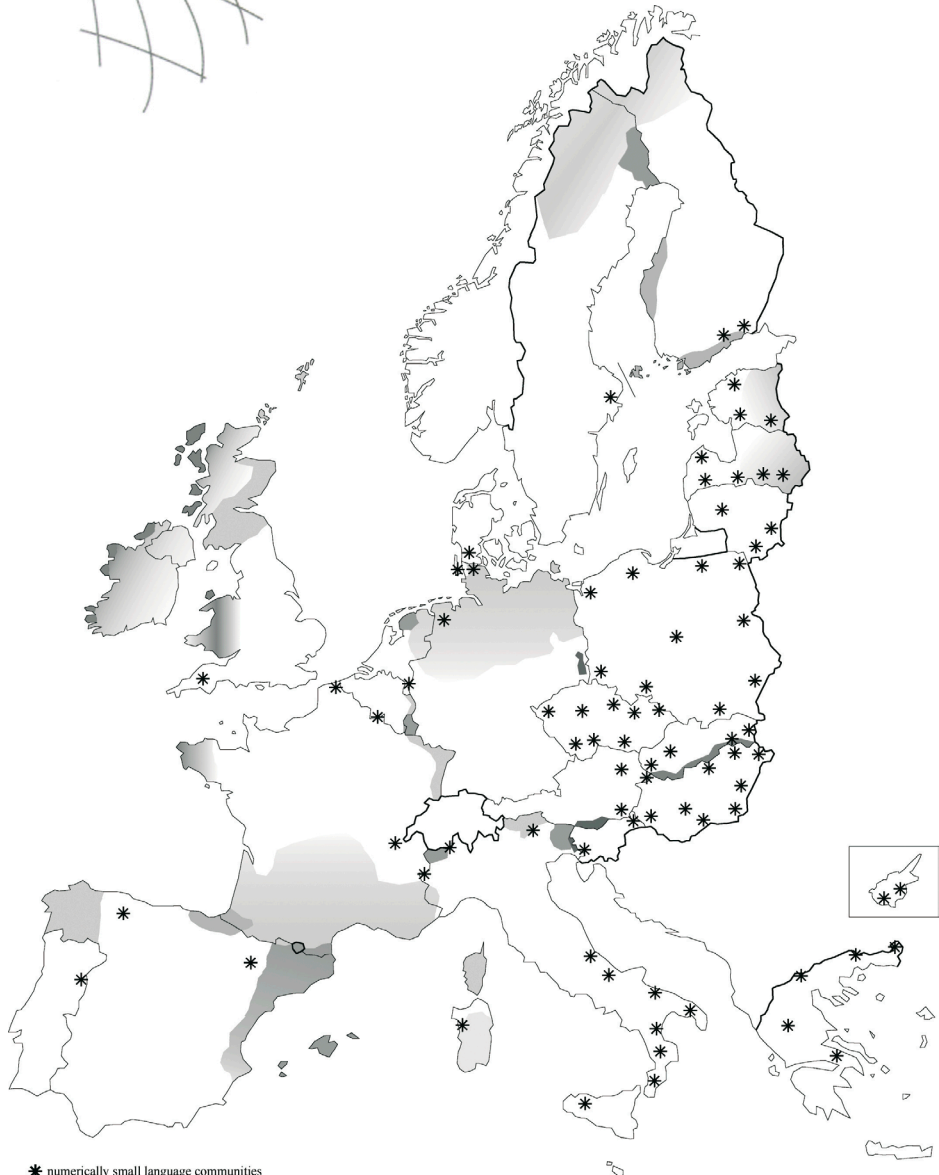




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# Polish

The Polish language in  
education in Lithuania



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## Foreword

### *background*

For several years now, Mercator-Education has made efforts to achieve one of its principal goals: to gather, store and distribute information on minority language education in European regions. Regional or minority languages are languages which differ from the official language of the state where they are spoken and which are traditionally used within a given territory by nationals of that state forming a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population.

The success of the series of regional dossiers has shown a need for documents stating briefly the most essential features of the educational system of regions with an autochthonous lesser used language. With the establishment of regional dossiers we intend to meet this need.

### *aim*

Regional dossiers aim at providing concise descriptive information and basic educational statistics about minority language education in a specific region of the European Union. This kind of information, such as features of the educational system, recent educational policies, division of responsibilities, main actors, legal arrangements, support structures, and also quantitative information on the number of schools, teachers, pupils and financial investments, can serve several purposes.

### *target group*

Policy makers, researchers, teachers, students and journalists may use the information provided to assess developments in European minority language schooling. They can also use a regional dossier as a first orientation towards further research or as a source of ideas for improving educational provision in their own region.

### *link with EURYDICE*

In order to link these regional descriptions with those of national educational systems, it was decided to follow the format used by EURYDICE, the European education

information network in the European Union. EURYDICE provides information on the administration and structure of education in member states of the European Union. The information provided in the regional dossiers is focussed on language use at the various levels of education.

*contents*

The remainder of this dossier consists firstly of an introduction to the region under study, followed by six sections each dealing with a specific level of the educational system. These brief descriptions contain factual information presented in a readily accessible way. Sections eight to ten cover research, prospects and summary statistics. For detailed information and political discussions about language use at the various levels of education, the reader is referred to other sources with a list of publications.

# I Introduction

## language

Polish (in Polish: język polski, polszczyzna) is the Western Slavic language with the largest number of speakers (about 46 million<sup>1</sup> in total, with 38 million in Poland itself). The other languages are Czech, Slovak, and the regional/minority languages Kashubian (in Poland) and Upper and Lower Sorbian (in Germany).

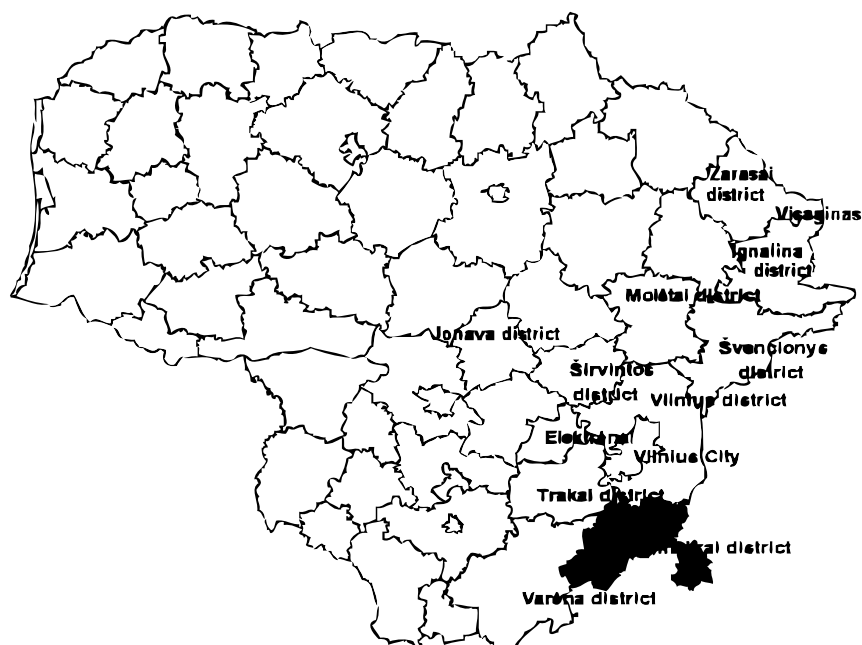
Polish is the official language of the Republic of Poland, and compact Polish minorities are found in Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan. A considerable number of Polish emigrants live in the US, France, Germany and Canada.

Native speakers of Polish are found all over Lithuania, but over 90 per cent of the Polish minority in Lithuania live in and around the Lithuanian capital Vilnius/Wilno: in the municipalities (savivaldybės) of Vilnius City (Vilnius/Wilno), Vilnius District (Vilniaus rajonas/Rejon Wileński) Šalčininkai/ Wielkie Soleczniki District, Trakai/Troki District, and Švenčionys/Święciany District.

## Population with Polish ethnic affiliation according to the census of 2001<sup>2</sup>:

Municipality	Ethnic Poles of the total population (percentage)	Number of people with Polish ethnic affiliation
Šalčininkai/ Wielkie Soleczniki	79.5	31,223
Vilniaus rajonas / Rejon Wileński	61.4	54,322
Trakai/Troki	33.3	12,403
Švenčionys/Święciany	28.8	9,089
City of Vilnius/Wilno	18.1	104,446
Molėtai/Malaty	10	2,053
Širvintos/Szyrwinty	10	2,019
Visaginas/ Wisaginia	8.6	2,541
Ignalina/Ignalino	8.3	1,908
Elektrėnai (founded 2000)	8	2,175
Zarasai/Jeziorosy	6.7	1,518
Varėna/Orany	6.6	2,067
Jonava/Janów	1.3	7,13

In all other municipalities, the percentage of people with Polish ethnic affiliation is less than one percent.



### *population*

The history of the Polish-speaking minority in Lithuania goes back as far as the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when the Lithuanian duke Jogaila (in Polish: Jagiełło) married Jadwiga (Jadwiga had been crowned as King of Poland, being the only woman bearing that title) and was crowned King of Poland. Lithuania was then Christianised, a process originating from Poland. Thus, Polish culture and the new Roman Catholic religion played an important role in the lives of the Lithuanian elite. With the new religion and the personal union of the Lithuanian Grand Duke and the Polish King, Polish started to dominate the royal court in Vilnius/Wilno too, and the magnates of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania switched to the Polish language in the following centuries.



Polish was the language of the nobility (in Polish: *szlachta*, in Lithuanian *šlėkta*) in what is now Lithuania<sup>3</sup>. From the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Lithuanian was usually the language of the peasants residing in villages. Documents, if not in Latin, were written in Polish, and the language of the Roman Catholic Church and of education was nearly exclusively Polish (together with Latin). In 1679, the Sejm of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (in Polish: *Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów*, in Lithuanian: *Abiejų Tautų Respublika*) decided that Polish should be the official language of the Lithuanian part, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, too. After 1795, when the greater part of Lithuania fell to Russia during the last of the three Partitions of Poland, the language of education and administration was mostly Russian, whereas the language of the Roman Catholic Church continued to be Polish.

In the region around Vilnius, even the peasants gradually switched to Polish as their native language – thus in fact becoming Lithuanian Poles<sup>4</sup>. Polish has been the dominant language in some areas of the region for centuries, and in others the language switch took place at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> or at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the picture of the ethnic affiliation in the area of today's Eastern and South-Eastern Lithuania - then part of the Russian Empire and after World War I part of the Polish state<sup>5</sup> - was quite heterogeneous. There were areas where Poles predominated, others with a Lithuanian or Belarusian majority, and even areas with a mixed population. The inhabitants of Vilnius were mostly Poles or Jews, with the latter dominating in smaller cities. They usually spoke Yiddish as their native language, with Russian or Belarusian (or a Polish-Belarusian hybrid called “*po prostu*” – “in a simple way”) as their second language.



In the period between World War I and World War II, Polish was the official language in the territories incorporated in the Polish state. Therefore, assimilation processes took place in the Vilnius region in favour of this language - and some of these processes did not take place without force. According to Valerij Čekmonas (in Turska 1995, 36), about 150,000 new Polish settlers arrived in the region from Poland.

According to the 1923 census, 3 per cent stated Polish ethnic affiliation<sup>6</sup> in the Republic of Lithuania (excluding the Vilnius Region). Ethnic minority schools were founded, among them Polish schools, with the minority language as the language of instruction. These schools operated during the entire interbellum period. In periods when the already difficult relations between Lithuania and Poland grew even worse, both states saw a deterioration of conditions in education and cultural life in the other language.

A dramatic decrease of the Polish-speaking population in Lithuania was caused by ethnic cleansing in Central Europe and by the connected expulsion of Poles from Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine to Poland (mostly to former German territories)<sup>7</sup> after World War II. This took place until 1956. Over 200,000 Poles, among them the overwhelming majority of the elite of Poles living in Lithuania, left the Lithuanian SSR for Poland. Since the nineteen-fifties, the Polish Lithuanian population has not changed to such a dramatic extent:

Year	1959	1979	1989	2001
Thousands	230	247	258	2,349
Percentage	8.5	7.3	7.0	6.7

Source: Lithuanian censuses

After World War II, about 130,000 new settlers, mostly speakers of Russian or Belarusian, arrived in Lithuania from other Soviet republics. This led to the foundation of numerous schools with Russian as the language of instruction and to the implementation of Russian as the administrative language as an instrument of russification and sovietization. On the other hand, starting in the nineteen-fifties, the network of Polish schools in SE Lithuania was renewed, but later on numerous Polish schools were transformed into Russian schools. A considerable number of Poles in Lithuania attended Russian schools, thus alienating themselves from the literary Polish language. One of the results of this process was the decreasing percentage of Poles in Lithuania<sup>8</sup> stating Polish as their native language: in 1959 – 96.8%, in 1970 – 92.4%, in 1979 – 88.3%, and in 1989 – 85%. According to the Lithuanian census of 2001, of 234,989 people stating Polish ethnic affiliation, 187,918 (80 per cent) named Polish as their mother tongue, 22,439 (9.6 per cent) Russian and 17,233 (7.3 per cent) Lithuanian<sup>9</sup>. In 1989, 57.9 per cent of the Poles also spoke Russian, 15.6 per cent Lithuanian and 25.2 per cent only Polish.

A rather dramatic change took place in the ethnic affiliation of the inhabitants of Vilnius/Wilno itself: after the annihilation of the Lithuanian Jews during World War II and the expulsion of Poles after the war, more and more Lithuanians – as well as workers from other Soviet republics – moved to the Lithuanian capital. Thus, Vilnius/Wilno developed into a city with a Lithuanian majority. In 2005, 57.7 per cent of the population were Lithuanians, 18.1 per cent Poles and 18 per cent Russians.

After the re-emigration of many ethnic Russians from Lithuania after 1991, today's Polish minority is the largest: 6.7 per cent of the total population of Lithuania.

*language status*

Article 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania states that “the official language shall be Lithuanian”. According to Article 37 “citizens belonging to ethnic communities shall have the right to foster their language, culture, and customs”, and according to article 45 “ethnic communities of citizens shall independently manage the affairs of their ethnic culture, education, charity, and mutual assistance. Ethnic communities shall be provided with support from the State”. Language use at court hearings is regulated by article 117: “court hearings in the Republic of Lithuania shall be conducted in the official language. Persons who have no command of Lithuanian shall be guaranteed the right to participate in the investigation and court proceedings through an interpreter”.

The rights and duties of the minorities are formulated by the 1989 Law on Ethnic Minorities<sup>10</sup>.

The Law provides that the development of culture and education of minorities shall be supported by the state. Schooling is to be organised in the native language of the respective minority up to secondary level and in departments at institutions of higher learning training teachers and other specialists needed by ethnic minorities. If required, future specialists may be sent abroad for their studies. Schools as well as cultural organisations can be founded by minority cultural organisations. The right is granted to publish newspapers and issue other publications in the minority language as well as the right to hold any post in government organisations and other institutions.

Article 4 grants the right to use the minority language in addition to the Lithuanian state language in offices in areas of compact minority settlement. Article 5 provides that in these areas signs may be designed both in Lithuanian and in the minority language. Article 8 regulates the choice of

ethnicity stated in the Lithuanian passport<sup>11</sup> on the basis of the nationality of (one of) the parents.

Another important law concerning language status is the 1995 Law on the State Language. The following paragraphs illustrate certain relevant articles.

Article 1 of this law provides that “the Law shall not regulate unofficial communication of the population and the language of events of religious communities as well as persons belonging to ethnic communities” and that “other laws of the Republic of Lithuania and legal acts adopted by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania shall guarantee the right of persons belonging to ethnic communities to foster their language, culture and customs”.

Article 13.

Audiovisual programmes and motion pictures publicly shown in Lithuania must be translated into the state language or shown with subtitles in Lithuanian.

Paragraph 1 of this Article shall not be applied to teaching and special programmes and events, or events and programmes held for a certain occasion or intended for ethnic communities. This also applies to radio and television programmes or texts of musical works of foreign states which are broadcast in Lithuania.

Article 18.

Names of organisations of ethnic communities and their informational signs may be rendered in other languages along with the state language. The format of signs in other languages cannot be larger than that of signs in the state language.

On the one hand, these provisions allow a high level of minority language use in public life. On the other hand, the

provision that the minority language should be used as an auxiliary language together with the Lithuanian state language and the provision that official documents have to be written or issued in Lithuanian grant the latter a privileged status.

The bilateral Polish-Lithuanian Declaration on Friendly Relations and Good Neighbourly Cooperation, signed on 13 January 1992, and the following Treaty on Friendly Relations and Good Neighbourly Cooperation, signed on 26 April 1994, recognised the existence of the Polish minority in Lithuania and the Lithuanian minority in Poland. They also obliged both states to protect their rights on a mutual basis (including the right to education in the respective minority languages).

In 2000, Lithuania ratified one of the most important documents of the Council of Europe regarding minority protection: the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities. Lithuania has so far not signed the European Charter for Regional and Minority languages. It seems that there are no such plans at the moment (information of the Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad and Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

The Polish minority in Lithuania makes active use of the rights provided by the law: witness the publication of one daily newspaper “Kurier Wileński” as well as the weekly “Nasz czas”, the Catholic weekly “Tygodnik Wileńszczyzny”, the quarterly “Znad Wilii”, the monthly magazine for Poles in Lithuania “Magazyn Wileński”, all published in Vilnius/Wilno and providing a rather broad spectrum of information for the Polish-speaking population of Lithuania. There is one radio station, Znad Wilii, broadcasting in Polish from Vilnius/Wilno 24 hours a day. The national Lithuanian radio and TV broadcasting company translates a TV programme

in Polish for 15 minutes once a week. The Polish-speaking population in and around Vilnius is also able to receive some TV stations from Poland (Polonia).

The most vivid conflict in the relationship between Lithuania and its Polish minority as well as its Lithuanian counterpart in Poland concerns the spelling system to be used for personal names and place-names in the respective minority languages. According to Lithuanian laws, personal names have to be written in the “Lithuanian alphabet”. Earlier, even a Lithuanian nominative ending had to be added, so the name could be inflected in Lithuanian. This is no longer the case, but still personal names in official documents are spelled differently from the original language: for example Lavrinovič and not Lawrinowicz. It is allowed to use Polish spelling for place-names in addition to the Lithuanian name (see below). Problems in this area might be solved by spelling names from languages using a kind of Latin alphabet in their original form. This could very well be a topic for discussion in the whole of the European Union

*status of language  
education*

According to the Law on Education, article 28, paragraph 7, “in localities where a national minority traditionally constitutes a substantial part of the population, upon that community’s request, the municipality assures the possibility of learning in the language of the national minority”.

Article 30 of the same law regulates the right to study in the state language and in the mother tongue:

1. Instruction in the Lithuanian state language and study of the Lithuanian state language is guaranteed to all citizens of the Republic of Lithuania and aliens having a permanent or provisional residence permit in the Republic of Lithuania.
2. At those general education and non-formal education schools, the by-laws of which (respecting the requests of



parents and learners) provide for teaching in a language of an ethnic minority and fostering of the ethnic minority's culture, the teaching process is conducted or certain subjects are taught in the language of the ethnic minority. The subject of the Lithuanian state language is a constituent part of the curriculum at such schools. In such schools:

- 1) the primary and basic curricula are implemented in the language of the ethnic minority, while selected curriculum subjects may be taught in the Lithuanian state language, upon the parents' (foster parents', guardians') request;
  - 2) the secondary curriculum is implemented in the language of the ethnic minority. Curriculum subjects selected by the learners may be taught in the Lithuanian state language;
  - 3) State-run and municipal pre-schools and general education schools provide opportunities for learners who belong to ethnic minorities to have supplementary study of their mother tongue; this is subject to the existence of a real need and the availability of a specialist of that language and if the teaching process is organised in another language.
3. A person who belongs to an ethnic minority may study his mother tongue at a school that implements non-formal education programmes or with another education provider.
4. The children of persons who have the right to permanently or provisionally reside in the Republic of Lithuania are granted the possibility of studying the Lithuanian state language, of receiving education in the Lithuanian state language and (when possible) of studying their mother tongue.
5. All schools that provide general education must ensure mastery of the Lithuanian state language, meeting a standard prescribed by the Ministry of Education and Science.

In accordance with these propositions, the Polish minority in Lithuania has the possibility to attend kindergartens and schools in Polish in South Eastern Lithuania (municipalities of Vilnius/Wilno city, Vilnius/Wilno district, Šalčininkai/Wielkie Soleczniki, Trakai/Troki, Švenčionys/Święciany). There is one basic school (*pagrindinė mokykla*) (grades 1-10) with Polish groups at Barskūnai/Barskuny in the municipality of Širvintos/Szyrwinty.

After the re-establishment of the Lithuanian state, the network of Polish schools in South East Lithuania was upheld. During the nineteen-nineties, as more and more Russian schools were closed, the network was extended upon active lobbying of Lithuanian Polish organisations. The result of such consolidation is the growing number of Polish mother tongue children attending schools with Polish as the language of instruction:

<b>Student dynamics in 1990-2000</b>					
	<b>1990/1991</b>	<b>1993/1994</b>	<b>1996/1997</b>	<b>1999/2000</b>	<b>2000/2001</b>
<b>Lithuanian</b>	409,295	422,216	459,799	508,373	522,569
<b>Russian</b>	76,038	58,743	52,315	44,058	41,162
<b>Polish</b>	11,407	15,312	19,212	21,826	22,303

Source: Ministry of Education and Science

According to information provided by the Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad, there were 103 schools for general education in Lithuania with Polish as the language of instruction in 2005/06. Among them were 64 Polish schools (12,689 students), 18 with Polish and Lithuanian groups (3,901 students), 15 with Polish and Russian groups (5,384 students) and 6 with Polish,

Lithuanian and Russian groups (3,413). Of these, 6 were kindergarten schools (*darželis-mokykla*: pre-school and primary education), 8 primary schools (*pradinė mokykla*: primary education), 40 secondary schools (*vidurinė mokykla*: primary, basic and secondary education, i.e. grades 1-12), 44 basic schools (*pagrindinės mokyklos*: primary and basic education, i.e. grades 1-10), 3 gymnasiums – grammar schools (*gimnazija*: grades 9-12), one special boarding school (*specialioji internatinė mokykla*) and one education centre for adults (*suaugusiųjų mokymo centras*: grades 11 and 12 for adults). 18,392 students were instructed in Polish in schools for general education.

	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
kindergartens	48			45	44	44
children in Polish kindergartens / groups	1,963	1,901	1,889	1,860	1,907	
Polish schools <sup>1</sup>	121	130	124	123	100	103
students in Polish schools	21,940	21,710	21,314	20,549	19,507	18,392

Sources: Statistics Lithuania, Ministry of Education and Science, Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad.

Outside of these compact Polish settlement areas, Saturday or Sunday schools provide instruction in Polish language and culture. According to the Concept of Saturday and Sunday Schools for Ethnic Minorities of 2004, “a Sunday school is an institution of non-formal education for children created to sustain the ethno-linguistic vitality of their ethnic minority and satisfy specific educational needs of an ethnic minority’s children and youth to learn their mother tongue, gain knowledge of ethnic traditions and culture, and, in a general, preserve and strengthen their ethnic identity and support their for need ethno-cultural expression and socialisation”. In 2005, there were 11 such Saturday/Sunday schools for Polish-speaking children in the Kaunas, Klaipėda and Kėdainiai districts and in other regions.

Until 1999, all foreseen titles for teaching Polish language and literature had been published by Lithuanian publishers. Other titles were or are being translated from Lithuanian and then published. As the costs for publishing and translation have grown considerably during the last decade, the association of the Polish Teachers in Lithuania coordinates the titles to be published.

**The table below shows the number of titles published in Polish in different years:**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Titles</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Titles</i>
1996	16	2000	2
1997	11	2001	17
1998	10		
1999	5		

Source: Ministry of Education and Science

In Vilnius, there is also a seminary for Catholic priests where the students intending to become priests in South East Lithuania attend courses in Lithuanian or Polish, whichever is not their native language. On becoming priests, they have to be able to hold religious services in both languages in the multi-ethnic area of Vilnius/Wilno.

#### *education system*

School attendance is compulsory between the ages of 7 to 16 (10 years). The current structure consists of seven levels. The different levels are:

- I. pre-school education (children aged 3-7), including pre-primary education (6-7).
- II. primary education lasting 4 years (children aged 7-10).
- III. basic education lasting 6 years (children aged 10-16).
- IV. secondary education lasting 2 years (children aged 16-18).

- V. post-secondary education not resulting in the attainment of college or higher education level (stage IV curricula of basic vocational training) lasting 1-2 years. This is for students with secondary education.
- VI. higher education. This may be one of two types, i.e. university studies (usually at universities) and non-university studies (usually at colleges)<sup>13</sup>. At university, students may obtain a bachelor degree after three years and a master degree after another two years of studies.
- VII. postgraduate education up to Ph.D. Level.

The general education system in Lithuania finds itself in a reformation phase. Today, the remnants of the old system are still present: secondary schools providing education from grade one to grade 12. The new system should consist of primary schools (grades 1-4), basic schools (grades 1-10) and gymnasiums – grammar schools (grades (8/10-12).

*public and private* According to the *Law on Education*, institutions of public education schools may be established and maintained by the Seimas (university education); the Government (non-university higher education); the Ministry of Education and Science (vocational training, non-formal adult education, National School of Arts, special schools etc.); another ministry or an institution authorised by the Government (vocational training, non-formal adult education school); the county governor (special education, vocational training school and in some cases general education schools); the municipal council (pre-school and non-formal education; general education, special education, vocational training schools upon a written consent of the minister of education and science); other legal and natural entities of the Republic of Lithuania and legal and natural entities of other states (general education, special education, non-formal education, vocational training, colleges).

The pre-school institutions and schools for general education in South East Lithuania with Polish as the (or one of the) language(s) of instruction are founded and maintained by the respective municipal councils. In 2004/05, only 19 of 1,534 schools for general education in Lithuania were private schools. None of them had Polish as the language of instruction.

The Saturday/Sunday schools are maintained by local Polish organisations, mainly the Association of Poles in Lithuania (in Polish: Związek Polaków na Litwie, in Lithuanian: Lietuvos lenkų sąjunga). Moderate financial support is available from the state for the maintenance of the Sunday Schools.

*bilingual education  
forms*

So-called Polish schools<sup>14</sup> in the area around the capital Vilnius/Wilno, where the overwhelming majority of the Lithuanian Poles live, are usually monolingual, with only Lithuanian language as a compulsory subject taught in Lithuanian (see article 10 of the Law on Education). The Law on Education allows the teaching of other subjects in Lithuanian, if the parents of the pupils or the pupils themselves wish so. There are no schools in Lithuania with systematic bilingual teaching in Polish and Lithuanian. For certain subjects, especially in regions more distant from Vilnius/Wilno, a shortage exists of teachers who are able to teach one or two other subjects in Polish. Consequently, pupils are taught in Lithuanian.

In basic education curricula (up to grade 10), almost exclusively Polish teaching materials and school books are used. In the last two years before the Matura examinations (grades 11 and 12), school books are mostly in Lithuanian. Nevertheless, the courses – except Lithuanian language and literature – are taught in Polish.

*administration* According to the Law on Education, the main policy concerning education, science and studies is formulated by the Ministry of Education and Science. The County Manager's Administration implements the national education policy in the counties, and the municipalities execute the national education policy in the municipalities.

The education programmes are to be approved by the Ministry of Education and Science and the curricula are the same for all schools, including schools with a minority language as the language of instruction, except for the teaching of the native language as a subject and the Lithuanian state language as a non-native language.

According to the Law on the State Language, official documents of administrative bodies are to be issued in Lithuanian. Members of the administration may speak Polish with local people or with each other Polish only has an auxiliary status and is to be used together with the Lithuanian state language.

*inspections* In Lithuania, inspections are organised on all three levels responsible for education in the country, i.e. the Ministry of Education and Science, the county's (apskritis) administration and the municipalities. All of them appoint inspectors at their level. The responsible inspector from the Ministry of Education and Science supervises the implementation of the national education policy in the schools. The inspector appointed by the County Managers' administration and the inspector appointed by the municipality's Department of Education analyse the education processes in the schools more thoroughly.

*support structure* The main organisation supplying professional support for teachers in Polish schools in Lithuania is the Association of Polish school teachers in Lithuania (in Polish: *Polska Macierz Szkolna na Litwie*, in Lithuanian: *Lietuvos lenkų mokyklų mokytojų draugija* "Macierz szkolna"), based in

Vilnius/Wilno. This NGO organises visits to Poland for teachers from Polish schools, and invites lecturers from Poland to hold seminars (normally about 2-3 days) for teachers in Polish schools.

*Macierz szkolna* also coordinates the orders for instruction materials from publishers for the Polish schools in Lithuania. This measure was agreed upon as the materials would otherwise be too expensive – because of the low number of copies ordered.

There is regular financial support from the side of the Polish state for the maintenance of the Polish schools in Lithuania.

## 2

### Pre-school education

#### *target group*

Education at pre-school level is not compulsory in Lithuania. Pre-school education is provided to children from the age of one to six in nurseries (up to the age of three) and kindergartens (up to age six) and nursery-kindergartens (1-6).

Pre-primary education is not compulsory. However, it is made available by the State to all children, as of age six, as a preparatory class where children are prepared for successful learning in primary school. The pre-primary curriculum is implemented by establishments of pre-school education or, more often, schools for general education.

#### *structure*

All Polish kindergartens<sup>15</sup> or kindergartens with Polish groups are founded and run by the respective municipalities. In 2004/05, only 3 of 655 kindergartens in Lithuania were run by other founders than the municipalities, with none of them a kindergarten for Polish-speaking children. Parents pay a monthly fee appointed by the kindergarten. Socially weak families are supported by the state through the municipality.



According to Statistics Lithuania, in 2004/05, there were 38 Polish kindergartens<sup>16</sup> or kindergartens with Polish groups attended by 1,907 children. These kindergartens all operated in Vilnius County, in the municipalities of Vilnius/Wilno City, Vilnius/Wilno District, Šalčininkai / Wielkie Soleczniki, Švenčionys/Święciany and Trakai/Troki.

The percentage of children attending kindergartens in Polish in all these municipalities is fairly low in comparison with the percentage of the Polish-speaking population. Quite many parents send their children to Lithuanian kindergartens or kindergarten groups. In the municipality of Šalčininkai / Wielkie Soleczniki, where 79.5 per cent of the population stated Polish ethnic affiliation (2001), as many as 330 of 631 (52.3 per cent) in 2003 and 298 of 672 children (44.3 per cent) in 2004 were attending kindergartens in Lithuanian. In the municipality of Vilnius/Wilno District (61.4 per cent Poles in 2001), the numbers are 916 of 1,261 (72.6 per cent) for 2003 and 842 of 1,226 (68.6 per cent) for 2004.

In the municipalities with Polish minorities, where pre-school institutions exist with teaching in Polish, the figures for children attending Polish kindergartens are the following: City of Vilnius/Wilno (18.1 per cent Poles): 1,066 of 18,809 (5.7 per cent) and 1,055 of 19,027 (5.5 per cent) in 2004; Municipality of Trakai/Troki (33.3 per cent Poles): 85 of 1,100 (7.7 per cent) in 2003 and 64 of 1,167 (5.5 per cent) in 2004; Municipality of Švenčionys/Święciany District (28.8 per cent Poles): 45 of 624 (7.2 per cent) in 2003 and 45 of 560 (8 per cent) in 2004.

A framework set up by the Ministry of Education and Science regulates the standards of pre-primary and general education (*Bendrosios programos ir išsilavinimo standartai*. (General Programmes and Education Standards); Lithuanian

text at <http://www.smm.lt/ugdymas/docs/Programos2003.pdf>, p.21-64. The programmes for kindergarten education before pre-primary classes and detailed programmes for pre-primary classes are worked out by the local pre-school institutions.

*legislation*

Pre-school education is regulated by articles 7 and 8 of the Law on Education.

*language use*

In South East Lithuania, which houses the overwhelming majority of the Lithuanian Poles, starting in 1989, Polish kindergartens have been founded by the municipalities to provide Polish-speaking children with pre-school education in their native language. Education in such kindergartens or kindergarten groups is in Polish only. The pre-primary class prepares children to continue their studies in schools with Polish as the language of instruction.

*teaching material*

The material used at this level mostly consists of educational toys, booklets with pictures and similar material. Booklets used in the majority of kindergartens in Lithuania with educational purpose, for example teaching the alphabet, are published by various publishing houses, but are available only in Lithuanian. Therefore, teachers in Polish kindergartens, although teaching in Polish, use Lithuanian materials and some material from Poland they have collected themselves.

*statistics*

**Institutions organising pre-school education in 2004/2005**

Nurseries-kindergartens	Kindergartens	Total	Number of children
30	14	44	190

## 3

**Primary education**

*Target group* In the Lithuanian education system, primary education is compulsory. It usually begins at the age of seven. It lasts four years (classes 1-4) and is directly followed by lower secondary education. At the end of the fourth grade, pupils receive a certificate on their completion of primary school.

*structure*

Primary education is organised by schools-kindergartens (grades 0, i.e. pre-primary education – 4), primary schools (grades 0-4), basic schools (grades 1-10), and secondary schools (grades 1-12). In 2005/06, in 103 schools for general education with 18,392 students (99 of them organised primary education), Polish was the group or school language of instruction. All these schools are located in Vilnius County, in the municipalities of Vilnius/Wilno City, Vilnius/Wilno District, Šalčininkai/ Wielkie Soleczniki, Švenčionys/Święciany, Trakai/Troki and Širvintos/Szyrwinty.

In 2004/05, 3.6 per cent of all students in general education (grades 1-12) were taught in Polish, compared to 6.7 per cent of the inhabitants of Lithuania stating Polish ethnic affiliation. The percentage is quite different for different grades, ranging (in 2003/04) from 3.14 per cent for grade one over 3.43 per cent for grade 6 to 5.65 per cent for grade 12. We might therefore conclude that after the renaissance of the Polish schools in the nineties the trend has become quite strong to send children to Lithuanian schools instead of Polish schools.

Education plans for two academic years are worked out by the Ministry of Education and Science (see: [http://www.smm.lt/ugdymas/docs/ugdymo\\_planai\\_2005.pdf](http://www.smm.lt/ugdymas/docs/ugdymo_planai_2005.pdf) (text in Lithuanian) for the General Education Plan for 2005-2007). These plans, among other things, regulate the minimum number of

lessons for each subject in non-Lithuanian schools. In addition, the mentioned framework worked out by the Ministry of Education and Science regulates the standards of teaching different subjects in grades 1-10 (*Bendrosios programos ir išsilavinimo standartai*. General Curriculum Framework and Education Standards). The Lithuanian text can be found at <http://www.smm.lt/ugdymas/docs/Programos2003.pdf>. The teaching of Polish language as a native language is mentioned on p. 187-199). Detailed programmes within the scope of these frameworks are worked out by the school and approved by the school's council.

*legislation*

In accordance with the Law on Education, children start attending the first grade of primary education in the calendar year in which they turn seven years of age. Primary education is regulated by article 9 of the Law on Education.

*language use*

In the Polish schools of Vilnius County as well as in Polish groups in schools with groups instructed in different languages, all subjects are taught in Polish except Lithuanian language as a non-native language. The learning of the Lithuanian state language is compulsory from grade one upwards.

Outside the compact area with a Polish majority or considerable minority, only Polish language and culture is taught in non-compulsory Saturday or Sunday schools.

*teaching material*

Teaching material for the Polish schools is produced in Polish in Lithuania. Most school books and exercise books have already been published. The teaching materials for Polish language and literature are originals, created by Polish authors from Lithuania, whereas the books for other subjects are mostly adapted translations of Lithuanian originals. The teaching materials used in Polish schools in Lithuania have to be approved by the Ministry of Education and Science.

*statistics*

### **Schools organising primary education in Polish in 2005/2006**

Schools-kindergartens (grades 0-4)	6
primary schools (grades 0-4)	8
basic schools (grades 1-10)	44
secondary schools (grades 1-12)	40
special boarding school	1

Source: Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad

## **4**

### **Secondary education**

*target group*

Secondary education starts upon completion of primary school with grade 5 and ends after the 12th grade. The students concerned are 11-18 years old. Secondary education in Lithuania is divided into two curricula: basic education (grades 5-10) and secondary education (grades 11-12). While the former is compulsory, the latter is not.

*structure*

The first three grades of basic education (grades 5-8) are shared by all students. After this, students may choose different curricula. They may:

- 1) follow a traditional grammar school programme provided by gymnasiums (*gimnazija*) and secondary schools (*vidurinė mokykla*); stay in the same school, i.e. basic school (*pagrindinė mokykla*) or secondary school (*vidurinė mokykla*) and finish the basic education programme up to grade 10. For those having graduated from basic school, the main option is vocational education (see section 5).
- 2) follow vocational education programmes providing basic education and qualification (see section 5).

For traditional grammar school programmes, the frameworks mentioned in the section “Primary education” apply here, too. In addition, every school providing education for grades 11 and 12 (secondary education curriculum) works out an education programme to be approved by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Students of non-Polish secondary schools can choose Polish as the second foreign language. In 2004/05, 142 students of 5 secondary schools were learning Polish as their second foreign language (see [http://www.istruzione.it/buongiorno\\_europa/potenza/lituania.pdf](http://www.istruzione.it/buongiorno_europa/potenza/lituania.pdf)).

The maturity examinations after grade 12 are of two types: state and school examinations. The state examinations consist of four subjects. Lithuanian (native or state) language examination is compulsory, and the other subjects are to be chosen from a list. The state maturity examinations are taken in examination centres (normally one per district, but there are more in cities) and evaluated by one or two centres. The school examinations are organised by local centres (at the school itself, if there are 15 students to take them). Polish native language examinations are only part of school examinations. State examinations are oriented at students having chosen intensive courses in the subjects, and school examinations at students having chosen ordinary courses.

### *legislation*

Secondary education is regulated by articles 10 and 11 of the Law on Education.

### *language use*

The provisions of language use in the classic type of secondary grammar schools (grades 5-12) are the same as in primary school. In Polish basic and secondary schools, Polish is the medium of instruction for all subjects except Lithuanian state language. Only when no teacher of the subject

in Polish is available, is this subject taught in Lithuanian. For schools in the nearer environs of Vilnius/Wilno, there are virtually no problems to find a teacher for all subjects. Most of the teachers are themselves graduates from Polish schools and later from Lithuanian universities, and some are specialists, having learnt Polish as a second language. Many of them live in Vilnius/Wilno itself and travel to their places of work. That said, it becomes clear that the problems in finding a teacher increase with the distance from the capital, which is a problem not only of minority schools. There are some difficulties to find teachers for certain subjects, such as English and informatics, which is also a problem for schools in the Lithuanian countryside as a whole.

*teaching material* Teaching material for schools with Polish as the language of instruction is published in Polish by various publishing houses in Lithuania. The textbooks for teaching Polish language and literature are produced by authors of Lithuanian Polish origin, and the textbooks for other subjects are translations of their Lithuanian equivalents. In grades 11 and 12, textbooks in Lithuanian are used for several subjects, but the respective subjects are nevertheless taught in Polish. In addition to these materials, teaching materials from Poland are used in some schools for secondary education.

*statistics*

### **Schools organising secondary education in Polish in 2005/2006**

basic schools (grades 1-10)	44
secondary schools (grades 1-12)	40
special boarding school	1
gymnasiums (grades 9-12)	3
adult education centre (grades 11-12)	1

Source: Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad

**5****Vocational education***target group*

Programmes for vocational education can be chosen at different ages. It must be said that vocational education is not very popular, except higher professional education organised by colleges. For example, in 2003/04 only 44,4 thousand students were learning in vocational schools, compared to 52,7 thousand at (professional) colleges and 130,2 thousand university students.

The first type of vocational school is a two-year vocational training programme resulting in professional basic education (grades 8-10, age 14-16), or a three-years course resulting in the attainment of basic education and a qualification.

The second type of vocational education is basic vocational training in accordance with stage II curricula resulting in vocational qualification only. It lasts for two years and is designed for individuals with basic education (after grade 10, age 16-18).

The third type of vocational education is basic vocational training in accordance with stage III curricula resulting in secondary education and vocational qualification. It lasts for three years and is designed for individuals with basic education (after grade 10, age 16-19).

The third type of vocational education is basic vocational training in accordance with stage IV curricula (post-secondary education not resulting in the attainment of college or higher education). On the stages of education see page 41.

*structure*

There are two schools in Vilnius/Wilno and Baltoji Vokė/Biała Waka offering programmes in stage III (partly) that are taught in Polish.



The Vilnius Advanced School of Agriculture (*Vilniaus aukštesnioji žemės ūkio mokykla*) in Baltoji Vokė/Biała Waka organises 3 different programmes at this level: technical support worker, rural business worker, food preparation worker.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> polytechnic school of Vilnius in the suburb of Naujoji Vilnia/Nowa Wilejka organises three programmes: car body repairer, industry mechanic and enterprise merchant. There were some 130 students of Polish ethnic affiliation attending this school in 2005/06.

In another school, the Dieveniškės/Dzieweniszki School of Agriculture, general subjects related to secondary education are taught in Polish to students with Polish as their native language. Subjects related to vocational specialisations are taught mainly in Lithuanian. Lithuanian state language is a compulsory subject. The provisions are the same as in secondary grammar schools, as the school provides education for grades 11 and 12 leading to secondary and vocational education. In 2005/06, 30 students have been taught partly in Polish, compared to 45 in 2003/04 and 41 in 2004/05.

At the Bukiškės/Bukiszki School of Agriculture, only native Polish language is taught through the medium of Polish. In 2005/06 there were 66 students with Polish ethnic affiliation: 40 in the second study year and 26 in the first study year.

Three different stage IV vocational programmes which are taught partly (more than half of the courses) through the medium of Polish are organised by the Vilnius Advanced School of Agriculture (*Vilniaus aukštesnioji žemės ūkio mokykla*). These programmes are designed for individuals with secondary education. Most of the students have graduated from Polish schools in the region. The programmes

offered include: car mechanic, small business coordinator, rural tourism organizer.

In total, there are 392 students being taught (partly) in Polish at the Vilnius Advanced School of Agriculture.

*legislation*

Vocational education in Lithuania is regulated by article 13 of the Law of Education and by the Law on Vocational Education and Training.

There are no additional provisions in either of the two laws concerning the language of instruction in vocational schools.

*language use*

At the Vilnius Advanced School of Agriculture in Baltoji Vokė/Biała Waka, classes are mainly taught in Polish. Terms are given in Polish and Lithuanian, and teaching materials from Poland are used in addition to those from Lithuania so as to guarantee more or less bi-lingual vocational education.

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> polytechnic school of Vilnius in Naujoji Vilnia/Nowa Wilejka, classes of the three programmes mentioned above are partly (about 50 per cent) taught in Polish. Examinations are to be taken in Lithuanian.

At the Dieveniškės School of Agriculture, general subjects are taught through the medium of Polish, with specialised subjects mainly taught in Lithuanian.

At the Bukiškės School of Agriculture, students with Polish as a native language are taught in Lithuanian: only the native Polish language programme is taught through the medium of Polish.

*teaching material*

Teaching material used in vocational education varies from school to school. The textbooks for Polish language and literature are the same as in secondary grammar schools,

i.e. produced by Lithuanian Polish authors and published in Lithuania. For subjects in connection with the vocational specialisation, Lithuanian teaching materials are used, as the publication of such materials in Polish would be rather expensive. Some teachers use their own materials in Polish, especially in the less regulated stage IV programmes. Teaching materials from Poland are used in some of these vocational schools in addition to material in Lithuanian. At the Vilnius Advanced School of Agriculture in Baltoji Vokė/Biała Waka, Polish materials are used in teaching the Polish language as well as professional subjects.

*statistics*

### **Vocational schools organising classes in Polish in 2005/2006**

	<i>Number of schools</i>	<i>Number of students taught (partly) in Polish</i>
Schools with prevailing teaching in Polish (most subjects)	1	392
Schools partly teaching in Polish (about 50 per cent)	2	~ 160
Schools with Polish language subject taught in Polish	1	66

## **6**

### **Higher education**

*structure*

There are three levels of higher education in Lithuania: the bachelor programme (3 years), the master programme (two years) and the doctoral programme (4 years). These programmes are offered by state or private universities. Colleges offer undergraduate professional studies focused on practical activities (3–4 years). Graduates from non-university undergraduate studies obtain higher vocational qualification.

*language use*

In higher education, the Polish language is used at two universities: Vilnius University and Vilnius Pedagogical University.

Polish philology (language and literature) can also be studied at Vilnius University, at the Department of Polish Philology.

Polish is taught as an optional subject to students of Slavic studies at the universities of Klaipėda, Šiauliai, and the Vytautas-Magnus-University of Kaunas.

Graduates of Polish secondary schools also study at universities in Poland. Every year, about 20-30 students enrol at a Polish university according in a programme offered by the Polish Ministry of Education. These students receive grants offered by the Ministry and do not have to pay study fees. The programme is open exclusively to Lithuanians of Polish origin from all of Lithuania, mostly but not exclusively graduates from Polish schools, and is coordinated by the Polish Consulate in Vilnius/Wilno. Examinations are organised by the Consulate. Earlier, there were about 150 candidates, but the number has recently come down to fewer than 50. It is not known how many students go to Poland at their own initiative for university study .

*legislation*

Higher education in Lithuania is regulated by the Law on Higher Education.

In Article 10, the Law on Higher Education provides that “the Language of Instruction at higher education institutions of the Republic of Lithuania shall be the Lithuanian language. Other languages shall be allowed to be used for instruction if: 1) a study programme is related to another language; 2) lectures are delivered and other academic studies are run by foreign higher education institution teachers

and specialists of other foreign organisations; 3) this is required by an international study exchange programme.

In accordance with these provisions, the courses at the Department of Polish Philology of Vilnius Pedagogical University and Vilnius University are taught through the medium of Polish.

### *teacher training*

Teachers of Polish language and literature for the Polish schools in Lithuania have mostly been trained at the Faculty of Slavic Studies of the Vilnius Pedagogical University, Department of Polish Philology. Some graduates from Vilnius University are also engaged in teaching Polish language and literature at Polish schools for general education. The teachers of other subjects are graduates of Lithuanian universities who have studied their subjects in Lithuanian.

### *statistics*

#### **Students of Polish Philology in the academic year 2005/2006**

Programme	Number of students
Polish Philology	216 (67 bachelor, 122 bachelor/teacher, 27 master/teacher)
Polish Philology and Primary Education Teaching	39 (bachelor/teacher)
Polish Philology and Social Pedagogy	12 (bachelor/social pedagogue)

Sources: Ministry of Education and Science

## 7

**Adult education**

The training courses for Polish teachers play an important part in maintaining a high level of competence in the teaching of Polish. As was mentioned above, these courses are organised on a regular basis by the Association of Polish Teachers in Lithuania (*Polska Macierz Szkolna na Litwie*), which invites lecturers from Poland or sends teachers to Poland for visits. An agreement has been developed between the association and the University of Lublin.

Polish language courses for adults are regularly organised at different levels by the Polish Institute in Vilnius. In other places, possibilities to learn the Polish language are only sporadically available.

## 8

**Educational research**

At the Departments of Polish Philology of Vilnius University and Vilnius Pedagogical University, the main focus of scientific research lies with the special features of the Polish language spoken in Lithuania and the literature in Polish written by Poles from Lithuania. Some researchers investigate the rural Polish dialects in Lithuania, and others the impact of the bilingual environment in many of the Polish-speaking families.

The main research on Polish education in Lithuania today and in the past is carried out at the Department of Polish Philology of Vilnius Pedagogical University. Some research on the subject is also done by researchers from Poland.

## 9

**Prospects**

The prospects for language maintenance and further development among the Lithuanian Poles are rather good. The Polish minority is very active in lobbying for their interests. The majority of the members of two municipal councils, namely Šalčininkai / Wielkie Soleczniki and Vilniaus rajonas / Rejon Wileński represent the Polish minority. The strengthening of the Polish school system in Lithuania during the nineteen- nineties has led to the consolidation of the Polish minority in Lithuania. Cultural organisations such as the Polish House or the Polish Theatre in Vilnius / Wilno support this level of confidence. Contacts with the neighbouring Republic of Poland have intensified after the restoration of Lithuanian independence in 1990 and are flourishing now.

The Polish education system in Lithuania, i.e. in the regions where the overwhelming majority of the Lithuanian Poles is living, is stable and has expanded heavily in the nineties. Even when the dramatic decrease in birth rates and the strong emigration from Lithuania are taken into consideration, the number of pupils is decreasing less dramatically. On the other hand, the fairly high percentage of ethnic Poles attending Lithuanian schools for general education, especially in kindergartens and in primary education, shows some tendencies of assimilation, so it is far from clear whether this also applies to the Polish ethnic identification of these people.

Polish schools also receive substantial financial support from the Polish state in order to renovate old school buildings or build new ones.

**10****Summary statistics****Polish in pre-school education**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
pre-school education institutions	48	49	44	45
number of children:	1963	1860	1907	??

Source: Statistics Lithuania, Ministry of Education and Science

**Polish in general education***Schools with groups instructed in Polish*

	<b>1990</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
of which:												
Polish	44	46	58	63	71	73	74	80	81	83	64	64
Lithuanian and Polish	7	6	8	10	11	11	11	12	13	14	13	18
Polish and Russian	47	50	42	37	30	28	26	21	21	18	17	15
Polish, Lithuanian and Russian	25	24	16	15	13	10	10	9	9	8	6	6

Sources: Ministry of Education and Science, Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad

*Students instructed in Polish*

<b>1990</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
11,407	12,611	19,212	20,263	22,303	21,710	21,314	20,549	19,507	18,392

Sources: Ministry of Education and Science, Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad

**Polish in vocational education**

	<b>1990/1991</b>	<b>1996/1997</b>	<b>2000/2001</b>	<b>2001/2002</b>	<b>2002/2003</b>	<b>2003/2004</b>	<b>2004/2005</b>
Number of students in vocational schools		298	470	405	369	181	639
Number of students professional colleges	444	145	107	114	236	249	139

Source: Statistics Lithuania

**Polish in higher education**

	<b>1990/991</b>	<b>1996/1997</b>	<b>2000/2001</b>	<b>2001/2002</b>	<b>2002/2003</b>	<b>2003/2004</b>	<b>2004/2005</b>
Students studying in Polish	261	164	204	254	237	178	188

Source: Statistics Lithuania



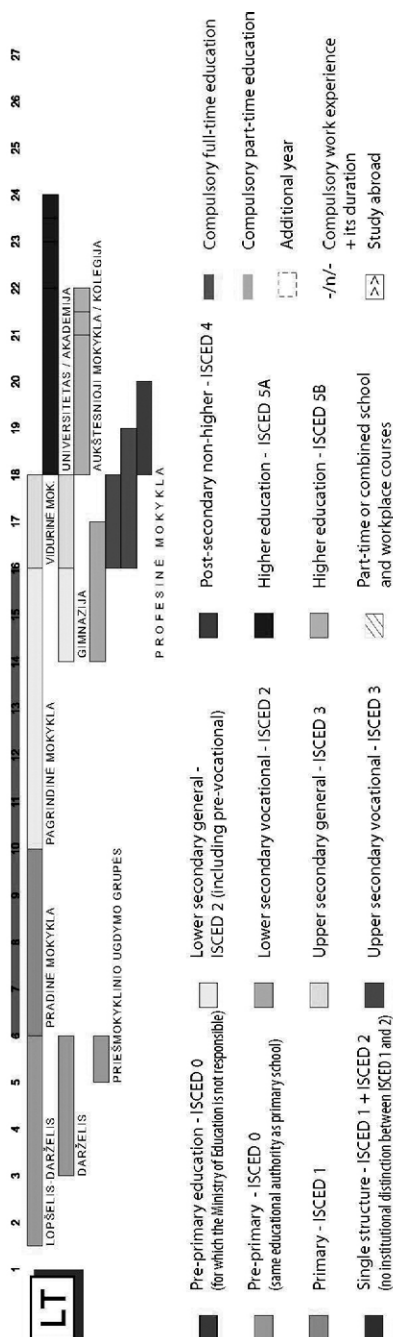
## Endnotes

- 1 Some sources name a number of up to 60 million.
- 2 Data provided by the Department of Statistics to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. <http://www.std.lt/lt/pages/view/?id=1705>.
- 3 With the exception of the Region of Klaipėda/Memel belonging to the Kingdom of Prussia, later the German Reich where the German language dominated.
- 4 In fact, the situation is more complicated as until late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century being Polish meant belonging to a certain social class and/or adhering to the Roman Catholic religion. A considerable part of the peasantry in the environs of Vilnius/Wilno used to speak *prosta mova / po prostu* (language of the common people). Statistics shows that up to late in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in larger areas to the south of this city a considerable number of people spoke this language at home or with other inhabitants of the region while Polish was the language in church and later also in schools (see also Sielicki 1989).
- 5 Lithuanian historiography and school books use the term “Polish occupation”, referring to this period as Lithuania never recognised the annexation of the region by Poland.
- 6 Polish sources mention about 10 per cent.
- 7 Lithuanian scholars and Lithuanian laws use the term repatriation, referring to these events.
- 8 The ethnic affiliation (ethnicity, in Russian: *nacional’nost’*, in Lithuanian: *tautybė*) of the inhabitants of the USSR was stated in their passports. In Lithuanian passports, ethnic affiliation is stated if the holder of the passport wishes this.
- 9 Source for 2001: Department of Statistics to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (Statistics Lithuania) <http://www.std.lt/lt/pages/view/?id=1678>.

- 10 The law was adopted in the final years of the Soviet era and is still in function. Projects concerning a new law on ethnic minorities are being discussed at the moment.
- 11 Stating ethnicity in Lithuanian passports is no longer compulsory.
- 12 The number is the total number of kindergartens/schools with groups in Polish. It includes schools where Polish is the only language of instruction, schools with Polish and Russian groups, schools with Polish and Lithuanian groups and schools with Polish, Lithuanian and Russian groups. See below for the non-bilingual (-trilingual) character of groups in these schools.
- 13 Enrolment for a different level – called post-secondary studies – stopped, following the *Law on Education* in 2003. Colleges started to become established in 2000.
- 14 The mixed Lithuanian-Polish, Polish-Russian or Lithuanian-Polish-Russian schools do not have bi- or trilingual, but separate Polish, Lithuanian and Russian groups, where all or most subjects are taught in the respective language.
- 15 In the following, the term ‘kindergarten’ means all forms of pre-school education institution, i.e. nursery, kindergarten and nursery-kindergarten.
- 16 The information provided by the Ministry of Education and Science ([www.aikos.smm.lt](http://www.aikos.smm.lt)) differs slightly from this. A total number of 44 kindergartens with Polish as the / one of the languages of instruction is mentioned for 2004/05 and the same number is mentioned for 2005/06.

Education system (*Eurydice*)

## Organisation of the education system in Lithuania, 2003/04



Source: Eurydice.

## References and further reading

*regulations*

*Law on Ethnic Minorities.* <http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=21840&Condition2>

*Framework convention for the Protection of National Minorities.* <http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=50236&Condition2>

*Treaty on Friendly Relations and Good Neighbourly Co-operation of the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Poland.* <http://www.lfpr.lt/982/a20.doc>

*The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania.* Education Resource Centre, Vilnius, 2003. English version of the last amended version available on the internet: <http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=230355&Condition2=>

*Lietuvos Respublikos Švietimo ir mokslo ministro įsakymas “Dėl tautinių mažumų švietimo nuostatų”* (Decree of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania “On the Regulations of Education of National Minorities”). [http://www.smm.lt/old/ugdymas/isak\\_56.htm](http://www.smm.lt/old/ugdymas/isak_56.htm)

*Law on Vocational Education and Training.* <http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=123796&Condition2>

*Law on Higher Education.* <http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=102792&Condition2>

*Law on Special Education.* [http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc\\_l?p\\_id=93743&p\\_query=](http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=93743&p_query=)

*Law on Nonformal Adult Education.*

<http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=104190&Condition2=>

*Dėl šeštadieninės ir sekmadieninės tautinių mažumų mokyklos sampratos patvirtinimo* (On the confirmation of the concept of the Saturday and Sunday schools for ethnic minorities) <http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=242039&Condition2=>

*General Curriculum Framework and Education Standards. Pre-primary, Primary and Basic Education*, Vilnius, 2003. Lithuanian text available online:

<http://www.smm.lt/ugdymas/docs/Programos2003.pdf>

*Law on the State Language.* <http://www.litlex.lt/Litlex/Eng/Frames/Laws/Documents/354.HTM>

*Dėl tautinių mažumų integracijos į Lietuvos visuomenę 2005-2010 metų programos patvirtinimo* (On the confirmation of the 2005-2010 programme on the integration of national minorities into the Lithuanian society). <http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=235234&Condition2=>

Links to various Lithuanian laws in the field of minorities' rights can be found on <http://www.minelres.lv/NationalLegislation/Lithuania/lithuania.htm>

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Union of Poles in Lithuania

Związek Polaków na Litwie (ZPL) / Lietuvos lenkų sąjunga

Naugarduko g. 76, LT-03202 Vilnius

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(The community has branches in several cities in Lithuania)

Association of Polish teachers in Lithuania „Macierz szkolna“  
Polska Macierz szkolna na Litwie / Lietuvos lenkų mokyklų  
mokytojų draugija „Macierz szkolna“

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Tel.: +370 5 233 56 91; Fax: +370 5 233 32 25; Mobile:  
+370 698 19 362; E-mail: info@polskidom.lt

(Information about Polish schools in Lithuania)

House of Polish Culture in Vilnius

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*online sources*

Polskie Centrum Informacyjne na Litwie (Polish Information Centre in Lithuania).  
<http://www.pci.lt/index2.shtml>

<http://www.polonia.org/litwa.htm> A collection of useful addresses of Polish organisations in Lithuania.

[http://www.euro-languages.net/poland/cdrom/index\\_en.htm](http://www.euro-languages.net/poland/cdrom/index_en.htm)  
(Information about the Polish schools in Lithuania provided by the John Paul II Gymnasium in Vilnius/Wilno)

<http://www.kurierwilenski.lt> (Polish daily published in Vilnius/Wilno)

<http://www.znadwilii.lt> (Radio station broadcasting in Polish from Vilnius/Wilno)

## Other websites on minority languages

*Mercator*

**[www.mercator-central.org](http://www.mercator-central.org)**

General site of the Mercator-project. It will lead you to the three specialized centres:

*Mercator-  
Education*

**[www.mercator-education.org](http://www.mercator-education.org)**

Homepage of Mercator-Education: European Network for regional or minority languages and education. The site contains the series of regional dossiers, a database with organisations and bibliography and many rated links to minority languages.

*Mercator-Media*

**[www.aber.ac.uk/mercator](http://www.aber.ac.uk/mercator)**

Homepage of Mercator-Media. It provides information on media and minority languages in the EU.

*Mercator-  
Legislation*

**[www.ciemen.org/mercator](http://www.ciemen.org/mercator)**

Homepage of Mercator-Legislation. It provides information on minority languages and legislation in the EU.

*European Union*

**<http://europa.eu>**

At the website of the European Union an explanation is given of its support for regional or minority languages.

*Council of Europe*

**<http://conventions.coe.int>**

*European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (1992) and *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (1995). European Treaty Series/Série des traités européens ETS 148 and 157, Strasbourg.

*Eurydice*

**[www.eurydice.org](http://www.eurydice.org)**

Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The site provides information on all European education systems and education policies.

*EBLUL*

**[www.eblul.org](http://www.eblul.org)**

Homepage of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages. This site provides general information on lesser used languages as well as on projects, publications and events.

*Eurolang*

**[www.eurolang.net](http://www.eurolang.net)**

Eurolang provides coverage of the concerns felt in the minority language regions in the European Union. Eurolang is EBLUL's news service.





## **What can Mercator-Education offer you?**

<i>website</i>	<a href="http://www.mercator-education.org">www.mercator-education.org</a>
<i>network</i>	Mercator-Education is part of an information service and research network of three centres. They provide reliable and in-depth information on regional or minority languages in co-operation with many experts throughout Europe. Mercator-Media resides at the University of Wales (Aberystwyth) and Mercator-Legislation at Ciemen (Barcelona).
<i>newsletter</i>	An electronic newsletter with current developments concerning regional or minority languages in education is distributed to people and organisations.
<i>Q&amp;A</i>	Through the Question and Answer Service we can inform you about any subject related to education in minority or regional languages in the European Union.
<i>publications</i>	<p>Regional dossiers are published on a regular base to provide basic information on schooling in minority language regions in the European Union.</p> <p>During the years we have published our extended studies on pre-primary education, primary education, teacher training and learning materials. Topical case studies and a selective bibliography have also been published. A list of all our publications is available.</p>

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