

Background Information: Higher Education System in Lithuania



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Higher Education System in Lithuania

I. General Characteristics

Population	
Total population (I.I.2013) (million) ¹	2.97
Population density (2013) (persons per square kilometre) ²	47.2
Population Structure (2013) (share of total population %)³	
0-14 years	14.7
15-24 years	13.5
25-49 years	33.3
50-64 years	20.2
65 years and older	18.2
GDP	
GDP per capita in PPS (2013), EU 28 = 100 ⁴	73
GDP year-on-year growth rate (2013) ⁵	3.3
Education (2012) (All levels)⁶	
Enrolment	
Total (ISCED 0-6)	703,669
Tertiary Level of Education (ISCED 5-6)	175,066
Tertiary Education	
Population aged 25-64 years with tertiary education (2012) (%) ⁷	34.1
Population aged 30 – 34 years with tertiary education (2012) (%) ⁷	48.6
Public expenditure on tertiary education (percentage of GDP) (2011) ⁸	1.5

2. Types of Higher Education Institutions

In Lithuania, higher education is delivered mainly by two types of institutions – universities and colleges which may be state or non-state. Universities offer degrees in first (Bachelor), second (Master), and third (Doctoral) cycle qualifications. Universities also offer integrated study programmes including both first and second cycle qualifications.

¹ European Commission. (2013). *Eurostat Compact Guides: Basic Figures on the EU, Winter 2013/2014 Edition*. Luxembourg: Publications office of the European Union.

² Eurostat. (2013). *Population density*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00003&plugin=0>

³ Eurostat (2013). *People by age group*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tps00010&language=en>

⁴ Eurostat. (2013). *GDP per capita in PPS*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=teco0114>

⁵ Eurostat (2013). *Real GDP growth rate*. Retrieved from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=teco0115>

⁶ Eurostat (2014). *Students by ISCED level, age and sex*. Retrieved from http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_en1rtl&lang=en

⁷ Eurostat. (2014). *Population by sex, age and educational attainment*. Retrieved from <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

⁸ Eurostat (2014). *Expenditure on education as % of GDP or public expenditure*. Retrieved from <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do#>

Colleges offer professional Bachelor programmes. The focus of colleges in Lithuania is on applied scientific and research training whereas universities focus on fundamental scientific research and education.

3. Study Structure

As a result of the Bologna Process, a three-cycle structure was introduced in Lithuania. Higher education attainment and student's performance are measured with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

First cycle qualification (Bachelor)

- The workload associated with a professional Bachelor degree is typically 180 to 240 ECTS credits.
- The workload associated with a Bachelor degree is 210 to 240 ECTS credits.

Bridging courses

- Bridging courses are offered to provide additional skills and competencies which are needed to begin studies on a higher level, e.g. holders of Professional Bachelor degree interested in pursuing second cycle (Master) programmes.

Second cycle qualification (Master)

- The workload associated with Master degree is 90 to 120 ECTS credits.
- Integrated long cycle Master programmes which combine first and second cycle of university studies require 300 to 360 ECTS credits.

Third cycle qualification (Doctoral)

- The completion of a Doctoral degree usually requires four to six years.

4. Admission Requirements^{9 10 11}

The eligibility criteria for first cycle higher education programmes include a degree at the secondary level. In addition, applicants may be required to take an entrance examination. The requirements for second cycle programmes include a relevant Bachelor degree or equivalent. Applicants with a Professional Bachelor degree are eligible to enter second cycle study programmes if they meet the minimum requirements approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (that is having completed bridging courses or having relevant professional experience). The requirements for admission to a Doctoral programme include a Master degree or equivalent.

5. Enrolment Levels

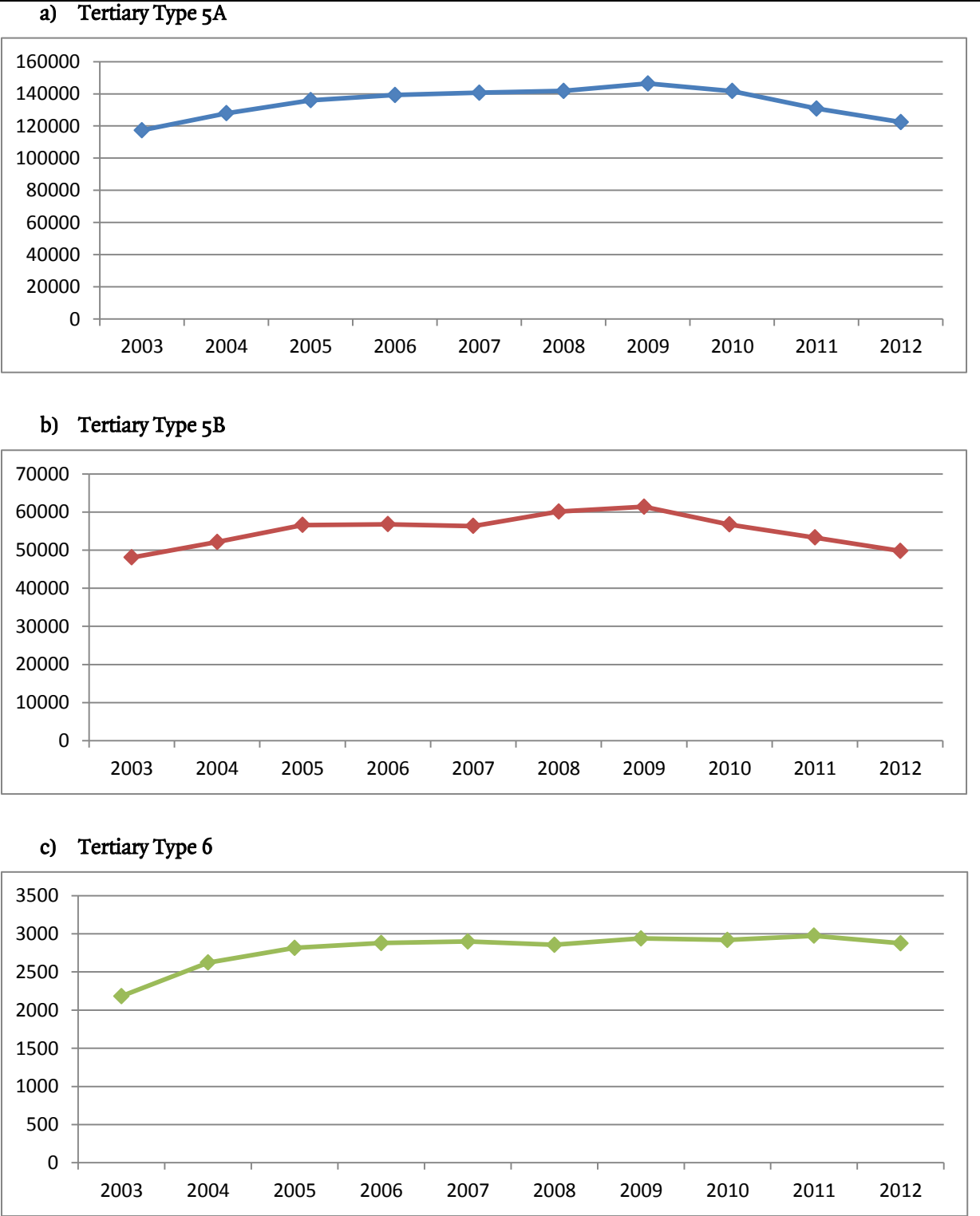
⁹ Eurydice. (2014). *Bachelor*. Retrieved from <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Lithuania:Bachelor>

¹⁰ Eurydice. (2014). *Second cycle programmes*. Retrieved from <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Lithuania:Bachelor>

¹¹ Eurydice. (2014). *Third cycle (PhD) programmes*. Retrieved from https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Lithuania:Third_Cycle_%28PhD%29_Programmes

Figure 1 shows trends in enrolment levels (ISCED 5A, 5B and 6, ISCED 97) in Lithuania between 2003 and 2012. The number of students enrolled in tertiary Type 5A, 5B, and 6 has remained stable.

Figure 1: Trends in Enrolment Levels



Data source: Eurostat (2014), *Students by ISCED level age and sex*, European Commission. http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_enrlrt&lang=en#

6. Registration and/or Tuition Fees¹²

Higher education is free of charge for students admitted on state-funded seats. Students who study on non-state funded seats have to pay a tuition fee which is set by the higher education institution.

All fees are determined by the Government and vary depending on the study programme or study forms (full-time/ part-time). Higher education institutions can set different tuition rates for national students as well as for citizens of non-European Union (EU) and non-European Economic Area (EAA) countries.

7. Financial Support for Students

Financial support for students is provided in the form of state and state-supported loans, scholarships, and also in the form of reimbursement of student fees. State loans are provided to first cycle, second cycle, and integrated programme students who were admitted before 2009. Beginning 2009, state supported loans were introduced which include loans for tuition and loans for living expenses. State supported loans are provided twice per year (in autumn and spring semesters) and are not available to students who have temporarily suspended their education, who have breached their contractual agreement under the state or state supported loan agreement, and international students outside of the EU member states. State funded academic, social, and targeted scholarships are also available for students. Tuition fee may be reimbursed for students who achieve best academic results.¹³

Additionally, tuition fees are reimbursed to students in the first cycle or integrated studies who are not funded by the state and who have achieved best results in the first two academic years (in case of part-time studies – half study programme) and afterwards in the remaining academic years. The tuition fees are reimbursed for studies during a respective period (a part of the fee which does not exceed the normative cost of studies).

Also, three main types of scholarships/grants for academic achievement and study scholarships are available. The amount of the scholarships for academic achievement is regulated by each higher education institution. The amount of study scholarship is the same as fees (vary depending on the study programme and study forms). Social scholarships are available for students with low socio-economical background, students with disabilities, and orphans. Their amount is 114 Euro per month. Students can apply for this scholarship all year round.¹⁴ Students with disabilities can also receive targeted allowance for study access improvement. The amount is 152 Euro per month.¹⁵

¹² Eurydice. (2014). *Higher education funding*. Retrieved from https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Lithuania:Higher_Education_Funding

¹³ State Studies Foundation Lithuania. (2015) www.vsf.lt/en

¹⁴ National Student Fee and Support Systems (2012-2013)

¹⁵ Ensuring Accessibility of Studies for Students with Special Needs
<http://www.studijuoktobulek.lt/About-the-Project-p357.html>

8. Note on the Lithuanian data provided for EUROSTUDENT V

The final sample of Lithuanian students was n=1731. Response rate was 6 %. In previous EUROSTUDENT rounds questionnaire was distributed via paper-pencil survey, this round was online survey. This is important to bear in mind when interpreting Lithuanian results over time.

This report is based on the following sources:

Ensuring Accessibility of Studies for Students with Special Needs. Retrieved from

<http://www.studijuoktobulek.lt/About-the-Project-p357.html>

European University Association (EUA). (2012). *EUA's Public Funding Observatory (June 2012)*. Retrieved from http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Governance_Autonomy_Funding/June_2012_report_FINAL.sflb.ashx

European University Association (EUA). (2013). *EUA's Public Funding Observatory (Spring 2013)*. Retrieved from http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Governance_Autonomy_Funding/EUA_PFO_report_2013.sflb.ashx

Eurydice. (2013). *Overview Lithuania*. Retrieved from

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Lithuania:Overview>

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