

## Lithuania – ANED country profile

The information contained in this summary was compiled by the Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED) in April 2009.

### Academic networks and resources

There is currently no national academic research network on disability studies in Lithuania.

[Special Education Research Centre at Siauliai University](#) studies various spheres of education of persons with disabilities, ways of meeting and assessing their educational, psychological, and social needs, also speech therapy and social integration areas. At present the main research topic of the Centre is 'Exclusion and social participation: educational and psychosocial issues'.

Academic research is also carried out by the [Institute for Social Research](#) and by the Institute of [Labour and Social Research](#). Both are public research institutions. Research, focused on different aspects of disability is carried out by universities, but not a permanent or systematic basis.

The Special Education Research Centre publishes the academic journal 'Special Education' for researchers and practitioners concerned with education and social participation of persons with disabilities. Vytautas Magnus University Faculty of Social Welfare publishes the journal 'Social Work: Experience and Methods'. Mykolas Romeris University publishes the journal 'Social Work'. Some of the journals' issues are focused on disability affairs.

### Policy and enforcement bodies

The key national bodies with responsibility for disability law and policy implementation include:

[The Department for the Affairs of Disabled at the Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) exists to plan and co-ordinate social policy for the integration and equal rights of disabled people (including a national program on social inclusion).

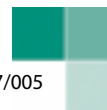
[Council for the Affairs of Disabled](#) at the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.

[Lithuanian Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman](#) is an independent public institution with responsibility for implementing and enforcing rights under the 2005 Law of Equal Treatment, and investigates individual complaints.

The main aim of the [Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania](#) is to make health services equally accessible to all inhabitants of the country.

The mission of [the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania](#) is to implement effective social security and labour policy seeking to create opportunities for qualitative employment and to ensure social safety within the society, family welfare, and social cohesion.

The [Special Education Division](#) of the Ministry of Education and Science



## Organisations of disabled people

The national organisation representing disabled people at the European level (European Disability Forum) is:

The [Lithuanian National Forum of the Disabled](#) operates on the principle of 'nothing about us without us'. It seeks to disseminate information, shape policy development, and encourage research on disability issues.

Other significant national organisations of disabled people include:

[Lithuanian Union of Persons with Disabilities](#) has 15 [associate members in different cities](#), including more than 8,000 disabled members.

[Lithuanian Association of the Deaf](#)

[Lithuanian Association of the Blind and visually impaired](#)

Lithuanian Welfare Society for People with Intellectual Disability '[Viltis](#)'

## National law and strategy

Lithuania has signed the [United Nations Convention](#) and the [Optional Protocol](#).

Important national laws, policies and strategies concerning disabled people include:

Law on Social Services (2006 No X-493);

Law on Disabled Social Integration (2004 No I-2044);

The National Programme for Social Integration of People with Disabilities 2003–2012 (2002 No 57 – 2335). Information on implementation of the [national program for social integration](#) is available from the Department for the Affairs of Disabled;

The Programme for Housing Adjustment to People with Disabilities 2007–2011 (2006 No 73 – 2782)

Order on the Approval of the Procedure for Establishing an Individual's (Family's) Need for Social Services and Granting Thereof, and the Methodology for Establishing the Need of Social Care for an Elderly Person and an Adult with Disability (2006 No 43 – 1571)

Order on the Approval of Basic Requirements for Housing Adjustment to People with Disabilities, the Methodology of Assessing the Need for Housing Adjustment to People with Disabilities, and the Procedure for Financing Housing Adjustment to People with Disabilities (2007 No 47 – 1822)

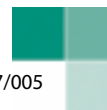
[More information about Lithuanian disability laws](#) is also available from LZNS.

## Facts and figures

Data on population indicate that:

Disability and Working Capacity Assessment Office present:

In 2007, 25.6 thousand persons of working age were for the first time recognised as disabled. Against 2006, this number grew by more than by 25 per cent, and made 12



persons per 1000 working age population. Most (24 per cent) persons of working age were for the first time recognised as disabled due to diseases of the circulatory system.

In 2007, 2.2 thousand children were for the first time recognised as disabled. Each third of them was recognised as disabled due to mental or behavioural disorders.

In 2005 the highest proportion of disabled people (60%, 148,586 people) comprised people with 30–40% capacity for work level or disability group 2. People with the most severe disability, with 0–25% capacity for work, or disability group 1 comprised 14% of the total number. There were 50,035 disabled people with the 45–55% capacity for work level or disability group 3. They comprised 20% of the total number of disabled people.

Data on employment indicate that:

During 2004–2006, disabled people started participating in the labour market slightly more actively. The number of employed disabled individuals went up by as much as 43% (from 2,665 to 3,809). The number of those participating in vocational rehabilitation and the [number of registered disabled unemployed individuals](#) also increased (from 9,817 in 2005 to 10,828 in 2006).

According to the data of the Lithuanian Labour Exchange (2007), there were 12122 registered disabled unemployed persons (disabled persons, against the total number of persons 6.5 per cent). The number of employed disabled persons was 5798 (disabled persons, against the total number of persons 5.8 per cent). 1421 disabled persons participated in vocational training and retraining programmes.

Data on education indicate that:

According to the data of the Department of Statistics to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (2007), there were 111 special pre-primary education establishments for disabled children (3620). The number of children with special needs integrated in general educational group of preschool education institutions was 14330; pupils with special needs integrated in general school – 51955; pupils with special needs integrated in special, catch-up and developmental class (partial integration) – 796; pupils with special needs integrated in general education class (full integration) – 51159.

According to the data of the Department of Statistics to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (2007 – 2008) the total number of pupils and students in vocational schools was 1062; in universities – 312; in colleges – 278.

Data from the Ministry of Education and Science (2006) represent:

31.5% of Lithuanian schools attended by pupils with special needs employ teaching assistants; the support of speech therapists is available in 46.8% schools, where there are pupils with hearing loss.

There are no special teachers or speech therapists in 52% of Lithuanian schools.

Data on accessibility indicate that:



There is no statistical data on accessibility, but the National Program on the Disabled People's Social Integration (2003 - 2012) made provision during 2003-2006 for adaptation of public communication systems for persons with movement disorders. Other measures were ramps, automatic doors, lifts and improved information systems for public transport passengers. 96km of pavements were also built.

Official data reports only a small [number of housing adaptations for disabled people](#)

The project '[Vilnius for all](#)' has reported detailed information on accessibility in all the major facilities of the capital city from disabled people's perspective.

The [2007 MeAC accessibility survey for Lithuania](#) found that:

None of the selected public or commercial/sectoral websites passed the accessibility evaluation.

The main emergency telephone number was not accessible by text or alternative means.

The main telephone providers did not offer accessibility information on their customer websites.

Neither the public service or commercial TV stations provided subtitles in Lithuanian language broadcasts.

Of the two main retail banks, one had installed three talking ATMs (out of 333).

Data on poverty and incomes indicate that:

There is no central database as yet, which, when connected to the social insurance database, could allow assessment of a general level of income of disabled people. A new system is under development.

Since 2005, all disabled people who have been recognised as in need of special nursing or attendance (assistance) services have received targeted compensations amounting to 2.5 of a social insurance basic pension.

Data on attitudes indicate that:

There is no national statistical data on attitudes to disabled people, or how many people identified themselves as disabled. Exists just some academic studies.

The [2007 Special Eurobarometer on Discrimination in Europe](#) showed that 60% of people knew someone who was disabled (compared to 55% EU average) and 81% acknowledged that being disabled tended to be disadvantage in society (EU average 79%).

Disability discrimination was viewed as widespread by 53 (the same as the EU average); 28% thought that disability discrimination was more widespread than five years ago. 52% thought that not enough was being done to combat discrimination in general in Lithuania.

73% thought that more disabled people should be in the workplace (EU average 74%) and 77% thought specific measures on equal opportunities were needed in this field.



Data on public spending indicate that:

In 2005 the Lithuanian republic spent 10.4% on total social benefit expenditure on disability benefits compared to EU 27 average 7.9% ([www.eurostat.com](http://www.eurostat.com))

### **Social protection**

Key features of the national system include (including adapted items from the [MISSOC](#) database December 2008):

#### Disability benefits

Pensions for incapacity to work are funded through a compulsory social insurance scheme financed by contributions covering the active population (employees and self-employed) and provide pensions consisting of a basic (flat-rate) and a supplementary (earnings-related) part.(MISSOC, 2008)

Pensions for incapacity to work are paid to individuals with a minimum contribution period for state social insurance. The requirements for the minimum and compulsory period of insurance for the pension for incapacity for work depend on an individual's age.

Old age pensions are funded through compulsory contributions by individuals or by the state on their behalf. Contributions must be made over a minimum number of years; for fewer years of contribution amounts are reduced pro rata. The old age pension is comprised of two amounts: basic and additional.

Between 2003-2006, the total number of disability pension beneficiaries increased by 0.02% and the total number of old age pension beneficiaries by 0.01%.

Between 2005-2006, for social insurance payments in the case of disability and invalidity): total number of support receivers increased by 1.5%; number of incapacity support receivers increased by 39.5%; number of disability support receivers increased by 35.5%.

Disabled people at university, college or vocational school get special financial support. Students who have I or II level incapacity for work and high or medium disability receive a monthly 50% allowance of state basic pension for special needs.

#### Rehabilitation and re-training

In 2007, the Lithuanian Labour Exchange helped up to 300 disabled people to renew their work and professional skills. Financial support for social enterprises has helped to keep 1500 disabled people in work market, established 87 new staff posts, of which 20 were allocated to disabled persons. In 2007, 300 new workplaces for disabled people were established, with about 40% of these workplaces allocated to people with 40% incapacity. Disabled people were employed as drivers, cooks, confectioners and book – keepers.

#### Preferential employment and quotas



In 2007 the status of social enterprise was granted to 15 new enterprises. From the beginning of the year the state granted 14 million LTL in financial support to these enterprises.

The Lithuanian Labour Exchange at the Ministry of the Republic of Lithuania has allocated financial support to employers, to establish workplaces for disabled people. In 2007 there were established 300 new workplaces for disabled people, with about 40% of these workplaces was separated for people with 40% incapacity. See also the section above on rehabilitation and training.

#### Long-term support and care

Disabled people receive the following general social services: interpretation into the sign language, provision with compensatory equipment, assistants, guides, housing adaptation, transportation, information and consulting, assistance at home, care homes, assistance benefits, meals, provision with basic necessities, etc.

Where the general social services are insufficient, people receive special social services, provided at fixed and mobile social care and rehabilitation institutions. Long-term and lifetime services for older and disabled persons are provided in institutions run by counties, municipalities and non-governmental organizations. These provide special care, social work and nursing when people are not able to take care of themselves. They aim to address basic needs such as informing, consulting, help with eating, health care, personal hygiene, employment and organization. Additional services are provided on an individual basis.

Official statistics suggest that the [number of disabled adults in institutional care](#) has increased slightly, from 5,163 in 2000 to 5,370 in 2007. The number of places available increased from 5,175 (25 institutions) to 5,400 (30 institutions). The number of [children in residential](#) educational institutions has decreased.

#### **Additional information**

Useful sources of more detailed information about the situation of disabled people, and the policies and support available, include:

[Official statistics on the social integration of disabled people](#) are available from the Statistical Department (see also the [2008 Statistical Yearbook](#))

[Links to relevant legislation](#) are provided by LZNS