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Lithuania

General Education

In Lithuania, general education starts with pre-primary education (compulsory from age 6), followed by primary education, which covers grades 1 to 4 and typically serves children aged 7 to 10. This stage focuses on foundational skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and basic sciences, as well as introducing foreign languages (usually English). Education is delivered in Lithuanian, though schools for national minorities may teach in other languages.

Secondary education in Lithuania is divided into two stages: lower secondary (grades 5–10) and upper secondary (grades 11–12). Lower secondary is a continuation of general education, while upper secondary may take place in general education schools or gymnasiums and culminates in the Brandos Atestatas (Maturity certificate) state examination. Students choose from a range of academic subjects and may tailor their studies towards variety of fields. Completion of upper secondary education with the Maturity certificate allows entry to higher education institutions. The system encourages academic flexibility and preparation for further study or employment.

Starting from 1 May 2023, Lithuania issues digital certificates, including maturity certificates. These documents are granted in accordance with the Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport, which establishes the official procedure for issuing general education and maturity certificates in the Republic of Lithuania.

Vocational Education and Training

Vocational training (VET) in Lithuania provides practical and profession-oriented alternatives to academic pathways. It is available to students who have completed lower or upper secondary education and can be pursued in parallel with general education. VET institutions offer qualifications at different levels, including vocational diplomas and post-secondary non-tertiary certificates. Programs may include hands-on training and internships in cooperation with employers. Although graduates are usually solely prepared for entering the labor market, recent reforms aim to modernize curricula and increase the prestige and quality of vocational pathways.

Higher Education

Higher education in Lithuania is binary in its nature. Professional higher education is provided by colleges and universities (offering academic programs). Colleges are limited by the law to award only professional bachelor degrees corresponding to level 6 of EQF while universities offer bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programmes.

Admission is based on the results of the state exams leading to Brandos Atestatas but also might include entrance exams or tests (e.g. for admission to art programs offered by Art Academy of Vilnius).

Lithuanian higher education institutions offer programs in Lithuanian and an increasing number in English, attracting international students. The system emphasizes quality assurance, academic mobility, and participation in European research and education initiatives. Students may receive state-funded study places based on competitive admission, while others pay tuition fees which vary depending on the chosen field of study.

Higher Education Qualifications

- **Trumposios pakopos studijos**

Short cycle

Level 5

Level 5

The short cycle programmes are aimed at preparation for the labour market and are offered in selected fields (such as IT, engineering, tourism and leisure). After successful completion of a short cycle programme, a qualification attested by a diploma is awarded.

Rights Granted

Provides access to the labour market and further study at the first cycle programmes with a possibility of credit transfer.

Recognition Status

Accreditation at the study programme and institutional level is compulsory.

Other Information

<https://www.aikos.smm.lt/>

<https://www.enic-naric.net/page-Lithuania>

- **Bakalauro diplomas; Profesinio bakalauro diplomas**

First cycle

Level 6

Level 6

Bakalauras (Bachelor) degree study programmes are oriented to expand one's general education and provide knowledge in certain field of science or art and offer the background necessary for further study or professional activity. Compared to college studies, university curriculum is more academically oriented.

Profesinis bakalauras (Professional Bachelor) degree is awarded after completion of college level study programmes which are more oriented towards preparation for professional activity and applied research.

Rights Granted

Legally both qualifications gives access to Master's degree programmes (Level 7). However, in practice professional bachelor holders are requested to study additional 1 year which improves students research skills and prepares them for academically oriented Master programs.

Recognition Status

Accreditation at the study programme and institutional level is compulsory.

Other Information

<https://www.aikos.smm.lt/>

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- **Magistro diplomas; Magistro diplomas (vientisosios studijos)**

Second cycle

Level 7

Level 7

Magistras (Master) degree study programmes are designed to prepare for independent

research activity or any other activity the performance of which requires scientific knowledge and analytical competence.

There are also Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Laws (LL.M.) and Master of Publication Administration (MPA) degrees, which are more professionally oriented degrees.

The Master's degree may also be awarded after completion of integrated long-cycle (vientisiosios studijos) university studies, which combine the 1st and 2nd cycle of university studies. Traditionally, these studies are offered in several fields of medicine, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, law, and religious studies and take 5 - 6 years to graduate.

Rights Granted

Access to 3rd cycle study at Doctoral (PhD) degree programmes (Level 8)

Recognition Status

Accreditation at the study programme study field and institutional level is compulsory.

Other Information

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• Mokslo daktaro diplomas; Meno daktaro diplomas

Third cycle

Level 8

Level 8

Mokslo daktaras (Doctor of Arts) is awarded to a person who has successfully defended his/her academic dissertation, passed required exams and fulfilled other study requirements. A study plan is organized to develop student's academic skills which is needed for further scientific research.

Meno daktaras (Doctor of Arts) is awarded to a person who has successfully defended his artistic research project and fulfilled study requirements. A study plan is projected towards development of research based skills and knowledge. Research project consists of artistic and scientific parts which are integrated and evaluated as a whole.

Rights Granted

This is the highest academic qualification.

Recognition Status

Institutions acquire rights to implement and carry out PhD education after evaluation procedure done by the Research Council of Lithuania (Lietuvos mokslo taryba).

Other Information

<https://www.aikos.smm.lt/>

<https://www.enic-naric.net/page-Lithuania>

Useful Links

- [Description of Lithuanian education system](#)
- [AIKOS provides lists of recognized institutions and academic programs](#)
- [Lithuania profile on ENIC/NARIC portal](#)

For more information, please visit ar-go.online.

