



Lithuania

WP3: National Review

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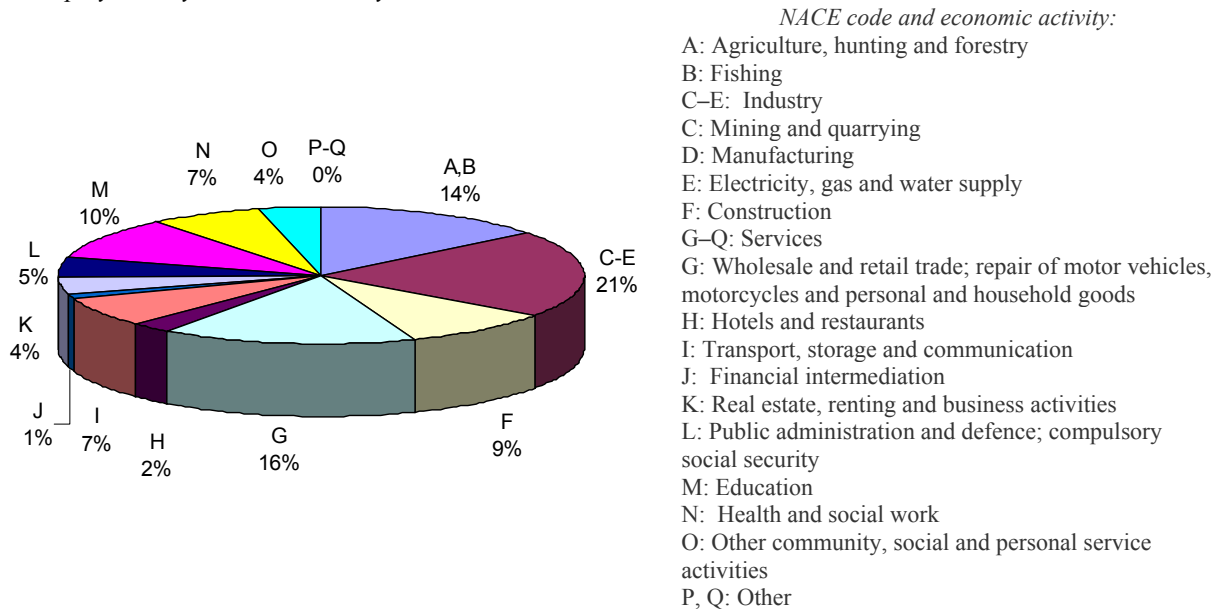
1 Lithuania, an introduction

Lithuania has more than 3.4 million inhabitants, with an average population density of 53 persons per km². The number of population has fallen by 6 % since 1995. In the period 1995-2004, the number of people aged 0-24 has fallen by 9 %, while the number of those aged 60 and over has risen by 8 %. According to the official forecasts population will continue to decline and in 2025 it would be 3184.5 thousand inhabitants.¹

One of the reasons for decrease of number of population is emigration. Statistics Lithuania calculated that since 1990 more than 334 thous. persons (around 10 % of population) have emigrated. In 2005, number of emigrants accounted for 15.6 thous. (for comparison, 6.8 thous. persons immigrated to Lithuania). Emigration causes loss of working age youth: those, aged 20-29 accounted for 36.3 % of all emigrants.

The total labour force was 1606.8 thousand in 2005.² Employment by sectors has seen major changes in the transition period. Employment in the services sector increased from 42 % of total employment in 1992 to 58 % in 2005. Though employment in agriculture decreased from 20 % in 1992 to 14 % in 2005, it still accounts for a large proportion of employment and greatly exceeds EU-25 average (in 2005 – 4.9 %). Employment situation by sectors in 2005 is presented in the picture below.

Picture: Employment by economic activity



Source: Statistical yearbook of Lithuania 2005. Statistics Lithuania

From 2000 the unemployment rate was constantly decreasing and caught up with EU-25 average in 2005. Based on Labour Force Survey data in 2000 it was 16.4 % and decreased to 5.9 % in 2006.³

Human resource status

The main challenges in respect to Lithuanian human resources include:

- Aging of the workforce and scope of emigration of Lithuanian population may result in a shortage of qualified labour force what in consequence can negatively affect the growth of economy.
- Insufficient correspondence between labour market supply and demand in terms of educational attainment. From one side, medium and low skilled workers account for 52 % of the total employed in Lithuania. On the other side, number of entrants to vocational schools is about 2.5 times less than to higher education.
- There is a low level of participation in continuous training and lack of lifelong learning culture.

¹ Eurostat, <http://www.eu.int/comm/eurostat/>

² Statistical yearbook of Lithuania 2005. Statistics Lithuania

³ Eurostat, <http://www.eu.int/comm/eurostat/>

Formal education⁴

People in Lithuania have compulsory education till they are sixteen years old.

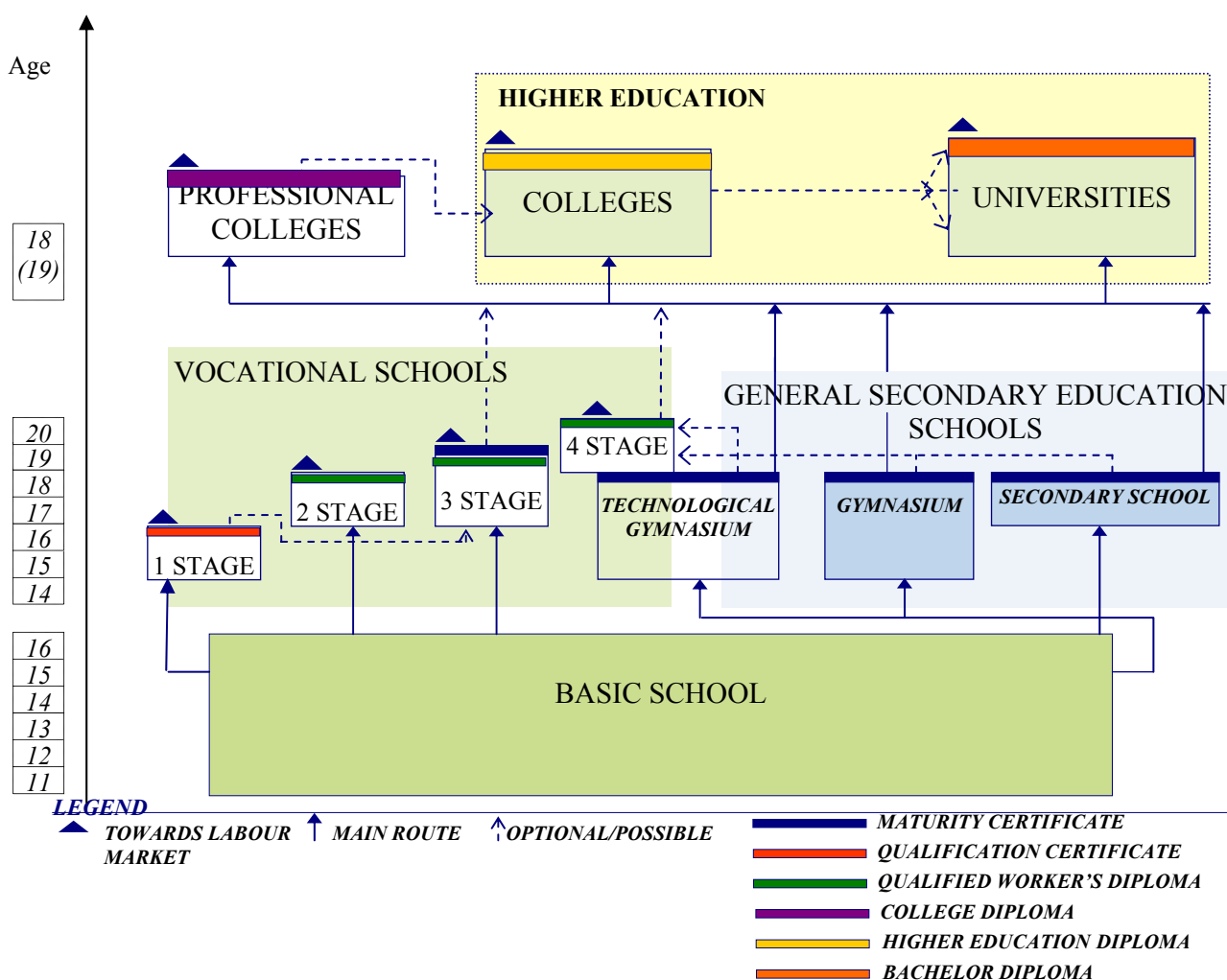
General secondary education is obtained at three levels: primary, lower secondary and upper-secondary. Vocational education is of four-level programmes varying in duration and content according to the needs of different ages and education background of young people:

- level 1 – vocational lower secondary education, leading to a qualification certificate (ISCED 2) and, optionally, to a basic school-leaving certificate;
- level 2 and 3 – vocational upper secondary education. Both types of programmes lead to a qualified worker's diploma (ISCED 3) and, in case of level 3 programmes, graduation leads to a maturity certificate;
- level 4 – vocational post-secondary (non-tertiary) education, leading to a qualified worker's diploma (ISCED 3).

Higher education in Lithuania comprises non-university and university studies. Higher education is accessible only for those having a maturity certificate.

In 2005-2006 there were 784 thous. of pupils and students following formal education on different kind of levels.

Diagram: Education and training system in Lithuania



Adult education

Learning opportunities for adults may be categorised as follows:

- formal adult education, providing primary, basic general, secondary general, vocational, post-secondary (non-tertiary) and higher education, ensuring the same level of education as in the formal initial education system;

⁴ Overview of Lithuanian VET system (thematic overview). Methodological Centre for VET. <http://www.trainingvillage.gr>

- non-formal adult education, chosen according to individual interest;
- informal adult education, providing an individual with possibilities for continuing independent learning supported by the surrounding information space (libraries, media, internet, museums, etc.) and life experience.

Both, non-formal and informal adult education may be recognised as being a part of a formal education programme or a qualification.

Participation in adult learning

According to official statistics (Education in Lithuania published by Statistics Lithuania) 137 thousand adults participated in adult education (defined as courses in enterprises and licensed providers) in 2003. Participation is rather low as to compare with other countries. According to Eurostat data in 2005, 6.3 % of persons aged 25 to 64 received education or training in Lithuania, whereas the EU-25 indicator was 10.8 %.

Short history of VPL in Lithuania⁵

Analysis of information available reveals the increasing motivation of individuals to legitimate competences acquired outside formal education. One of the main factors for this are special sectoral regulations. Expansion of work opportunities in other countries also encourages people to go through VPL process.

The legal basis for recognition of non-formal and informal learning is rather developed in Lithuania. Early impetus was provided by the *White Paper on VET* (1998) and *Law on Non-formal Adult Education* (1998). In 2001-2002 *legal acts* defining the procedures for the recognition of knowledge and skills acquired outside formal vocational education and training and prior-learning in higher non-university studies were adopted (The Temporal Procedure for Recognition of Knowledge Gained through the Non-formal Adult Education or Informal Education and for Receiving of Formal Documentation for Evidence of Graduation of Higher Level Education, Vocational Training, some Level or Module of Vocational Training and Acquisition of Qualification, 2001, Ministry of Education and Science, Procedure for Organisation and Implementation of Labour Market Vocational Training and Regulations on Digest of Non-formal Labour Market Programmes, 2002, Ministry of Social Security and Labour). Finally, new edition of the *Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania* passed in 2003 sets out key elements to formally certify competences acquired through non-formal (including children's and adult education) or informal learning. New *Procedure of IVET Final Qualification Exams* passed in 2005 describes the procedure of examination of external students who are studying independently and wish to acquire vocational qualification.

Development of VPL is addressed in current VET policy priorities. *Draft of new edition of Law on VET* (it is planned to approve the document by the end of 2007) further expands VPL opportunities. New edition introduces a system of qualifications that should facilitate VPL implementation. It also foresees procedures for recognition of competences as a qualification or part of it. System of qualifications is being developed through ESF national level project "*Development of national qualification system*". The aim of this project is to create a uniform and transparent qualifications system which would cover all levels of qualifications, secure transition between the levels, ensure the variety of ways of acquiring a qualification, and provide a possibility to flexibly respond to the requirements of the changing environment. The other national level project "*Further Development of VET Standards System*" contributes to the development of qualifications through the national VET standards and labour market needs analysis. Results of these projects will create good conditions for the further development of VPL systems.

VPL definitions used in Lithuania

Law on Education (2003) introduced "*asmens igytos kompetencijos pripažinimas*". If translated literally it would mean recognition of competence acquired by a person as a part of formal education programme or qualification. In vocational education and training competences are defined through national VET standards.

⁵ National overview on validation of non-formal and informal learning in Lithuania. European Inventory on Validation of non-formal and informal learning. Giedre Beleckiene. A Final Report to DG Education & Culture of the European Commission

Draft of new Law on VET (it is planned to approve the document by the end of 2007) introduces “*mokymosi pasiekimų pripažinimas*” (recognition of learning attainments) and gives a definition similar to that used in Law on Education. The term is defined as recognition of competence acquired in formal, non-formal or informal way as a part of formal VET programme or qualification, or recognition of qualification.

Involved parties

Ministry of Education and Science, MES (Svietimo ir mokslo ministerija) shapes and implements State education policy, submits proposals and drafts resolutions to the Government, organises and co-ordinates the accreditation of secondary education, vocational training, post-secondary and higher education studies curricula. The Ministry organises *matura* examinations and confirms the Procedure for final qualification examinations including validation of non-formal and informal learning experiences. Powers of the Ministry also include determination of the equivalency of education levels attained abroad with those attained in Lithuania, confirmation of State Standards of attained education and vocational training.

Methodological Centre for VET, PMMC (Profesinio mokymo metodikos centras) is responsible for the development of national VET standards. It also deals with methodological and quality assurance issues, as well as implementation of research in VET and related fields.

Ministry of Social Security and Labour, MSSL (Socialines apsaugos ir darbo ministerija) is responsible for management of labour market vocational training at national level. The Ministry also appoints vocational training institutions that admit those willing to validate their knowledge and skills acquired through non-formal labour market training and implement the exams. Responsibility for organisation and implementation of labour market vocational training falls on *Lithuanian Labour Market Training Authority, LLMTA (Lietuvos darbo rinkos mokymo tarnyba)* under MSSL.

Other ministries and departments, governors of counties and municipalities also may implement functions in the field of VET in the scope of their activity. For example, Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for training of farmers at national level and has issued related legal acts, appointed training institutions, implementing farmers training and assessment of competence.

State and municipal institutions perform annual assessment of their employees – civil servants and, following results of assessment, plan training of civil servants.

Vocational schools and labour market vocational training institutions (in case of validation of knowledge and skills acquired through non-formal labour market training) are responsible to provide for an applicant seeking to validate knowledge and skills acquired outside formal education a necessary support which leads to final qualification exams.

Social partners provide suggestions on VET standards and training programs and participate in examination commissions. The responsibility for the assessment of acquired qualifications of vocational schools students is fully moved to social partners. Chambers of Industry, Commerce and Crafts and the Chamber of Agriculture took over full organisation of final exams including the design of tasks, identification of relevant members of the commission and granting of qualification. Assessment separated from education creates good conditions to formalize the knowledge acquired in non-formal way. Some regional Chambers approve requests of those willing to validate their knowledge in vocational schools.

Situation of VPL

At national level, the main method leading to *legitimizing* of non-formal or informal learning attainments for adults is *equivalency examination*. Following the Temporal Procedure⁶ a person having at least one year work experience and no younger than 18 years old can apply for the recognition of competence acquired outside formal education. In September of each year he or she should register in training institution having license to provide and providing programme chosen by the individual. Procedure starts with the identification of non-formal or informal learning attainments and their correspondence to the national VET standards. It is done through analysis of certificates on non-formal education and other related documents provided by individual. Then external student and school agree on the timetable of appointed course credit tests and consultations if they are needed. In case the results are positive external student is allowed to take final qualification exam together with those from formal education. Individuals who successfully pass the exam are awarded with a qualification certificate or a qualified worker diploma. Their diplomas do not differ from those of graduates from formal education and give a possibility to progress to the next level of education depending on certificate/ diploma. Assessment and recognition services are paid by external student himself, by employer in case he initiates the procedure and by Labour Exchange in case it referred job seeker to take examination.

At institutional level, most often companies apply VPL instruments (in form of interviews, observation, personal portfolio and etc.) for selection of new employees, monitoring the performance of staff and identification of training needs. It is quite common, for these activities to use services of private consulting and human resource management firms.

Case studies collected within current project “Managing European Diversity in Lifelong Learning” and the exploratory research conducted in the framework of earlier Leonardo da Vinci programme project “Facilitating Access to Lifelong Learning through the Recognition Procedure of Non-formal and Informal Learning”⁷ revealed that valuing prior learning practices are not widespread. However current activities for the development of legal base and qualification system, as well as implementation of projects for the creation of VPL systems indicate positive movements in the field. For example:

- Vytautas Magnus University Centre for Vocational Education and Research with the support from ESF is developing a model for recognition of competences acquired outside formal education and is creating a competence centre in University. The project was started in May 2006 and will last until April 2008.
- VšĮ Skudutiškis academy with support from EQUAL programme is developing and piloting a methodology for assessment of competences. This regional-level methodology should help pre-pensioners, females experiencing problems of integration to labour market and other persons with risk of exclusion from labour market to self-assess competences, get them recognised and start home-based business.

These activities should contribute to the increase in demand for VPL services. On the other hand, space for future activities still remains, as for example, improving awareness of population on VPL, elaboration of related methodics and instruments.

⁶ The Temporal Procedure for Recognition of Knowledge Gained through the Non-formal Adult Education or Informal Education and for Receiving of Formal Documentation for Evidence of Graduation of Higher Level Education, Vocational Training, some Level or Module of Vocational Training and Acquisition of Qualification, 2001, Ministry of Education and Science

⁷ Coordinator of the project: Vytautas Magnus University, Centre for Vocational Education and Research. The result of the project – A monograph „Assessment of competences in non-formal and informal learning“. The research of employers showed that only 17 % of employers have sent their personnel for assessment and recognition of their competences.

2 Sector Reviews

a. Non-profit sector

Introduction – overview of the sector

In this overview non-profit sector is referred to *health and care, education, social services* and *public administration* sectors. Non-profit sector was defined based on following criteria: 1) organisations of the sector do not operate to generate and distribute profit; 2) activity of organisations fall into one of categories: provision of public services (education, health, care, culture, leisure and etc.) or public administration.

Health care system (without private institutions) consists of 159 hospitals (including 29 specialized, 59 nursing), 438 outpatient care institutions (policlinics, primary health care centres, general practitioner offices) as well as 839 rural medical aid posts and 42 ambulance units.⁸ The number of private health care institutions was 1521 in year 2005. Usually private health care institutions are small offices of one or several physicians.

Educational institutions network consists of 1664 institutions (1534 general education schools, 76 vocational schools, 5 college-type schools, 28 colleges and 21 universities).⁹

According to the information of Ministry of Social Security and Labour, in 2004, there were around 600 institutions (municipal, state, NGOs) providing *social services*. Around 40 % of them were stationary care institutions. Social services may be provided both in social service institutions (social care centres, foster families, temporary shelters, day centres, independent living centres, community institutions, etc.) and at home.

Public administration network consists of state administration (parliament, President institution, courts, Ministries and their subordinate organisations and etc.), municipal administration and other entities of administration (public institutions and NGOs which have been granted public administration powers). According to the Statistical Business Register, in 2005, there were 743 institutions acting in the field of public administration, defence and compulsory social security.

Population employed in non-profit sector accounts for 22 % of total employed population. 45 % of employed in this sector are engaged in education; 30 % - in health and care and 25 % - in public administration field.

Existing recognition models

A distinctive feature of this sector is a great number of regulated professions. Accordingly, legal acts regulate sector's human resources qualification development: qualification requirements, upskilling, licensing, certification and etc.

Knowledge and skills acquired in formal and non-formal ways of health and care workers, teachers and social workers are recognised within licensing and certification (*atestacija*) procedures. Responsible organisations are: State Accreditation Authority for Health Care Activity at the Ministry of Health (health and care sector), Teachers Competence Centre (education sector) and Commissions of Certification of Social Workers. Persons responsible for licensing and certification assess the documents (certificates, diplomas and etc.) and make decision to issue a licence or award a certain qualification category. In case a person would like to formalise knowledge and skills acquired outside formal education and receive a formal qualification, the procedure described in the 1st part of this review is applied.

In addition VPL procedures are used for managing competences within sectoral organisations. E.g. competences of civil servants are assessed annually for the purpose to identify training needs and develop plans for training.

⁸ 2005 data, source: Health Statistics of Lithuania 2005. Lithuanian Ministry of Health, State Public Health Service, Lithuanian Health Information Centre

⁹ 2005 data

The case studies in this sector within current Leonardo da Vinci programme project “Managing European Diversity in Lifelong Learning” revealed that the main VPL instruments used are analysis of documents (certificates, diplomas and etc.), assessment of portfolio and interview. Equivalency exam as VPL method is gaining popularity among vocational teachers working in vocational schools, since with recent amendment of legislation, vocational teachers must have a vocational qualification in the subject they teach.

Demand and need for competences

Currently many reorganisations are taking place in non-profit sector. For example, in *health* sector the number of beds in hospitals (internal diseases, obstetrics – gynaecology, surgery and psychiatry) decreased and beds for nursing increased, what raised demand for nursing competencies and need for both, training of new specialists and retraining events.

Reorganisation of the network of education institutions decreased institutions number at general education level (from 2521 in year 2000 to 1534 in 2005). The research commissioned by Ministry of Education and Science forecasts demand for general education teachers to decline in the upcoming years. The research carried out in 2006 revealed that currently the most needed teachers are those of English, mathematics and information technologies. It also outlined that one third of newly employed teachers have no pedagogical qualification, which is required by laws. Based on analysis of current teachers training trends and situation in the labour market, it is forecasted that from 2006 to 2015, a number of primary education teachers will decrease around 20 % and that number of subject teachers will decrease by around 40 %. In such circumstances teachers will need to re-qualify and apply their competences in other fields of economy. It should be also noted that recently more strict regulations of pedagogic and professional qualification have been adopted. Taking into account said above and aging of population it can be assumed that scope of initial and continuing training for teachers should increase, thus expanding a demand for VPL services.

Organisational changes are characteristic for social care service sector too, as in recent years number of ambulatory social services institutions increased and new institutions providing mixed services were established. The accent in the development of social services infrastructure is placed on community level services, services at home and services for socially vulnerable persons (social risk families, disabled, elderly persons). For this reason, social workers’ general competencies, such as communication, cooperation, management ability as well as personal features and values are getting importance and are taken into account during certification. Additionally, recent legislation changes have restricted formal qualification requirements for workers in the sector and new procedure for development of qualification was approved. In such circumstances role of VPL for development of qualification is obvious.

Qualification development issues and procedures are especially regulated in public administration sectors. Strategy of Civil Servants Training for 2002-2006 defined that priority areas for competence development of civil servants are strategic planning, management, team work, foreign languages and IT skills.

Role of VPL in obligatory and optional certification

As it was mentioned above, there is a great number of regulated professions in the sector and, in consequence, many qualification related issues are regulated by legal acts. For this reason VPL plays an important role in obligatory certification.

Mainly VPL tools are used in the following ways:

- in recruitment as well as assessing and planning of upskilling processes at institutional level;
- in licencing and certification procedures. Legal acts establish that qualification development is one of criterions for receiving a licence or a qualification category.

b. Voluntary sector

Introduction – overview of the sector

Presently, voluntary sector is under development. The sector receives more and more attention from the State. The concept of voluntary work was included into legal acts since 2001 and special strengthening measures are foreseen in the Government programme for 2004-2008. However, the concept of volunteer is not always clear to population and very often is attributed exceptionally to youth participation in organisations activity.

Existing recognition models

Based on case studies, validation initiatives are on the development stage in the voluntary sector. The case studies revealed that VPL procedures are mainly used for selection of new volunteers and observation of their competences. Analysis of documents (certificates, diplomas and etc.), assessment of portfolio and interview are the main VPL instruments. Usage of VPL systems in NGOs can be illustrated via such examples:

- Organisations assess skills and knowledge of newly accepted volunteers and, in consequence, create qualification development plans. Qualification development is assessed annually at group meetings and interviews for the purpose to identify further training needs.
- Lithuanian volunteers who have participated in voluntary activity projects abroad may get their experience recognised and certified. This opportunity was enabled by Association of the European Voluntary Service. Volunteers receive European Voluntary Service Certificates with assessment of their technical, social/ intercultural, language competences/ skills acquired during their project. The assessment is done by host organisation and Association of the European Voluntary Service.
- Presently, social workers' training project has been started. A number of various organisations, so called methodological centres, were selected to implement different training programmes. Type of the institutions varies from NGOs to public institutions. It is foreseen after successfully completing the training course to award participant with the certificate that would be recognised by Ministry of Social Security and Labour when certifying social workers.

Demand and need for competences

The most recent available information about people in voluntary work in Lithuania is of 2000.¹⁰ NGOs Information and Support Centre estimated that in 2000 there were 50 thousand volunteers what constituted around 3 % of total employed population. Official statistics does not provide forecasts on future developments in this sector.

Case studies collected revealed that the most important competences for volunteers are social skills, approach/attitude, motivation and responsibility.

Role of VPL in obligatory and optional certification

Certification is optional in voluntary sector. Case studies revealed that VPL plays an important role in regard to designing development plans and estimating annual progress, including qualification development issues.

¹⁰ NGOs Information and Support Centre: <http://www.nisc.lt>

C. Profit sector

Introduction – overview of the sector

In this overview profit sector is referred to economy sectors consisting from entities that operate to generate and distribute profit.

Currently Lithuania experiences fast growth of economy, especially due to the growth of the manufacturing industry, construction and transport sectors. Size of sectors by added value is presented in the annex and estimation of population working in the sectors – in the 1st part of Review.

It should be noted that Lithuanian small and medium enterprises (SME), comprising 99.3 % of all enterprises, play an important role both for employment of population and development of economy. Generally, SME business and employment indicators are similar to the EU indicators. However, compared to EU trends, segment of micro enterprises (with 1-9 employees) is less developed. E.g. micro enterprises in EU employ around 40 % of employed population, whereas in Lithuania – only 16 %. In addition, share of added value created by Lithuanian micro enterprises (9,7%) is twice less than average EU indicator.

Existing recognition models

People interested in official legitimation of their skills and knowledge may address the training providers for recognition of education acquired in non-formal or informal way. The procedures for recognition of competences are described in the 1st part of this review.

Case studies collected in metal, telecommunications, restaurants and retail sector revealed that a number of private companies use VPL instruments aiming to assess competences as well as to monitor qualification development progress. Majority of such schemes are developed to assess competences and suitability of newly recruited personnel. Commonly, development of personnel competence is assessed on annual basis in the performance assessment meetings.

Interview is the most typical VPL instrument. Other instruments: tests, questionnaires, STAR method (to assess technical competence and individual needs of metal sector companies), portfolio method (a case in one of the biggest shops chains, when shop assistants willing to receive qualification of retailer formed a portfolio of competences) are also rather popular among companies. It should be noted that in some economy fields the assessment results in a certificate award recognised among sector's employers (e.g. FESTO certificates for metal sector).

Demand and need for competences

Lithuanian economy is currently experiencing shortage of workforce mainly caused by migration and population aging. Based on official information such situation will remain in the future: in 2007 there will be around 124-127 thous. job offers registered by labour exchange, whereas average number of registered unemployed will not exceed 70 thous.

Researches conducted and information available suggest that there is a demand to improve practical and communication skills, IT skills and foreign language skills. It should be also noted that new technologies are of great importance to the sector and introduction of these technologies will raise requirements for qualification and will call for continuous upskilling and requalification. Bearing in mind all said above, it can be assumed that scope of VPL will increase in the nearest future.

Role of VPL in obligatory and optional certification

In profit sector VPL tools are usually used for the following purposes:

- Obligatory certification in case of special national or EU regulations adopted for particular sectors of economy (transport, agriculture);
- Optional certification, when certificates are awarded after particular assessment of competences;
- Recruitment of new personnel;
- Identification of training needs in regard to implementation of new technologies.

3 Appendix: Fact Sheet of Lithuania

Politics

Name of country	The Republic of Lithuania
Form of government	Parliamentary Republic
Head of state	President

Geography

Area	65300 Km ²
Capital	Vilnius

Population

Population	3.4033 million residents (2005)
Population growth	-2.4 % (2001-2005)
Language	Lithuanian
Religion (according to The 2001 population and housing census of Lithuania)	79 % Roman Catholics 4.1 % Orthodox 0.8 % Old believers 0.6 % Evangelical lutherans



Source: Eurostat, <http://www.eu.int/comm/eurostat/>; Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania, 2006

Economic indicators, 2005

	2005
GDP	20621 mill. EUR
GDP per capita	EUR 6040
Actual growth GDP	7.6 %
Annual inflation	3.0 %
Currency	Litas (LTL)

Source: Statistical yearbook of Lithuania 2005. Statistics Lithuania

Gross added value per sector, 2005

	in million Litas	in million Euro	Growth from 2001 in percent
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fisheries	3649.4	1056.9	19.5
Industry	14219.9	4118.4	65.1
Mining	349.6	101.3	11.3
Construction	4896.3	1418.1	90.5
Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household appliances; Hotels and restaurants	12218.1	3538.6	51.1
Transport, storage and communication	8055.9	2333.1	51.0
Financial intermediation	1614.7	467.6	77.9
Real estate, renting and business activity	6482.3	1877.4	46.8
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	3315.4	960.2	31.8
Education	3186.4	922.8	17.1
Health and social work	1883.9	545.6	28.7
Other community, social and personal service activities	1721.3	498.5	23.3
Private households with employed persons	106.7	30.9	144.7
Total	64312.5	18626.2	48.9

Source: Statistical yearbook of Lithuania 2005. Statistics Lithuania