The development of regional planning in Lithuania

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According to the Law on the Territorial Administrative Units of the Republic of Lithuania and Their Boundaries, the territory of the Republic of Lithuania is currently comprised of 10 counties (from the year 1995) and 60 municipalities (from the year 2000). Average of the municipality – 60 000 residents, whereas average of the county residents is 350 000. Vilnius county is the largest county with 850 000 residents.
Administrative division maps

Klaipėda County
Telšiai County
Šiauliai County
Panevėžys County
Utena County
Vilnius County
Kaunas County
Alytus County
Marijampolė County
Tauragė County
Public Government system of Lithuania

CENTRAL PUBLIC GOVERNMENT BODIES

SUBMINISTERIAL STRUCTURES

GOVERNMENT

MINISTRIES

OFFICES UNDER THE GOVERNMENT

TERITORRRIAL-REGIONAL GOVERNMENT BODIES

COUNTY GOVERNORS (WITH ADMINISTRATIONS)

GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES (WITH OFFICES)

DECONCENTRATED ADMINISTRATIONS

LOCAL SUBJECTS OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT

COUNTY GOVERNORS ADMINISTRATIONS TERRITORIAL UNITS

OTHER LOCAL OFFICES

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
The structure of Spatial Planning in Lithuania

According to the Law OF Territorial Planning (LTP) there are IV levels of plans in Lithuania

I – national plans (approved by Seimas, Government);

II – county plans (approved by the State Government);

III – municipal plans (approved by the local municipality);

IV – plans organized by private and legal entities (for the plans approved by legal entities).
Structure of Law on Territorial Planning by parts and Chapters

Part I. Comprehensive Provisions;

Part II. Territorial Planning:
   1) Comprehensive Planning
   2) Special Planning
   3) Detailed Planning
   4) Regulation of Territorial Planning;

Part III. Transparency of Territorial Planning;

Part IV. State Supervision of Territorial Planning;

Part V. Indemnification for Damages and Liability for Violations of the Law.
There are two official regional policies conducting in Lithuania:

1. EU regional policy (to reach the average level of economy of EU);

2. National regional policy (to implement this policy there were indentified the regions with biggest economical or social problems, created programmes to recover these regions).

The aim of the regional policy is the reduction of regional socio-economic disparities within the country.

Measures of national regional policy are implemented in all countries territory via regional development plans, national strategies and programmes, local and regional initiatives.

Strategic provisions of Lithuanian national policy are incorporated into EU structural support for national regional policy.
Main changes in regional policy, 2010

Functions executed by Ministry of the Interior (or its regional subdivisions):

• Preparation process of regional development plans;
• Preparation of the regional project list (EU funding);
• Coordination of actions from municipalities and social economic partners in the sphere of regional development;
• Coordination of cross border cooperation (in the region);
• Secretariat functions for the Regional development council.

Subdivisions of the Ministry of the Interior (Regional development offices) will remain the coordination, but no longer the applicant.

Authority of the Regional development council and it’s role in the ES support management shall not change.
Institutions in charge of the national regional policy

Government of the Republic of Lithuania

Ministries, other institutions, partners

Ministry of the Interior

National regional development council

Regional development councils

Municipalities, local social and economic partners

County governors administrations
National regional policy proposes to concentrate on:

- The development of limited number of regional centers, which have the highest development potential;

- Problem territories, with highest social development needs;

- Solving of specific problems of regional or local character of the sectors of economy.
Target territories and sectors

- Regional centers (7 cities);
- Problem territories (14 municipalities);
- Ignalina nuclear power plant region (3 municipalities);
- Visaginas municipality.

Target sector – rural development, diversification of rural economy.
Map of target territories

Skuodas Municipality
Mažeikiai Municipality
Joniškis Municipality
Pasvalys Municipality
Rokiškis Municipality
Ignalina Municipality
Jurbarkas Municipality
Kelmė Municipality
Jelgava Municipality
Jonava Municipality
Šalčininkai Municipality
Lazdijai Municipality
Druskininkai Municipality
Alytus Municipality
Marijampolė Municipality
Tomsonia Municipality
Visaginas Municipality
Švenčionys Municipality
Mažeikiai Municipality
Utena Municipality
Tauragė Municipality
Telšiai Municipality

County border
Municipality border
Problem territories
Regional centre
Strategic goal

Lithuanian regional policy and long-term goal – to ensure a high quality of life for all inhabitants of the country. Until 2013 it should be improved social and territorial cohesion. In counties should be achieved:

• The average standard of living, measured as the average residents annual income should not be lower than 75 percent the national average;

• The unemployment rate should be not more than 35 percent higher than the average unemployment rate.
Measures of EU support

Regional centers:
Development of urban infrastructure and living environment, investment attractions (until 2013).

Problem territories:
• Developments of urban infrastructure and living environment, investment attraction (until 2013);
• Renovation of multiflat housing (until 2013);
• Development of social housing (until 2013);

Rural areas:
Development of public spaces and social infrastructure, diversification of economic activity (until 2013)
Decommissioning of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant Region is one of the biggest structural, financial projects implemented in Lithuania. Country’s political decision to close the Power Plant of Ignalina partly accelerated Lithuania’s integration in the EU, however, at the same time caused quite a lot of social and economic problems. First of all, perspectives of the development of the town of Visaginas are associated with the activity of the Nuclear Power Plant, many institutions and organizations of the town render direct services to this enterprise which is one of the biggest in the country.
According to NUTS, a system of territorial distribution into regions unified by European Union, Lithuania consist of 10 third level NUTS regions. NUTS III territorial formations consist of regions, which are inhabited by 150 thousand people at minimum and 850 thousand people at maximum, and the territory of which covers form 10 to 83,5 thousand sq. km.
European territorial cooperation

Lithuania is participating in 5 programmes:

1. Lithuania-Poland Cross-border Cooperation Programme (to foster the sustainable development of the border region through enhanced economic, social and territorial cohesion of the areas on both sides of the border);

2. Latvia-Lithuania Cross-border Cooperation Programme (to promote sustainable and equal socio-economic development in border regions to make it competitive for economical and business development and attractive for living and visiting);

3. South Baltic cross-border cooperation Programme (to strengthen the sustainable development of the South Baltic area through joint actions increasing its competitiveness and enhancing integration among people and institutions);

4. Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013 (to strengthen the development towards a sustainable, competitive and territorially integrated Baltic Sea Region by joining physical and human resources over the borders);

5. INTERREG IVC Programme (to improve the effectiveness of regional policies and instruments; exchange of experiences among partners who are ideally responsible for the development of their local and regional policies).
Lithuania is located in the Baltic Sea region (BSR), and has always been an active business partner with its neighbors – other BSR countries – the Scandinavian states and Germany, as well as Poland, Latvia and Estonia. Lithuania’s trade with BSR countries makes up about half of all Lithuania’s foreign trade, and about 70% of FDI in Lithuania comes from BSR countries.
Cross-border Cooperation

It helps transform regions located on either side of internal or external borders of European Union into strong economic and social poles. In particular cross-border actions are encouraged in the fields of entrepreneurship, improving joint management of natural resources, supporting links between urban and rural areas, improving access to transport and communication networks, developing joint use of infrastructure, administrative cooperation and capacity building, employment, community interactions, culture and social affairs.
Comprehensive plan of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania
Urban framework (2002)
National regional policy organization
Lithuanian strategic infrastructure

- Main gas pipelines
- Railway
- International transport corridors
- Oil pipelines
- Main Roads
This publication allows to compare the regions of Lithuania and their municipalities in important aspects.

It is useful for discussions of regional development alternatives and taking strategic decisions, planning the funds of the state and municipal budgets and assistance of European Union Structural Funds, as well as to investors planning on economic expansion, the locals, tourists and other people who would like to take a deeper look at the situation of the regions of Lithuania and their development trends.

The publication has been prepared by the specialists of the Development of Statistics to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, with the assistance of the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania, the Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania and county governor.