

Foreword

Lithuania has embarked upon an ambitious reform programme that addresses not only the development of new regulations but also inspection and enforcement. The goal is to effectively implement regulations while placing the lightest possible administrative burden on citizens and businesses.

The *OECD Review of Regulatory Policy in Lithuania* takes stock of the development and implementation of these reforms, with a special focus on inspections and enforcement and on territorial planning and construction permits, which form a crucial part of Lithuania's reform efforts. The review assesses the capacity to manage and implement these reforms and identifies practical recommendations for enhancing trust in regulatory institutions, strengthening regulatory effectiveness and supporting growth and competitiveness. The review finds that the reforms have successfully established some of the essential tools for improving regulation. For example, requirements for better regulation are largely in place, consultation is a common practice, business licences are being simplified and some highly innovative solutions such as requirements for assistance and advice to businesses have been introduced in the field of inspection and enforcement. However, challenges remain to effectively implement these tools and maximise their impact. The review makes specific recommendations to address these challenges, highlighting, for example, the need for stronger steering and oversight of reform implementation, clear guidance, better use of evidence and analysis in decision making and proactive communication within and outside government on key better regulation objectives. The review complements the *OECD Public Governance Review of Lithuania*, which looks at open and inclusive policy making. Taken together, the recommendations presented in these reviews can help improve economic performance, social welfare, open and inclusive policy making, government-citizen relations and trust in public institutions.

The review methodology draws on two decades of peer learning reflected in the *2012 Recommendation of the OECD Council on Regulatory Policy and Governance*, the first international instrument to address regulatory policy, management and governance as a whole-of-government activity. The Recommendation identifies the measures that governments can and should take to support the implementation of systemic regulatory reform. These measures are used as a baseline for assessing regulatory management capacity in Lithuania. The review also draws on the *2014 OECD Best Practice Principles for Regulatory Policy: Regulatory Enforcement and Inspections*, which address the design of the policies, institutions and tools to promote effective compliance and the process of reforming inspection services to achieve results.

Data and information for the review were collected through detailed questionnaires completed by the Lithuanian government in October 2014 (overall regulatory policy and governance) and January 2015 (construction permits and territorial planning). The review team also held discussions in Vilnius with Lithuanian officials and external stakeholders in November 2014 and January 2015, and received detailed comments from the Lithuanian authorities on early drafts of the review. Information presented in the review reflects the situation up until June 2015.

Country reviews of regulatory policy reform contribute to the programme on regulatory governance led by the OECD Regulatory Policy Committee with the support of the Regulatory Policy Division of the OECD Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate. The Directorate's mission is to help government at all levels design and implement strategic, evidence-based and innovative policies to strengthen public governance, respond effectively to diverse and disruptive economic, social and environmental challenges and deliver on government's commitments to citizens. The goal is to support countries in building better government systems and implementing policies at both national and regional level that lead to sustainable economic and social development.

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