

Foreword

This report for Lithuania forms part of the OECD Review of Policies to Improve the Effectiveness of Resource Use in Schools (also referred to as the School Resources Review, see Annex A for further details). The purpose of the review is to explore how school resources can be governed, distributed, utilised and managed to improve the quality, equity and efficiency of school education. School resources are understood in a broad way, including financial resources (e.g. expenditures on education, school budget), physical resources (e.g. school infrastructure, computers), human resources (e.g. teachers, school leaders) and other resources (e.g. learning time).

Lithuania was one of the education systems which opted to participate in the country review strand and host a visit by an external review team. Members of the OECD review team were Claire Shewbridge (OECD Secretariat), co-ordinator of the review; Katrina Godfrey (Department of Education in Northern Ireland); Deborah Nusche (OECD Secretariat); and Zoltán Hermann (Hungarian Academy of Sciences). The biographies of the members of the OECD review team are provided in Annex C. This publication is the report from the OECD review team. It provides, from an international perspective, an independent analysis of major issues facing the use of school resources in Lithuania, current policy initiatives, and possible future approaches. The report serves three purposes: i) to provide insights and advice to the Lithuanian education authorities; ii) to help OECD countries understand the Lithuanian approach to the use of school resources; and iii) to provide input for the final comparative analysis of the OECD School Resources Review.

The scope for the analysis in this report includes early childhood education and school education. At the request of the Lithuanian authorities, the focus areas of the Review of School Resources in Lithuania are: i) funding of school education; ii) organisation of the school network; and iii) the teaching profession and school leadership (including improving their attractiveness). The analysis presented in the report refers to the situation faced by the education system in December 2014, when the OECD review team visited Lithuania.

The involvement of Lithuania in the OECD review was co-ordinated by Vilma Bačkiūtė, Head of Teacher Activity Division, Department of Lifelong Learning in the Ministry of Education and Science. An important part of the involvement of Lithuania was the preparation of a comprehensive and informative Country Background Report (CBR) on school resource use authored by the National Agency of School Evaluation in Lithuania. The OECD review team is very grateful to the main authors of the CBR and to all those who assisted in providing a high-quality and informative document. The CBR is an important output from the OECD project in its own right as well as an important source for the OECD review team. Unless indicated otherwise, the data for this report are taken from the Lithuanian Country Background Report or updates provided by the Ministry of Education and Science from the Education Management Information System (EMIS). The CBR follows guidelines prepared by the OECD Secretariat and provides extensive information, analysis and discussion in regard to the national context, the organisation of the education system, the use of

school resources and the views of key stakeholders. In this sense, the CBR and this report complement each other and, for a more comprehensive view of the effectiveness of school resource use in Lithuania, should be read in conjunction.

The OECD and the European Commission (EC) have established a partnership for the Project, whereby participation costs of countries which are part of the European Union's Erasmus+ programme are partly covered. The review of Lithuania was organised with the support of the EC in the context of this partnership.* The EC was part of the planning process of the review of Lithuania (providing comments on Lithuania's draft CBR, participating in the preparatory visit and providing feedback on the planning of the review visit) and offered comments on drafts of this report. This contribution was co-ordinated by Joanna Basztura, Country Desk Officer for Poland, Lithuania, Denmark, working within the "Country Analysis" Unit of the Directorate for "Modernisation of Education I: Europe 2020, country analysis, Erasmus+ co-ordination", which is part of the Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) of the European Commission. The review team is grateful to Joanna for her contribution to the planning of the review and also for the helpful comments she provided.

The review visit to Lithuania took place on 2-9 December 2014. The itinerary is provided in Annex B. The visit was designed by the OECD (with input from the EC) in collaboration with the Lithuanian authorities. It also involved a preparatory visit by the OECD Secretariat on 9-10 September 2014, with the participation of Joanna Basztura, from the EC. The OECD review team held discussions with a wide range of groups, including at the national level: Dainius Pavalkis, then Minister of Education and Science and Dainius Numgaudis, then Chancellor of the Ministry of Education and Science; other officials of the Ministry of Education and Science; representatives from the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Social Security and Labour; quality assurance agencies; teacher associations; representatives of school leaders; representatives of parents and students; organisations representing the interests of students with special educational needs; representatives of teacher educators; and researchers with an interest in the effectiveness of school resource use. At the municipal level, meetings were held with educational and finance authorities of the municipalities of Kėdainiai, Klaipėda, Rietavas, Šiauliai City, Vilnius City and Vilnius District. The team also visited six schools in these municipalities, interacting with school governing bodies, school management, teachers and students. The intention was to provide the review team with a broad cross-section of information and opinions on school resource use and how its effectiveness can be improved.

The OECD review team wishes to record its gratitude to the many people who gave time from their busy schedules to share their views, experiences and knowledge. The meetings were open and provided a wealth of insights. Special words of appreciation are due to the National Co-ordinator, Vilma Bačkūūtė, and Aidan Aldauskas and their colleagues from the Ministry of Education and Science, for sharing their expertise and responding to the many questions we had during and following the review. The review was extremely well organised and allowed the review team maximum opportunity to benefit from rich discussions with stakeholders. The courtesy and hospitality extended to us throughout our stay in Lithuania made our task as pleasant and enjoyable as it was stimulating and challenging.

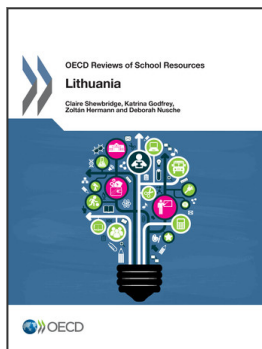
The OECD review team is also grateful to colleagues at the OECD, especially to Eleonore Morena for administrative, editorial and layout support and to Yuri Belfali for guidance and support.

* This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

This report is organised in four chapters. Chapter 1 provides the national context, with a brief description of the Lithuanian school system and an overview of evidence on its quality, equity and efficiency. Then Chapters 2 to 4 look into three dimensions of resource use that were defined as priorities by Lithuania in collaboration with the OECD: the governance of schooling and the organisation of the school network, the funding of school education and the teaching workforce. Each chapter presents strengths, challenges and policy recommendations regarding the effectiveness of school resource use.

The policy recommendations attempt to build on and strengthen reforms that are already underway in Lithuania, and the strong commitment to further improvement that was evident among those the OECD review team met. The suggestions should take into account the difficulties that face any visiting group, no matter how well briefed, in grasping the complexity of the Lithuanian education system and fully understanding all the issues.

This report is the responsibility of the OECD review team. While the team benefited greatly from the Lithuanian CBR and other documents, as well as the many discussions with a wide range of Lithuanian stakeholders, any errors or misinterpretations in this report are its responsibility.



From:
**OECD Reviews of School Resources: Lithuania
2016**

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264252547-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

Shewbridge, Claire, *et al.* (2016), "Foreword", in *OECD Reviews of School Resources: Lithuania 2016*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264252547-1-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to rights@oecd.org. Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at info@copyright.com or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at contact@cfcopies.com.