

Sveikiname Lietuvą!

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Sveikiname Lietuvą—welcome to the OECD, Lithuania! The Baltic country became the 36th member of the organisation on 5 July 2018, just one day before its Statehood Day, which commemorates the coronation of the first Lithuanian king, Mindaugas, in 1253. Lithuania is the third Baltic Republic to come on board, alongside Estonia (2010) and Latvia (2016). The country, which is also member of the EU, NATO and several other multilateral organisations, has a population of 3.1 million, uses the euro as currency and has one of the fastest growing economies in the OECD area—its GDP grew by 3.8% in 2017, above the OECD average of 2.6%.

According to the [OECD Economic Survey of Lithuania 2018](#), Lithuania's economy has been quickly catching up with the OECD average, as the country's GDP per head leapt from 36% to 73% of the OECD level between 2000 and 2017. Unemployment has dropped steeply, from 9.1% in 2015 to an estimated 6.6% in 2018. Public finances have also stabilised, thanks to ambitious reforms, the report notes.

Lithuania has a smart workforce, with 39% of its adult population (aged over 25) having tertiary education, compared to the OECD average of 35%. The public's average rating of the quality of health services in Lithuania has increased from 5.1 to 6.3—on a scale from 1 to 10—between 2003 and 2016, the *European Quality Of Life Survey* shows.

Lithuania faces challenges, as the new economic survey argues, such as to reduce its above average inequality, population decline and a need to boost low productivity.

As a member of the OECD, Lithuania will not have to face these challenges alone but will be able to look to the multilateral organisation for the intelligence, advice and encouragement it needs to follow on a path of inclusive, sustainable growth. The OECD will in turn learn from Lithuania’s experiences, and help the organisation, as OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría put it, “in our collective endeavour to provide answers to the leading economic, social and environmental challenges of our time. Lithuania’s membership will help enrich the OECD’s work through the country’s unique experience in several policy areas, while membership in the OECD will support Lithuania’s efforts to improve the well-being of its own citizens.”

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