**pcgn** The Permanent Committee on Geographical Names

# Lithuania

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|---|---|
| **Country name** | Lithuania |
| **State title** | Republic of Lithuania |
| **Name of citizen** | Lithuanian |
| **Official language** | Lithuanian (lit)[1] |
| **Country name in official language** | Lietuva |
| **State title in official language** | Lietuvos Respublika |
| **Script** | Roman |
| **ISO-3166 country code (alpha-2/alpha-3)** | LT/LTU |
| **Capital** | Vilnius |
| **Population / Area** | 2.886 million[2] / 65,286 km² |

**Introduction**

Lithuania, located in northeastern Europe, is the largest and most populous of the three Baltic states. It is also the southernmost of the trio, situated on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea. It has international boundaries with Belarus, Latvia, Poland and a detached part of Russia (Kaliningrad oblast').

Lithuania, the first of the Soviet Republics to assert its independence in 1990, adopted the official state title "Republic of Lithuania". Prior to this, from 1940 to 1990, Lithuania was a part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) as the "Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic" (SSR), though Lithuania's annexation by the USSR was never formally recognised by the British Government.

**Geographical names policy**

Lithuanian is written in Roman script; PCGN recommends using official Roman-script sources for all Lithuanian place names, retaining all diacritical marks.

The State Commission of the Lithuanian Language (http://www.vlkk.lt/en/) is the official regulating body of the Lithuanian language and functions as the geographical names authority. The Service of Place Names for the Territory of Lithuania is a toponymic database provided via the Lithuanian Spatial Information portal. Alternatively, an interactive map, administered by the State Enterprise Centre of Registers, the Address Register (REGIA), also contains authoritative geographical names. The Portrait of the Regions of Lithuania on the Official Statistics Portal of Lithuania contains administrative mapping.

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[1] Language codes in this Factfile are ISO 639-3 codes.
[2] https://osp.stat.gov.lt/en

**Language**

The only official language is Lithuanian (Lithuanian: *lietuvių kalba*), a Baltic language most closely related to Latvian, although the two are not mutually intelligible. The Baltic languages form a sub-group within the Indo-European family and share a common ancestor with most languages of Europe, though notably not Estonian. The main linguistic minorities are Polish in the southeast and Russian in the northeast.

**Inventory of characters**

Lithuanian uses the Roman alphabet excluding the letters Q, W and X. Four distinct diacritics are used to produce a total of nine additional symbols.

*Additional characters*

| Upper-case character | Unicode encoding | Lower-case character | Unicode encoding |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ą | 0104 | ą | 0105 |
| Č | 010C | č | 010D |
| Ę | 0118 | ę | 0119 |
| Ė | 0116 | ė | 0117 |
| Į | 012E | į | 012F |
| Š | 0160 | š | 0161 |
| Ų | 0172 | ų | 0173 |
| Ū | 016A | ū | 016B |
| Ž | 017D | ž | 017E |

**Alphabetical order**

The letter **Y** is sorted between I and J, rather than between V and Z. Letters with diacritics are sorted after their counterparts without.

**Capitalisation**

Upper-case letters are used in Lithuanian less often than in English. A generic geographical term usually has a lower-case initial if it is part of a place name; PCGN recommends reflecting this local use e.g. Vilniaus apskritis (Vilnius County). Note that BGN's Geographic Names Server (GNS) capitalises generic terms regardless of the original, so this should be borne in mind when using that dataset.

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## Territorial issues

Lithuania has been larger since 1945 than it was during the interwar period (1918-39) as it gained territory from Poland; a strip of territory in the south east that included the *de jure* capital Vilnius. The post-WW2 boundary roughly followed ethnic boundaries rather than any previous administrative boundary. Some Lithuanian nationalists claimed additional territories in Belarus, Poland and Kaliningrad oblast' (part of Germany up to 1945; subsequently part of Russia).

## Administrative divisions

Lithuania is divided into 10 counties (*apskritis*). These were established in 1994, with a few subsequent minor changes to borders. However, in 2010 the administrative powers of the counties were shifted largely to the 60 municipalities within the counties. It is therefore the municipalities that should be considered the first-order administrative divisions (ADM1s). All counties and municipalities are named after their chief town. The full Lithuanian name is in the genitive case, which results in a small difference to the end of the specific part of the name when incorporated into the full name with generic. For example, Vilnius becomes Vilniaus in the full name *Vilniaus apskritis* (Vilnius County).

| Lithuanian | English |
|---|---|
| apskritis | County |
| savivaldybė | Municipality |
| miesto savivaldybė | City Municipality |
| rajono savivaldybė | District Municipality |

| Municipality - short name | Municipality - full name with generic | ISO 3166-2 code | County – full name with generic | Administrative centre |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Akmenė | Akmenės rajono savivaldybė | LT-01 | Šiaulių apskritis | Naujoji Akmenė |
| Alytaus miestas | Alytaus miesto savivaldybė | LT-02 | Alytaus apskritis | Alytus |
| Alytus | Alytaus rajono savivaldybė | LT-03 | Alytaus apskritis | Alytus |
| Anykščiai | Anykščių rajono savivaldybė | LT-04 | Utenos apskritis | Anykščiai |
| Birštonas | Birštono savivaldybė | LT-05 | Kauno apskritis | Birštonas |
| Biržai | Biržų rajono savivaldybė | LT-06 | Panevėzio apskritis | Biržai |
| Druskininkai | Druskininkų savivaldybė | LT-07 | Alytaus apskritis | Druskininkai |
| Elektrėnai | Elektrėnų savivaldybė | LT-08 | Vilniaus apskritis | Elektrėnai |
| Ignalina | Ignalinos rajono savivaldybė | LT-09 | Utenos apskritis | Ignalina |
| Jonava | Jonavos rajono savivaldybė | LT-10 | Kauno apskritis | Jonava |
| Joniškis | Joniškio rajono savivaldybė | LT-11 | Šiaulių apskritis | Joniškis |
| Jurbarkas | Jurbarko rajono savivaldybė | LT-12 | Tauragės apskritis | Jurbarkas |

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| Municipality - short name | Municipality - full name with generic | ISO 3166-2 code | County – full name with generic | Administrative centre |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kaišiadorys | Kaišiadorių rajono savivaldybė | LT-13 | Kauno apskritis | Kaišiadorys |
| Kalvarija | Kalvarijos savivaldybė | LT-14 | Marijampolės apskritis | Kalvarija |
| Kaunas | Kauno miesto savivaldybė | LT-16 | Kauno apskritis | Kaunas |
| Kauno miestas | Kauno rajono savivaldybė | LT-15 | Kauno apskritis | Kaunas |
| Kazlų Rūdos | Kazlų Rūdos savivaldybė | LT-17 | Marijampolės apskritis | Kazlų Rūda |
| Kelmė | Kelmės rajono savivaldybė | LT-19 | Šiaulių apskritis | Kelmė |
| Klaipėda | Klaipėdos miesto savivaldybė | LT-21 | Klaipėdos apskritis | Gargždai |
| Klaipėdos miestas | Klaipėdos rajono savivaldybė | LT-20 | Klaipėdos apskritis | Klaipėda |
| Kretinga | Kretingos rajono savivaldybė | LT-22 | Klaipėdos apskritis | Kretinga |
| Kupiškis | Kupiškio rajono savivaldybė | LT-23 | Panevėzio apskritis | Kupiškis |
| Kėdainiai | Kėdainių rajono savivaldybė | LT-18 | Kauno apskritis | Kėdainiai |
| Lazdijai | Lazdijų rajono savivaldybė | LT-24 | Alytaus apskritis | Lazdijai |
| Marijampolė | Marijampolės savivaldybė | LT-25 | Marijampolės apskritis | Marijampolė |
| Mažeikiai | Mažeikių rajono savivaldybė | LT-26 | Telšiu apskritis | Mažeikiai |
| Molėtai | Molėtų rajono savivaldybė | LT-27 | Utenos apskritis | Molėtai |
| Neringa | Neringos savivaldybė | LT-28 | Klaipėdos apskritis | Nida |
| Pagėgiai | Pagėgių savivaldybė | LT-29 | Tauragės apskritis | Pagėgiai |
| Pakruojis | Pakruojo rajono savivaldybė | LT-30 | Šiaulių apskritis | Pakruojis |
| Palangos miestas | Palangos miesto savivaldybė | LT-31 | Klaipėdos apskritis | Palanga |
| Panevėžio miestas | Panevėžio miesto savivaldybė | LT-32 | Panevėzio apskritis | Panevėžys |
| Panevėžys | Panevėžio rajono savivaldybė | LT-33 | Panevėzio apskritis | Panevėžys |
| Pasvalys | Pasvalio rajono savivaldybė | LT-34 | Panevėzio apskritis | Pasvalys |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| Plungė | Plungės rajono savivaldybė | LT-35 | Telšiu apskritis | Plungė |
| Prienai | Prienų rajono savivaldybė | LT-36 | Kauno apskritis | Prienai |
| Radviliškis | Radviliškio rajono savivaldybė | LT-37 | Šiaulių apskritis | Radviliškis |
| Raseiniai | Raseinių rajono savivaldybė | LT-38 | Kauno apskritis | Raseiniai |
| Rietavas | Rietavo savivaldybė | LT-39 | Telšiu apskritis | Rietavas |
| Rokiškis | Rokiškio rajono savivaldybė | LT-40 | Panevėzio apskritis | Rokiškis |
| Skuodas | Skuodo rajono savivaldybė | LT-48 | Klaipėdos apskritis | Skuodas |
| Šakiai | Šakių rajono savivaldybė | LT-41 | Marijampolės apskritis | Šakiai |
| Šalčininkai | Šalčininkų rajono savivaldybė | LT-42 | Vilniaus apskritis | Šalčininkai |
| Šiauliai | Šiaulių miesto savivaldybė | LT-44 | Šiaulių apskritis | Šiauliai |
| Šiaulių miestas | Šiaulių rajono savivaldybė | LT-43 | Šiaulių apskritis | Šiauliai |
| Šilalė | Šilalės rajono savivaldybė | LT-45 | Tauragės apskritis | Šilalė |
| Šilutė | Šilutės rajono savivaldybė | LT-46 | Klaipėdos apskritis | Šilutė |
| Širvintos | Širvintų rajono savivaldybė | LT-47 | Vilniaus apskritis | Širvintos |
| Švenčionys | Švenčionių rajono savivaldybė | LT-49 | Vilniaus apskritis | Švenčionys |
| Tauragė | Tauragės rajono savivaldybė | LT-50 | Tauragės apskritis | Tauragė |
| Telšiai | Telšių rajono savivaldybė | LT-51 | Telšiu apskritis | Telšiai |
| Trakai | Trakų rajono savivaldybė | LT-52 | Vilniaus apskritis | Trakai |
| Ukmergė | Ukmergės rajono savivaldybė | LT-53 | Vilniaus apskritis | Ukmergė |
| Utena | Utenos rajono savivaldybė | LT-54 | Utenos apskritis | Utena |
| Varėna | Varėnos rajono savivaldybė | LT-55 | Alytaus apskritis | Varėna |
| Vilkaviškis | Vilkaviškio rajono savivaldybė | LT-56 | Marijampolės apskritis | Vilkaviškis |
| Vilniaus miestas | Vilniaus miesto savivaldybė | LT-57 | Vilniaus apskritis | Vilnius |
| Vilnius | Vilniaus rajono savivaldybė | LT-58 | Vilniaus apskritis | Vilnius |
| Visaginas | Visagino savivaldybė | LT-59 | Utenos apskritis | Visaginas |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| Zarasai | Zarasų rajono savivaldybė | LT-60 | Utenos apskritis | Zarasai |

**Other Significant Locations**

| PCGN recommended name | Variant names or spellings | location | Feature type | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Curonian (Courland) Lagoon | | 55.092778 N 20.916389 E | lagoon | Situated between the Curonian Spit and the mainland of Lithuania and Russia's Kaliningrad oblast'. |
| Nemunas | | 55.336667 N 21.247222 E | river | |
| Neris | | 54.900278 N 23.874167 E | river | |
| Mūša | Latvian: Mūsa | 56.402778 N 24.159444 E | river | A small tributary of the Mēmele, forming part of the boundary between Latvia and Lithuania. |
| Šventoji | Latvian: Sventāja | 56.028333 N 21.073333 E | river | The river forms part of the boundary between Latvia and Lithuania for 30km. Its mouth, on the Baltic Sea, is in Lithuania. |
| Vadakstis | Latvian: Vadakste | 56.411944 N 22.2175 E | river | A small tributary of the Venta, forming part of the boundary between Latvia and Lithuania. |

Map of Lithuania



*Map produced by PCGN for illustrative purposes only, and is not to be taken necessarily as representing the views of the UK government on boundaries or political status.*

## Useful references

*In Lithuania*

- Names, addresses and geographical locations of administrative units, wards, residential areas, streets, as well as names given to buildings, structures or other objects are stored in the Address Register, which is administered by the State Enterprise Centre of Registers. An interactive map of the Register objects REGIA (www.regia.lt) has been created on the basis of the Address Register data.
- The Service of Place Names for the Territory of Lithuania is a toponymic database provided via the Lithuanian Spatial Information portal: http://www.geoportal.lt/map/.
- The Portrait of the Regions of Lithuania: http://regionai.stat.gov.lt/ (contains administrative mapping).
- Geo-Information Database of Lithuanian Toponyms (in Lithuanian): http://lvvgdb.lki.lt/vietovardziai/english.html.
- Modern Lithuanian Dictionary, which contains a list of place names: http://www.autoinfa.lt/webdic/.
- The Lithuanian Dictionary of Place Names (volumes 1 & 2) published by the Onomastics Division of the Lithuanian Language Institute.
- 1:300,000-scale wall map of the Republic of Lithuania published 2014-5 by the Institute of Aerial Geodesy.

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- The National Atlas of Lithuania (volume 1), published in 2014 by the National Land Service under the Ministry of Agriculture. Maps from the 1st Volume can be found on the Lithuanian Spatial Information Portal (www.geoportal.lt). The 2nd Volume of the National Atlas of Lithuania published in 2015 is dedicated to the history of Lithuania.

*General*
- BBC Country Profile: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17536867
- CIA World Factbook: https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/lithuania/
- FCDO Travel Advice: https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/lithuania
- International Organization for Standardization (ISO): www.iso.org
- ISO Online Browsing Platform (OBP): https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/
- Languages: www.ethnologue.com; www.omniglot.com
- US Board on Geographic Names Server (GNS): http://geonames.nga.mil/gns/html/

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