

Lithuania: Road towards OECD membership

Lithuania in global and regional perspective

According to Statistics Lithuania, **revised GDP for 2014 compared to 2013 increased by 3%** rather than by preliminary estimate of 2.9%. Higher growth was driven by the growth of construction industry, as well as the new Government's housing renovation programme. Construction (15.5%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (3.5%) and industrial production (3.4%) sectors contributed the most to the country's GDP growth last year. Despite Russian embargo and difficult situation in the main export markets, 2014 Lithuanian economic growth will be one of the highest among the EU member states.

Lithuania's shared services sector **won in three major categories at the Central and Eastern Europe Shared Services and Outsourcing Awards 2015**, organised by leading Polish information portal Biznes Polska. Kaunas won the award for "emerging" city of the year, capital Vilnius won best city of the year, and Barclays Technology Centre in Vilnius was crowned the best service centre in Central and Eastern Europe.

Lithuania – Europe's #1 in fibre-optic internet penetration in 2014. For the 6th year in a row, Lithuania retained its leading position in Europe in terms of the fibre-optic (FTTH) Internet network penetration in 2014. In a global ranking, Lithuania comes in the 8th place, as shown by the annual report of the FTTH Council Europe.

Data and facts

Lithuania – one of the world's most vibrant environments for laser industry:

Produces more than half of the global market of pico-second laser spectrometers;

Award-winning products with 80 % of production exported to over 60 countries;

Clients include NASA, NATO and Pentagon;

#1 in the EU for Science, Technology & Mathematics graduates per capita;

R&D Open access centres.

Co-operation calendar (January – February)

30 Jan. 2015 – Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists obtained Observer status at the Business and Industry Advisory Council (BIAC) to the OECD. This shows that the advantages of the OECD are recognised by both the authorities and Lithuanian business.

11-13 Feb. 2015 – A delegation of the OECD experts on a fact-finding mission visited Vilnius, in order to collect remaining data for Public Governance Review. The delegation had meetings with representatives of Lithuanian Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The findings of Public Governance Review are to be discussed by the OECD in April 2015.

25 Feb. 2015 – The Government of Lithuania issued a Resolution on the Establishment of the Commission for Co-ordination of Preparation for the OECD Membership. The commission is chaired by the Chancellor of the Government of Lithuania, consists of vice-ministers and heads of institutions that participate in the OECD Bodies.

26 Feb. 2015 – Marcos Bonturi, Director of OECD Global Relations Secretariat, paid a visit to Vilnius. During the visit Mr. Bonturi had meetings with the Chancellor of the Lithuanian Government, decision makers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and representatives of key ministries and institutions. At a seminar Mr. Bonturi discussed the progress of Lithuania-OECD Action Plan, stressing successful implementation of Lithuania's obligations.

High-level meetings, consultations: Estonia, Canada, Chile, Finland, Israel, Turkey.

Status

30 May 2013 – OECD Ministerial Council passes "Resolution on Strengthening the OECD's Global Reach", signals period of enhanced cooperation with Lithuania with a view to potentially beginning accession talks in 2015. **22 Oct. 2013** – Lithuania-OECD Action Plan made public. The Plan is designed to foster close and mutually beneficial cooperation between Lithuania and the OECD.

Major OECD Policy Reviews of Lithuania under way: Public Governance review; Regulatory Reform review; Corporate Governance of State-owned Enterprises review; Innovation Policy review; Economic Assessment; Market Openness review. 2 additional reviews set to start in Q2 of 2015.