

Lithuania

This country note for *Education at a Glance 2026* provides an overview of the key characteristics of the education system in Lithuania. In line with this year's thematic focus, it emphasises teacher shortages while also covering other parts of the education system. The data in this note are provided for the latest available year. Readers are referred to the corresponding tables in *Education at a Glance 2026* for notes and reference years.

Highlights

- **Demographic decline will reduce demand for teachers, but an ageing workforce will create substantial replacement needs.** The number of children aged 5-14 in Lithuania is projected to decline by 22% between 2024 and 2033, more than twice the OECD average decline of 9%. At the same time, 43% of secondary teachers are aged 55 or above, the highest share among OECD countries with available data, compared with an OECD average of 25%. The net effect on recruitment needs will also depend on teacher attrition and policy choices such as class sizes and funding.
- **Primary teacher numbers have not kept pace with rising student enrolment, but demographic trends are expected to ease pressures.** Between 2015 and 2024, the number of primary students in Lithuania rose by 12%, while the number of primary teachers fell by 16%. As a result, the number of students per teacher increased from 10.3 to 13.7, an increase of 34% and the largest increase among OECD countries with available data. By contrast, the OECD average fell from 15.2 to 13.9 students per teacher, a decline of 8%. Looking ahead, national projections suggest that demand for primary teachers will remain stable or decline as the school-age population falls.
- **Teacher shortages are concentrated in particular parts of the education system.** A national forecast for 2026-31 projects the largest mismatches between supply and demand among subject teachers and social pedagogues (Jakštas and Venckutė-Jakštė, 2025^[1]). For subject teachers, recruitment needs are estimated at around 6 700, compared with around 4 200 expected graduates from relevant teacher education programmes, with the greatest needs in English, mathematics and Lithuanian. To address recruitment and retention pressures, Lithuania has adopted a Teacher Attraction and Retention Plan for 2026-28, including measures to ease entry into the profession and improve working conditions (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of Lithuania, 2026^[2]).
- **Teachers' pay is comparatively favourable, although satisfaction with salaries remains lower than in OECD countries.** Unlike in most OECD countries, pre-primary and lower secondary teachers in Lithuania earn on average 1% more than other tertiary-educated workers. Yet only 28.4% of lower secondary teachers are satisfied with their salaries, below the OECD average of 38.7%. This represents a substantial improvement, however, with salary satisfaction increasing by 17 percentage points between 2018 and 2024.

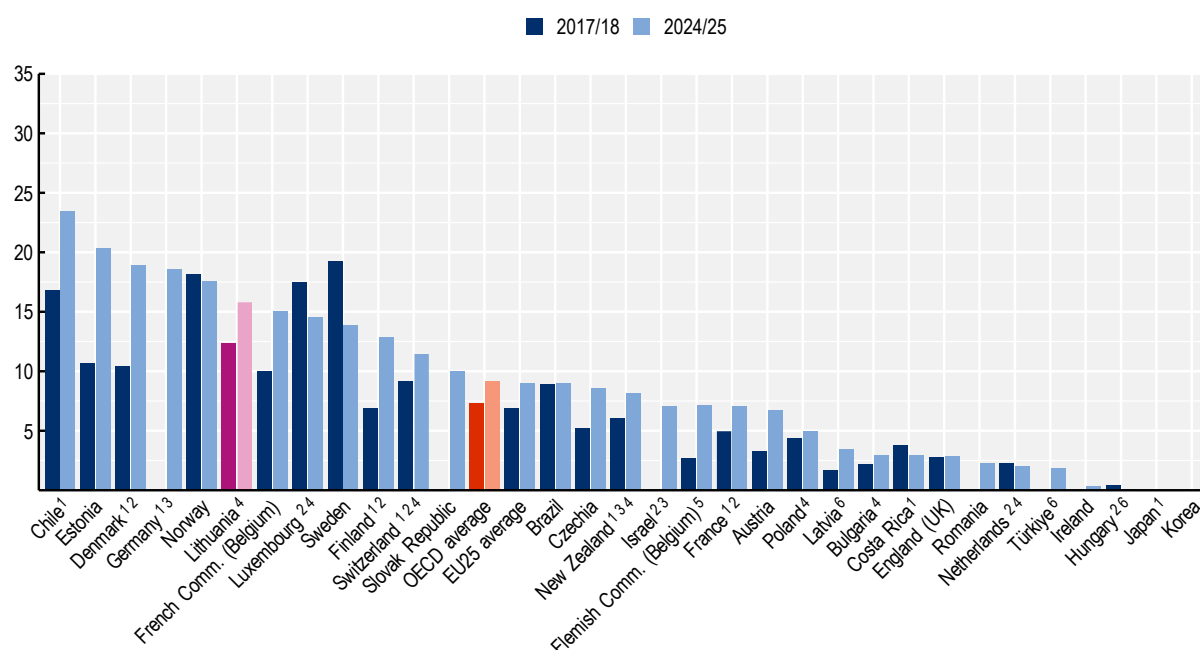
- **Educational attainment is high, but participation in adult learning remains below the OECD average.** Half of working-age adults (50%) hold a tertiary qualification, above the OECD average of 43%, and the share of 25-34 year-olds without upper secondary attainment declined from 10% to 5% between 2015 and 2025. However, according to the 2023 Survey of Adult Skills, 42% of 25-44 year-olds participated in non-formal education or training over the previous 12 months, compared with an OECD average of 52%. Among 45-64 year-olds, participation was lower still, at 32% in Lithuania compared with 45% on average across the OECD.
- **Participation in early childhood education and care is nearly universal in Lithuania.** In 2024, 98% of children between age 3 and the starting age of primary education are enrolled, compared with an OECD average of 90%. Among 2-year-olds, 87% were enrolled in early childhood educational development programmes, placing Lithuania at the upper end of OECD countries with available data.
- **Government expenditure on education in Lithuania is below the OECD average, both per student as a share of GDP per capita and overall as a share of GDP.** In 2023, government expenditure per full-time equivalent student in public and private institutions was 18% of GDP per capita at primary level and 19% at lower secondary level, compared with OECD averages of 20% and 22%, respectively. Overall, government expenditure on primary to tertiary educational institutions represented 3.1% of GDP, compared with 4% on average across the OECD, placing Lithuania sixth lowest among OECD countries with available data.

Teacher shortages

- Shortages of skilled workers have affected many sectors across the OECD in recent years, and the teaching profession is no exception. Teacher shortages manifest in different ways across education systems: in some countries, a lack of fully qualified teachers is reflected in a higher share of non-fully qualified staff, while in others a significant number of teaching positions remain unfilled.
- Non-fully qualified teachers refer to teachers who do not yet meet all the requirements to be recognised as fully qualified teachers under national regulations. In most countries, they either possess the required academic qualifications but lack mandatory certification or teacher training, have completed the required teacher training but do not hold the required academic qualifications, or lack both. In Lithuania, 15.8% of all primary and secondary teachers in public institutions were not fully qualified in 2024/25, above the OECD average of 9.1% (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Trends in the share of non-fully qualified teachers in primary and secondary education (2017/18 and 2024/25)

In per cent, full-time equivalents, public institutions



1. Year of reference differs from 2024/25: academic year 2023/24 for Denmark, Finland, France, Germany and Switzerland; calendar year 2024 for Chile and Costa Rica; calendar year 2025 for New Zealand; academic year 2025/26 for Japan.

2. Pre-primary and primary education are combined in France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Upper secondary education is excluded in Denmark, Israel and Switzerland. Upper secondary vocational education is excluded in Finland, Hungary and the Netherlands.

3. Teacher data are based on headcounts instead of full-time equivalents.

4. Year of reference differs from 2017/18: academic year 2018/19 for Bulgaria, the Netherlands, and Switzerland; 2019/20 for Luxembourg and Poland; calendar year 2020 for New Zealand.

5. Including government-dependent private institutions.

6. Teachers classified as non-fully qualified in these countries are in the process of acquiring full qualification.

For data, see OECD (2026) *Education at a Glance 2026: OECD Indicators*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b4968bbc-en>, Figure 1 and Table 1.

- Recruiting second-career teachers is a common strategy for addressing teacher shortages and helps to diversify the profile of the teaching workforce. According to the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2024, on average across the OECD, 8.4% of lower secondary teachers are second-career teachers; in Lithuania, they make up 7% of all teachers (Table 5).
- The attractiveness of the teaching profession depends on a variety of factors, including working conditions and salaries. According to the OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), full-time teachers in primary, secondary and vocational education report working 40.8 hours per week on average across the OECD in 2023, compared with 41.5 hours for other full-time workers holding a bachelor's or master's qualification. In Lithuania, these teachers report working 39.3 hours per week on average, while other full-time workers with a bachelor's or master's qualification report working 41.4 hours per week (Table 6).
- According to the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2024, a large majority of lower secondary teachers (68.4%) are satisfied with their terms of employment (barring salaries) on average across the OECD. In contrast, the share of lower secondary teachers who are satisfied

with their salaries is much lower at 38.7% on average. In Lithuania, 77.4% of lower secondary teachers are satisfied with their terms of employment and 28.4% are satisfied with their salaries (Table 5). Although satisfaction with salaries remains below the OECD average, the share of teachers who are satisfied with their salaries increased by 17 percentage points between 2018 and 2024. The share reporting overall job satisfaction also increased by 3 percentage points, reaching 85.4% in 2024.

- Teachers' autonomy and professional recognition also contribute to the attractiveness of teaching. According to TALIS 2024, 88.2% of Lithuanian teachers reported having professional autonomy. Additionally, 71.6% reported that parents and guardians in their school value and respect teachers. Perceptions of the profession's standing in society have also improved: the share of teachers who felt that teaching was valued in society increased by 6 percentage points between 2018 and 2024, reaching 21%, close to the OECD average of 22%.
- Teachers tend to be older than other workers. On average across countries with available data, 25% of secondary teachers are aged 55 and over, compared to 19% of employed individuals holding at least a master's degree and 21% of the overall employed population. Lithuania follows a similar pattern: 43% of secondary teachers are aged 55 and over, compared to 24% of employed individuals holding at least a master's degree and 25% of the overall employed population (Figure 10).
- High teacher turnover can indicate dissatisfaction with the profession, but the number of teachers in public institutions who leave the profession is also shaped by factors such as the age structure of the workforce, labour-market conditions and the professional culture of a country. In Lithuania, 6.4% of fully qualified teachers in primary and secondary education left the profession (through retirement, resignation, or by switching to another assignment within the public education sector) in 2024/25, compared with an OECD average of 6.4% (Table 3). Nevertheless, there are positive signs in teacher recruitment and retention. According to national data published by Lithuania's Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the share of teacher education graduates working in schools two years after graduation rose from 55.5% in 2022 to 69.1% in 2025.
- The number of teachers a system needs is not determined by student numbers alone. On average across the OECD, measured in full-time equivalents, the number of teachers in public and private primary schools rose by 13% between 2015 and 2024, even though the number of primary students rose by only 2% over the same period, a divergence driven by policy choices around class sizes, teachers' working hours and instruction time. In Lithuania, the number of primary teachers decreased by 16% over this period, while the number of students increased by 12% (Table 7).
- Looking ahead, the number of children aged 5-14 in Lithuania is projected to decrease by 22% between 2024 and 2033, pointing to lower demand for teachers if other policies remain unchanged (Table 7). However, as argued above, demographic trends are only one factor shaping teacher workforce needs, and their effects can vary depending on how population change is distributed across regions. Teacher workforce needs also depend on policy decisions related to class sizes, teacher attrition and funding.

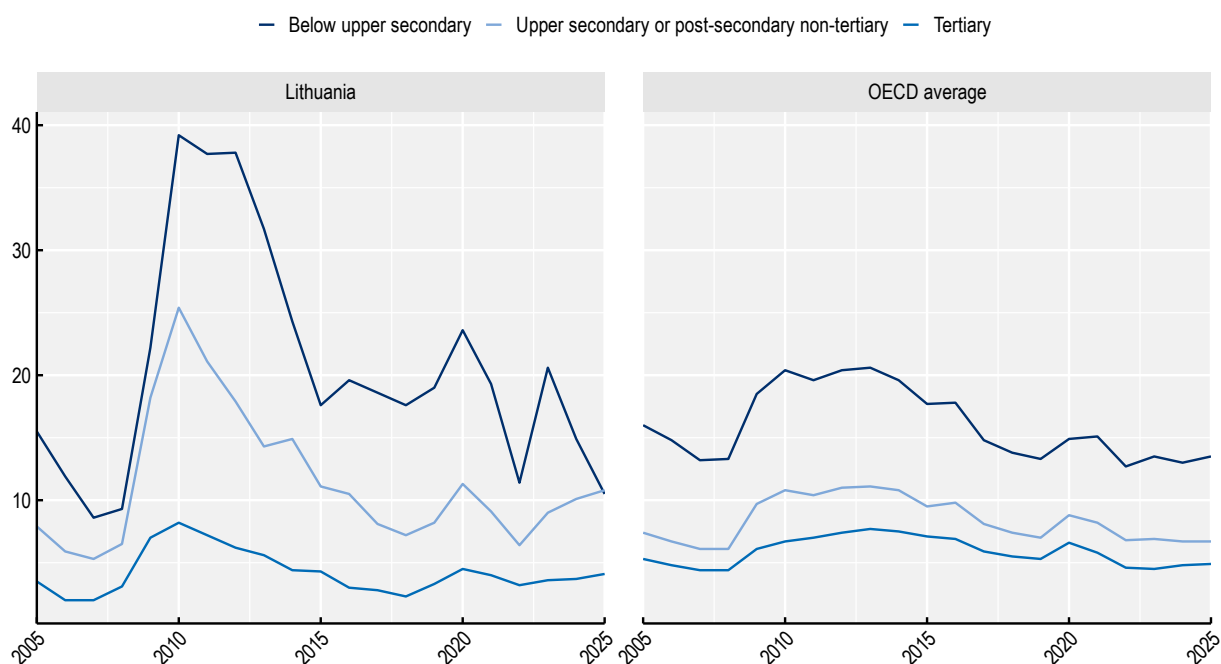
The output of educational institutions and the impact of learning

- Educational attainment remains at an all-time high in 2025 as more people obtain advanced qualifications. Across the OECD, 43% of working-age adults (25-64 year-olds) have a tertiary qualification, while the share of adults with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment is slightly lower at 39%. In Lithuania, the share of adults with tertiary attainment is above the OECD average at 50%, while the share of adults with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment is also above the OECD average at 44% (Table A1.1).

- The share of young adults without upper secondary attainment continues to decline across the OECD, standing at 12% in 2025. This trend is also apparent in Lithuania, where the share of 25-34 year-olds without upper secondary attainment decreased from 10% to 5% between 2015 and 2025 (Table A1.2).
- While more young adults obtain a tertiary qualification, the share of individuals whose highest qualification is upper secondary with a vocational orientation is decreasing in almost all OECD countries. This is also the case in Lithuania, where 10% of all 55-64 year-olds have upper secondary vocational attainment in 2025, compared to 7% of all 25-34 year-olds (Table A1.3).
- Youth and young adults who are neither employed nor in education or training (NEET) are a key policy concern, as prolonged periods of inactivity at a young age can have lasting negative effects on socio-economic outcomes later in life. In Lithuania, 13% of all 18-24 year-olds were NEET in 2025, down from 15% in 2015. For comparison, the average share of NEETs across OECD countries with available data for both years was 13% in 2025 and 16% in 2015 (Table A2.2).
- Employment outcomes for recent tertiary graduates vary across countries and are shaped by economic conditions, labour demand, and public policy. In Lithuania, the unemployment rate among tertiary-educated young adults remained constant at 4% in 2015 and 2025. The corresponding rates across OECD countries with available data for both years were 7% on average in 2015 and 5% in 2025 (Table A3.3. and Figure 2).

Figure 2. Trends in unemployment rates of young adults in Lithuania and on average in the OECD, by educational attainment level (2005 to 2025)

In per cent of 25-34 year-olds in the labour force



Note: The OECD average on the right is based on a fixed sample of 34 countries.

For data, see OECD (2026) *Education at a Glance 2026: OECD Indicators*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b4968bbc-en>, Figure A3.1 and *Unemployment rates of adults, by educational attainment, age group and gender* (indicator), <https://data-explorer.oecd.org/s/570> (accessed on 27 August 2026).

- The labour-market significance of advanced qualifications is also reflected in earnings. In almost every OECD country, workers without a tertiary qualification have earnings below the national average. In Lithuania, full-time, full-year workers with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment earn 27% less than the national average and those with below upper secondary attainment earn 32% less (Figure A4.1).
- As the demand for skills in the labour market changes, participation in lifelong learning is essential for all adults. According to the OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), among employed adults, younger adults (aged 25-44) are more likely to participate in non-formal education or training than older adults (aged 45-64), but differences between the age groups are often small. In Lithuania, 42% of 25-44 year-olds had participated in non-formal education or training over the last 12 months, compared to 32% of 45-64 year-olds. Across the OECD, average participation rates are 52% among 25-44 year-olds and 45% among 45-64 year-olds (Figure A5.2).
- Workers with higher educational attainment are much more likely to be in jobs where they can work from home in most countries. In Lithuania, 20% of tertiary-educated workers sometimes or usually work from home compared to 5% of workers with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary attainment (Figure A6.3).

Access to education, participation and progression

- Participation in early childhood education and care (ECEC) is common among children from the age of 3 in all OECD countries. In Lithuania, 98% of children between the age of 3 and the starting age of primary education (age 7 in Lithuania) were enrolled in ECEC in 2024, higher than the OECD average of 90% (Figure B1.1). However, enrolment rates for younger children vary widely across OECD countries. Among 2 year old children in Lithuania, 87% are enrolled in early childhood educational development programmes that meet the criteria of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) by combining education and care. This places Lithuania at the upper end of OECD countries with available data (Table B1.1).
- The number of primary and secondary schools – and thus their geographical proximity to students – varies across countries. Many countries have more primary than lower secondary schools, reflecting the desire to provide education close to primary students' homes while offering secondary students the greater choice of specialist subjects that can only be provided by larger schools. In Lithuania, there are 0.92 primary schools for each lower secondary school, below the OECD average of 1.97 (Figure B2.4).
- In most countries, there is no strong alignment between trends in the number of students and trends in the number of schools at lower secondary level. In Lithuania, the number of lower secondary students increased by 1.50% annually between 2015 and 2024, while the number of lower secondary schools decreased by 2.94% annually over the same period. On average across the OECD, the number of students increased by 0.96%, while the number of schools decreased by 0.10% (Figure B2.1).
- Transitions from one level of education to the next are critical junctions in a student's trajectory and have a major influence on educational outcomes. One year after the last grade of lower secondary education, 92% of students in Lithuania are enrolled in an upper secondary or other education programme, 1% of students are repeating the last grade in lower secondary and 7% are not enrolled in formal education. The share of students who are not enrolled is above the average of 5% among the 22 countries and economies with available data (Figure B3.1).
- In upper secondary education, 87% of new entrants in Lithuania complete a general or vocational programme within two years of the theoretical end of the programme. By this point, 1% of the cohort remain enrolled, while 13% have dropped out without qualifying (Table B3.3). In Lithuania, women

are 5 percentage points more likely to complete their upper secondary programme than their men peers, a gap that is similar to the gap in most other countries with available data (Table B3.2).

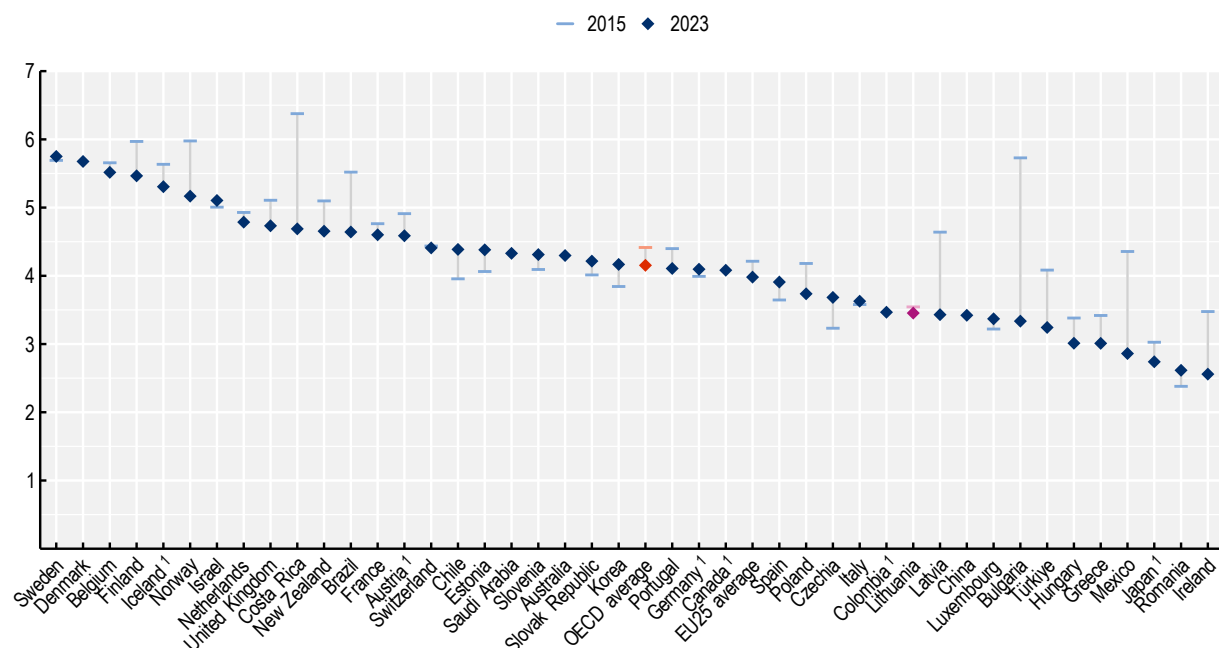
- The transition from upper secondary education to other programmes or the labour market is another important milestone in a student's career. One year after the end of their upper secondary programme, 55% of students are enrolled in a bachelor's or master's degree programme in Lithuania, 10% are enrolled in a post-secondary non-tertiary or short-cycle tertiary programme, 2% are enrolled in another upper secondary or other type of programme and 33% are no longer enrolled in any education. Of these, 56% are employed, while 44% are unemployed or outside the labour force. In comparison, on average across countries with available data, 35% of upper secondary graduates are enrolled in a bachelor's or master's degree programme, 13% are enrolled in a post-secondary non-tertiary or short-cycle tertiary programme, 10% are enrolled in another upper secondary or other type of programme and 42% are no longer enrolled in education (Table B3.4).
- At tertiary level (ISCED 5-8), most OECD countries host a larger number of international students than they send abroad. On average across the OECD, outbound internationally mobile students account for 6% of all national students (whether enrolled domestically or abroad), while inbound students account for 12% of all students enrolled domestically in 2024. In Lithuania the share of outbound international students is 7%, while inbound international students average 11%. The top three destination countries for outbound students in Lithuania are the Netherlands (27%), the United Kingdom (13%) and Germany (10%), while the top three origin countries of inbound students are Ukraine (17%), Belarus (14%) and India (9%) (Table B4.3. and Table B4.4).
- In many countries, inbound mobility has increased faster than outbound mobility among tertiary students. On average across the OECD, the share of inbound mobile students increased by 4 percentage points between 2015 and 2024, and the share of outbound mobile students increased by 1 percentage point. In Lithuania, the share of inbound students increased by 8 percentage points, while the share of outbound students remained the same (Table B4.3).

Financial resources invested in education

- Most investment in education comes from public sources. On average across the OECD, government expenditure on primary to tertiary education (based on initial funds, on educational institutions) corresponded to 4% of GDP in 2023, while private expenditure corresponded to 0.6%. In Lithuania, government expenditure equalled 3.1% of GDP in 2023, while private expenditure equalled 0.4% (Table C1.8).
- In OECD countries with available data for both years, average government expenditure on primary to tertiary education (based on final funds, inside and outside educational institutions) has decreased slightly from 4.4% of GDP in 2015 to 4.2% in 2023. Over the same period, it remained constant at 3.5% in Lithuania, thus defying the trend of declining government expenditure on education as a share of GDP (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Trends in government expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP (2015 and 2023)

Total government expenditure on education (inside and outside of educational institutions); primary to tertiary education



1. Data include or exclude some categories, please refer to the source table for more information.

For data, see OECD (2026) *Education at a Glance 2026: OECD Indicators*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b4968bbc-en>, Figure C1.2 and Table C1.7.

- Government expenditure on primary to tertiary education as share of GDP (based on final funds, on educational institutions, including R&D) varies by a factor of approximately two across OECD countries (ranging from 2.4% to 5.2%), while government expenditure per student varies by a factor of ten (from USD 3 398 to USD 32 832 adjusted for purchasing power parity) as differences in income levels mean nominal expenditure tends to vary more than relative expenditure. On average across the OECD, expenditure per student from primary to tertiary education was USD 13 601 in 2023, while in Lithuania it was USD 10 785 (Table C1.4. and Table C1.1).
- In early childhood education, government expenditure per child has grown substantially between 2015 and 2023 in many OECD countries. This was also the case in Lithuania, where expenditure per child aged 3-5 in 2023 was USD 13 573 compared to USD 5 362 in 2015 (Table C2.3).
- Government expenditure on education tends to rise with the level of education. In primary education, expenditure per student was USD 9 620 in 2023 in Lithuania and USD 12 893 on average across the OECD. In lower secondary education, it was USD 9 987 in Lithuania and USD 14 291 on average across the OECD. Thus, Lithuania is among the majority of OECD countries where expenditure is higher at lower secondary level than at primary level (Table C3.1).
- Expenditure can be divided into capital and current expenditure: the former finances investment in assets such as infrastructure, while the latter covers regular operating costs. Current expenditure can be further broken down into staff compensation and other current expenditure, such as purchases of goods and services and routine maintenance. In Lithuania, 80% of current expenditure in primary educational institutions is dedicated to staff compensation compared to 79% on average across the OECD, while the remainder is dedicated to other current expenditure (Figure C3.3).

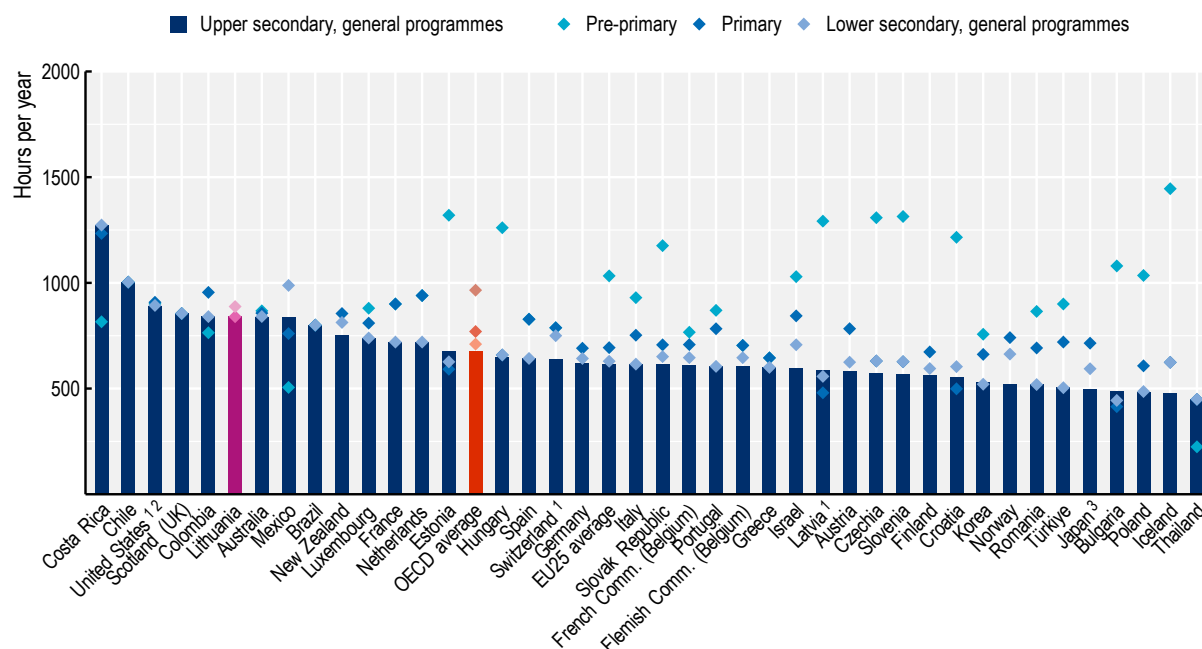
- At upper secondary level, government expenditure per student can differ substantially between general and vocational programmes. Vocational programmes are often more expensive than general programmes due to the need for specialised technical equipment, while at the same time, private contributions, for example from firms, cover a larger share of overall costs in some countries. In Lithuania, expenditure per student is USD 9 661 in general upper secondary programmes and USD 14 727 in vocational upper secondary programmes, compared to the OECD average of USD 12 421 in general programmes and USD 13 901 in vocational ones (Table C4.1).
- On average across the OECD, government expenditure per student is the highest at bachelor's and above levels despite being the levels where government expenditure accounts for the smallest share of total expenditure. Lithuania is among the countries where government expenditure constitutes a larger share of total expenditure compared to the OECD average. Government expenditure per student was USD 13 073 in 2023, corresponding to 72% of total expenditure at bachelor's and above levels. In comparison, average government expenditure per student across the OECD was USD 16 405, amounting to 68% of total expenditure (Table C5.1).

Teachers, the learning environment and the organisation of schools

- As discussed above, most countries have increased their investment in pre-primary education in recent years. This is also reflected in the ratio of children to teachers. Across the OECD, the number of children enrolled at this level decreased slightly by 2% between 2015 and 2024 while the number of teachers increased by 14%, resulting in a 14% reduction in the child-to-teacher ratio. In Lithuania, the number of children enrolled in pre-primary education decreased by 71%, while the number of pre-primary teachers also decreased by 65%, resulting in a 18% decrease of the child-to-teacher ratio (Data for chart D2.1).
- In most countries, salaries of teachers in public institutions are lower than the salaries of other tertiary-educated workers, especially for teachers at lower levels of education. However, this is not the case in Lithuania, where pre-primary teachers earned on average 1% more than other tertiary-educated workers, while lower secondary teachers earned on average 1% more than other tertiary-educated workers (Table D3.2).
- Teachers spend only a fraction of their working time teaching; the remainder is devoted to other tasks, including lesson preparation and marking. On average across the OECD, primary teachers taught 770 hours per year compared to 710 hours per year in lower secondary education. In Lithuania, annual maximum teaching hours were 840 in primary education and 888 in lower secondary education. Thus, Lithuania was one of the few countries where teachers in primary education did not have to teach more hours than their lower secondary colleagues (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Teaching time of teachers, by level of education (2025)

Net statutory teaching time in hours per year, in public institutions



Note: Please refer to the source table for information on whether the data refer to typical, minimum or maximum hours.

1. Actual teaching time (in Latvia except for pre-primary level).

2. Reference year differs from 2023. Refer to the source table for details.

3. Average planned teaching time in each school at the beginning of the school year.

For data, see OECD (2026) *Education at a Glance 2026: OECD Indicators*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b4968bbc-en>, Figure D4.1 and Table D4.1.

- Women form the majority of teachers at all levels of education except tertiary. Teachers in pre-primary education are almost entirely women with 96% of teachers being female on average across the OECD. The share of women among pre-primary teachers in Lithuania is even higher at 97%. At 82%, the share of female teachers in lower secondary education is lower, although it is still above the OECD average of 68% (Table D5.1).
- Across the OECD, women are more strongly represented among teachers than among school management staff. In primary education, women in Lithuania accounted for 96% of teachers and 95% of school management staff in 2024, a gap of 1 percentage point. This gap was smaller than the OECD average of 15 percentage points (Figure D5.3).
- Regular teacher appraisal as a quality assurance mechanism is common in some countries, but not in others. Lithuania does not use an appraisal mechanism, as do 9 out of 29 countries and economies with available data (Figure D7.1).
- Appraisals of schools are more widespread than those of teachers, with school inspections being used in 24 out of 28 countries and economies with available data. Lithuania is among the majority of countries with a mandatory appraisal mechanism at primary or lower secondary levels (Figure D6.1).

References

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Contact

For more information on Education at a Glance 2026 and to access the full set of indicators, see: <https://doi.org/10.1787/b4968bbc-en>.

For more information on the methodology used during the data collection for each indicator, the references to the sources and the specific notes for each country, see Education at a Glance 2026: Sources, Methodologies and Technical Notes, <https://doi.org/10.1787/DCF64A14-EN>.

For general information on the methodology, please refer to the OECD Handbook for Internationally Comparative Education Statistics 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264304444-en>.

Updated data can be found online at <http://data-explorer.oecd.org/> and by following the StatLinks in the publication.

Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using the Education GPS: <https://gpseducation.oecd.org/>.

Questions can be directed to the Education at a Glance team at the OECD Directorate for Education and Skills: EDU.EAG@oecd.org.

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The full book is available in English: OECD (2026), *Education at a Glance 2026: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b4968bbc-en>.

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