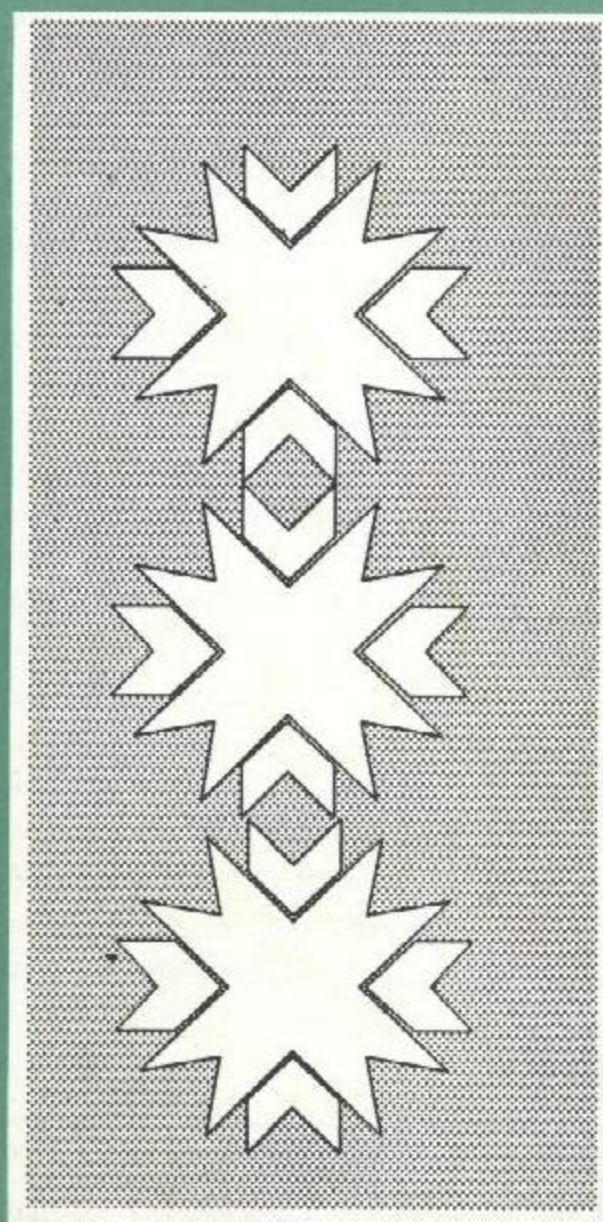


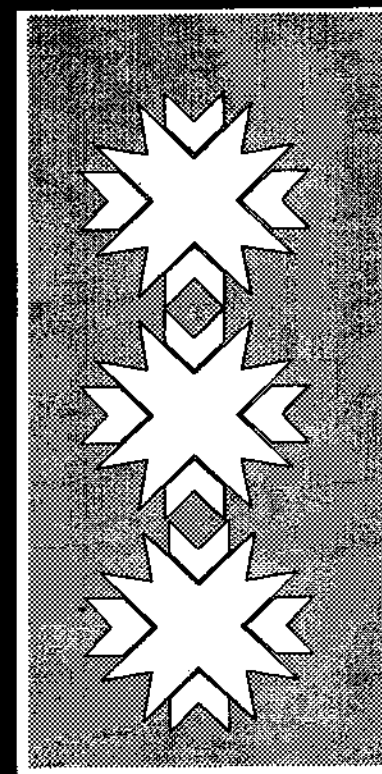
# GENERAL

CONCEPT OF EDUCATION  
IN LITHUANIA



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 **LITHUANIAN  
EDUCATION SCIENCE  
CENTRE**

VILNIUS  
1994

Translated from:

LIETUVOS ŠVIETIMO KONCEPCIJA,  
Lietuvos Respublikos kultūros ir švietimo ministerijos  
Leidybos centras, 1992. - 51 p.

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On the basis of the decisions of the Lithuanian Education Council (October 22, 1992) and the Board of the Ministry of Culture and Education (October 23, 1992), I present the General Concept of Education in Lithuania and the Educational Reform Program to society for its information and to the Government and Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania for approval.

November 26, 1992

DARIUS KUOLYS

Minister of Culture and Education  
Of the Republic of Lithuania

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## 1. GENERAL SECTION

The restoration of statehood in Lithuania has created new possibilities for social, cultural, economic and political development which corresponds with national aspirations. Like other post-communist countries, Lithuanian society is experiencing a fundamental historic shift. This provides a unique opportunity for Lithuania to join the community of democratic European nations, fully liberate the creative energies which were repressed during the years of occupation, and form a modern, open, pluralistic, and harmonious society of free citizens. Ideological polarization, dynamic economic and social relations, the increasing importance of information technology and scientific production, and the strengthening of individual independence and initiative are characteristic of this transitional phase.

The historic shift in national development demands a change in the mental climate of the society: a basic comprehension of democratic values, a new political and economic literacy, the maturation of a moral culture. These social changes are possible only if Lithuanian education is radically reformed and given new objectives. Education is a fundamental factor in the development of society, the basis for all social reforms. On the other hand, education can successfully achieve its goals only when its development surpasses the development of society in general. For this reason, it is essential that education become a State-supported priority.

The intention of educational reform in Lithuania is not to justify existing social and ideological structures, but to provide a basis for dynamic social renewal and open and analytic social consciousness.

The main goal of educational reform is an independent and creative individual, whose full potential emerges in school.

Educational reform should help the individual flourish in social and cultural spheres and cultivate his cultural identity and the understanding that he is not only a consumer of native culture, but its creator as well, responsible for its development and preservation.

Lithuanian education depends on close cooperation between the family, the school, and society. The school is a cultural hearth open to the family and society.

At the core of a nation's independent and full life is the individual, who is educated in the spirit of educational reform, is mature and dedicated to the new historic period of national development, is aware, makes decisions independently, is active in society, bases his worldview on national and basic human values, is able to competently and responsibly participate in the creation and development of a democratic society and state.

In this context education is understood as a whole made up of historically formed, purposeful methods of activity and organizational structures. The objective is an educated individual and society.

Education is the totality of necessary conditions for the individual to creatively express his natural abilities in the adoption and development of culture. Thus defined, education incorporates teaching, learning, training, fostering, and self-education.

Educational reform, which was started under Soviet occupation can be tentatively divided into four periods:

Phase I (up to 11 March 1990):

- the concept of a national school is presented (end of 1988);
- Lithuanian teachers, scientists, and artists pool their energies in an effort to create new curricula, textbooks, and educational materials based on the unique national culture;
- the theoretical foundation of educational reform (types of schools, educational content) and legal documents (laws governing education, school regulations) are drawn up.

Phase II (after the reestablishment of the Lithuanian state):

- the administrative structures (the Ministry of Culture and Education, regional departments of education) are reorganized;

— the restructuring of vocational schools and colleges is begun;

— changes are implemented in the system of higher education (undergraduate and graduate studies are reorganized, the law on science and studies is passed);

— the law governing education in the Republic of Lithuania is passed, enacting the conceptual regulations of educational reform and creating a legal basis for the restructuring of the education system.

Phase III (present phase, estimated to continue until 1998):

— a uniform permanent Lithuanian educational system is created. It covers formal and informal education, an expanded network of public and private educational institutions. The education reform program outlines Phase III activity.

Phase IV (1998-2005):

— the results of reform are evaluated and summarized; the structure, curricula, and textbooks are revised and expanded.

## Goals and principles

Educational goals:

— to help the individual discover universal human values and base his life upon them;

— to foster a person who is able to think critically, evaluate existential questions, make decisions responsibly, and operate independently;

— to foster an individual who is prepared for professional work, determined and able to adapt to an everchanging social and economic environment and participate in its betterment;

— to develop the individual's national and cultural consciousness;

— to prepare the person for democracy;

— to raise a citizen of Lithuania.

To achieve these goals a permanent, differentiated, and integrated educational system is being created in Lithuania.

The educational system is based on European cultural values: the absolute value of the individual, neighbourly love, innate equality among men, freedom of conscience, tolerance, the affirmation of democratic social relations.

Educational reform is based on the educational experience of democratic Lithuania and Europe.

Principles of Lithuanian Education:

1. Humanism — the affirmation of the absolute value of the individual and his freedom and responsibility to choose.

2. Democracy — the learning of and ability to base one's life on democratic values; the creation and application of democratic relations in education; the universal access to education; and the recognition that morality is fundamental to democracy.

3. A commitment to Lithuanian culture and the preservation of its identity and historic continuity. Lithuanian education protects and promotes a pluralistic culture enriched by national minorities.

4. Renewal — an openness to change and critical acceptance of novelty, while retaining universal norms of morality and a core of national culture.

## 2. STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The educational system consists of formal and informal educational structures (Fig. 1 and 2).

Formal education is regulated and controlled by the Government and ends with examinations and receipt of a diploma or certificate recognized by the Government. The State Education Register defines formal education by spelling out standards of general education, lists of specialties and professions, general requirements for curricula and modules (individual curriculum sections), and qualification requirements.

Formal education consists of: a) the sequential education system, including preschools, general education schools (including special schools), vocational schools, colleges, and universities; b)

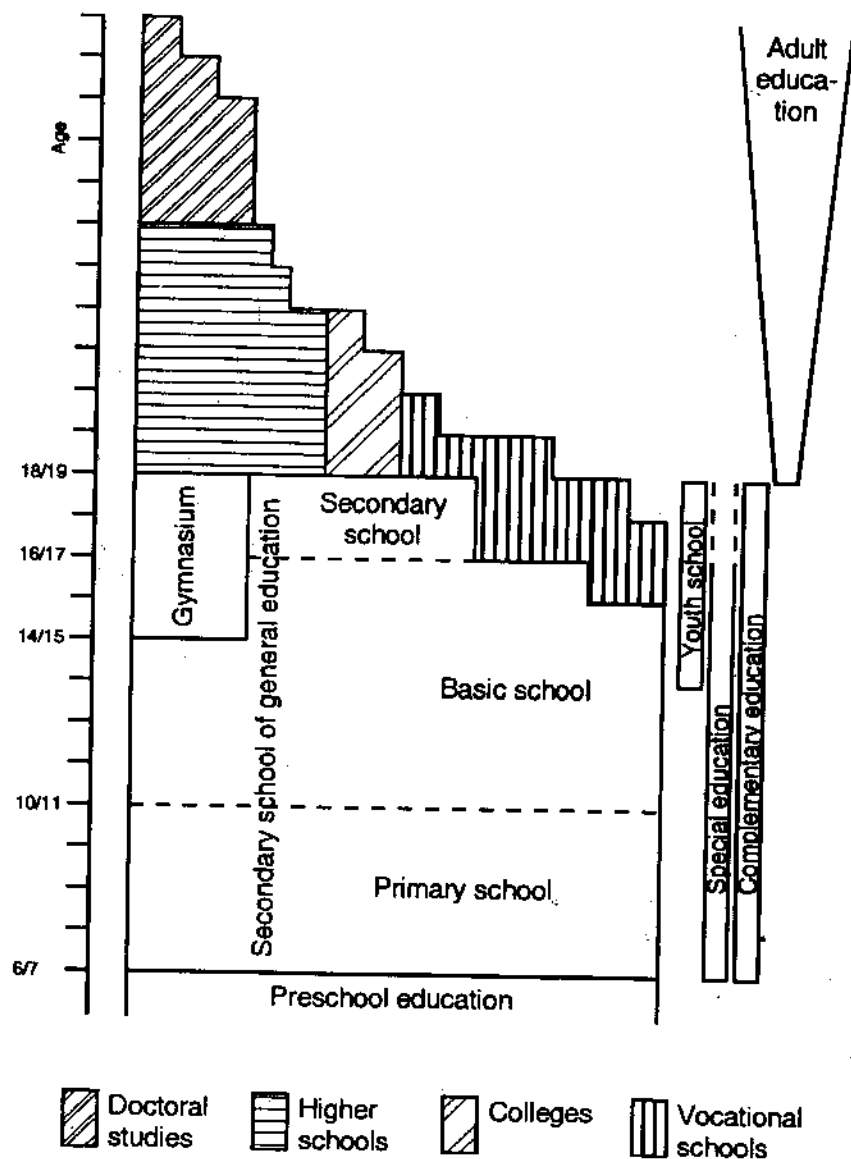


Fig. 1. Scheme of the educational system

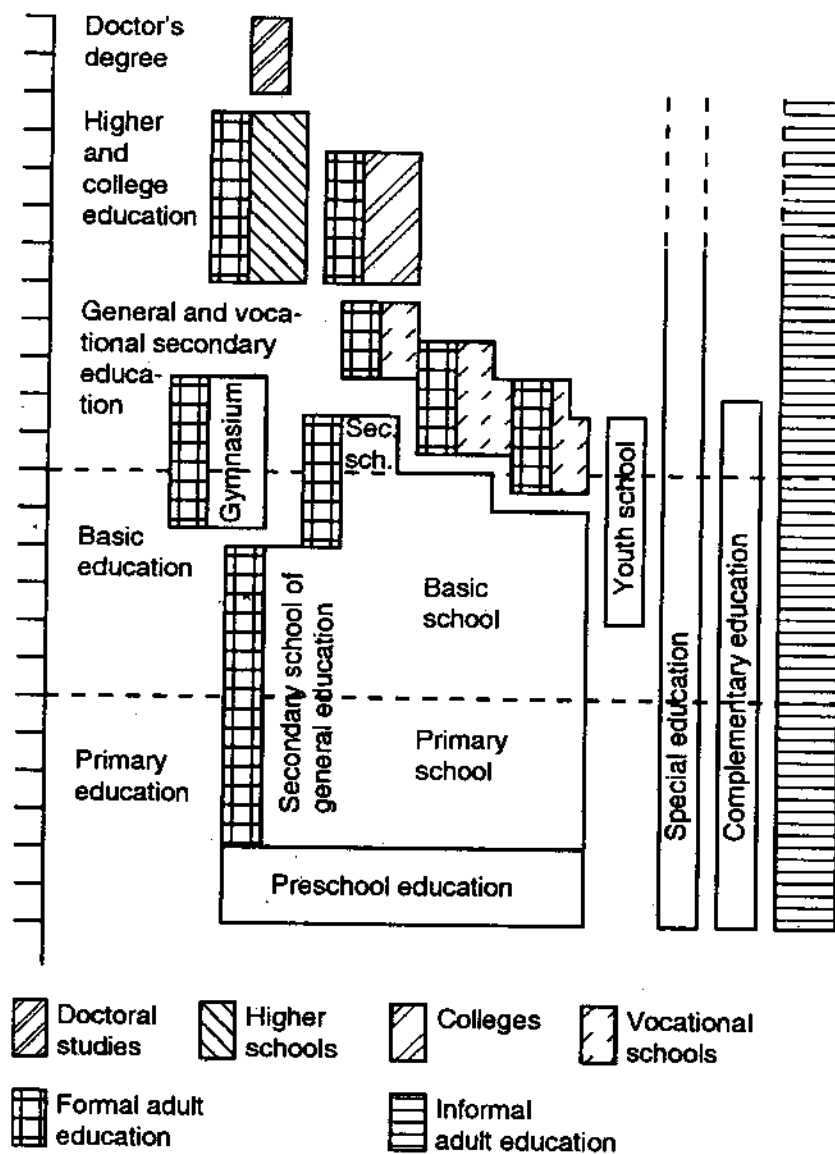


Fig. 2. Scheme of the educational system (according to level of education)

nonsequential parts of the educational system, including formal adult education institutions.

Informal education consists of self-education, which is based on individual or societal interests and is not defined by the State Education Register.

## 2.1. The Sequential Education System

It is created according to the principles of continuity and spirality and guarantees the flexibility and multiformity of the system.

Preschool-age children are raised at home and in preschools.

An education is offered by primary, basic (ten-year), and general secondary schools, gymnasiums, youth schools, vocational schools, colleges, universities, and special education schools. Schooling is compulsory to the age of 16 (inclusive).

The three levels of general education are primary, basic, and upper secondary. Primary schools consist of grades 1 through 4 of the general education school. Children who are not younger than 6 and who have reached the required psycho-physical developmental stage are accepted into the first class. To ease the transition from preschool to primary school preparatory classes are being established in schools for children, age 5-6, who have not attended kindergarten. After completion of primary school students continue their education at the basic education school level, grades 5 through 10. The third general education level (the upper secondary school) includes grades 11 through 12.

The gymnasium is an extended profiled school offering a general education at a more advanced level. It consists of grades 9 through 12.

Special education schools educate children who are unable to attend general education schools because of serious physical or developmental handicaps.

Youth schools are geared towards providing the individual with basic knowledge about the world, elementary work skills, and a general education. These schools are for those who for some reason are unable to attend the general schools, who lack

motivation, or whose attendance is dictated by social conditions.

Vocational schools, colleges, and universities prepare young people for professional life.

Vocational schools provide training for work in the economy or in the service sector at the basic professional qualification level and offer a general education.

Colleges provide training for jobs in various economic and social sectors at an advanced professional qualification level and offer a general cultural education.

Schools of higher education prepare the individual for professional, scientific, or cultural work at the highest qualification level.

## 2.2. Adult (Nonsequential) Education

These institutions are geared toward those 18 or older. Formal education of this type consists of general and professional education at various levels, including college and university level, and is offered by both special adult education institutions (adult schools, learning centers, open universities, etc.) and special adult education departments within institutions of the sequential education system. One aspect characteristic of nonsequential education is the module system. The course content and pace are adapted to the student's experience and interests. By using the module system it is possible to transfer from nonsequential education to the sequential education system.

## 2.3. Complementary Education

By studying at institutions of the sequential education system students can further develop their talents, satisfy their interests or need for self-expression. Doing so is possible at sequential and nonsequential education institutions such as music, art, sport, technical schools, various study groups, clubs, societies, etc.

Educational institutions can be State-run or private. State educational facilities are established and run by the State. Private educational institutions may receive State aid.

### 3. GENERAL CHILD AND YOUTH EDUCATION

General child and youth education is the main link in sequential education, the foundation for an individual's further education and future activity.

The purpose of general child and youth education is to help each person's individuality unfold in his native culture and to prepare him for a harmonious social life.

At this level, a general education that meets modern needs is provided, and a desire to learn throughout one's lifetime is instilled.

General education is geared toward the child, his needs and abilities. The relationship between the teacher and the pupil is characterized by mutual respect and cooperation. Individual and group initiative is supported and encouraged.

#### 3.1. Preschool Education

Preschool education conforms to the child's primary needs: security, activity, and self-expression. Its goal — to encourage the child's independence, initiative, and creativity as well as to care for and protect the child's physical well-being.

Preschoolers are raised in the family, nurseries (up to age 3), and kindergartens (up to age 6-7).

The general curricula approved by the Ministry of Culture and Education provide guidelines for preschools. They are adapted according to the individual needs of the preschool. The form of instruction is freely chosen.

Nursery and kindergarten attendance is not compulsory. Children attend kindergarten from the age of 4 or 5 to prepare for school and develop social skills.

#### 3.2. Schooling

General schooling takes place in 12-year secondary schools. It is made up of three levels: primary school (grades 1-4), basic

school (grades 5-10), upper secondary school (grades 11-12). All three levels can comprise one organizational unit or function separately.

Children with mild physical handicaps or learning disabilities are taught along with healthy children and receive additional necessary assistance.

The content and form of instruction are chosen taking into account characteristics of the pupils' maturity level as they move through the primary (grades 1-4), adaptation (grades 5-6), observation (grades 7-8), orientation (grades 9-10), and decision-making (grades 11-12) phases.

Educational content and forms of instruction are differentiated and individualized. This allows for required and elective subjects and takes into account the child's interests, intellectual capabilities, and health.

The Ministry of Culture and Education approves general curriculum requirements, which are taken into account in all public schools. Schools concretize the requirements by choosing textbooks, creating and choosing individual curricula. The teacher creates or chooses individual curricula, freely chooses methods and the form of instruction. Individual subject curricula are integrated with cross-curricular programs. Study of the native language, ethics, civics, ethnic culture, ecology, health, labor, technology, and aesthetics provides a value orientation to the study of other subjects and acquaints young people with appropriate means of action.

Content curricula are created according to spiral and concentricity principles.

On the basis of the child's cognitive characteristics at different age levels, several educational content concentric levels are recognized. At each of them, the content is presented according to these principles: concrete-abstract, elementary-complex, integrated-differentiated.

The concentricity principle is supplemented by the spiral principle. Topics and problems are discussed at preschool and elementary school levels in age-appropriate ways. These topics and problems are reevaluated in the upper grades at more advanced levels.

The four educational content concentric levels correspond with the new general education school structure of 4+4+2+2.

At the first level, which covers the primary school years, emphasis is laid on a concrete and integrated view of the world. The child is acquainted with his immediate surroundings. Moral sensitivity is fostered. Elementary facts about man, nature, the native country are taught. Primary native language, reading, writing, arithmetic skills are learned. The ability to express one's thoughts in simple oral and written language is encouraged. The basics of a foreign language are taught; the skills of cooperation, artistic expression are gained. The child learns by example, experience, activity, and direct contact. Primary education content is equally mandatory for all. An opportunity for supplemental learning is provided.

The purpose of integrated teaching is to help the child form a whole and unified view of the world.

The purpose of differentiated teaching is to help form the child's structural thinking by teaching individual subjects separately:

- to create an opportunity for the child to choose according to his own interests and inclinations (profiled teaching);
- to create conditions for the child to learn consistent with his talents and abilities (individualized teaching).

Basic subjects are usually all taught by the same teacher at this level. The primary school cooperates closely with the family.

At the second concentric level, which covers grades 5 through 8 of the basic school, different teachers teach different subjects. Close subject integration remains. Common problems uniting individual subjects (the relationship between man and nature, personality and culture, the individual and society) and practical aspects of everyday life are raised. Knowledge of the native language, literature, mathematics, natural science is increased.

The fostering of ethics and aesthetics is continued; the learning of a second foreign language and social studies is begun. The curriculum consists of required subjects and electives. Specialized orientation begins at the 7-8th grade level.

At the third concentric level, which covers grades 9 through 10 of the basic school, learning of basic subjects continues. A

greater emphasis is placed on fostering abstract thinking. Previously learned material is summarized. This guarantees meeting a standard of general education. A greater variety of courses is available. Electives should aid in making future educational and professional decisions. At the third level a new aspect of differentiation appears. A student can choose to take certain subjects at different levels: basic (B) or advanced (A). Changing levels is possible during the school year. Completion of the third level corresponds with completion of the basic school. Upon completion of the 10th grade the student receives a basic school certificate, which lists the completed required subjects and their evaluation at the (A) or (B) level. The Government prescribes a basic school standard — a level of required knowledge of subject matter and skills. The list of subjects is made up of a core: required subjects — ethics, native language and literature, mathematics, history, foreign languages, physical education, plus other subjects which are chosen — languages, natural and exact sciences, social sciences, and arts.

At the fourth concentric level, which covers the 11th and 12th grades of the secondary school, teaching is profiled. Taking into account the interests of the students, the capabilities of the school and the concrete situation, a school can offer a liberal arts, natural science, technical, economic-commercial program or other variants. All aspects of differentiation remain. A new level of integration is reached by systematic teaching, emphasis on abstract thinking and problem solving. Taking into account greater student motivation, greater requirements are placed on independent study.

Examinations are required to graduate from secondary school. A student takes 5-7 examinations: required exams in the native language and literature, mathematics, and a foreign language; and one exam in a subject from each elective block — humanities, sciences, and social sciences. The student chooses the level (A) or (B) at the time of the examination. Upon passing his examinations the student receives a Government — approved secondary school diploma. A secondary school education consists of the standard basic school education and prescribed modules which are learned in the secondary school, in the gymnasium, or in the

vocational school. With this diploma a student can apply to universities, colleges, or vocational schools. If a student does not pass the examinations, he receives a graduation certificate which allows him to study in vocational schools and in some cases colleges.

The school makes it possible to take examinations without attending lectures and to receive a diploma. A general education is also offered by the gymnasiums and youth schools.

A more demanding profiled program in the humanities, natural sciences, or technological-commercial studies as well as broader opportunities for the study of all subjects is offered by the gymnasium. A student enters the gymnasium after completing the 8th basic school grade. A secondary school student can enter the gymnasium at any level upon passing examinations. To graduate, the student must pass the standard secondary school graduation examinations.

Basic and secondary school students who do not adapt to or are for social reasons unable to attend the general education school may attend a youth school. Usually the youth school is attended for one or two years. From the youth school a student can reenter the general education school or enter a vocational school. Educational content and forms of instruction in the youth school are differentiated and individualized.

A student can receive a basic and secondary school education by studying independently.

Structural reform of schools and the legal, economic and organizational aspects are discussed in the education reform program.

Apart from the secondary school, gymnasium, and youth school, a general secondary education in Lithuania is offered by certain vocational, hospital-children's home, and boarding schools, by detention facility and prison schools, and by general adult education schools.

### 3.3. Special Schools

Children with severe physical or mental handicaps who are unable to attend general education schools are taught in special

schools. Suitable conditions for corrective therapies, compensation, personality development, preparation for future activity, professional adaptation and integration are created in these schools. A child is sent to a special school only when corrective help provided by a school psychologist, the child's teachers, or other specialists does not achieve expected results. Children can transfer from a special school to a general education school.

### 3.4. Education of Children Belonging to National Minorities

There are national minority preschools and general education schools of every level in Lithuania. They are organized according to the general principles in this Concept. These schools provide an opportunity for children to receive a general education based on their native culture, with certain subjects taught in their native language. At the same time the schools help the children integrate into Lithuanian culture and society. These schools use textbooks prepared in Lithuania and foreign textbooks approved by the Ministry of Culture and Education. One of the languages taught in these schools is the official State language — Lithuanian. A student is required to reach a fluency level which will allow him to continue his education (and study in universities) in the official State language.

At the initiative of the minority community weekend schools may be established.

## 4. VOCATIONAL YOUTH EDUCATION

Vocational education is the part of the sequential education system which provides an opportunity to receive vocational training for jobs in various economic and cultural spheres. Only general aspects of vocational education are discussed in this Concept.

The main goals of vocational education are:

— to create an opportunity to receive a vocational and general cultural education which meets today's scientific, technical, and cultural standards as well as the requirements of the chosen profession;

— to foster a desire to continuously raise one's qualifications, to be concerned with one's cultural competency, to seek a meaningful and diverse expansion of one's personality.

Many of today's professional fields demand a comprehensive general education, social and cultural competency, and continuous training, especially in view of the rapid developments in technical processes and technology. Because of this: a) premature vocational training is avoided (it is begun after the mandatory schooling period); b) an attempt is made to provide students with a comprehensive theoretical general and vocational education to create opportunities for retraining (requalification) and more flexible adaptation to constantly changing production and job market conditions.

The vocational training system is closely connected with the cultural and economic sphere, and its effects directly influence social conditions. Thus, a common approach in coordinating the interests of the social partners, i.e., the State, the employer, and the employee, is essential. The partners work together to define goals, content, methods, and forms of vocational training, to coordinate and evaluate vocational training institutions, to make decisions about the establishment, reorganization, and closing of these institutions. An information system is being created in an attempt to guarantee that the activities of the partners are effectively coordinated and that information is conveyed to society. This system collects and disseminates information about job market perspectives, vocational training, advanced training and retraining requirements, and services provided by the vocational training system.

The vocational education system consists of vocational schools and higher schools (colleges). Vocational schools train qualified manual laborers as well as various workers in the service, business, and cultural sectors. Colleges train specialists, workers with a higher education for various jobs in the production, service, and cultural sectors, as well as future private businessmen.

## 4.1. Vocational Schools

The vocational school system is made up of State-run and private vocational schools of various types and academic levels. State-run schools are under the direction of the Ministry of Culture and Education or other ministries (departments). In addition to vocational schools which have a formal education institution status, corporations and individuals may establish various informal institutions providing vocational training.

Usually students not younger than 16 are accepted by vocational schools. Some schools may make exceptions and accept students from the age of 15. Youth schools, which accept students under the age of 16, may be established next to vocational schools. Vocational schools offer different training programs of various lengths to students of different ages and educational backgrounds.

1. The main vocational training program (2-3 years) is geared toward those 16 and over, who have finished the basic school. Students receive vocational training and the general education required to apply to comparable schools of higher education.

2. Students of the same age and background who do not wish to receive a general education complete only the vocational training program.

3. Graduates of secondary schools or gymnasiums who desire vocational training can complete a vocational training program (up to 2 years).

4. Students who have not finished the basic school and are not under 15 years of age may attend 2- or 3-year vocational training programs. Vocational schools offer general education programs and simplified general education programs, which acquaint the student with the content of his unfinished general education.

From an organizational standpoint vocational schools can offer one, several, or all of the aforementioned programs.

In order for the network of vocational schools to be a well-coordinated system of educational institutions, continuity between programs at such schools is guaranteed, as are close ties between vocational schools and general education secondary schools, colleges, and schools of higher education.

Three social partners, i.e., the State, the employers, and the employees, participate in coordinating the activities of the vocational schools. The State is represented by the Ministry of Culture and Education, regional departments of education, departments and other ministries (departments) governing vocational schools; employers are represented by the Chamber of Industry and Trade, the Chamber of Agriculture, and other associations; employees are represented by unions. Three-party governing structures are being established — the Lithuanian Council for Vocational Training as well as regional vocational training committees. The social partners organize financing for the vocational school from the State and regional budgets, determine professional requirements, and evaluate qualifications. The social partners also regulate school enrollment, taking into account job market demands. This cooperation is the foundation of the concept of the vocational school.

The type, structure, and length of study program at each individual school is determined by taking into account the demands of the job market, the complexity of the profession, the level of general and vocational education offered, the teaching staff, the technical base, etc.

Vocational schools operate according to programs approved by representatives of all interested social partners. Programs are approved by the Ministry of Culture and Education or coordinated with the Ministry according to established rules.

The educational process in vocational schools consists of theoretical learning as well as the development of practical skills. The theoretical part should include: a) a general cultural education, b) basics of mathematics and natural science, c) information about the job world (social, economic, legal, psychological, medical aspects), d) general theoretical basics of the profession, e) concrete knowledge of the specific activities of the specialty.

Several ways of organizing the educational process are possible:

- 1) A student signs a contract with an enterprise and completes the practical training in the enterprise.

- 2) After completion of the first year of vocational school, with the school mediating, a contract is signed with a licensed enterprise, and the practical training is continued in the enterprise.

- 3) Practical training is received in training centers, where working conditions are similar to those in enterprises.

In all of these cases theory is learned in school. Thus, a school is responsible for theoretical preparation, and the enterprise (center) is responsible for the practical training.

- 4) Theory and practice are acquired at the school. In this case the practical qualification examination is taken only after practical job experience.

- 5) A plant (enterprise) runs a school where students can learn theory, as well as job skills.

Vocational schools widely make use of the module system which allows for flexible organization of studies and adaptability to the changing conditions of the job market and advances in technology. To receive a qualification certificate one must pass both theoretical and practical qualification examinations. The social partners make up the Qualification Committees. The theoretical examinations are taken at the school. The practical examination is taken at enterprises or at the practical training centers. The qualification certificate is issued by the Chamber of Industry and Trade, the Chamber of Agriculture, or other associations. Examinations in general education subjects taken at vocational schools may be accepted as secondary school final examinations if the Ministry of Education confirms that the programs for these subjects meet secondary school requirements.

## 4.2. Colleges

The goal of college is to offer a higher education and create opportunities for students to become competent specialists and good citizens. These specialists are able to work independently in the economic and cultural spheres or assist other specialists with university degrees. Studies conclude with state examinations or defense of a final project.

Colleges can be State-run or private. The Education Register regulates the college structure, nomenclature of specialties, education content, and length. The social partners participate in forming the Register. They take into account the economic structure in

Lithuania, as well as the developmental outlook, the needs of the job market and the changes predicted within it, and the demands on schools which train specialists for professional work. The level of education offered by colleges is between that of a secondary school and that of a university. That is why the activities of a college are closely linked with those of higher schools, vocational schools, and secondary schools. A college may be associated with a comparable higher school or have an associate vocational school. Continuity of educational content between colleges, vocational schools, secondary schools, and higher schools is guaranteed. Students with a secondary education are accepted by colleges.

Colleges are urged to associate and coordinate their programs with similar higher schools, to use the teaching base to achieve mutual college and university goals, and to find other ways of working together. Possibilities for students to transfer from colleges to universities and vice versa may be created. Conditions for transfers are determined by the schools themselves.

Coordinating institutions, comprised of representatives of colleges and higher schools, of the Ministry of Culture and Education, and of the Chambers of Industry and Trade and of Agriculture and Trades as well as trade unions, are created to guarantee close interaction between colleges and the production, commercial, service, and higher education spheres.

The length of study in colleges, usually 2 to 4 years, depends on the requirements of the particular specialty. Education content consists of general cultural subjects as well as fundamental (core), professional, and special subjects. General cultural and fundamental (core) subject content is relatively stable. The content of special subjects is characterized as dynamic because of advances in science and technology and changing economic needs. Taking into account general education goals and specific vocational training tasks, colleges prepare specific educational content projects in coordination with other interested social partners. The projects are submitted to the Ministry of Culture and Education for approval.

The college educational process combines theoretical and practical training. The module learning system as well as various independent student projects is widely used. Persons studying in

colleges have student status. Colleges may offer bachelor degree programs, the same degree as issued by higher schools. Levels of general education and vocational training are evaluated by State examination committees which are chosen with all social partners concurring.

## 5. HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education is the highest level of the sequential education system in Lithuania. The main objective of higher schools is to offer students a higher education, scientifically sound general and professional basics which enable the individual to work creatively and professionally in various economic and cultural spheres. Higher schools prepare students for professional work which requires either knowledge of scientific methods and their application or artistic mastery. An important goal of higher education is to create favorable conditions for persons with a university education to continue their studies, change or acquire a new qualification, and fulfill spiritual needs not directly associated with their profession.

The higher education system operates on a principle of unity between study and scientific or cultural activity. Pedagogical work is purposefully integrated with the training of scientists, scientific research, or artistic endeavours. Higher schools are independent centers of free scientific thought, meaningful centers of science and culture which determine the development of science, technology and culture in Lithuania and influence democratic processes in society. An atmosphere of democratic interaction and cooperation is being created in higher schools.

Having legal autonomy, higher schools operate on the principle of openness. This helps anticipate the development and application of new scientific and artistic ideas and methods, respond to the needs of society, renew programs, and assure free exchange of professors and students between universities and attendance in international cooperation programs.

Higher schools operate in the context of scientific, cultural, and economic relations between Lithuania and the rest of the

world. Changes in the content and form of study, and in relations with the State are made within this context. Renewal based on competition, free initiative, and moderate government regulation occurs continuously. These premises influence the variety in the structure and study programs of higher education.

### 5.1. Structure

There are State-run and private, university and non-university higher schools in Lithuania. The academic status of a higher school is largely determined by the level of and the relationship between the general education and specialized professional training it offers, the nature, scale, and level of scientific research or artistic activity, and societal recognition. Also taken into account is the right of the school to grant certifications and degrees. The academic status of State-run and private higher schools is granted and reviewed by the State. Fundamental scientific research is conducted in universities, while applied research is predominant in non-university higher schools. To achieve these goals independent scientific structures (laboratories, institutes, research centers, etc.) are being created in institutions of higher education. Higher schools join with State scientific institutes to develop fundamental and applied research.

Private higher schools can be established by private individuals or social and other private organizations. In the transitional phase the granting of professional degrees to specialists in specific fields (education, law, medicine, pharmacy, and veterinary medicine) trained in private higher schools is decided by the State.

Military and police academies make up a separate group of State-run schools of higher education. The activity of these schools is regulated by special laws (statutes) as well as laws governing education and science. Seminaries, higher schools which prepare men for the priesthood, also operate in Lithuania. They function according to the legal principles which govern relations between Church and State. Theological studies are also possible in State-run higher schools with the Church hierarchy and the institution concurring.

University and non-university schools of higher education exist in Lithuania. The main activities of universities are joint and cooperative university teaching and pure scientific research. Universities rest on the highest competence of lecturers and scientists, broad information and teaching possibilities, and a modern scientific base.

University doctoral programs encompass various fields of study. Traditional universities are distinguished from specialized universities (technical, technological, pedagogical, etc.). The liberal arts and natural sciences dominate in traditional universities, while engineering sciences with an emphasis on the humanities prevail in technological and technical universities.

Non-university schools of higher education are closely connected with a single branch of culture or science, a concrete and practical sphere of activity.

University studies include study at all three levels. Studies at non-university higher schools may be three, two or one level. Two or one level institutions can be independent structures, as well as subordinate components of higher level institutions. Various associate ties are also possible.

### 5.2. Admittance and Study

Enrollment in State higher schools is not limited. When there are more applicants than can be accepted, admission occurs by contest. Higher schools may arrange entrance examinations or otherwise test the knowledge, practical or artistic skills of applicants. Every person having a graduation diploma or any certificate showing completion of a secondary school education may enter university at the first level. Higher schools adopt entrance requirements based on State graduation examinations. Persons having the knowledge or skills set by higher schools may be accepted to higher levels of study. Higher school study programs are oriented toward the needs of a person who acts independently in an ever-changing environment. Curricula are flexible and constantly renewed, encouraging the students themselves to plan their studies. The student evaluation system is based on the principles applied in international practice.

Higher schools may offer studies at the first, second and third level. Upon successful completion of studies, bachelor's, master's (or equivalent qualification degrees) and doctor's degrees are granted. Qualification degrees show the education and professional qualification level and grant the right to continue studies at a higher level or to work in a professional capacity. The main goal of the first level of study is to offer a basic education. Programs at this level encompass general theory, specialty theory and practical subject modules. The specialty theory and practical subject modules help establish the direction of studies. First level studies last up to four years. Upon successful completion a bachelor degree and/or a professional qualification is granted. Passing State examinations is necessary to obtain a professional qualification in fields where the granting of degrees is regulated by the State. In some cases higher schools may grant college graduates a bachelor's degree.

The master's program consists of more in-depth theory and specialty subject modules as well as interdisciplinary courses. The main characteristics of master's studies are individualized study programs of freely chosen courses and the independent strengthening of the student's scientific skills. University master's programs offer a broad spectrum of theory modules and interdisciplinary courses. Non-university institution master's program modules and courses are marked by a narrower professional orientation. Studies in the master's programs last up to three years. Completion of the master's program includes defense of a thesis or other final project. In certain fields which are regulated by the State the professional qualification associated with the Master's degree must be confirmed by passing the mandatory State examination. Upon completion of studies at the second level other qualification degrees, e.g., certified engineer, may also be granted.

The goal of the highest level of studies, the doctoral level, is to prepare scientists and pedagogues of the highest competency. Doctoral programs are completed in no more than five years and encompass study and writing of a dissertation.

### 5.3. State Regulation

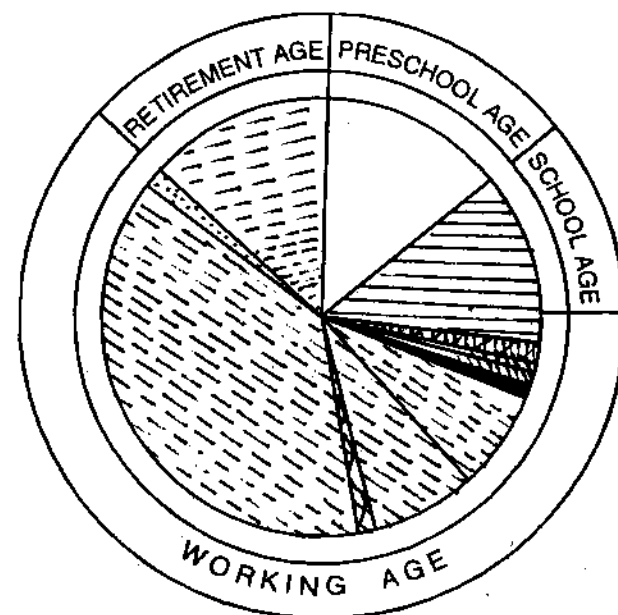
The legal basis of the activity of higher schools is the Law of the Lithuanian Republic on Science and Studies, which confirms the most important principles regarding higher schools and their relationship with the State. The creative, research, and pedagogical work done in higher schools is independent of the political, ideological, and economical government. Higher schools operate under the executive government's regulation and coordination. But the decisions about internal issues of administration, organization of studies, scientific and artistic activity, and financial management are made independently according to the statutes of the higher school, which are legally binding. The autonomy of higher schools fosters academic communities. These communities guarantee the academic rights and freedoms of their members and are able to satisfy all the needs of society which are associated with higher education.

The main levers of State regulation of higher education are the partial financing of State higher schools and the accreditation and licencing of institutions of study. State financing of higher schools is based on the need for specialists and the scientific and cultural priorities of the State. Tuition for higher education can be charged only when special scholarship funds which provide student loans under favorable conditions for socially disadvantaged students have been created. The purpose of accreditation is to evaluate the ability of higher schools to grant internationally comparable and accepted qualifications and education degrees. Upon accreditation higher schools are granted the right to train specialists, develop scientific research, grant diplomas and other equivalent certificates recognized by the State. Higher schools are nominated by the Lithuanian Science Council for accreditation by the Government. The right to train specialists (grant diplomas or certificates), not specified at the time of a higher school's establishment or accreditation, is obtained according to Government-established rules. Receiving an appropriate licence is necessary.

## 6. ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education is the largest part of the continuous education system and encompasses persons who are usually above the age of 18 and not studying in the sequential education school system (fig. 3). Voluntary selection of fields and specific training methods characterize adult education. Adult education is not simply a continuation of the youth education system. It allows a person, who has decided and is prepared, to begin new training at any level and to continue that training. The purpose of this system is two-fold. First, by having as a goal the expansion of an individual's physical, spiritual, and mental abilities, adult education allows the individual to expand his abilities in a chosen professional field. But it also allows him to change his occupational direction or profession because of social conditions or individual incentive. The latter gives adult education a new moral tone, which is understood as society's support for the person who was earlier unable to choose a profession according to abilities and inclinations. An opportunity is created for him to choose his occupational direction for the second time. The experience of small European nations which do not have great natural resources shows that flexibility in professional adult education is especially important. International professional cooperation and the need to adapt to ever-changing economic developments compel individuals to make frequent changes in professional occupational direction. The obligation of the State is to create favorable conditions for such changes. Such changes also require the individual to prepare himself adequately and to have the desire and courage to do so. This type of fostering of the individual is also a goal of adult education.

The main educational institutions (fig. 4) where formal study occurs are adult courses (classes) in general education schools and special adult sections (day, evening, and correspondence) in vocational schools, colleges, and schools of higher education or independent study institutions (adult general education centers, retraining centers, etc.). Adult education is also available in other State-authorized, State-run, and private adult education institutions and teaching enterprises. Formal studies are regulated by



- PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN
- ⊖ STUDENTS AT SCHOOLS OF GENERAL EDUCATION  
(538.000 - 14,6% of the population of Lithuania)
- ⊗ STUDENTS AT VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS  
(64.000 - 1,7% of the population of Lithuania)
- ⊙ STUDENTS AT COLLEGES  
(56.000 - 1,5%, adults 12.300 - 0,3%)
- ⊕ STUDENTS AT SCHOOLS OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
(66.000 - 1,7%, correspondence students 28.000 - 0,8%)
- ⊗ POPULATION OF WORKING AGE
- STUDENTS AT ADULT SCHOOLS OF GENERAL EDUCATION  
(8.000 - 0,2%)
- ⊙ STUDENTS TAKING COURSES TO IMPROVE THEIR QUALIFICATIONS  
(40.000 - 1,1%)
- ⊙ UNEMPLOYED
- ⊙ RETIRED PEOPLE

Fig. 3. The education of the people of Lithuania according to age group (1991-1992 school year)

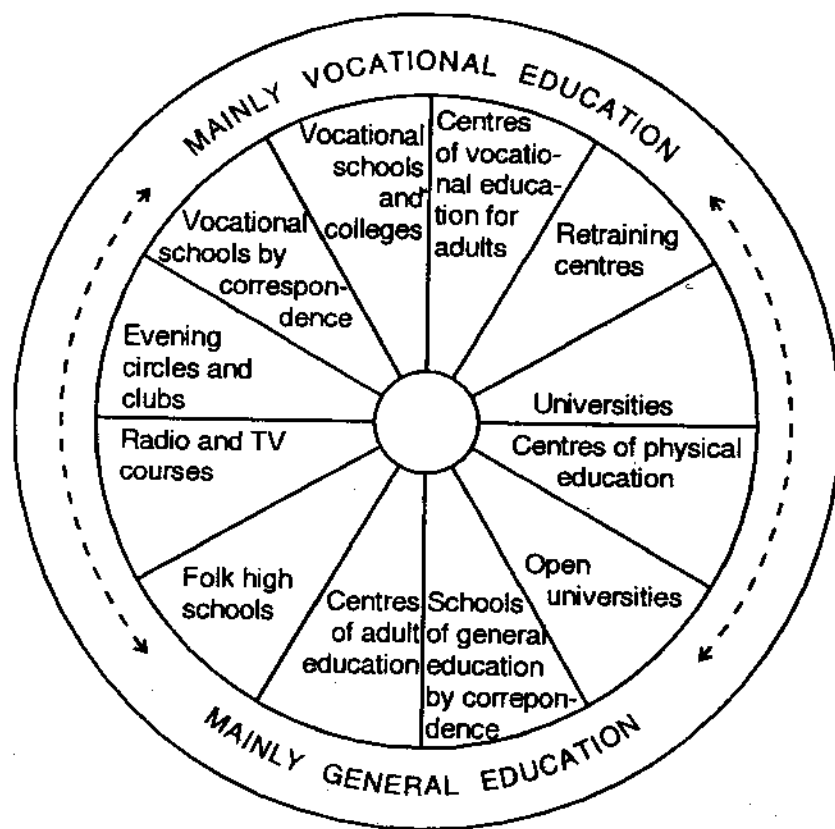


Fig. 4. Types of institutions for adult education

the State Education Register. Employed persons may retrain themselves or improve their qualifications in formal education institutions. The creation of new programs for informal study and the organization of this type of study in formal education institutions is encouraged. Educational institutions of various levels are part of the formal adult education system, and transfers from one level to another are regulated by established rules. The formal adult educational system guarantees the same education level as the sequential education system, making it possible to transfer at the same level from an institution in one system to an institution in another system.

Informal adult education encompasses all education (general and vocational training) not included in the State Register. Social needs (qualification improvement, lack of professional competence) and the need for self-expression (professional training, legal, political, and cultural education, fostering of recreational activities, etc.) are incentives for this type of education. Informal education is offered by officially registered State and private educational institutions, clubs, libraries, museums, associations, and organizations.

Two types of formal and informal adult education are emphasized: adult education which is directly connected with the needs of the labor market and the education of Government-assisted social groups. The first includes the training of the unemployed and employer-initiated employee training and differs in its specific goals (foremost is adaptability to labor market conditions) and financing. Training for the unemployed is financed by employment service bureaus, and employers pay for the training of required employees. Education may be both formal and informal. Training agreements are made between employment service bureaus, employers, and educational institutions. Training contracts are awarded to State and private educational institutions, including specialized retraining institutions, according to competition principles. The Government encourages the active participation of all types of State educational institutions in the preparation and implementation of programs. The second major type of adult education is the education of Government-assisted social groups. Handicapped persons, soldiers in the mandatory military service,

immigrants, and convicted persons belong to these groups. Education may be formal or informal and may have its own specific goals, e.g., basic adaptation for immigrants, preparation for post-demobilization employment, etc. The educational content of formal adult education is regulated by the State Register requirements for programs, subjects and their modules, and qualification. The content of informal education is not regulated, as long as it is not prohibited by State law. The exceptional aspect of informal education is the active participation of the participants in the preparation of programs and determination of content and length. Formal education is completed when a State-recognized certificate or a certificate of completion of a separate part (module) of a regulated program is issued. Module formal education allows the individual to rationally choose according to his own needs the pace and module sequence, as required to acquire a formal education level or specialty. Adult education programs and curricula are made to coincide with the education and experience of the adult. This is done by the lecturers of the adult education institutions.

The teachers (lecturers) in the adult education system are as qualified as the teachers (lecturers) in the sequential education system. They are trained in accordance with the general pedagogical training regulations. Teachers may be specially trained for this system. Library, museum, and club employees are trained in adult education. The State supports formal adult education in order to make it practically accessible to all. The State encourages and partly finances informal adult education. The conditions for receiving State aid are regulated.

## 7. TEACHER TRAINING

The goals of the renewal of Lithuanian education and society will be successfully achieved only with the training of teachers who are able to develop as much as possible the inborn physical, mental, and spiritual powers of the student and create conditions for the free expression of individuality and improvement of per-

sonality. Therefore, it is most important that future teachers be creative individuals, nurturers of human beings, and not only conveyers of objective information. They must be able to base fostering and pedagogical interaction on dialogue, tolerance, respect, fairness, insistence on high standards, and creativity. Teachers with their value systems and professional competence determine the nature of institutions, the goals of training, and the methods of achieving objectives. Teachers at educational institutions of all levels and stages must be culturally, morally, civically, intellectually, pedagogically, and scientifically competent.

Teacher training in Lithuania is regulated by the Law of the Lithuanian Republic on Education, the Law on Science and Study and their clauses. The main regulations governing teacher certification, advanced training and retraining are discussed in this document.

The following teachers may be specially trained for the education system: preschool teachers, elementary teachers, individual subject teachers (for the second and third levels of general education schools and gymnasiums), vocational teachers and lecturers (for trade and vocational schools and colleges), special education teachers (for teaching institutions for all age groups), social pedagogues, ethnic minority school teachers, university pedagogues, adult education pedagogues.

### 7.1. The Teacher Training System

Teachers are trained in pedagogical colleges and universities which are granted the right to train teachers by the Ministry of Culture and Education. The right to train teachers may also be granted to separate departments of other universities. The need for teachers in various specialties is determined by the Ministries of Culture and Education and of Social Welfare, as well as teacher training institutions. There are four levels of teacher training:

- I — study at a pedagogical college;
- II — study at a university (to receive a bachelor's degree);
- III — master's studies;
- IV — doctoral studies.

Admission to colleges and universities occurs according to the rules governing general admission to colleges and universities, but additional tests are given to find out if the applicant has the values necessary for a future teacher.

At the first level, teachers are trained in pedagogical colleges, which may be associated with universities. Persons with a general secondary school education or a higher education in a different field are accepted by these colleges. Studies last 3 to 4 years. Day classes are attended, and studies conclude with State examinations. College graduates may work as preschool, primary, and basic school teachers, in some cases also as upper secondary school teachers, or they may continue their studies at pedagogical universities.

At the second level, teachers of all specialties are trained. Persons with a secondary school education or a higher education (nonpedagogical) in a different field are accepted. Studies last 4 to 5 years. Those who have a secondary school education attend day classes. Those who have graduated from college with a similar specialty may choose day, evening, or correspondence courses. Studies conclude with State examinations. Graduates of the second level have the right to work in general education secondary schools or equivalent vocational schools or continue their studies at the master's level.

Teachers of all specialties as well as education administration specialists may continue their studies at the third (master's) level. Persons with a bachelor's degree and usually at least one year of teaching experience are accepted. Studies last 1 to 2 years. The form of study is determined by the university. Studies conclude with the defense of a master's thesis. Graduates of the third level gain the right to work in gymnasiums and colleges or continue their studies at the doctoral level.

College and university pedagogues with the highest qualifications are trained at the fourth (doctoral) level. Laws govern acceptance conditions and the length and order of study.

Graduates of any level of teacher training receive a diploma which states the specialty/ies (specialization) and the qualification (academic degree) level. Teachers receive the following qualification and academic degrees:

Bachelor's — those concluding the second level;  
Master's — those concluding the third level;  
Doctor's — those concluding the fourth level;  
Habilitated Doctor.

Graduates of levels one through three receive a pedagogical qualification when:

- it is determined that their qualification level matches State qualification requirements,
- they have had one year of practical pedagogical experience,
- they have attended additional theory courses if necessary.

State qualification requirements are determined by the Ministry of Culture and Education.

Pedagogues of high qualification, who have successfully defended doctoral or habilitated doctor's dissertations, receive the pedagogical titles of docent and professor.

Graduates of nonpedagogical universities who wish to receive pedagogical training may do so at universities which have accredited rights to train teachers. The length (usually not less than one year) and form of study are determined by the university.

Vocational teachers may also be trained in specialized non-pedagogical universities. Vocational teachers must have a vocational education, work experience in that field, and teacher training which may be received by attending specialized licensed courses (studies).

Study plans for teacher training are prepared by the college or university. Each pedagogue who has finished his studies should be able to teach no less than two disciplines. These schools determine the content of courses in the humanities and social disciplines, pedagogy, psychology, and subject methodology as well as the length of practical training in coordination with the Ministry of Culture and Education.

## 7.2. Teacher Qualification Improvement, Retraining, and Certification

Teacher qualification improvement is a continuous process, a part of adult education. Educational institutions, where teachers

are employed, create the necessary conditions for this. A teacher is granted no less than two months during a five-year period for qualification improvement. A teacher freely chooses how this will be done and receives a full salary during that time.

Teacher qualification improvement is divided into formal and informal. Forms of formal qualification improvement are: courses in the subject and its teaching methodology, pedagogy, psychology, humanities and social studies, special internships.

The Ministry of Culture and Education, regional departments of education, schools, and teachers' unions may request qualification improvement courses. Qualification improvement programs are offered by colleges and universities, qualification improvement centers, and science centers and are freely chosen by teachers. Only those qualification improvement programs which are approved by the Ministry of Culture and Education are financed from the State budget. Participants receive certificates approved by the Ministry.

Teachers are continuously kept informed about opportunities to improve their professional qualifications.

Informal teacher qualification improvement is voluntary teacher self-education, which is encouraged by educational institutions and Government-supported to the extent the course content meets school interests.

A teacher's level of professional training is determined by the granting of a qualification category at the time of certification. Teachers who wish to improve their qualifications may be tested periodically. Doing so is voluntary. During certification a teacher has the opportunity to objectively evaluate his level of professionalism and his ability to improve. Teacher salaries are dependent on qualification categories. The granting of qualification categories is determined by the Ministry of Culture and Education.

The Ministry of Culture and Education continuously studies teachers' needs. Together with the Ministry, universities and other institutions which have or are able to request the services of highly qualified pedagogues organize teacher requalification courses.

## 8. GOVERNING AND FINANCING

The State governs education in order to guarantee the realization of the goals of the educational system. The State governs only formal education. Universities are granted autonomy by the State. The activities of private and informal educational institutions are regulated by laws and government decrees. The role of the State in education is based on these principles:

1. The coordination of the activities of State institutions that regulate education policy and self-governing institutions created by private initiative. Both sides offer projects and suggestions, encourage other organizations and private individuals to offer projects and programs.

| <i>Institutions controlling education</i>      | <i>Self-governing educational institutions</i>   |
|--|--|
| Educational institution                        | Educational institutions board   |
| Regional departments of education              | Regional education board<br>Professional training committee<br>Expert commissions<br>Gymnasium board<br>Educational content board<br>Inspection board    |
| Government (Ministry of Culture and Education) | Employer organizations Unions  |
|  | Boards of educational institution heads<br>Board of Culture and Education department heads   |
| Seimas   | Lithuanian Council of Professional Training<br>Conference of Lithuanian University Rectors<br>Lithuanian Education Council<br>Lithuanian Science Council |

2. The result, not the educational process, is centrally controlled. The State regulates: the registration of professions; the mandatory requirements for programs and modules, while allowing schools and regional councils to determine part of the educational content; the qualification requirements for teachers, which

are determined by taking into account world standards and societal needs, as stated by professional organizations, parents, and employers; the conditions for learning, which are monitored by inspections (guardianship, observation, control); the control of the evaluation of learned information and skills.

3. Each organization level of the system (educational institution — regional departments of education — the ministry) is responsible for the functioning of that part of the formal education system within its competency. The educational institution is responsible for: meeting State education standards; creating optimal learning conditions; continuously revising content and methods; organizing cultural programs; encouraging teacher creativity and qualification improvement. Educational institutions freely disperse funds to support programs, innovation, and initiative.

Regional departments of education are responsible for: preparing and realizing development of regional education programs; organizing inspections; creating optimal conditions for educational institutions; creating opportunities for teacher qualification improvement.

The Government (Ministry of Culture and Education) is responsible for: forming and realizing a State education policy; preparing and realizing development of State education programs; determining and controlling realization of State education standards; determining criteria and methods for financing education; creating optimal conditions for the educational institutions directly under its control; organizing inspections; encouraging pedagogical research; teacher training, coordinating qualification improvement, preparing certification.

The Seimas is responsible for: establishing the legal groundwork for the Lithuanian educational system; determining strategic educational development directions; deciding upon the amount of financing for the various education links.

Education employees must be properly paid for their work, on the basis of qualification categories, and financially encouraged for their creativity. Higher education and informal education are partially financed by the State. Funds invested in education are tax-exempt.

## 9. MAINTENANCE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS (INFORMATIONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND MEDICAL)

In the process of educating an individual it is important to keep in mind his mental and physical nature as well as to guarantee its normal development. Rational organization of the educational process requires information maintenance.

The goal of psychological maintenance is to maintain a positive psychological atmosphere in educational institutions; to observe the educational process, recognize possible sources of psychological tension and diagnose their causes, provide consultation and correctional assistance. These things are done by State school psychological and diagnostic services, special psychotherapy and consultation centers, and individual consulting psychologists.

The goal of medical maintenance is to insure that healthy conditions for work and rest are created in educational institutions and to guarantee medical care and assistance. These things are the responsibility of the Lithuanian health care system.

The goal of informational maintenance is to guarantee the effective interaction of separate educational links and institutions of different levels. For this purpose, an education information system which includes compiling, storing, disseminating, and generating scientific, statistical, and other vital information is being created. Information is compiled and validated in regional departments of education and stored in information centers, libraries, and archives. Educational information is disseminated by the publishing system, mass media, computerized information systems, public and specialized libraries, and educational institution services. Scientific information is generated and analyzed in universities, scientific research institutions, and other centers of scientific thought.

GENERAL CONCEPT OF EDUCATION IN LITHUANIA

LIETUVOS ŠVIETIMO KONCEPCIJA  
Anglų kalba

SL 1086. 1994 02 22. 2,5 leidyb. apsk. I. Tir. 2000 egz. Užsakymas 548..

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