

NATIONAL
COMMUNITIES
IN LITHUANIA



FACTS
NUMBERS
ACTIVITIES



POLES IN
LITHUANIA

DEMOGRAPHICS

Poles are the largest national minority in Lithuania. According to the data gathered during the National Population and Housing Census in 2011, there are 200 thousand Polish nationals, which represents 6.6% of the entire population (overall there are 2 814 696 inhabitants).

If one compares the largest cities in Lithuania, the Polish minority in each city is as follows: Vilnius – over 88 thousand; Kaunas – approximately 1136; Klaipėda – 540; Šiauliai – 160; Panevėžys – 180.

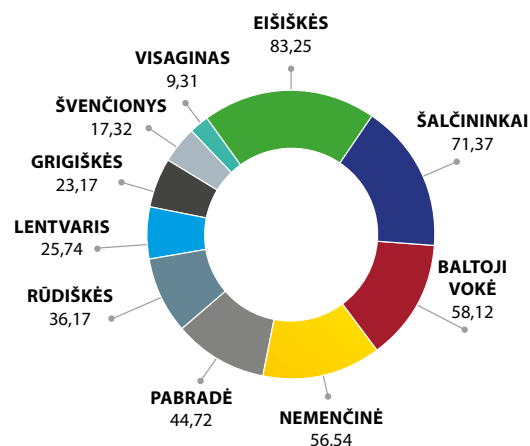
In some municipalities, the Polish minority forms the majority of residents. These are: the municipality of Šalčininkai district (77.8%), the Vilnius district municipality (52.1%), the Trakai district municipality (30.1%) and the Švenčionys district municipality (26%). The highest number of Polish minority representatives can be found in the following cities: Šalčininkai

County	%	Polish nationality/ overall number of population
ALYTUS COUNTY	1,92%	3 029 / 157 766
Alytus city municipality	0,64%	384 / 59 964
Alytus district municipality	0,71%	201 / 28 167
Druskininkai district municipality	3,46%	755 / 21 803
Lazdijai district municipality	0,34%	77 / 22 455
Varėna district municipality	6,35%	1 612 / 25 377
UTENA COUNTY	4,03%	6 126 / 152 004
Anykščiai district municipality	0,34%	97 / 28 668
Ignalina district municipality	7,05%	1 297 / 18 386
Molėtai district municipality	6,34%	1 313 / 20 700
Utena district municipality	0,53%	229 / 43 275
Visaginas municipality	9,33%	2 108 / 22 585
Zarasai district municipality	5,88%	1 082 / 18 390
VILNIUS COUNTY	22,98%	186 195 / 810 403
Elektrėnai municipality	7,08%	1 769 / 24 975
Šalčininkai district municipality	77,75%	26 858 / 34 544
Širvitos district municipality	9,27%	1 628 / 17 571
Švenčionys district municipality	25,98%	7 239 / 27 868
Trakai district municipality	30,11%	10 362 / 34 411
Ukmergė district municipality	0,70%	280 / 40 055
Vilnius city municipality	16,51%	88 408 / 535 631
Vilnius district municipality	52,07%	49 648 / 95 348

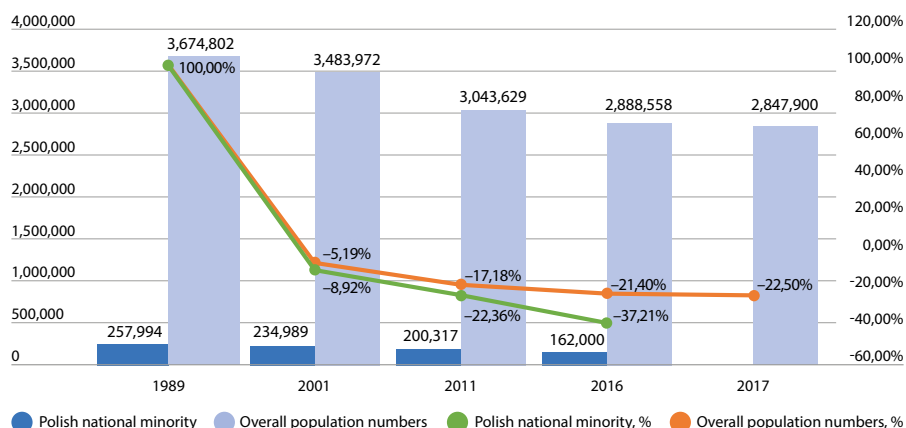
district – Eišiškės – 83%, Šalčininkai – 71%, Baltoji Vokė – 58% of all inhabitants. Approximately 1% of ethnic Poles in Lithuania live in the districts of: Kaunas, Klaipėda, Marijampolė, Panevėžys, Šiauliai, Tauragė and Telšiai.

77% of people who claim to be Polish consider their mother tongue to be Polish. 89% of Poles in Lithuania are Roman Catholic.

LARGEST NUMBER OF POLISH NATIONALITY POPULATION, TOWNS (%)



POPULATION TRENDS IN COMPARISON WITH 1989



EDUCATION

One can find the biggest network of Polish-language schools outside the Republic of Poland in Lithuania.

In order to execute the educational programme requirements, 32 Polish-language handbooks have been prepared. Additionally, 85 Polish-language manuals for learning other subjects were released. These handbooks, created specifically for students from the 1st to the 12th grades, were prepared in cooperation with Polish minority schoolteachers and academics from Lithuanian universities.

Auxiliary digital didactic aids were created (e-learning platforms) for students in grades 9-12. Their main goal was to form and develop skills for understanding literary and non-literary texts as well as to shape their ability to create their own. The framework of implementation of the basic education programme envisages a handbook for primary-school first graders.

Since September 2016, all schools in Lithuania have managed their programmes in line with the new Lithuanian language teaching curriculum. This new curriculum foresees more hours of Lithuanian language lessons, hence educational funding for each class in Polish-language or other minority language schools was raised by 20%. This solution was also applied to grades 5-10 and grades 11-12 in schools considered as being in a multi-language environment. For schoolchildren in grades 1 to 4 in minority-language schools, this funding is being increased by 22.02%.

Lithuania is the only country where representatives of the Polish minority can obtain an education in their mother tongue, starting at the level of primary education and up to higher education. Three institutions of higher education offer the possibility to study in the Polish language.

In 1993, the Polish Language Centre was established as a part of the philology cathedra at Vilnius University. The centre provides the opportunity to learn Polish philology, regardless of language ability or nationality of the student.

The Polish Language and Culture Centre at the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, which recently celebrated its 55th anniversary, offers the opportunity to learn the Polish language, Polish culture and intercultural links between Poland and Lithuania. One can earn a pedagogical degree there. On the 13th of January 2018, Lithuanian Parliament approved the incorporation of the

Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences into Vytautas Magnus University, which will cause a reorganization of the centre.

In 2007, the Lithuanian Government decided to establish the Faculty of Economics and Informatics as a Branch of the University of Bialystok in Vilnius. The university has been providing educational programmes in Economics and Informational Technologies, as well as European studies, since 2015. Polish is the language of instruction. It is the only Polish higher education establishment outside the territory of Poland where students can study in the Polish language.

As of 2018, there are 50 kindergartens and pre-school groups and 76 primary schools using Polish or the following languages as the language of instruction – Lithuanian and Polish; Polish and Russian; Lithuanian, Polish and Russian.

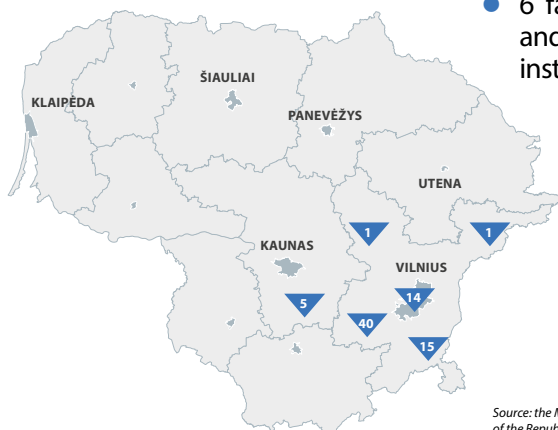
Southeastern Lithuania has the biggest density of Polish and minority-language schools: Vilnius (14); Vilnius district (40); (15) Trakai district (5); Širvintai district (1); Švenčionys district (1).

Overall in Lithuania:

- 20 schools and 31 lower-secondary schools (gymnasias) use Polish as the language of instruction;
- 6 schools and 19 lower-secondary schools use 2 or 3 languages of instruction.

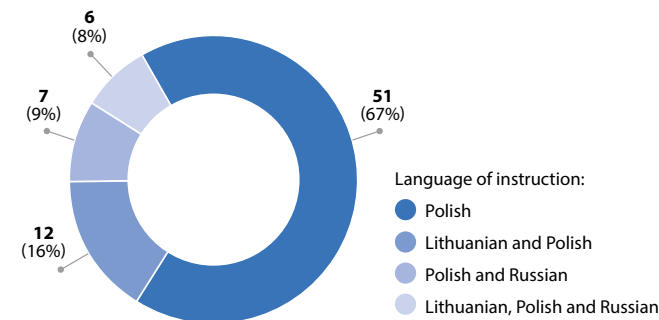
Among them:

- 51 facilities use Polish as the language of instruction;
- 12 facilities use Lithuanian and Polish as the languages of instruction;
- 7 facilities use Polish and Russian as the languages of instruction;
- 6 facilities use Lithuanian, Polish and Russian as the languages of instruction.



Source: the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, 2017

SCHOOLS USING POLISH AS THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

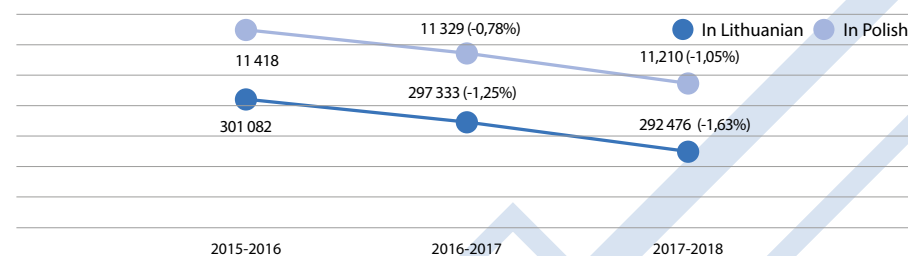


Following the re-establishment of independence, 5,040 schools operated in Lithuania with the overall number of students being 50,740. According to data from the Ministry of Education in the 1990-1991 school year, the Polish language-based curriculum was executed in 44 schools. This number held until the year 2009, when the number of schools increased from 44 to 62.

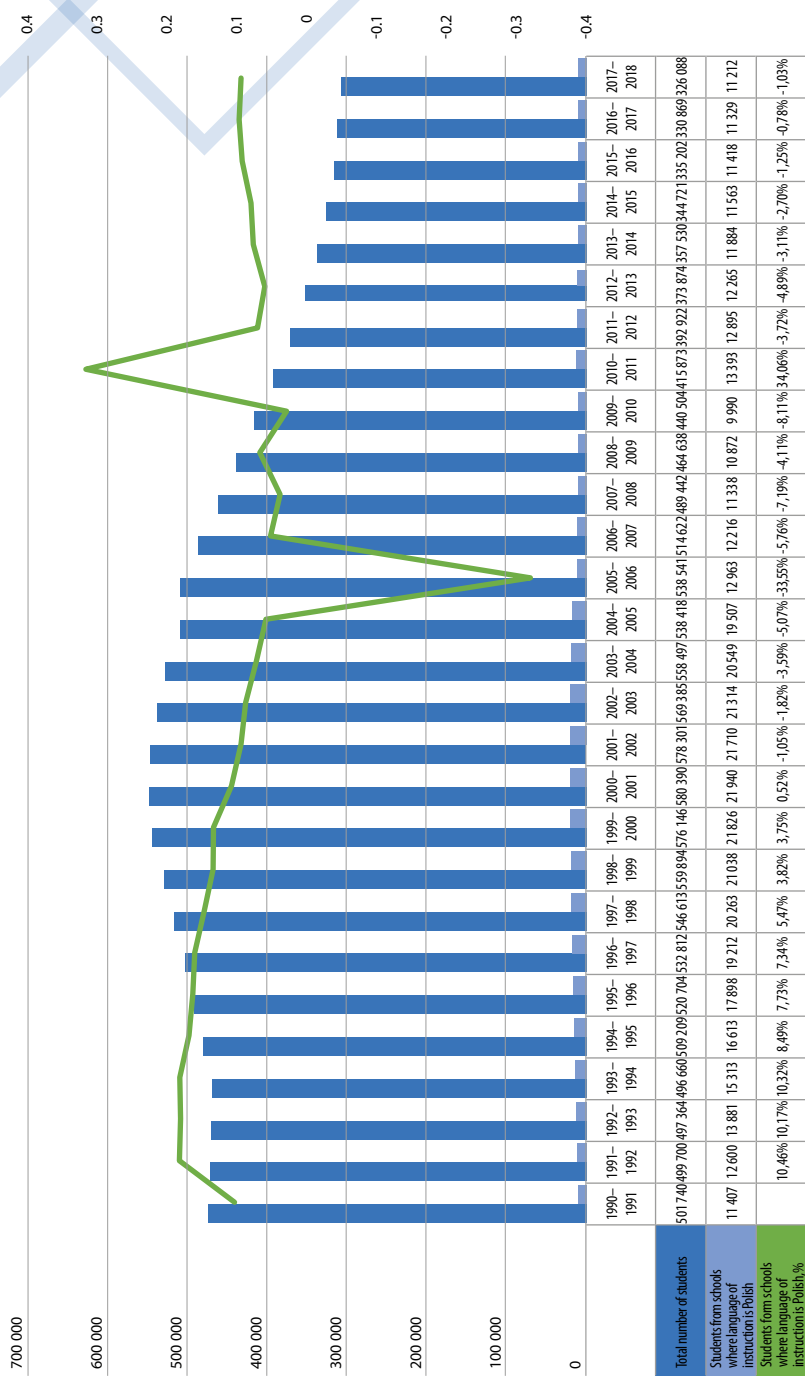
During the years of independence, the number of students in Polish-language schools was constantly changing and has been dropping steadily over the last decade. This was the result of demographic, social, economic and political factors. The possibility of choosing schools with a different language of instruction is also considered to be a significant reason for such a decline. At the beginning of the 2015/2016 school year, there were 52 Polish-language schools in Lithuania, attended by 8,534 students. There were also 24 mixed schools with several languages of instruction (including Polish) attended by 2,884 students. The overall number of students learning in Polish during the 2015/2016 school year was 11,418.

In the 2017/2018 school year, Polish was the language of instruction in 51 Polish schools and in 25 mixed schools. The overall number of students learning in Polish was 11,210, where 8726 attended Polish schools and 2584 – mixed schools.

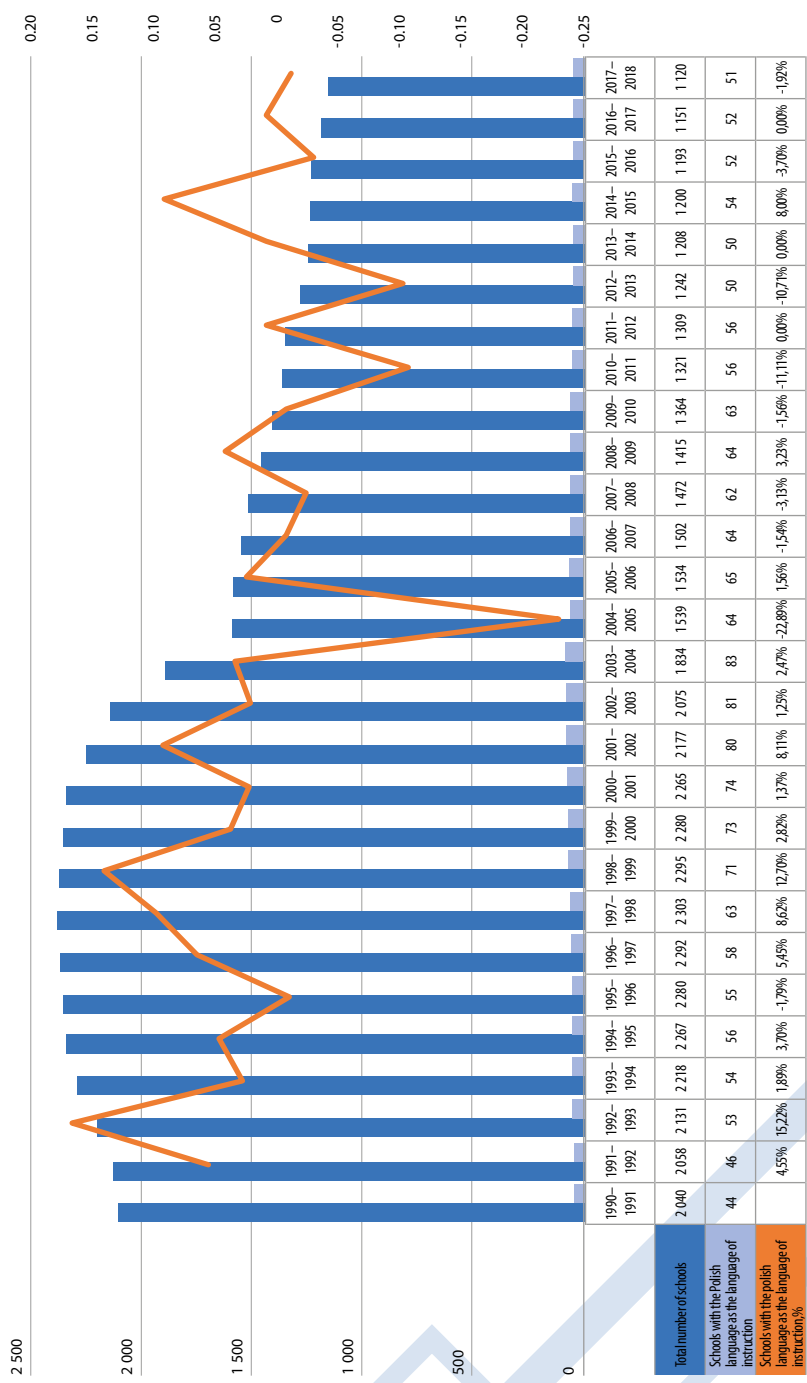
CHANGES IN THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS LEARNING IN THE POLISH AND LITHUANIAN LANGUAGES 2015-2018



CHANGES IN THE NUMBER OF SCHOOL STUDENTS



CHANGES IN THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS



STATE MATRICULATION EXAMINATION OF LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

The state exams are standardized, although lower requirements related to language correctness and style are applied to students from schools with minority languages as the language of instruction.

During the transition period between the years of 2013 and 2020, some differences in evaluation criteria will be applied.

More stringent requirements for students from national minority schools have been applied since 2016. The following factors were considered before introducing such changes:

- More Lithuanian language lessons in schools compared to 2013 (239 lessons);
- Results of state Lithuanian language matriculation exam from 2016;
- 2020 set to be the year of implementation of uniform evaluation criteria for all examinees regardless of their language of instruction at school.

To pass the exam, students must not make any more than:

Students from schools with the Lithuanian language of instruction	Students from schools where the language of instruction is the language of a national minority
6 grammatical and lexical errors	14 grammatical and lexical errors
16 spelling mistakes	27 spelling mistakes
14 punctuation errors	14 punctuation errors
21 stylistic or expression errors (500 words)	29 stylistic, logical or expression errors

In 2018, it took 30% of the total number of points to pass the exam.

18,339 candidates took the exam (in 2017 – 18,525). 1,892 of them were students from schools where the language of instruction was a national minority language (in 2017 – 966).

91.25% of students passed the exam (in 2017 – 88,94). Among them:

- 91.61% of students went a Lithuanian-language school (in 2017 – 89.50%)

- 78.50% of school-leavers went to a school where the language of instruction was a national minority language (in 2017 – 80.74%, in 2016 – 87.87%).

0.84% of all candidates obtained a perfect score (100 points) on the exam (in 2017 – 0.43%).

Data from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania and the National Examination Centre

MATRICULATION EXAMINATION RESULTS IN LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (SCHOOLS WHERE THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION IS A NATIONAL MINORITY LANGUAGE)

	Number of students	Failed	16-35	36-85	86-100
2017–2018 Vilnius city	286	58	129	84	15
2017–2018 Vilnius district municipality	201	46	92	56	7
2017–2018 Šalčininkai district municipality	81	21	43	16	1
2017–2018 Švenčionys district municipality	12	3	8	1	0
2017–2018 Trakai district municipality	43	12	13	16	2
2016–2017 Vilnius city	264	22	117	97	28
2016–2017 Vilnius district municipality	139	20	66	40	13
2016–2017 Šalčininkai district municipality	70	8	46	12	4
2016–2017 Švenčionys district municipality	10	0	8	2	0
2016–2017 Trakai district municipality	25	2	13	8	2
2015–2016 Vilnius city	281	31	137	96	17
2015–2016 Vilnius district municipality	158	30	84	39	5
2015–2016 Šalčininkai district municipality	77	18	44	15	0
2015–2016 Švenčionys district municipality	7	1	5	1	0
2015–2016 Trakai district municipality	22	2	12	6	2
2014–2015 Vilnius city	374	58	180	119	15
2014–2015 Vilnius district municipality	190	38	96	53	3
2014–2015 Šalčininkai district municipality	87	8	49	29	1
2014–2015 Švenčionys district municipality	13	5	4	4	0
2014–2015 Trakai district municipality	30	1	9	18	2

INFORMAL EDUCATION

In order to teach the mother tongue, spread knowledge about Polish culture and traditions, as well as provide learning of the history of the country, 12 Sunday schools were established.

They can be found in Alytus, Druskininkai, Kaunas, Kėdainiai and Klaipėda.

- Since 1999, there has been a **Sunday school in Klaipėda “Płomyczek” (“Little flame”)** under the Klaipėda Branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania. Every year, it is attended by 20-30 students. Liulita Sulcienė is the teacher. This school provides them with the opportunity to become more familiar with their national heritage, culture, traditions and folk songs. They learn Polish, sing Polish songs and read literature in Polish. The school is very active during educational activities, exhibitions, and other events organized by the Centre of National Cultures. Some of the celebrations include: The Day of the National Cultures, National Minorities Sunday School Festival, or the celebration called “We: The Children of Europe” – and have become a tradition.
- **The Polish Language School under the Association of Poles in Kėdainiai** was established in 1994 at Akademija by Irena Duchovskaja – a chairman of the Polish organization, who works at the school. In the years following the establishment of the school the Polish society there consisted of 80 people.

Picture belongs to the Polish Sunday School in Klaipėda „Płomyczek”



During the period between 1994 and 2008, the school was annually attended by approximately 30 students age 7-18. However, the amount of children has decreased over time. In the latest year, there were no more than 15 students, whose age range now varies from 7 to 65. The school has its own band, called “Issa” – one of the most active participants in events organized by the city of Kėdainiai and the district. This band also takes part in many international events and festivals. The school cooperates with several educational institutions, including the Third Age Universities from Warsaw, Gołdap and the Alcide de Gasperi University of Euroregional Economy. A branch was also opened in Panevėžys city. Since 2016, Regina Čirickaitė has taught the Polish language to 18 students annually.

- In 1999, at the initiative of the Švenčionėliai Branch of the Union of Poles in Lithuania, a **Polish language school** was established there. In its first year, over 30 students attended the school and classes took place in two groups. Due to a decline in the city’s population, the size of the Polish community also decreased, causing a decline in the number of students. In the years 2017-2018, there have been twenty students aged 11 to 18 attending the school, taking classes with their teacher, Wanda Golubeva. Ms. Golubeva, along with her colleagues, are the initiators of Christmas events and a Mother’s Day celebration held by the school community each year. The school is also represented during various events organized not only by the city, but by the whole district.

This educational establishment, with its headquarters at the Polish House in Švenčionėliai, is also known for being an active participant in the life of the Catholic community of the city. During mass, students read the liturgy in the church and visit and greet lonely and sick people during the holidays.

The school cooperates with other Sunday schools from Turmontas and Visaginas, as well as with institutions from the Šalčininkai district. Students spend their holidays together in Poland, where they can improve their native language.

The school has often participated in various festivals: the Festival of National Minorities in Visaginas, the Feast of Polish Songs and Dances, celebrations commemorating the victims of the Second World War and meetings with Polish compatriots.

- **The Polish language class** at the Sunday school at the Centre of National Minority Culture in Visaginas – **“Szkoła Ojczysta”** – was founded in 1995. In those days, 20-30 children attended classes with their teacher Krestina



Picture taken by Džoja Gunda Barysaitė

Gotovskaja. This lasted until 2009. Due to a decline in the population, the number of students also decreased. Recently, the annual number of students has not exceeded 15. Here, youth can learn their native language, as well as learning about Polish traditions and customs. They actively participate in amateur art classes. During the summer holidays, children go to summer camps in Poland. Older students take part in various national cultural projects, EU initiatives and international youth exchange projects. Zygfryd Binkiewicz is a teacher at this school.

- **The Polish school in Šilutė** also preserves and promotes Polish traditions and culture. Since the founding of the school in 2000, teacher Alina Judženienė, who initiated the establishment of the school, cares for the welfare of the institution. When school was opened, more than 40 Polish nationals lived in the region. Every year, 12 to 18 school-age students attend classes. The institution actively participates in celebrations on the occasion of: the "Day of languages," organized by the Vydunas Gymnasium, the 1st of September and other events organized by the city. Students and teachers take care of the cemetery in Macikai. On the occasion of Catholic holidays, the school prepares celebrations for the local Polish community. For ten years, the institution has cooperated with the Polish school from Klaipėda. Together, they have arranged celebrations of Polish Independence Day, Christmas parties, annually participated in the Day of the Sea, carried out various projects and taken part in a number of exchange programs. Students have visited Poland to spend their holiday at summer camps five times so far. As of the 1st of September 2017, only 7 people go to the school; they are all adults.

CULTURE

In Lithuania, there are over 65 Polish NGOs, associations for the promotion of culture and education, charities and organisations dealing with professional or other fields. They participate in a very wide range of activities, including: song and dance ensembles, choirs, theatres, Guides and Veterans Clubs and the University of the Third Age. Non-governmental organizations include various age groups and professions: writers, journalists, entrepreneurs, medics and lawyers.

The New Year's concert of the Wilia Song and Dance Ensemble – "In the rhythm of the polonaise and mazurka", the Festival of Polish Culture of the Trakai land "Dźwięcz, Polska Pieśń!", and the Polish culture festival of the Širvintai land "Sing with Us" – have all become a tradition. The feast of Polish song and dance in the Vilnius region "Kwiaty Polskie" is also among new traditions in Lithuania, along with the Polish culture festivities organized by the Association of Poles in Kėdainiai – "Znad Issy", the school theatre festival and dictation competition "The best of Lithuanian language" organized by the Association of Polish School Teachers in Lithuania "Macierz Szkolna", an international festival organized by the Stanisław Moniuszko Centre of Polish Culture in Lithuania "Pieśń znad Wilii".

Amateur bands and professional Polish artists also take part in the Days of Polish poetry festival and other Polish art festivals. Discussion-meetings

Picture of the House of Polish Culture in Vilnius





Picture belongs to the Charity and Assistance Fund "Smiles Gallery"

organized by the Polish Discussion Club on topics relevant to Lithuanian society are also gaining momentum.

On the initiative of the Republic of Poland, a Charity and Support Fund, called "The house of Polish Culture in Vilnius" was established in 2001. Its main objective is to encourage Polish society to be active in the field of culture, promoting and supporting this field of activity. It is one of the largest Polish institutions in Lithuania. Similar cultural centres operate in Eišiškės and Druskininkai. On February 17, 2015, another centre for Polish culture was opened – the Polish House in Švenčionėliai.

Private bookstores not only offer Polish literature, scientific publications and periodicals, but also organize presentations of Polish books and meetings with Polish writers. "Elephas," a bookstore in Vilnius, has been operating since 1998. Two years after it was opened, another bookshop was established in Eišiškės. The House of Polish Culture in Vilnius has given some of its space to the bookshop established by the Association of Poles in Lithuania. In 2015, the first Polish online bookshop appeared and is available at: www.ewka.lt

Picture taken by Joanna Bożerodska



In 1993, the private Polish art gallery "Znad Wilii" was opened. It became not only an exhibition centre for Polish painters but also an important hub of Polish culture.



Picture belongs to the Charity and Assistance Fund "Smiles Gallery"

A Theatre Studio for Vilnius Poles was founded in 1960, called: "Polski Zespół Dramatyczny". After three years, the name was changed to: "Teatr Polaków z Wilna". The theatre has presented 50 premieres and over 3,000 performances. It brings together the circle of Polish intelligentsia in Vilnius. The Club of Polish Theatre Art and many school theatres were also established and people started to create school folk songs and dance ensembles.

After the rebirth of Lithuanian nation, 1991-1994, several church choirs and about 30 new Polish amateur artistic groups were founded. They can be divided into: song and dance troupes, folklore performers, choirs, bands, stage bands and theatres.

The most famous amateur bands:

- Established in 1955 and still well-known today, Polish Folk Song and Dance Ensemble "Wilia"
- Folk dance ensemble "Zgoda"
- Folk dance ensemble "Perła"
- Songs and dance ensemble "Troczenie"
- Children's song and dance ensemble "Wilenka"
- Children and young people's dance ensemble "Sto uśmiechów"
- Ensemble "Rudomianka"
- The representative Wileńszczyzna Polish Song and Dance Ensemble
- Folklore ensemble "Sużanianka"
- Dance ensemble "Przyjaźń"



Picture belongs to the Charity and Assistance Fund "Smiles Gallery"

CULTURAL PROJECT FUNDING

The Department for National Minorities under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – the National Minorities Dept.) organizes competitions for cultural projects focusing on national minorities, thus annually allocating funds for established traditional or newly organized events. Applications for partial financing of projects may be submitted by associations, charities and public institutions registered in accordance with the requirements of Lithuanian law.

In order to strengthen the dialogue between schools from the south-eastern part of Lithuania and other regions of the country, the Department for National Minorities has financed 14 projects prepared by schools from these areas, where teaching takes place in Lithuanian, Polish and Russian. In total, in 2018, over 3,000 children have taken part in these projects.

Funding was earmarked for the following activities in the southeast of Lithuania: developing citizenship, intercultural dialogue, commemorating events and developing habits of civic, cultural and social activity.

	Submitted projects	Amount asked for	Financed projects	Amount allocated
2016	47	202 036 EUR	32	39 850 EUR
2017	46	225 780 EUR	34	56 000 EUR
2018	41	201 012 EUR	32	48 850 EUR

CULTURAL HERITAGE

The history of Poles in Lithuania can be traced back to the very origins of their statehood. According to historical information, Poles have been residing per-

manently on the lands of the Great Polish-Lithuanian Empire since the second half of the 13th century.

Polish-Lithuanian history spans far more than a century. Much of the history is intertwined, which is why it is sometimes difficult to assign architectural, cultural or historical heritage to just one nation. Often, historic figures or cultural monuments are valuable for both Poles and Lithuanians.

Many well-known Polish activists in the field of culture, science and politics are connected with Lithuania.



Piotr Skarga, picture from pl.wikipedia.org

Piotr Skarga (1536-1612) – a figure of great importance to Polish and Lithuanian 16th century literature is forever written into the history of Vilnius University. Born in Poland in a city called Grójec, in 1579, he became the first rector of Vilnius University, holding this position for five years – until 1582. From 1588, he was the preacher of the Polish King and the Grand Duke of Lithuania – Sigismund III Vasa. Piotr Skarga played an important role in the history of Vilnius University and the catholic church in Lithuania. He took part in the most important cultural and political processes in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Maciej Strykowski – An unjustly forgotten author of the first printed history of Lithuania, Strykowski was born in Poland. After completing his studies at Krakow University, he performed military service in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Curious about Lithuania's past, the religion of the Balts, their folklore and traditions, while in Varniai city, he wrote "*Chronicle of Poland, Lithuania, Samogitia and all of Ruthenia*". This piece – substantial for Lithuanian history – was printed in Karaliaučius (Kaliningrad) in 1582.

Vilnius University is of utmost importance for Polish and Lithuanian cultural development. In varying time periods, various activists of Polish origin have studied and worked there. These figures have had significant input into the evolution of Polish culture. One of them is Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski – born in Sarbiewo in Poland, educated in Vilnius by Jesuits, he became a professor at Vilnius University. His literary works in Latin brought him worldwide recognition and a reputation as an outstanding poet of the baroque epoch. His *Lycorum libri IV*, released in Vilnius, was also released 40 times in various European countries – no other examples of Polish Lithuanians who were published so widely were known. At the end of the 17th century and at the beginning of the 19th

century, personalities like: Joachim Lelewel, Euzebiusz Słowacki, Andrzej i Jan Śniadeccy and many others worked at Vilnius University.

One of the most well-known alumni of Vilnius University is Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855), Lithuanian poet of 19th century, creator of classical Polish literature and an important figure for European Romanticism. His influence can be seen in the works of many poets of the 19th and 20th centuries. In 1822, he lived in Vilnius in a house situated on Bernardinų street – this building and his memorial flat now house a museum in his honour under the patronage of the Vilnius University Library. The museum gathers, aggregates and stores all the materials related to his life, work and artistic activity. In addition, the museum is engaged in building educational and cultural awareness performing large-scale activities.

A further famous alumnus of the University is Juliusz Słowacki. Coeval with Mickiewicz, he was a playwright, poet and mystic. Becoming a graduate of law at Vilnius University, he became one of the most known figures of Polish Romanticism.

Famous composer Stanisław Moniuszko also lived in Vilnius. A memorial plaque was unveiled on the facade of the Muller's House – a guest house for affluent aristocrats and a cradle of culture of 19th c., in which the composer used to live. In the square near the Church of St Catherine, a monument to Stanisław Moniuszko reminds us of his life in Lithuania.



Czesław Miłosz, picture from www.milosz.pl

Czesław Miłosz also comes from Lithuania – a well-known Polish poet, intellectual and laureate of the Nobel Prize for Literature. A cultural centre was founded in his homeland – Šeteniai (Kėdainiai district), where literary evenings, meetings and conferences are held. There is also an exhibition dedicated to Czesław Miłosz on display. To commemorate the poet, in Vilnius – the city in which he lived from 1921-1937, a staircase with fragments of the poet's works carved into them was unveiled.

A few Polish political activists of the inter-war period are closely connected with Lithuania. One of them is Józef Piłsudski – the first actual leader of the reborn Polish state in 1918. Another – Gabriel Narutowicz was the first president of Poland, elected in 1922. The memory of Piłsudski is preserved in his homeland – the village of Zalavas in the Švenčionys District Municipality – there are some farm buildings and an oak growing in the place where the manor once stood. The grave of Piłsudski's mother, where his heart also rests, is also located in Vil-

nius – a place visited by many tourists. The patrimony of G. Narutowicz, who comes from an old Samogitian boyar family, is a manor in Brevikiai (Telšiai district).

To learn about the Polish cultural and historical heritage, one should visit the Ethnographic Museum of Vilnius, located in Nemenčinė, the Granary-museum of Rural Life and Lithuanian Palms in Čekoniškės, the Museum of priest Józef Obrembski in Maišiagala, Bareikiškės manor or the Vladislovas Sirokomlė museum (Vilnius district) and the museum of folk artist Anna Krepsztul in the village of Tabariškės (Šalčininkai district).

The cultural and social life of Poles in Lithuania is also proven by the architectural heritage. One of its most important centres is the theatre in Vilnius, on J. Basanavičiaus Street – currently the Russian Drama Theatre of Lithuania, built in 1913 according to the design of architects A. Parczewski and W. Michniewicz. In the interwar period, Polish playwrights – Juliusz Ostrewa and Aleksander Zelwerowicz worked here, and actresses – Hanka Ordonówna and Hanka Bielicka made their debuts. On Gediminas avenue, buildings under numbers 12, 14, 18 and 20 have been built in accordance with the design of Polish architects. Zbigniew Puget and Juliusz Żurawski designed the building in which the former savings bank (built in 1937) was located. Jerzy Pankowski and Stanisław Galenzowski designed the Polish national development bank (Built in 1937-1938). Kazimierz Krzyżanowski, Karel Jankowski and Franciszek Lilpop designed the Shopping Centre that was built during the period between 1914 and 1923. Tadeusz Roztworowski designed the hotel "George", which was built in 1893-95 on land belonging to the architect.

LANGUAGE

Poles from Lithuania are mostly identified by their unofficial, unwritten language, called by some the "Vilnius dialect" or speaking "in a Vilnius manner". It has grown over the centuries in the southeastern lands of Lithuania. The local Polish dialect existed alongside, and was therefore influenced by, Lithuanian and Belarusian. The "Vilnius dialect" is commonly associated with the language of the Polish village of the inter-war period, while the way of speaking "in a Vilnius manner" is more reminiscent of the speech of Vilnius residents, for whom only some specific regional influences are characteristic. Sometimes the Poles make jokes about themselves, saying that, when they can't find Polish words to express something, without hesitation, they will use a more suitable word from Lithuanian, Russian or Belarusian. Although there is a bit of irony in their words, Lithuanian Poles are proud of this unique and unusual language characterized by the singular pronunciation of vowels and the

sonorous pronunciation of consonants and the “h” sound, as well as another way of articulating the soft consonants of ś, ć, dź. The rich and humorous dictionary allows Lithuanian Poles to laugh (chłopczuk, badzienia, dyłda, prynuka, bałbotać), and describe events significant to the local population (fest, tłoka, wchodziny). Thanks to literature, some of these expressions (rojsty, żagary) have become part of the general cultural heritage of Poles.

Standard Polish is used in schools; however, most of the students use the local dialect at home to communicate with their family.

Source: Janusz Rieger, Irena Masojć, Krystyna Rutkowska, *Słownictwo polszczyzny gwarowej na Litwie*. Warszawa: DIG, 2006

MASS MEDIA

PRESS

- Daily journal: “Kurier Wileński”
- Weekly journals: “Tygodnik Wileńszczyzny” and “Nasza Gazeta”
- Magazines: “Magazyn Wileński”, “Soleczniki” and “Znad Wili” (quarterly journal)
- Catholic press: “Spotkania”

INTERNET

- www.kurierwilenski.lt
- www.zw.lt
- www.l24.lt
- www.wilnoteka.lt
- www.pogon.lt
- <http://www.tygodnik.lt>
- <http://www.magwil.lt>
- <http://zpl.lt>
- <http://radiowilno.lt>

RADIO

The Polish radio program broadcast by LRT (Lithuanian National Radio and Television) is the oldest radio program broadcasted on Lithuanian radio, having been on the air since 1944. Since then, though there have been changes in range, format and transmission time, Polish language broadcasts have been heard on a daily basis broadcasted by LRT.

	Znad Wili (hours per year)	ZW Fun (hours per year)	Radio Wilno (hours per year)
2015	6 205	6 205	6 205
2016	6 222	6 222	6 222
2017	6 205	6 205	6 205
2018	6 205	6 205	6 205

Private radio stations

“Znad Wili” broadcasts programs every day from 7:00 to 24:00.

Internet radio “ZW FUN” zw.lt/wfun/ for youth started broadcasting programs on February 17, 2016. One can listen to the broadcast on the portal www.zw.lt or by installing the Android application.

Radio Vilnius broadcasts radio programs every day from 7:00 to 24:00.

TELEVISION

“Kultūrų kryžkelė. Vilniaus albumas” – a 15-minute program broadcast on the LRT Kultūra channel.

“Misija Vilnija” – a 20-minute program about southeastern Lithuania broadcast on the LRT Kultūra channel.

	Broadcasts			
	Vilniaus albumas		Misija: Vilnija	
	Times	Hours	Times	Hours
2015	33	4,95	17	5,10
2016	35	5,25	34	10,20
2017	38	5,70	35	10,50
2018*	15	2,25	17	5,10

*Data up to 17 April 2018

POLISH LANGUAGE IN NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- Websites of Šalčininkai, Švenčionys and Vilnius districts
- Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Electronic police services system www.epolicija.lt



POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

The Polish national minority in Lithuania actively takes part in the political life of the country. On the political arena one can find EAPL-CFA (Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania – Christian Families Alliance) – a political party formed in 1994. Representatives of the party stand as candidates in elections for European Parliament, in parliamentary elections in Lithuania, and in presidential and municipal elections.

In 2000, 2004 and 2008 Waldemar Tomaszewski – leader of EAPL-CFA – was a parliamentary deputy representing EAPL-CFA in the single-mandate electoral district of Vilnius – Šalčininkai.

During the period 2016-2020, there have been 8 parliamentarians in the EAPL-CFA parliamentary faction, which represents 5.6% of all members. One can see that the biggest support for the party comes from the southeastern region of the country. In the municipal councils of Šalčininkai and Vilnius regions, there are accordingly: 21 out of 25 and 21 out of 31 mandates.

During the parliamentary elections in 2004, 45.3 thousand votes were cast in favour of the party. In a multiple-mandate constituency, the result was 3.79% of votes. Two candidates were chosen to become parliamentarians. Another Polish party – The Polish People’s Party – also participated in those elections. This party has now ceased its activity.

In the 2008 election, for the first time, the party teamed up with the Lithuanian Russian Union and, in another first, was very close to crossing the election threshold. They managed to receive 4.79% of votes (59.2 thousand). In the single-seat constituency of Vilnius-Šalčininkai, 61.33% of votes were in favour of Waldemar Tomaszewski – chairman of the party. Jarosław Narkiewicz – member of the party – won for the first time in another single-seat constituency. Three candidates were elected to be parliamentarians – Waldemar Tomaszewski, later replaced by Leonard Talmont, Michał Mackiewicz and Jarosław Narkiewicz.

During the 2012 parliamentary elections, EAPL-CFA formed an alliance with the Lithuanian Russian Union, the Lithuanian People’s Party and 30 other social organizations. This was the first election in which a coalition surpassed the 5% electoral threshold and obtained 3 mandates in single-seat constituencies and 5 mandates in multiple-seat constituencies. After the elections,

the EAPL-CFA was asked to join the ruling coalition. Representatives of the party were given important positions within the ruling coalition and Jarosław Narkiewicz was appointed vice-president of Parliament. Michał Mackiewicz became vice-chairman of the National Committee for Security and Defence and chairman of the Interparliamentary Contact Group with the Republic of Poland. Leonard Talmont became chairman of the Human Rights Committee. Jarosław Niewierowicz became the Minister of Energy. Members of EAPL-CFA also took the positions of deputy ministers in the ministries of energy, culture, transport, education and agriculture.

In 2009, representative of the Polish national minority and chairman of EAPL-CFA, Waldemar Tomaszewski, participated in the election for the President of the Republic of Lithuania for the first time. He collected 65.2 thousand votes (which is about 5%) and ended up in fourth place. In the same year, Tomaszewski won the election to the European Parliament and, in 2014, he was re-elected for a second term.

POLES IN THE LOCAL MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Municipality/number of mandates	2000	2002	2007	2011*	2015*
Klaipėda city / 31	–	–	–	–	4
Šalčininkai district / 25	18	17	20	22	21
Širvintos district / 21	1	1	–	2	1
Švenčionys district / 25	3	4	3	4	5
Trakų district / 25	6	6	5	5	4
Vilnius city / 51	5	6	6	11	10
Vilnius district / 31	20	17	19	19	21
Visaginas town / 25	–	–	–	2	3

*Electoral Action of Poles in coalition with the Russian Alliance under the name of “Waldemar Tomaszewski’s Block” took part in the elections in 2011 and 2015.

There are over 65 non-governmental organizations bringing together the Polish community in Lithuania. They are unions and associations that conduct activities in the field of culture, education and charity in the professional or other sphere.

POLISH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN LITHUANIA

Ensamble „Rudamianka” Director Jarosław Królikowski	Trakai district branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Jarosław Narkiewicz
Association Polish Information Centre in Vilnius “Inforum” Chairman Czesława Salwińska	Vandžiogala branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Ryszard Jankowski
Polish Media in Lithuania Association Chairman Robert Mickiewicz	Varėna branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Ludmiła Bliźniewicz
Polish Culture Society in Jauniūnai Chairman Stefanija Tamošiūnienė	Vilnius branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Alicja Pietrowicz
Józef Montwill Fund for Polish Culture in Lithuania Chairman Henryk Sosnowski	Vilnius district branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Waldemar Tomaszewski
Polish society in Kaunas “Pochodnia” (The Torch) Chairman Kristina Raišytė	Visaginas branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Zygfryd Binkiewicz
Association of Poles in Kėdainiai Chairman Irena Duchovska	Zarasai district branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Weronika Bogdanowicz
Polish Club in Klaipėda Chairman Ryszard Marian Zarzecki	Polish Lawyers Union in Lithuania, Chairman Grzegorz Sakson
Charity Foundation „Galeria Uśmiechów” (Gallery of Smiles) Chairman Danuta Grydz	Worldwide Wilniuki Congress Chairman Władysław Wojnicz
Charity and Support Foundation “House of Polish Culture in Vilnius” Director Artur Ludkowski	Polish Language Scholars Association Chairman Danuta Szejnicka
Polish Folk Song and Dance Ensemble „Wilia” Director Renata Brasel	The Polish Representative Folk Song and Dance Ensemble “Wileńszczyzna”, Director Natalija Sasnauskaitė
Polish Discussion Club Director Grzegorz Miłoszewicz	Republican Society of Polish Writers Chairman Aleksander Sokolowski
Polish Association for the Disabled „Litpolinva” Chairman Grzegorz Sakson	Stanisław Moniuszko Polish Cultural Centre in Lithuania Chairman Apolonia Skakowska
Association of Polish Engineers and Technicians in Lithuania Chairman Robert Niewiadomski	Polish University of the Third Age in Salčininkai Rector Antoni Jankowski
Polish Medical Association in Lithuania Chairman Dariusz Zybort	Forum of Parents from the Polish schools in Salčininkai district Chairman Renta Cytacka
Polish Art Gallery „Znad Wilii” Director Wanda Mieczkowska	Gymnastic Society „Sokół” (Falcon) Vice-chairman Genadij Baranovič
Foundation for Promotion of Polish Education „Samostanowienie” (Self-determination), Chairman Stanisław Pieszko	Third Age Academy Director Marian Grygorowicz
Polish Theatre Artistic Club Chairman Edward Kiejzik	Public entity „VILNVARSA” Director Artur Ludkowski
Folk dance ensemble „Zgoda” Director Henryk Kasperowicz	Children-and-youth Song and Dance Ensemble “Truskaweczka” (Strawberry), irector Bożena Czerniawska
Polish Scouts in Lithuania Association Chairman Paweł Giliuskas	Polish Theatre in Vilnius Director Irena Litwinowicz
Polish Youth in Lithuania Forum Chairman Dariusz Stańczyk	Polish Studio Theatre Director Lilia Kiejzik
Creative Association of Polish painter in Lithuania „Elipsa” Chairman Władysław Ławrynowicz	Polish Parents Forum Chairman Danuta Narbut
The Association of Polish Schools Teachers in Lithuania „Macierz Szkolna”, Chairman Józef Kwiatkowski	Vilnius Guides Club Chairman Barbara Ogonowska
Polish Scientists in Lithuania Association Chairman Henryk Malewski	Vilnius Vagrants Club Chairman Waldemar Wołodko
Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Michał Mackiewicz	Sport Club „Polonia” Vilnius Chairman Stefan Kimso
Druskininkai branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Teresa Igunnova	Polish Third Age University in Vilnius Rector Ryszard Jan Kuźmo
Kaunas branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Pranciška Abromavičiūtė	Non-profit organization, choir „Zgoda” Chairman Iwona Bujnowska
Klaipėda branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Liulita Sulcienė	Civic Initiatives Association Chairman Jan Jarecki
Branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania „Lauda” Chairman Irena Duchovska	Władysław Syrokoma Polish Cultural institution in Vilnius Director Janina Sławińska
Salčininkai branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Zdzisław Palewicz	Public Entity „Wilenka” Director Janina Labul
Šilutė branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Alina Judžentienė	Charity and Support Foundation of the Radio Station „ZNAD WILII” Director Irena Wojciechowska
Sirvintai district branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Stefanija Tamošiūnienė	Catholic Society of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Paulina Mielko
Švenčionys district branch of the Association of Poles in Lithuania Chairman Irena Bejnar	



THE DEPARTMENT FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES
UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

