

Chapter 7

Lithuanian Tourism Geography

Algirdas Stanaitis and Saulius Stanaitis

Abstract The chapter “Lithuanian Tourism Geography” includes an analysis of tourism trade development in Lithuania. The emphasis is placed on the last decades following the restoration of the statehood. Territorial analysis of tourism resources is the priority issue discussed. The chapter also contains information about the specific character of natural conditions and historical cultural heritage. In focus are preserved territories with concentrated complexes of cultural heritage, which are of paramount importance for educational tourism, recreation, scientific research and environmental and ethnocultural education. The territorial distribution of national and regional parks, nature reserves, preserved natural objects and monuments is given. Health and summer resorts are inventoried, concentrating on rural (ecological) tourism as one of the most promising branches of tourism trade. The chapter contains the information about the most popular types of tourism in Lithuania: bicycle tours, motor tourism, water tourism, sports and pilgrimage tourism, etc. It also introduces entertainment and business infrastructures. Rapidly modernized accommodation system—number, structure and location of accommodation establishments—is a reflection of inbound and outbound tourism development in Lithuania. The chapter also contains a survey of foreign tourism markets and most attractive tourism territories for various foreign tourism segments. The most interesting tourism routes in the main tourism regions of the country are discussed. The trends of the inbound tourism of recent years, which create preconditions for development of other branches of economy and culture, are analysed. The advantages and imperfections of the system of tourism in Lithuania are indicated and the future perspective of this important trade is suggested.

A. Stanaitis (✉) · S. Stanaitis
Vilnius Pedagogical University, Vilnius, Lithuania
e-mail: algirdas.stanaitis@vpu.lt

S. Stanaitis
e-mail: saulius.stanaitis@vpu.lt

7.1 Introductory Remarks

7.1.1 Geographical Situation

Lithuania is a small country situated along the south-eastern shore of the Baltic Sea, mainly in the Nemunas River basin. Sometimes this country is called Nemunas Country or, since amber has been found in it in abundance, Amber Country. The total area of the country amounts to 65.3 thousand square kilometre and it has a population of 2.9 million¹. On the European scale, it can be regarded as a country of medium size. It is on the 18th place according to its area and in the 30th according to the population. Lithuania is divided into 10 counties, the latter into 60 municipalities and 427 smaller territorial administrative units (elderships). The country has 103 towns and 21,800 rural settlements of various sizes (according to the population census of 2011) (Lietuvos 2013).²

Lithuania is located in the geographical centre of Europe. This was determined in 1992 at the National Institute of Geography of France. The centre is located 26 km north of the Vilnius city centre. It has an Information Centre of Tourism. The infrastructure is still in the development stage. In the nearest future, the territory is expected to become one of popular tourism destinations.

It should be pointed out that the name of the country is often unknown to a wider populations and even leaders of other countries. In the past, in the eastern countries and today in the west, it is often confused with neighbouring countries Latvia and Estonia or even with the Balkan countries. Even a little while ago, our closest neighbours Poles, Germans, Swedes and Fins had a vague idea about Lithuania—its past, economic potential, destinations worth visiting, language, customs and traditions. The situation cardinally changed after the restoration of country's independence (1990) and accession to the European Union and NATO (2004).

Lithuania is an old and a new country at the same time. It is old because its statehood counts 700 years, whereas its name was for the first time mentioned more than 1000 years ago. In 2009* Lithuania celebrated millennium of the first mention of the name Lithuania. In the same year, Vilnius was European Capital of Culture. Lithuania also is young because its restored independence has been lasting only for 25 years.

After restoration of independence and accession into the EU and NATO, Lithuania became a democratic country, open to the world. Being in the geographical centre of Europe, Lithuania is easily accessible by air, sea and inland roads. There are neither natural nor political obstacles for visiting Lithuania. Not only people from the European countries but also from other continents have

¹Lietuvos statistikos departamentas. Oficialiosios statistikos portalas. <http://osp.stat.gov.lt/statistiniu-rodikliu-analize?id=1353&status=A>.

²Lietuvos statistikos departamentas. Lietuvos gyventojai 2011 metais. 2011 metų gyventojų surašymo rezultatai. Vilnius, 2013 m.

discovered Lithuania. Twenty-one years ago, the world knew little about Lithuania. It was regarded as a part of Russia.

Recently, in the geographical space of east Baltic countries, a new region of international tourism has been developing based on the favourable geographical position and abundance of objects of natural and historical cultural heritage. The intensively developing tourism trade includes a few neighbouring countries.

Not only natural–historical–cultural tourism resources, but also good accessibility of the country stimulates tourism development. Other favourable factors include the proximity of important markets of international tourism: Poland, Russia, Latvia, Germany and Scandinavian countries. Moreover, after the restoration of independence, the preserved ethnic cultural links between Lithuania and emigrants have strengthened. As a result of emigration strengthened by World War II and the following years of oppression, many Lithuanian citizens and their progeny are residing in Poland, Great Britain, Russia, Israel, the USA, Canada, Germany and other countries. The emigrants willingly visit the native land of their parents and grandparents; they also arrive for rest or medical treatment (Stanaitis 2006).

The described circumstances serve as a background for Lithuania and the entire Baltic region to become a new easily accessible and interesting tourism region.

7.1.2 The Past of Tourism and Sources of Information

The educational trips of Lithuanian nobility go back to a few hundred years ago. Already in the sixteenth–the seventeenth centuries, several Lithuanian noblemen visited Near East, Jerusalem and Egypt in particular (Radvila 1990). Later on, they took fancy to visiting antique monuments of Greece and Rome and spending their time in the resorts.

The beginning of medical tourism in Lithuania goes back to the middle of the sixteenth century when mineral water spa was opened in Likėnai. At the end of the eighteenth century, Druskininkai obtained the status of health resort with mineral water spas. The localities along the Lithuanian shore—Palanga and Neringa (Nida, Juodkrantė)—were started to be used for recreational purposes in the nineteenth century. These localities were visited not only by Lithuanian people, but also by representatives of more remote territories: Tsarist Russia and Kaiser Germany (Čižiūnas 2007).

The sources of organized tourism go back to the end of the nineteenth–the beginning of the twentieth century. Yet the then tourist trips were occasional and few. They became more frequent at the end of the second and the beginning of the third decades of the twentieth century. The trips were mainly organized by different youth organizations, schools and societies (Džiovėnas 2003).

After World War II, it took some time for tourism to revive. It gained certain momentum in the 1960s–1990s. Yet, the trips were confined to the republics of the Soviet Union. Different departments, travel agencies, societies, trade union organizations, excursion bureaus and federations, organized them. The flows of tourists

from other republics visited the most beautiful and interesting destinations of the country.

The outbound tourism was limited. In 1985, only 21.1 thousand people from Lithuania visited foreign countries. Mainly, those were the countries of the socialist group: Poland, Czechoslovakia and Democratic Republic of Germany. Only 12.0% of the outbound tourists visited other countries. In the mentioned year, Lithuania received 52.2 thousand foreign visitors. The visitors from the socialist countries among them accounted for 80.0% (Juodokas and Raguckas 1988).

The situation dramatically changed after the restoration of independence. The tourism trade livened up, the flows of inbound and outbound tourism amounted to millions of visitors and the local educational tourism became especially popular. Lithuania received visitors not only from the neighbouring countries but also from all over the world. The branches of medical, recreational, ecological rural and educational tourism gained popularity. The Lithuanian tourists travel not only to European countries, but also to the countries in all continents of the world. Lithuanians mainly prefer the recreational and educational branches of tourism.

Tourism has turned into an important branch of trade in Lithuania. According to the data of the Department of Statistics (Lithuania), 2.4 million tourists stayed at the Lithuanian accommodation establishments in 2014, or by 8.2% more than in 2013. In 2014, the number of foreign tourists in these establishments increased to 1.3 million, whereas the number of local tourists exceeded one million. The tourism sector of the country (according to the data of 2013) creates about 3% of the countrywide value added. About 41.1 thousand people (or 4.4% of the total of employees) are engaged in activities related to tourism (Lietuvos 2015).³ There have emerged hundreds of tourism companies and information centres. The lodging system has been improved. Tourism specialists are trained at higher schools. Tens of thousands of people are engaged in tourism trade and related service system and their number tends to increase permanently.

The present research of tourism in Lithuania is designed as a survey of the state of the art in the sector of tourism and as an attempt to forecast the nearest future of tourism development. Not only the survey includes the analysis of available tourism sources, their location and use, but also it describes the most interesting tourism–recreation territories, their distribution and most popular tourism destinations. Ecological (rural) tourism as a priority branch is in the focus of survey. Other branches of tourism are overviewed briefly.

The article contains information about development of inbound tourism, operating lodging system, information centres and most interesting routes and destinations.

The survey is based on the material from the publications by the Lithuanian Department of Statistics (Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania and Tourism of

³Lietuvos ekonomikos apžvalga (2015). <http://ukmin.lrv.lt/uploads/ukmin/documents/files/Apzvalgos/Lietuvos%20ekonomikos%20ap%C5%BEvalga%202015%20m.%20kovo%20m%C4%97n.pdf>.

Lithuania) and National Tourism Department at the Ministry of Economy (Lithuanian Tourism Statistics). Besides, literary sources about tourism bearing theoretical and informative character were used. The tables, charts and sketch maps contained in the article were compiled based on the data from the mentioned sources and relevant individual calculations placing emphasis on territorial patterns.

The described state of the art of tourism in Lithuania and possibilities for its development are expected to attract the foreign readership to the newly developing tourism region. This in its turn will contribute to successful development of tourism in the country.

7.2 Distribution of Tourism Resources

Lithuania has no mineral resources of global importance such as oil, gas, coal, gold or other kinds of ores. It neither has large towns inhabited by millions or antique architectural constructions. Yet, Lithuania is famous for its rich natural resources, wonderful landscapes, park-like forests and blue rivers and lakes. The country has many historical and cultural monuments of different ages and constructions, belonging to different architectural styles. These objects are willingly visited by tourists and holidaymakers (Fig. 7.1).

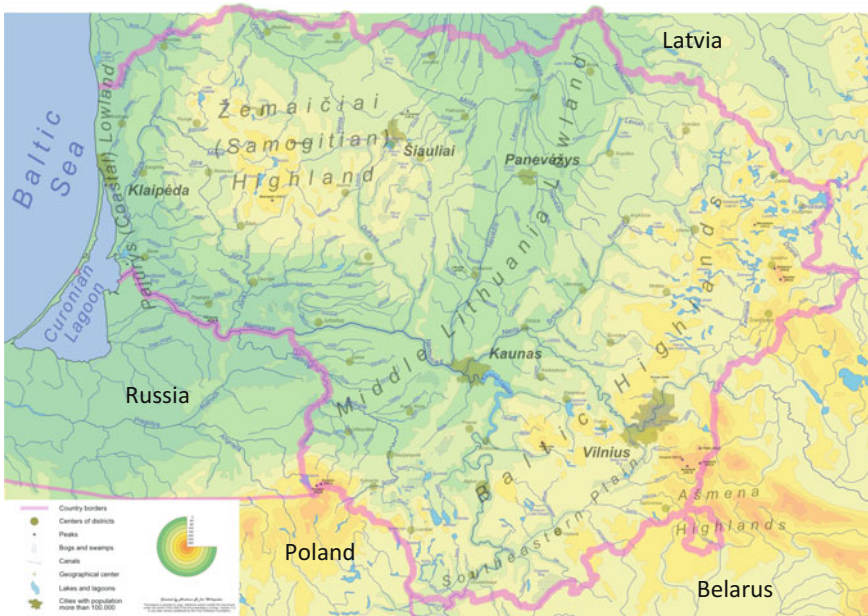


Fig. 7.1 Natural map of Lithuania

7.2.1 *Singularity of Natural Conditions*

Lithuania is a country of plains, yet its landscape is far from monotonous. Though there are no high mountains, beautiful hills towering up to 300 m above the ground can be found in abundance. There are a few regions of uplands and lowlands formed by past glaciations. In terms of tourism, all parts of Lithuania are interesting but especially its uplands crossed by river valleys and lake banks (Šeimos 2005).

The Žemaičiai Upland with some hills up to 234 m in height occupies a larger part of west Lithuania. Picturesque areas with hills domed with green forests open before the eyes of a visitor standing on the highest spots. A tract of Baltic Uplands with hills reaching 292 m in height extends along the south-eastern periphery of Lithuania. The Aukštasis Kalnas mount towering 294 m above the ground is the highest spot in Lithuania. It is located in the Lithuanian–Belarusian border area east of Vilnius (Eidukevičienė 2009).

Interesting and attractive to tourists is the dense hydrographic network of Lithuania. The country is along and across cut by rivers and streams of different size. It also has thousands of lakes. There are about 3000 lakes with the area exceeding 0.5 ha and almost as many smaller lakes and ponds. It is important that the lake water is clean and lake shores mostly are suitable for recreation. The majority of lakes are situated in the uplands, mainly in the north-eastern part of Lithuania. The streams connecting the lakes comprise a dense and interesting network willingly used by local and foreign tourists (Eidukevičienė 2013).⁴

Climate conditions are favourable for recreation and tourism. The warm period lasts for about five months: from May to September inclusively. The common summer air temperature reaches 24–28 °C; precipitation is moderate, especially in May–June. Winters are mild. The air temperatures rarely fall below 20 °C (Vaitekunas and Valanciene 2004). Autumns also are rather warm, especially September and October.

Green forests beautify Lithuania. They account for 1/3 of its territory. In the south-east part of the country, forests occupy more than 50% of the territory. This part of Lithuania is predominated by dry beautiful mushroom forests resembling parks. The hilly Žemaitija areas also are rather forested. The arable lands account for 44.8% of Lithuania's territory. They are mainly concentrated in central Lithuania. In some districts, for example in the Pasvalys District, farmlands account for 68.5% of the territory. Farmlands in hilly and forested territories (especially in the south-eastern part of Lithuania) occupy considerably smaller areas: in the Varėna District, they account for 17.1%, Švenčionys District 21.6% and Trakai District 25.7% of the district territory (Statistikos 2004). The mentioned territories are predominated by natural or semi-natural landscapes the main elements being: forests, lakes, wetlands, grasslands and pastures.

Flora and fauna of the country are rather rich. They offer many pleasant moments to holidaymakers and tourists. There is a high probability of encountering

⁴Eidukevičienė M. Lietuvos gamtinė geografija. Klaipėda, 2013.

Photograph 7.1 Kernave—Troy Lithuania—Lithuania’s first capital (*Source J. Łach*)



Photograph 7.2 Merkinė (Merecz)—Castle Hill from the fourteenth century—Dzūkija (*Source J. Łach*)



elks, deer, roes, hare, foxes and even wolves and lynxes in the forests. Lakes and rivers are habitats of beavers, martens, minks and different species of birds (over 350 species). Among the rare species can be mentioned a few varieties of eagles, cranes, and mute swans and a few varieties of ducks, wood grouse, heath cocks, bitterns and owls. Many countryside farmsteads can take pleasure in having stork nests because the White Stork has been declared the national bird of Lithuania (Logminas 2007).

7.2.2 Historical Cultural Heritage

Architectural and historical monuments and cultural events of Lithuania as tourism resources are competitive in the regional context yet not used to advantage.

Monuments of historical cultural heritage, architectural monuments of different styles, well-attended beautiful towns and settlements and ensembles of manor houses are scattered all over Lithuania. Their territorial distribution is uneven. The majority of them are located in big towns, on river and lake sides and in hilly areas.

In Lithuania, there are about 1000 hill forts of different size and age. The main of them have castles in great numbers visited by tourists and holidaymakers. Some hill forts have been preserved as sacred mountains. The known Lithuanian capitals Kernavė, Senieji Trakai and Vilnius are related to these hill forts (Photographs 7.1 and 7.2). An especially large number of ancient hill forts are located along Nemunas, on its right bank. Žemaitija in the west and Baltic Uplands in the south-eastern part of Lithuania also are distinguished for numerous hill forts (Stanaitis 2000). Yet in terms of tourism, Lithuanian castles and hill forts are underestimated. The Panemunė castles and Merkinė, Punia, Seredžius, Liškiava and Saudargas hill forts are underused as tourism destinations.

Among constructions of different age and size, Gothic architecture is represented by the well-known monuments: the Trakų Pilis Castle, Vytautas Church in Kaunas and St. Anne's Church in Vilnius. Among the most typical Renaissance constructions, we can mention Biržai Castle and Church of St. Michael the Archangel in Vilnius. Among the great number of Baroque constructions, the Church of St. Casimir in Vilnius and Pažaislis ensemble in Kaunas can be mentioned. The most typical classical architecture is represented by the Cathedral and Presidential Palace in Vilnius. The old cities of four Lithuanian towns are distinguished for abundance of architectural constructions and historical monuments: Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda and Kėdainiai (Mačiulis 2000).

Unique objects included in sightseeing tours can be found in many Lithuanian localities: museums, monuments, homesteads and parks. Worth mentioning are Open Air Museum of Lithuania in Rumšiškės not far from Kaunas, National M.K. Čiurlionis Art Museum and M. Žilinskas Art Gallery in Kaunas, sculpture garden of Soviet-era statues in the Grutas forest near Druskininkai, Hill of Crosses near Šiauliai, unique Orvydai farmstead in Žemaitija, Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant, Ethnocosmology Museum and Astronomical Observatory in Molėtai and many other.

The following objects were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List: Vilnius Historic Centre (in 1994), Curonian Spit (in 2000), Lithuanian cross-crafting (in 2001), the Baltic Song and Dance Celebrations (in 2003) and Kernavė Archaeological Site (in 2004). The Struve Geodetic Arc was included in the list in 2005 as a natural object. Yet, its use for tourism purposes is limited. In 2010, the Lithuanian polyphonic songs "Sutartinės" were included in the representative intangible cultural heritage of humanity list⁵. The cultural objects included in the UNESCO Heritage List contribute to country's prestige and make Lithuania known to the world.

⁵<http://unesco.lt/kultura/nematerialus-kulturos-paveldas/nematerialus-kulturos-paveldas-lietuvoje>.

In 2009, Vilnius was the European Capital of Culture. This circumstance contributed to rising the numbers of tourists and consolidating the Vilnius position as that of the cultural leader in the region.

According to the data provided by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania (RL), at the beginning of 2009, cultural services were offered by 3 national, 15 republican and 2 county museums and 61 municipal, 19 departmental and 6 private museums. The greatest flows of tourists are attracted by the Open Air Museum of Lithuania in Rumšiškės, Sea Museum in Klaipėda, Amber Museum in Palanga, National M.K. Čiurlionis Museum in Druskininkai, Devils' Museum in Kaunas and War and History Museum in Kaunas.

The Lithuanian musical culture is famous in Europe. Music festivals in Vilnius and Kaunas, T. Mann's cultural events in Neringa, jazz festivals in Birštonas, Klaipėda, Kaunas and Vilnius and other music events represent great potential for development of cultural tourism. Moreover, Lithuania participates in the international projects of cultural tourism: "Baroque Route, Abbey Route, Amber Route, Cultural Heritage and Hansa Route" (Photographs 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8).

According to the data of the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, at the beginning of 2009 Lithuania had 20,000 registered cultural objects and localities, including about 2000 objects within the highest category of cultural monuments, about 8.5 thousand objects and localities within the category of state preserved objects and almost to 9.5 thousand within the category of initial preventive conservation objects. The Lithuanian museums store 6,678,300 showpieces. In 2012, the museum year, museums were visited by 3,179,086 people.

A large part of preserved cultural objects is represented by manor houses, which, at the beginning of 2009, amounted to 821. The main problem related to the manor houses is that about 70% of them belong to private owners. The private investments into the renovation of old manors are minimal landed property being the main aim of investors. Many private manors are uncared for. No activities are taking place in them. Due to limited financial possibilities, the manors belonging to the state also

Photograph 7.3 Suderve—
Vilnoja Cultural Park (Source
J. Łach)



Photograph 7.4 Trakai
Castle on Lake Galve (*Source*
J. Łach)



Photograph 7.5 Vilnius
(*Source* J. Wyrzykowski)



Photograph 7.6 Kedainiai,
former magnate residence
(*Source* J. Łach)



Photograph 7.7 The Cathedral of Vilnius of St. Stanislaus & St. Ladislaus (Source J. Łach)



Photograph 7.8 Vilnius—Sanctuary of Our Lady of Ostra Brama (Source J. Łach)



are insufficiently renovated. The shabby state of many manors reduces their attraction and deteriorates their physical condition.

The preserved 300 parks and 55 ethnographic villages also belong to the category of cultural resources. The heritage of wooden manors and ethnographic villages is a unique phenomenon not only in the regional but also in the European context. It bears a great potential for cultural development.

The priority markets for the Lithuanian cultural tourism are Germany, Poland, Latvia, the United Kingdom and Nordic countries. The services of cultural tourism

are targeted at relatively well-educated persons of medium age who can afford cultural tourism. The objects of cultural tourism most popular among foreign tourists are historical centres of Vilnius and Kaunas, Trakai City and Hill of Crosses.

7.3 Preserved Territories—Treasury of Tourism Destinations

The preserved territories apply to areas designed for preservation of objects of natural and cultural heritage and preservation and restoration of ecological equilibrium, biological diversity and natural resources. They serve as destinations of educational tourism and as territories for recreation, scientific research, nature conservation and ethnocultural education.

Preservation of and care about natural environment have in Lithuania millennium traditions. Even before the adoption of Christianity (1387), Lithuania had sacred groves not to be stepped in without the permission of priests. There used to be trees (oaks in particular), stones and other natural objects regarded as sacred.

Later, the hunting areas of dukes and landlords could be equated to reserves because visiting them without necessity was forbidden in order not to scare wild animals and not to disturb their feeding. The first natural reserves were established in the thirties of the twentieth century. After World War II, preservation of natural environment and biological diversity received greater consideration. In 1960–1975, almost 100 reserves of different categories—botanical, landscape, zoological, etc.—were established. Many of them were rudiments of sanctuaries and national and regional parks established some time later. The area of preserved territories accounted for 2.0% of Lithuania's territory (Baškytė 2006).

Especially much attention to the state and preservation of natural environment was paid after the restoration of independence (1990). Today, Lithuania has an interesting and perfectly functioning system of preserved territories. It includes reserves, national and regional parks, national and municipal reservations, biosphere polygons and restorable areas (Table 7.1).

The preserved territories, national and regional parks in particular, represent the most valuable territories from the natural, aesthetic and cultural points of view. They are the treasury of tourism destinations. They have been established in the most beautiful parts of the country and are perfect destinations for educational tourism and recreation. These territories preserve the traditional lifestyles and abound in natural, historical, archaeological and architectural objects.

The Lithuanian preserved territories account (in 2014) for 15.74% of the country's area (Table 7.1). They are managed by the State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment.

The preserved areas not only are designed for protection and preservation of unique values (natural, historical, cultural and landscape) but also public

Table 7.1 Preserved territories and their area in Lithuania

Category	Number	Area, ha	Percentage of the total territory (%)
National sanctuaries	6	18,772.09	0.29
Biosphere sanctuaries	1	18,489.69	0.28
National parks	5	144,208.48	2.21
Regional parks	30	449,466.88	6.88
National reserves	396	146,351.93	2.24
Municipal reserves	112	12,897.57	0.20
Biosphere polygons	30	236,558.27	3.62
Restorable areas	3	875.42	0.01
Total	583	1,027,620.33	15.74

Source Lietuvos saugomos teritorijos 2014/(Preserved Territories of Lithuanian), Vilnius

environmental education. Creation of conditions for educational tourism and promotion of the objects of natural and cultural heritage for the sake of environmental education is one of the aims sought by preservation of territories set forth in the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Protected Areas. For this purpose, more than 100 educational routes, about 70 sightseeing tours and sites and hundreds of campsites and rest sites have been established in the preserved territories (Baškytė 2006).

The Lithuanian preserved territories have more than 40 visitors' centres, museum expositions and nature schools. In the preserved territories, educational excursions, sightseeing tours and trips guided by specialists are organized. Efforts are directed at managing the flows of tourists, nurturing their consciousness and environmental education.

The number of visitors to preserved territories is increasing every year. In the summer of 2009 alone, these territories were visited by 250 thousand people.

7.3.1 Sanctuaries

Lithuania has 3 natural, 1 biosphere and Dubrava local natural sanctuaries. They occupy 37,261.78 ha accounting for 0.57% of the country's territory.

Čepkeliai National Nature Reserve is located in the southern periphery of Lithuania, Varėna District. It was established in 1975 and occupies 11,227 h. The reserve was established for protection of one of the oldest and most interesting forest swamps of Lithuania, forested continental dunes, relict lakes, hydrological regime of the swamp and valuable flora and fauna.

Kamanos National Nature Reserve is located in the north-western part of Lithuania, Akmenė District. It was established in 1979. The area occupied amounts to 3961 ha. It was established for protection of the valuable north Lithuanian clayey

plain complex with typical morphological forms, fauna and flora. Bogs account for 67.0% of the total reserve area.

Viešvilė National Nature Reserve is located in west Lithuania, Tauragė District. It was established in 1991 and occupies 3219 ha. The aim of establishment was to preserve the very valuable natural ecosystem of Viešvilė River basin. In 1993, the Viešvilė reserve was declared swamp of international importance.

Žuvintas Biosphere Reserve is located in south Lithuania, Alytus District. This oldest reserve of Lithuania was established in 1937. Its area is 18,490 ha. Bogs account for 78% and Žuvintas Lake for 13% of its total area. The reserve was established for preservation of Žuvintas Lake, ecosystems of the surrounding bog terrains and rich fauna, birds in particular. In 2002, the reserve obtained the status of biosphere reserve. The building of administration houses an exposition of Žuvintas nature and guest rooms.

Dubrava Local Reserve near Kaunas obtained the status of preserved object in 1968. The status of reserve was obtained in 1994. The area of the reserve is 119.52 ha. It was established for preservation of rare forest habitats and plant communities. Three quarters of the reserve are occupied by upland bog. The rest of the area is under maturing or mature stands.

Cultural Reserve of Kernavė is located on the right bank of Neris River, Širvintos District. The reserve was established in 1989. It occupies 194.4 ha. It was designed for preservation of a valuable complex of historical, cultural and archaeological complex as a record of history encompassing about 12–13 thousand years. In 2004, the Kernavė archaeological site was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Reserve of Vilnius Castles is located in the historical centre of Vilnius. It was established in 1997. The area occupied is 51.07 ha. It represents a historical and spiritual centre of the Lithuanian State. It was designed for protection and conservation of Vilnius Castles and cultural and natural values existent in their surroundings.

7.3.2 National Parks

National parks are preserved territories of national importance with natural or developed landscapes representing certain ethnocultural regions. Lithuanian has five national parks.

Aukštaitija National Park preserves a forested landscape with many lakes and well-developed glacial landforms. It was established in 1974. The territory occupies 41,056 ha. One hundred and four lakes of different size and depth are scattered among forests. The park includes the unique ecosystem of the upper Žeimena abounding in different natural and cultural objects: subglacial–periglacial channels, ridges, old forests, ethnographic villages, homesteads and buildings and peculiar traditional lifestyles.

Dzūkija National Park preserves a forested system of rivers and streams, multitude of springs, continental dunes and dry pine forests. The park was established in 1991. Its territory occupies 58,522 ha. The park includes the Nemunas valley, small streams with deep valleys, numerous springs and specific natural diversity. There are old Dzūkai villages located in pine forests—Zervynos, Musteika, Margionys, etc.—distinguished for traditional lifestyles and peculiar ethnic culture.

Žemaitija National Park was established in 1991 as a territory for preservation of the larger part of Žemaičiai Upland and its forested lake natural complex. The occupied area amounts to 21,754 ha. The park includes preserved natural objects (lakes, hills, river valleys and forests), ethnographic settlements and individual objects. It also is designed to preserve the Žemaičiai traditions and customs.

Curonian Spit National Park is a territory with a landscape created by wind, waves and human activity. It extends as a narrow strip between the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea. It was established in 1991. The area occupied is 27,389 ha. The park is distinguished for the highest dunes of north Europe and cultural values of coastal region: ethnographic fishermen's homesteads, old country houses and cultural layers of old buried settlements. The park was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List as a territory of international importance.

Trakai Historical National Park includes Trakai City and its picturesque surroundings. It was established in 1991. The area occupied is 8147 ha. The Trakai Islands, the areas of the past castles and the historical centre of Trakai are the core of the park. Lakes with beautiful lakesides and numerous islands occupy one-fifth of the park territory. The castle in one of the islands of Galvė Lake is the only one that survived in Lithuanian lake islands.

7.3.3 Regional Parks

The term regional parks is applied to territories of regional importance distinguished for landscape diversity and unique natural and cultural historical objects. In these territories, preservation of natural and ethnocultural landscapes is combined, economic and recreational activities are regulated and efforts are put to preserve stable ecosystem. Regional parks are the most important destinations of ecological tourism rather popular among tourists and holidaymakers.

Lithuania has 30 regional parks. The first regional parks appeared at the end of the twentieth century, mainly in the areas of former landscape, botanical or zoological reservations.

The areas occupied by regional parks are very uneven. The largest Labanoras Regional Park occupies 52,848 ha and the smallest Pavilniai Regional Park only 2128 ha. The majority of regional parks occupies from 10 to 15 thousand hectares. There are 14 such parks.

Regional parks have been established in various parts of Lithuania, yet their territorial distribution is uneven. The greatest number of regional parks is concentrated in the hilly areas of Baltic and Žemaičiai Uplands. Many of them include

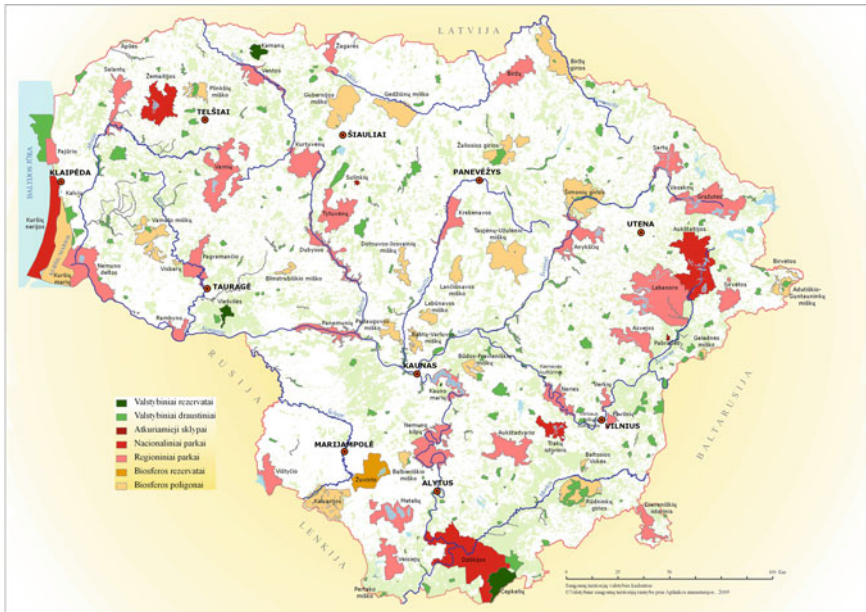


Fig. 7.2 System of Lithuanian preserved territories

sectors of Nemunas, Neris, Venta and other river valleys and lake areas. Few regional parks have been established in the plain territories of north and central Lithuania (Fig. 7.2).

Forests account for the largest areas in the Gražutė and Labanoras regional parks, whereas lakes and forested lakesides with Asveja, Meteliai, Sartai and Vištytis river valleys and adjacent territories predominate in the Nemunas Loops, Neris, Venta and some other regional parks. Some parks are represented by large lake terrains alone, e.g. Aukštadvaris, Veisiejai and some other parks.

7.3.4 State and Municipal Reservations

State and municipal reservations were established for preservation of natural and cultural complexes or certain landscape elements and plant and animal species. They are the territories with maintained landscape diversity and ecological stability. They also serve as polygons of scientific research and objects of tourism. In these territories, economic activities are restricted. The network of reservations has been developing since 1960. Some reservations have been converted into nature reserves and national and regional parks what accounts for their changing number.

The state reservations are of a few types (Table 7.2) depending on the purpose of establishment. Thermological reservations predominate. Also, there are 46

Table 7.2 State reserves

Types	Number	Area, ha	Part of the country's territory, %
Geological	10	629.95	0.01
Geomorphological	38	21,653.81	0.33
Hydrographic	34	12,858.29	0.20
Pedological	11	1272.06	0.02
Botanical	32	5097.63	0.08
Zoological	29	15,681.91	0.24
Botanical–zoological	27	17,947.50	0.27
Telmological ^a	51	24,090.2	0.37
Talasalological	1	14,027.1	–
Landscape	46	43,998.12	0.67
Total	279	1415,132.22	2.09

^aCoastal reservation. Its area is not included in the total

Source: <http://www.vstt.lt/en/VI/index.php#r/54>

landscape reservations designed for protection of unique landscape areas with important heritage objects. The diversity of landforms is preserved in geomorphological, the diversity of rivers, streams and lakes in hydrographic and various outcrops, karst pits and boulder fields in geological reservations.

The territorial distribution of state reservations is rather uneven. They are concentrated in the north-eastern—Aukštaitija ethnographic region—and southern—Dzūkija ethnographic region—parts of Lithuania. Tens of state reservations have been established in west Lithuania, Žemaitija. In central Lithuania, the number of state reservations is considerably smaller. The distribution pattern of reservations is predetermined by the character of landscape, surface forms of natural components and diversity of hydrological objects, flora and fauna.

The number of municipal reservations has been increasing. In 2010, there were 111 municipal reservations: archaeological, architectural, landscape architecture, ethnocultural, memorial and urban.

7.4 Resorts and Places Used for Recreation

The main Lithuanian natural resources—favourable climate, air humidity and temperature, wind patterns, solar radiation and healthy natural factors such as mineral water, curative mud, recreational greeneries and bodies of water—create good premises for medical treatment, prophylaxis and recreation. Resorts and places for recreation are established in the localities concentrating the mentioned favourable factors.

The natural curative resources have been used in Lithuania since long ago. Already in the middle of the sixteenth century, north Lithuania had a spa (today Likėnai). More than 200 years ago, mineral water for medicinal purposes was used

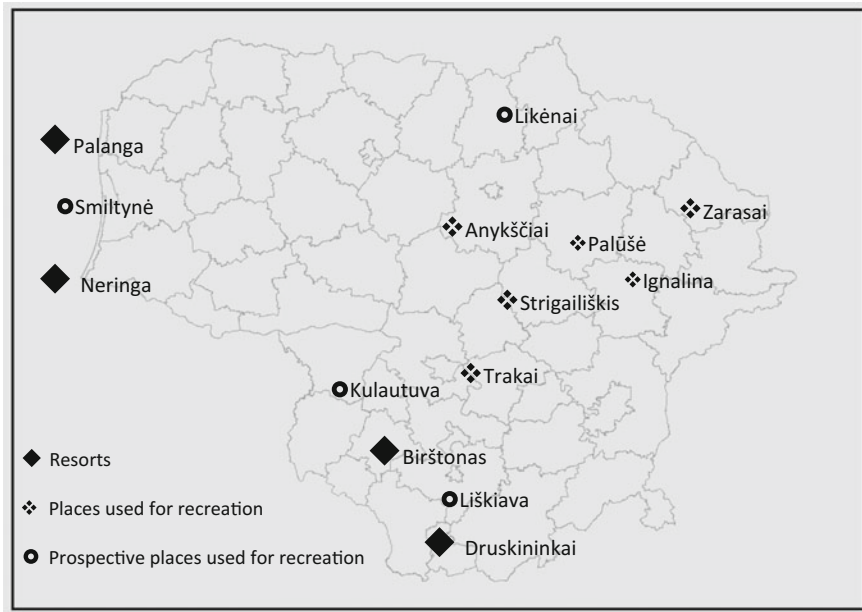


Fig. 7.3 Resorts and places used for recreation

in Druskininkai, some time later in Stakliškės and other localities. In the course of time, these localities have turned into resorts with sanatoriums and spas. They have become popular destinations for medical, prophylactic and recreational tourism.

Today, Lithuania has four resorts (Fig. 7.3). They are localities concentrating natural curative factors: mineral water, curative mud, healthy microclimate, bodies of water and recreational green areas. These factors are used for medicinal and recreational purposes (Kriščiūnas 2005).

7.4.1 Resorts

Birštonas is an integrated tourism and modern medical treatment resort located in the Nemunas River valley. It was established in 1854. In short time, Birštonas converted into a resort of balneological, climate and mud therapy. It is used for treatment of cardiovascular, respiratory, intestinal, nervous, joint and gynaecological diseases. Lately, Birštonas has become not only summer but also winter recreational resort. It has a ski track and visitors can have a ride in horse-drawn sledges. In the summer time, visitors have an opportunity to take a walk in clean forests and to relax on the Nemunas banks.

Druskininkai is a centre of international recreation designed for recreation, resort therapy and tourism. Already in 1794, Druskininkai was declared a place used for

medical purposes. Today, the city is distinguished for modern infrastructure allowing using the natural curative resources, cultural and historical potential and other possibilities to maximal advantage. The resort applies most advanced diagnostic and treatment technologies and offers a wide spectrum of procedures. Visitors to Druskininkai can receive medical treatment of cardiovascular, intestinal, nervous and metabolic diseases. For treatment, mineral water, curative mud, climate therapy and curative physical exercises are used. River and lake banks, health tracks and pine parks serve as popular places for relaxation.

Druskininkai is famous for its modern, recently reconstructed, water park and a unique ski track operating throughout the year. The resort often organizes music festivals, poetry evenings and concerts of classic and modern music and art exhibitions. Druskininkai is the native town of two world famous artists: M.K. Čiurlionis and progenitor of Cubism Ž. Lipšicas. Memorial museums of Čiurlionis and Lipšicas are operating.

Neringa is a prestigious international resort on the Baltic Sea shore composed of 4 tourism and recreation settlements. It is located in the 4 km wide peninsula (Curonian Spit) between the Baltic Sea and Curonian Lagoon. Its length is 52 km. The territory of the National Park of Curonian Spit is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. As a summer resort, Neringa has been known since the nineteenth century.

Neringa is a rather outlying, closed and prestigious resort for calm holiday. Moderate climate, quietness, sea, sunshine, beach sand and pine forests favourably affect vacationers and are helpful in curing different diseases. Neringa is popular among high-income Lithuanian and foreign tourists.

Palanga is an international seaside resort for active recreation oriented towards entertainment industry and resort treatment. It can offer a wide spectrum of services. Vacationers have been visiting Palanga since the beginning of the twentieth century. Since 1959, it has been functioning as a year-round medical resort. The resort provides medical treatment of respiratory, nervous, joint and oncological diseases. It also is a convalescent centre for persons who suffered acute paralytic strokes or have sleep disorders.

Recently, Palanga has acquired a status of universal and democratic resort. The Tiškevičiai Palace and the surrounding huge Andre Park represent one of the most beautiful places of Palanga. The Palace houses a unique Amber Museum. In August, various concerts and poetry evenings take place on the Palace terrace. The summer cultural programmes are rather variable.

Places used for recreation are places (towns, villages or their parts) with good infrastructure (engineering networks, communications and environmental requirements) used for recreation and attracting visitors for holidays or medical treatment (Fig. 7.3). These places must have favourable microclimate and at least one of the natural resources, such as mineral water, curative mud, recreational green areas or bodies of water. Also, they are expected to have a picturesque landscape and well-attended recreational environment.

Anykščiai is a tourism centre of national importance. It has many natural, historical, cultural and architectural monuments attractive to tourists. Anykščiai is

surrounded by beautiful landscapes, forests and river valleys. The infrastructure is fitted for summer and winter recreational and educational tourism.

Palūšė is a village in the Aukštaitija National Park surrounded by forests and lakes. The environment is beautiful, lakes clean and forests dry. The locality has perfect conditions for water and educational tourism and recreation.

Strigailiškis is a village near Ignalina with rich cultural heritage and ecological tourism resources. In the past, it used to be a fishermen's village distinguished by specific ethnoculture. The village has a Pisciculture Museum and homesteads of rural tourism.

Ignalina is an administrative district centre in a lakey terrain. It is a centre of educational and ecological tourism and recreation. The winter sports centre operates year-round. It also admits vacationers. This town also has a few rural tourism homesteads.

Trakai is an administrative district centre surrounded by clean and picturesque landscapes. Its natural and historical-cultural tourism resources are rich serving as a perfect basis for recreational and educational tourism. Trakai also offers health treatment services.

Zarasai is an administrative district centre with favourable microclimate and well-attended recreational environment. The town is surrounded by lakes and beautiful landscapes. It is a destination of educational tourism and active recreation.

7.4.2 Prospective Places Used for Recreation

Kulautuva is a small town in the Nemunas valley 20 km west of Kaunas (Fig. 7.3). There is a beautiful forest in its environs and health and recreation track. The microclimate is favourable and the environment is well attended.

Likėnai is a resort settlement in north Lithuania with trimmed environment, mineral water, curative mud and convalescent hospital.

Liškiava is an old ethnographic (Dzūkija) borough in south Lithuania 8 km north-east of Druskininkai on the left Nemunas bank. Its environment is trimmed and fitted for tourism and cultural activities. The restored Liškiava Abbey is its place of interest.

Smiltynė is a part of Klaipėda City located in the Curonian Spit. A large part of the locality is occupied by forests. The shore has many beautiful beaches and dunes. Smiltynė is distinguished for pleasant microclimate and clean air. Sandy beaches are a good place for recreation.

7.4.3 Medical Tourism and SPA

The Lithuanian resources of medical tourism are concentrated in four resort towns: Druskininkai, Birštonas, Neringa and Palanga. The curative resources of Druskininkai

and Birštonas resorts are represented by inland waters and recreational forests. The main natural resources of Neringa resort are the Baltic Sea, the Curonian Lagoon, beaches, unique dunes and recreational forests. The Baltic Sea with its beaches and forests are the main natural resources of Palanga resort.

In 2014, Lithuania had 18 convalescent homes and rehabilitation centres (the number of beds amounted to 6344) including 13 in resorts (Turizmas 2014). In 2007, there were 25 health care establishments. The greatest number of convalescent homes and rehabilitation centres was concentrated in the Palanga (5) and Druskininkai (4) resorts. The absolute majority of health companies are governed by private capital. The health companies run by the state and municipalities are in a poor condition. For their renovation and improvement of services, it is suggested to attract private investments.

According to the data of the Department of Statistics (Lithuania), in 2014, 110.9 thousand clients were accommodated in the convalescence homes and rehabilitation centres of the country (in 2010, their number amounted to 106.26 thousand). In the period 2007–2014, their number reduced (from 132.7 thousand in 2008) by almost one-fifth as a result of an economic crisis. It should be pointed out that in the time span under consideration (2007–2014), both the absolute and relative numbers of foreigners visiting the Lithuanian health care establishments increased (from 25.6 thousand or 19.5% in 2007 to 31.2 thousand or 28.2% in 2014).

In 2014, the greatest number of foreigners came from Russia (30.9%). Due to the political crisis of 2012–2014, the number of guests from this country in the health care establishments decreased by one-fifth (from 12,685 in 2012 to 9662 in 2014). The number of guests from Belarus amounted to 8642 or 27.6% and from Germany to 8056 or 25.8%. In the time span 2007–2014, the relatively highest increase of foreign clients in the Lithuanian health care establishments was from Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and Latvia. The relatively lowest decrease of clients was from the Scandinavian countries—Sweden, Denmark and Norway—and the neighbouring Poland.

In 2014, the greatest number of clients was received by Druskininkai, Palanga and Birštonas resorts: 49.8, 27.2 and 17.1%, respectively. The absolute majority of foreign clients were accommodated in the Druskininkai resort.

The Lithuanian health care establishments traditionally provide high-quality medical services at regionally competitive prices. The priority markets of inbound medical tourism are Germany, Belarus, Russia, Poland, Latvia and Israel. The expectations of the majority of tourists are related to calm recreation and relaxation procedures.

Though according to world practice health care services are least dependent on seasonal factors, the flows of medical tourists to Lithuania bear a distinctly seasonal character. The greatest flows of tourists to Birštonas and Druskininkai are recorded in May–September and to Palanga and Nida in July–August.

In order to mitigate the seasonal character of tourist arrivals and increase the arrivals of inbound tourists, it is necessary to broaden the spectrum of provided services. The common accommodation, catering, active tourism and leisure tourism

services should be supplemented with services of conference, water and beauty tourism. It is also essential to develop health care infrastructure and improve the qualification of human resources to match the high European standards.

7.5 Main Types of Tourism

7.5.1 *Rural (Ecological) Tourism—A Promising Branch of Trade*

Rural tourism is an effective measure for preservation of cultural heritage, improvement of the ecological state of territories, increase of the sales of farming products and preservation of natural beauty. It cannot be assumed that this trade would solve the agricultural problems of Lithuania, but undoubtedly the development of rural tourism is an important factor for creation of alternative modes of activity and alternative sources of income for rural families and preservation of natural and cultural heritage. Rural tourism has gained the leading positions because it has been undertaken by superior enterprising country dwellers with appropriate education and mentality. Rural tourism has all prerequisites for rapid development. An information system of Lithuanian rural tourism and crafts already has been developed (<http://www.countryside.lt>). The website introduces at length the available homesteads fitted for rural tourism, folk handicrafts and tourism destinations.

The rapidly developing rural tourism already has become a serious competitor for resorts and hotels as a rather cheap alternative for vacationers. Undoubtedly, this branch of trade is a promising leader of alternative rural trades. The Lithuanian recreational potential is fit for development of rural tourism: many forested areas (33% of the country's territory), dense hydrological network (2850 lakes and 758 rivers), objects of cultural heritage and traditional crafts. According to their distribution, priority regions for rural tourism development can be distinguished: forested and laky East Aukštaitija, forested Dzūkija with numerous lakes and rivers, Žemaitija Upland and Coastal area.

Many localities distinguished for recreational resources are located in the territories of low farming productivity, which are especially favourable for development of alternative—rural tourism—trades. Consequently, the rural tourism development programme emphasizes the importance of the measures for motivation of this kind of activity, preservation of cultural heritage and traditional Lithuanian lifestyles.

The rudiments of rural tourism, mainly renting rooms for summer vacation, go back to many years ago. Yet only in the last decades, the opportunities of rural tourism have gained increasing interest in Lithuania. The interest was prompted by exodus of many urban residents to rural areas for relaxation.

Organization of rest in rural areas has gradually become one of the most important alternative kinds of economic activity for rural dwellers. Increasing numbers of Lithuanian and foreign urban dwellers miss natural environment with

preserved historical cultural potential and rural customs and traditions. Countryside can offer clean lakes and rivers, interesting water entertainments, traditional handicrafts, fresh food and interesting gastronomic heritage. A rest in villages is a special attraction to families with small children.

Urban dwellers can rest in the countryside in two ways. They may either rent rooms in rural homesteads fitted for tourism and recreation in most scenic locations or spend holidays in the purchased rural summer residences. In view of increasing depopulation of rural territories, many urban dwellers buy rural residences and fit them for summer holidays. The greatest number of this kind of homesteads is concentrated in the peripheral parts of Lithuania, forested and lake localities (Lietuvos 2004).

Relaxation in rural homesteads is becoming a promising branch of trade. The number of rural homesteads has been increasing every year. In 2003, there were 284; in 2005 438; in 2007 615; in 2011 662; and in 2014 licensed homesteads of rural tourism. In 1997, the “Lithuanian Rural Tourism Association” was established having most of the rural homestead owners as its members (Vittrakytė 2007). As not all rural homesteads fitted for tourism and recreation are licensed, their actual number is expected to be larger (about 1000).

The territorial distribution of rural homesteads is very uneven. Their number depends on the character of natural environment and conditions. Most of them are located in the areas with numerous hydrological objects (lakes and rivers), forests, hills and scenic landscapes. Rural tourism is an alternative source of income for dwellers of low productivity territories with beautiful landscapes. The majority of such areas are concentrated in the south-eastern part of Lithuania, Baltic Uplands, Žemaičiai Upland and coastal area (Fig. 7.4).

The plain areas of central Lithuanian plain have few rural homesteads. The territory is scarcely forested and does not abound in lakes. The available rural homesteads are located near ponds and rivers. The number of rural homesteads in the Šiauliai and Panevėžys districts also is small.

The highest number of rural homesteads was registered in the Utena County—176, Vilnius County—129 and Alytus County—97. The Tauragė County which occupies 13.1% of the country’s territory had only 14 homesteads of rural tourism, the Šiauliai County—20, Marijampolė County—30 and Panevėžys County—23 (Turizmas 2014).

In 2014, the accommodation services were offered by 662 rural tourism homesteads or by 42 (6.8%) homesteads more than in 2013. The number of beds in the rural tourism homesteads increased by 8.6% amounting to the total of 14.8 thousand. The greatest number of rural tourism homesteads was in the municipalities of the Trakai, Zarasai, Ignalina, Utena, Molėtai and Klaipėda districts. The accommodation services in the Trakai municipality were offered by 50 rural homesteads, Zarasai by 41, Ignalina and Utena by 38 each, Lazdijai by 36, Molėtai and Klaipėda by 35 each and Varėna and Plungė by 32 rural homesteads each. Only 1–5 homesteads were registered even in 20 municipalities of north and central Lithuania (Sirutienė 2009). The number of rural homesteads is

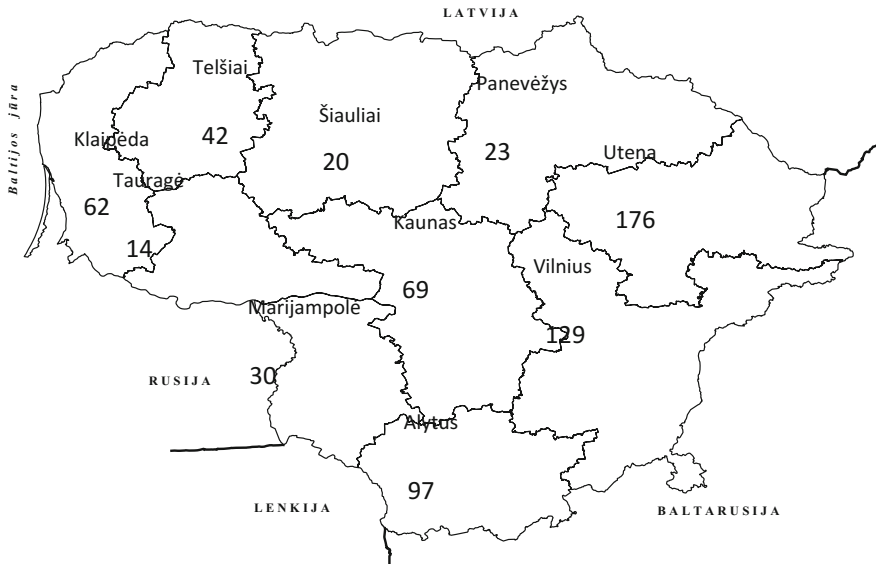


Fig. 7.4 Number of rural (ecological) tourism homesteads in 2014

predetermined not only by natural conditions but also by the size of municipalities, their geographical position and accessibility.

So far, there is no the competition between the rural tourist homesteads because the demand (in summer time in particular) exceeds the supply. The rooms for vacation have to be booked beforehand (not under the conditions of economic decline). The leaders of the Rural Tourism Association assume that up to 5000 rural tourism homesteads could operate successfully in Lithuania.

The size of rooms is an important factor for vacationers and tourists. Smaller rooms are preferred. In 2014, the Lithuanian rural tourism homesteads had 4682 rooms (Table 7.3). Rooms of average size have three beds. The average size of rooms varies but little in the homesteads of all counties. In 2014, 14,823 visitors were accommodated in the Lithuanian rural tourism homesteads at a time. The highest number of beds is available in the Utena, Vilnius, Alytus and Kaunas rural tourism homesteads.

The infrastructure of and levels of comfort in the Lithuanian rural homesteads varies considerably. The homesteads may be grouped into five categories. The level of each group is marked by a number of storks. A rural homestead with least commodities and entertainment is marked with a symbol of one stork, whereas the homesteads with the best infrastructure and living conditions are marked with a symbol of five storks. It should be reminded that the White Stork is the national bird of Lithuania and an important attribute of Lithuanian homesteads. It symbolizes a neat, quiet and safe homestead.

Homesteads with a symbol of 1 stork offer minimal accommodation and only little entertainment. They practice self-service.

Table 7.3 Number of rooms and beds in rural tourism homesteads

County	Homesteads		Rooms		Beds	
	2007	2014	2007	2014	2007	2014
Alytaus	76	97	553	682	1609	2215
Kauno	56	69	350	620	1150	1923
Klaipėdos	50	62	313	366	868	1241
Marijampolė	17	30	129	224	366	818
Panevėžis	26	23	128	180	311	606
Šiaulių	12	20	122	187	289	546
Tauragė	14	14	78	111	160	258
Telšių	31	42	161	327	443	930
Utenos	186	176	975	749	2850	2630
Vilniaus	70	129	514	1236	1571	3656
Viso	538	662	3323	4682	9617	14,823

Source Lithuanian Tourism Statistics

Homesteads with a symbol of 2 storks provide minimal accommodation. Vacationers sometimes have to share the house with the homestead owners. The spectrum of services and entertainment is poor.

Homesteads with a symbol of 3 storks offer average accommodations. Vacationers and tourists can be served or choose self-service. Usually they make cooking themselves.

Homesteads with a symbol of 4 storks are comfortable for relaxation and events. The rooms are cosy and the services and entertainment are well organized. Lodgers may use catering services.

Homesteads marked with a symbol of 5 storks are very comfortable and have perfect infrastructure. The services are variable, including catering, and entertainment.

The prices of beds in rural tourism homesteads depend on the number of services and entertainment. They may range from 5.7 to 72.5 euros per day.

With an increasing number of rural tourism homesteads, the number of vacationers in them also increases. Yet, the increase of the number of lodgers has been uneven. Until 2008, the number of lodgers had been increasing; in 2008–2010, it decreased; and beginning with 2011, the number of Lithuanian and foreign lodgers has been increasing every year (Table 7.4). In 7 years (2002–2008), the number of lodgers of rural homesteads increased more than fivefold (by 5.2 times): from 63.1 to 327.7 thousand. The decrease in 2008–2010 was predetermined by the economic financial decline of the country. In 2008–2010, the total number of vacationers decreased by 30.6%: the number of local vacationers decreased by 25.7% and the number of foreign vacationers decreased even by 60.6%. In 2011–2014, the number of vacationers increased by 51 thousand or by 18% (from 232.2 thousand in 2011 to 283.2 thousand in 2014). In the rural tourism homesteads, the number of foreign

Table 7.4 Number of lodgers at rural tourism homesteads

Year	Lithuanian residents		Foreigners		Total	
	Thousand	%	Thousand	Thousand	%	Thousand
2002	55.7	88.3	7.4	11.7	63.1	100.0
2003	68.1	88.6	8.8	11.4	76.9	100.0
2004	90.0	87.6	12.7	12.4	102.7	100.0
2005	137.1	88.5	17.9	11.5	155.0	100.0
2006	220.7	89.5	25.8	10.5	246.5	100.0
2007	259.2	88.4	34.4	11.6	293.3	100.0
2008	288.2	87.9	33.5	12.1	327.7	100.0
2009	217.8	87.5	27.6	12.5	245.4	100.0
2010	214.2	94.2	13.2	5.8	227.4	100.0
2011	232.2	91.9	20.6	8.1	252.8	100.0
2012	238.1	91.3	22.6	8.7	260.7	100.0
2013	250.4	90.8	25.4	9.2	275.8	100.0
2014	283.2	91.2	27.2	8.8	310.4	100.0

Source Lithuanian Tourism Statistics

lodgers increased even more rapidly (from 20.6 thousand in 2011 to 27.2 thousand in 2014 or by 24.3%).

The rural tourism in Lithuania is orientated to the internal market. In 2007–2009, foreign lodgers in the rural homesteads only accounted for one-eighth of the total of lodgers. In later years, their number increased. In 2014, they amounted to 27.3 thousand or 9% of the total of lodgers. Most of them were from the CIS countries (23%), Poland (19%), Germany (16%) and Latvia (11%). These markets dominated in the rural tourism trade. The arriving foreigners (Germans, Russians, Poles, Belarusians and Jews) are attracted to Lithuania by historical bonds. Lithuania is the motherland of parents and grandparents of many foreign visitors. They are driven by nostalgia. Some have relatives and friends living in Lithuania.

Rest and tourism in Lithuania also are appreciated by visitors from Estonia, Sweden, Norway, France and other countries. Their flows are limited by lack of information. The absolute majority of those who visited Lithuania are happy with their stay. They like the quiet and beautiful environment, clean bodies of water, good services, tasty fresh food and friendly and hospitable people. The general rapid development of rural tourism has helped to avoid appreciable slackening of inbound tourist flows.

The territorial distribution of lodgers at rural tourism homesteads is uneven. Their flows are largest to south-east Lithuania and smallest to north and central Lithuania. In 2014, the portion of vacationers in the Vilnius region (85.7 thousand or 20.1%), Alytus region (48.1 thousand or 15.5%), Kaunas region (45.8 thousand or 14.8%) and Utena region (46.0 thousand or 14.8% of the total number).

The character of the Lithuanian natural conditions is responsible for employment of rural tourism homesteads. It differs by seasons and months. The largest flows of

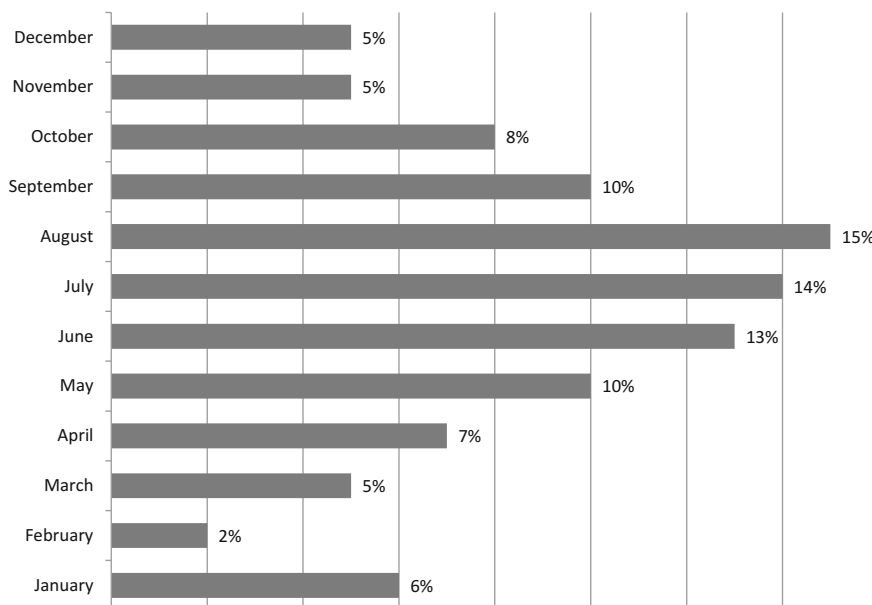


Fig. 7.5 Distribution of visitors to rural tourism homesteads in 2013 by months, %

tourists arrive in warm season. In the summer time, the number of vacationers accounts almost for a half (42%), in the spring for 22%, in the autumn for 23% and in the winter for 13% of the total (Fig. 7.5).

The main problems in the sector of rural tourism are orientation towards the local market, seasonal character and short stay time. In 2014, a half of the total number of visitors arrived in the summer months and their stays lasted for 2.48 days, i.e. one weekend (the stays of the Lithuanian visitors lasted even shorter—for 1.85 days).

Due to natural conditions and different needs of vacationers, not all rural homesteads are able to receive lodgers year-round. Only one-third of the total number of rural tourism homesteads function year-round (Fig. 7.5).

Rural tourism is considered a promising branch of trade in Lithuania. It is expected that by the end of economic decline, the number of vacationers not only will reach its former levels, but even will considerably exceed them. A growing number of Lithuanian urban residents (especially families) choose quiet relaxation in natural environment near bodies of water and in forests. After the visits to noisy resorts of south Europe, they crave for quiet rest in their own country (Stanaitis 2008).

The increasing flows of foreign visitors will be favoured not only by improving resting conditions but also by good accessibility, traditional relations and low prices. It is essential that the visa regime for visitors from the eastern countries is liberalized and promotion of tourism in Lithuania substantially improved. Also, it is necessary to modernize the infrastructure of rural tourism homesteads, increase

their number, balance their territorial distribution and widen the range of communication in foreign languages.

In the context of conversion to alternative occupations in rural areas and increasing demand for ecological tourism, the development of rural tourism in Lithuania is predicted to be rapid. It is recommended that it is oriented towards the inbound tourism, measures for mitigation of its seasonal character are employed and the length of stays increased.

7.5.2 *Bicycle Tourism*

The national system of bicycle tracks in Lithuania is composed of three transit tracks and four categories of national bicycle tracks grouped into western, eastern, southern and central Lithuanian regions. According to the data of the Road Administration under the Ministry of Transport, the total length of the national bicycle tracks amounts to 3769.4 km including 1988.1 km with asphalt pavement, one-third (1295.6 km) with gravel pavement and 485.7 km without pavement.

Bicycle tours are most popular in Europe. Its deepest roots are in German-speaking countries. The main bicycle tourism markets in Lithuania's case are Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

The national network of cycling tracks is rather evenly distributed and includes all Lithuanian regions. It offers the possibilities of travelling and accessibility to tourism resources for Lithuanian and foreign riders. The unified network of tracks creates premises for development of different products of bicycle tourism market and flexible coordination of regional and local tours.

The main drawbacks of bicycle tourism in Lithuania are insufficient quality of bicycle tracks, high probability of traffic accidents and poor systems of marking bicycle tracks and information.

7.5.3 *Motor Tourism*

The development of motor tourism mainly depends on two *macro* factors: roads and campgrounds. From the geographical standpoint, Lithuania is in a favourable geographical position: two international transport corridors go across it—Via Baltica and a road connecting the southern and northern countries. The west European–Russian road corridor also is of high strategic importance.

Campgrounds are the second most important factor influencing the development of motor tourism in Lithuania. The time of existence of campgrounds in Lithuania is less than 15 years.

The first campgrounds of the Lithuanian SSR were established in Palanga, Nida, Lampėdžiai (Kaunas environs) and Trakai. This branch of the tourism trade is rather new and requires much effort to catch up on the other member states of the EU. In

recent years, the number of campgrounds has been rapidly increasing (from 10 in 2007 to 22 in 2014) (784 number of campsites, 2549 pitches). They lodge 39.2 thousand tourists (including 44.3% of foreigners). The rapid growth of the number of campgrounds shows that Lithuania has good conditions for development of this trade. Moreover, it can be expected that with the improving social and economic situation in the country, the number of tourists will increase. New campgrounds can adapt better to the changing demands of visitors and offer the most desired services.

The territorial distribution of campgrounds is mainly predetermined by natural conditions and concentration of tourists in the main recreational territories. At present, most of the Lithuanian campgrounds are concentrated in the laky south and east Lithuanian regions. Lithuanians mainly use these campgrounds for entertainment and jamboree events during which they camp in cabins or own tents. The Lithuanian campgrounds are distinguished by valuable landscape complexes which reflect the specific features of Lithuanian nature. Many campgrounds are organized in strategically convenient places near bodies of water and forests, offering good conditions for development of educational tourism, and in the Lithuanian resorts (Palanga, Druskininkai and Neringa). Well-attended and professionally managed territories used based on the principles of sustainable development help to preserve the unique character of the natural and cultural valuables and strengthen the attraction of the campgrounds.

The most modern campgrounds in Lithuania belonging to the category of 4 stars are Druskininkai campground, “Kempingas Slėnyje” campground in Trakai and “Obuolių Sala” camp in the Molėtai District.

It is expedient to establish campgrounds also in less attractive localities along highways, in closer proximity to border crossing points, in the vicinities of the largest cities and in the coastal region. Effective systems of marking motor tourism tours and information should be introduced.

Today, the poorly developed network of parking grounds in Lithuania is unable to meet the requirements of motor tourists. Its qualitative and quantitative development is expected in the nearest future. Based on the west European experience, it is expedient to establish thematic campgrounds: fishing, entertainment, ecotourism, youth, etc.

7.5.4 Water Tourism

Water tourism is a rapidly developing branch of tourism in Lithuania. It can be divided into inland water tourism (travelling by canoes, kayaks and other kinds of special vessels) and sea tourism (yachts and sea cruises).

Due to increasing popularity of local tourism, rivers and lakes gain attraction for large flows of water tourists. Thanks to private investments, tourism by canoes and kayaks has become the most rapidly developing mode of travelling. Today, there are 200–250 stations renting out canoes and kayaks. The investments mainly are directed into navigation implements, their transportation and night boat landings.

From 2005, the development of inland water tourism was especially intensive in the small rivers of east and south Lithuania. The territorial asymmetry reduced the actual advantages of water tourism development. In order to increase the attraction of water tourism, it is necessary to create its high-quality infrastructure (boat landings and information systems in particular) and to increase the number of tours.

The sector of inland waterways is insufficiently developed. The number of water tours has not changed since 2007. Moreover, their exploitation intensity reduced. Navigation takes place only in Nemunas (from Kaunas to Nida), Neris (from the Vilnelė River mouth to Valakampiai), Kauno Marios Water Reservoir and Curonian Lagoon. The Nemunas and Neris waterways function ineffectively, whereas the Ūla, Lakaja and Žeimena rivers and the East Aukštaitija lakes are not fitted for large flows of tourists. From the territorial point of view, the Middle Nemunas region is most promising for water tourism development.

The Smiltynė, Klaipėda Castle, Nida and, partly, Mingė yacht ports are used for serving sea tourism. The existing sea tourism infrastructure is in an especially poor state: lack of safe and convenient landings, good quality day recreation and night-stay services, fuel stations, repair services, entertainments and other services necessary for attraction of yachting tourists.

Travelling cruises have a large potential of development in the seaside areas. This segment of sea tourism has been growing too slowly. For expansion of the possibilities offered by sea tourism, it is essential to reconstruct the Šventoji port fitting it for entertainment purposes.

The number of cruise vessels visiting Klaipėda has been increasing every year: 40 in 2009, 45 in 2010, 63 in 2014 and 55 in 2015. One-third of them were the large cruise liners (over 200 m in length). Klaipėda also was not once visited by one of the most impressive cruise liners “Constellation” which is the seventh largest cruise vessels in the world (bigger than the legendary “Titanic”). In 2015, Klaipėda was visited by record-holder cruise vessel “Celebrity Eclipse” (317 in length). In 2016, Klaipėda is expected to be visited by 330 m long cruise vessel “Royal Princess”. In the last ten years, cruise tourism in Klaipėda grew at the highest rates in the Baltic region. Having 1% of cruise tourists, Lithuania is the 11th largest Baltic cruise port.

7.5.5 *Ski Tracks*

In Lithuania, 9 ski tracks offer their services. In the regional context, complex competitive services are offered only by the Lithuanian Winter Centre located within the Ignalina town territory near the Šiekštis Lake. The Winter Centre is operating year-round, thus reducing the seasonal character of services. The services offered in winter are ski tracks, funiculars, rent of skiing equipment, catering and accommodation. The centre has four ski tracks and four funiculars.

New opportunities for entertainment appeared in 2011 after the opening of Druskininkai Snow Arena offering a possibility to combine winter and summer

entertainments at a time. The Druskininkai Snow Arena will add to attraction and competitiveness of Lithuania in the sector of tourism.

The Snow Arena has the indoor, outdoor and beginners skiing slopes. Their total length amounts to 1100 m. The width of the indoor slope is 50 m and the length 460 m. The width of the beginners' slope is 70 m and the length more than 150 m. The width of the outdoor slope is 40 m and the length more than 640 m. The range of altitudes between the lowest and highest points is 66 m (slope angle 17–25%). The ski tracks can receive about one thousand skiers at a time. The expected annual number of visitors amounts to 40,000. The closest other indoor skiing complex is in Moscow, i.e. 900 km away from Druskininkai. The Snow Arena offers many other winter entertainments. Visitors also can warm-up, relax and refresh in restaurants and bars tasting food cooked from ecological products.

The Snow Arena works all year-round. The outdoor skiing slope alone will work when the air temperature is lower than +5 °C. The snow cover of the indoor slope is replenished, smoothed and pushed upwards every day.

Before the opening of the Snow Arena, it was emphasized that the potential of winter tourism was used to minimal advantage in Lithuania and that the quality and number of skiing tracks was insufficient. Lithuania's competitiveness among the neighbouring countries (Latvia, Estonia, Poland and Belarus) was low. The mentioned arena and the planned future expansion of its skiing tracks will moderate the seasonal character of Lithuanian winter tourism and will contribute to attraction of larger flows of foreign tourists.

Winter tourism (skiing, skating, horse carts and hiking) is one of the best ways to solve the seasonality in Lithuania. It is necessary to encourage the establishment and development of the subjects offering winter entertainment services (e.g. ice hockey arenas, expansion of Snow Arena, construction of the cross-country skiing tunnel) and to construct and expand the cross-country skiing trails in the East Aukštaitija and south Dzūkija tourism regions.

7.5.6 Golf Courses

The infrastructure of golf courses in Lithuania includes six courses. The largest are "Sostinės" golf course in the Elektrėnai Municipality, European Centre Golf Course and golf course near the "Villon" hotel in the Vilnius Municipality and the incomplete course with nine holes in Lapės, Kaunas District. There are no golf courses in the western and northern regions of Lithuania indicating that the territorial distribution of golf courses in Lithuania is rather limited.

The infrastructure of golf courses in Lithuania has reached only the minimal development level. According to the rates of development, Lithuania is far behind the neighbouring countries. In the regional context, Lithuania is not prepared to receive foreign golf tourists and to offer adequate services.

The demand for golf services is expected to grow. It is predicted that in the future the development of golf courses will gain momentum. The idea of golf

villages is rather popular in Lithuania. Golf villages usually are established at the junctions of housing estates making use of and preserving the natural complexes.

7.5.7 Air Tourism

Lithuania has 4 international and 26 local civil air fields evenly territorially distributed. According to the results of the National Tourism Opportunities Development Study of 2007–2010, the existing air tourism infrastructure in Lithuania can be evaluated as poorly developed. The flow of inbound air tourists is small.

The main circumstances limiting the development of air tourism in Lithuania are high airport fees and high prices of aviation fuel. The material resources of aero clubs are state property. The renovation of the infrastructure is not supported by the state. Private funds are not attracted. Moreover, the Lithuanian aero clubs are not known in other countries due to the absence of general market development programme. According to the mentioned National Tourism Opportunities Development Study, air tourism development requires development of complex services including catering, accommodation and conference tourism.

Many Lithuanian air fields do not offer transportation services to the nearest sight worthy objects. Persons arriving by air are forced to spend their time in the air fields. Most of the air tourists fly past Vilnius, Kaunas or Palanga staying in Lithuania only for a few hours.

The favourable geographical position, technical basis for development of air tourism, aviation traditions and high number of qualified instructors are the necessary prerequisites for reception of tourists arriving by small airplanes and for offering training to fly, glade and parachute jump. These services could contribute to increase in the flows of inbound tourists.

7.5.8 Sports Tourism

The new universal sport arenas in Alytus, Klaipėda, Panevėžys, Šiauliai and Kaunas “Žalgiris Arena” built to host the 37th European Basketball Championship and the Vilnius “Siemens Arena” built in 2004 lie at the basis of sports infrastructure of Lithuania. The “Žalgiris Arena” is the largest indoor arena in the Baltics. The arena’s possible capacity for basketball games is from 12,300 to 15,000 seats, for concerts from 2700 to 15,100 seats and for circus shows 15,400 seats. The “Žalgiris Arena” is equipped with advanced audio and lighting equipment for concerts.

The mentioned objects were built for the first time after the restoration of independence. They are an investment into the future space of sports and cultural events. Among other sports centres, we can mention “Sportima” arena in Vilnius,

“Marijampolė Sports Complex” in Marijampolė and “Ice Palace” in Elektrėnai. The working sports arenas organize sports competitions, offer catering services and have souvenir shops, bathhouses, sports museums, and conference, aerobics and fitness gyms. The “Žalgiris Arena” and “Siemens Arena” offer services which meet the modern European market requirements. The other mentioned sports complexes also fulfil the European standards.

7.5.9 Pilgrim Tourism

Within the Pilgrim Route of John Paul II and the programme for including prominent places of prayer for 2007–2013 and according to the expert evaluation by agency “Idea prima”, the main centres and objects of attraction of pilgrims to Lithuania are Vilnius Cathedral, Vilnius Gate of Dawn, Church of St. Theresa and Church of the Holy Cross, Trakai Church, Kaunas Arch-cathedral-Basilica and Christ’s Resurrection Church Pažaislis Monastery, Šiluva, Hill of Crosses (Šiauliai), Šiauliai Cathedral, Samogitian Calvary Basilica and a complex of the stations of the cross, Pivašiūnai Church, Marijampolė Basilica and Chapel of Blessed Jurgis Matulaitis in his native village Lūginė, Tytuvėnai church and monastery, Vilnius Church of St. Peter and Paul, etc. All these attraction centres and objects (with an exception of the Vilnius Church of St. Peter and Paul) are included in the Pilgrim Route of John Paul II (Fig. 7.6).



Fig. 7.6 The most frequently visited objects and centres of pilgrim tourism in Lithuania

The most frequently visited objects of pilgrim tourism are the Gate of Dawn and Church of St. Theresa, Hill of Crosses near Šiauliai, Šiluva, Vilnius Cathedral, Pažaislis Monastery and Vilnius Church of St. Peter and Paul. The Pivašiūnai Church, Trakai churches, Marijampolė Basilica, the Chapel of Blessed Jurgis Matulaitis in Lūginė, and Tytuvėnai Church and Monastery are used as pilgrim visiting objects to least advantage. They represent the potential for future development of pilgrim tourism.

The competitive potential of pilgrim tourism in Lithuania is high, yet it is not sufficiently used. For greater flows of religious tourists, it is necessary to fit the existing tourism infrastructure to tourist needs, improve the information system and system of marking the destinations and encourage the production and sales of souvenirs on religious themes. Also, it is necessary to develop more explicit religious tourism tours embracing a few centres and objects of religious tourism.

The priority markets for the Lithuanian pilgrim tourism are Poland, Italy and Spain. Today, within the Pilgrim Route of John Paul II and the programme for including prominent places of prayer for 2007–2013, the absolute majority of inbound religious tourists arrive from Poland.

7.5.10 Entertainment and Business Infrastructure

The entertainment infrastructure in Lithuania includes water parks, ice palaces, theatre, cinema and music halls, and multifunctional entertainment centres.

The country has two modern water parks: “Vichy” water park in Vilnius and Druskininkai water park (Table 7.5). Water parks represent the most advanced segments of entertainment infrastructure.

The “Vichy” water park in Vilnius, offering services of water entertainments, catering and bathhouses and selling souvenirs, is one of the biggest and most advanced water parks in Europe.

Table 7.5 Services offered in the Lithuanian water parks

Water Park	Area (Thousand square metre)	The number of clients that can be received at a time (thousand)	Offered services
“Vichy” water park	13.4	~ 1.5	Water entertainments, complex of bathhouses, catering, souvenir store
Druskininkai water park	~ 25.0	~ 1.5	Water entertainments, complex of bathhouses, catering, bowling, night club, winter garden, souvenir store

Source www.vandensparkas.lt, www.akvapark.lt

The complex of 20 bathhouses in the Druskininkai water park meets the world standards. The park occupies about 25 m² and can receive about 1500 clients at a time. The services offered are water entertainments, catering, bowling, night club, winter garden and souvenirs.

The infrastructure of ice palaces in Lithuania includes Kaunas Ice Arena, Vilnius Ice Palace, Elektrėnai Ice Palace and Ice Palace in Akropolis (Vilnius). The network of ice arenas is sufficient for the local market. Yet, its contribution to the growth of inbound tourist flows is minimal.

The level of development of cinema tourism in Lithuania is minimal. Cinema is oriented towards the local users rather than inbound tourists. Lithuania holds annual regional cinema festivals “Kino pavasaris” and “Tinklai”. Yet, they hardly contribute to the growth of inbound cinema tourism.

There are three national musical theatres in Lithuania (the Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theatre, Kaunas National Musical Theatre and Klaipėda Musical Theatre), five state concert establishments (Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society, Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, Lithuanian State Wind Instrument Orchestra “Trimitas”, Lithuanian State Song and Dance Company “Lietuva” and Šiauliai Chamber Choir “Polifonija”) and private concert organizing companies.

Lithuania organizes festivals of classic music—“Vilnius Festival”, “Kristupas Summer Festival”, “Pažaislis Music Festival”, Lithuanian Song Festival—and international jazz festivals in Kaunas, Birštonas, Klaipėda and Vilnius. Yet, these festivals attract small flows of visitors from other countries and do not markedly contribute to development of inbound tourism.

The entertainment infrastructure includes multifunctional entertainment centres. The most important among them are “Entertainment Bank”, “Forum Palace” and “GCW” entertainment centres in Vilnius, “Entertainment Bank” in Klaipėda, “Los Patrankos” in Kaunas and “Honolulu” in Klaipėda. The entertainment centres offer the following services: gambling houses, bathhouses, night clubs, restaurants, bars, pubs, video games, discotheques, sport bars and sport clubs.

Entertainment services are offered in Lithuania also by large specialized entertainment and leisure networks: casino “Olympic Entertainment Group”, “Casino Tornado” and sport clubs “Impuls”. The biggest night clubs “Pacha Vilnius”, “Gravity” and “Helios Club” in Vilnius and “Exit” in Kaunas are unable to compete with other regional entertainment and leisure objects and are oriented towards the local market.

The priority markets of entertainment tourism for Lithuania are UK, Russia, Germany, Finland and Sweden.

In spite of modern high-quality infrastructure of water parks, the entertainment infrastructure in Lithuania is insufficiently developed. It lacks services of thematic parks and night clubs. Judging from the European trends, the interest in thematic parks and entertainment centres is increasing. Therefore, the existing entertainment infrastructure has to be further qualitatively and quantitatively developed.

7.5.11 Business and Conference Centres

In 2014, 23.5% of foreign tourists visited Lithuania for business and professional purposes including conferences. Relevant infrastructure and high-quality services could stimulate the development of business and tourism in Lithuania bearing in mind its favourable geographical position.

The Lithuanian conference tourism infrastructure includes specialized conference centres, hotels and other conference halls. In Lithuania, many hotels have conference infrastructure suitable for organization of small international conferences. The biggest in Lithuania “Litexpo” exhibition centre of Vilnius is a modern specialized conference centre meeting the European standards. The total exposition area of “Litexpo” is 32.7 thousand square metre including 17.6 thousand square metre of halls. The centre has 5 stationary exposition halls and 10 conference halls. The recent investments are designated for a high-class restaurant and a parking lot for 700 cars.

Hotels in Lithuania operate most effectively on behalf of conference tourism because they combine the services of conference organization, catering and accommodation.

More than a half of the total of conference halls is concentrated in Vilnius hotels and motels. In 2014, the leading providers of conference tourism services were hotels “Le Meridien Villon”, “Crowne Plaza Vilnius”, “Reval Hotel Lietuva”, “Panorama”, “Holiday Inn Vilnius”, “Karolina”, “Šarūnas”, “Naujasis Vilnius”, “Polonez”, “Radisson SAS Astoria” and “Kempinski”.

Conference tourism services are also offered by other conference halls for which this activity is only accessory. The biggest establishments of this kind also are concentrated in Vilnius: “Siemens Arena”, able to seat 9500 members, Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theatre, Vilnius Congress Palace, Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society and Lithuanian National Drama Theatre, able to seat from 950 to 100 persons, and Kaunas with its “Žalgiris Arena”, which is the biggest arena in the Baltics (15,000 seats).

Not all possibilities for conference tourism are taken advantage of because the representation of these products in the international tourism markets is not organized on a national level and there are no active sales. As Lithuania does not have a special conference centre meeting the international standards and able to seat more than 2500 participants, it is of primary importance to establish such centre and organize its activity. The possibilities for conference tourism in Lithuania should be represented and conference tourism should be encouraged based on the partnership of public and private sectors. Organisational and incentive measures ensuring active participation in the European trade tourism market should be worked out and implemented. The territories of the highest tourism potential where priorities are given to development of trade tourism are Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda and Lithuanian resorts.

The priority markets of conference tourism for Lithuania are Germany, Poland, Nordic countries and the UK.

7.6 System of Accommodation Establishments

Accommodation establishments—their number, structure, location and distribution—represent a constituent part of tourism trade. Its development mirrors the development patterns of tourism trade. Moreover, accommodation statistics can be regarded as the most accurate and reliable one.

In the Soviet years, the system of accommodation establishments was poorly developed. It included a small number of hotels in large cities: one hotel in each regional centre, seasonal rest houses, one or two campgrounds and summer holiday camps for children. This system of accommodation establishments reflected the actual situation in tourism trade. It basically changed after the restoration of Lithuania's independence in 1990. Before the economic decline of 2008, the improving indices of accommodation establishments were predetermined by local rather than inbound tourism. In the years of economic decline, the influence of local tourists diminished, yet in general the spectrum and quality of accommodation services improved.

7.6.1 Accommodation Establishments, Their Development and Distribution

The number of accommodation establishments substantially increased in the last few decades. Their structure also changed. In 37 years (1977–2014), their number has increased more than eightfold—from 166 to 1400. The structural changes included appearance of health care establishments, conference centres and private lodgings. The number of accommodation establishments has increased most markedly after Lithuania's admission into the EU. In 2000–2014, the total number of accommodation establishments increased by 153.6% (Table 7.6).

Table 7.6 Number of beds in accommodation establishments

	2000	2005	2010	2012	2014	Changes 2000–2014%
Hotels	210	290	342	365	392	(+86.7)
Motels	17	41	39	32	29	(+70.6)
Rest houses	249	176	125	112	111	(–55.4)
Campgrounds	3	7	18	20	22	(+633.3)
Lodging houses	9	9	23	31	55	(+511.1)
Health care establishments	31	26	22	18	18	(–41.9)
Children's summer camps	21	22	20	16	15	(–29.6)
Private lodging sector	4	85	311	438	758	(+17,950)
Total	550	660	906	1032	1400	(+ 153.6)

Source Lietuvos statistikos departamentas. Turizmas Lietuvoje. Vilnius

During the first decade of the twenty-first century, the total number of accommodation companies has grown by 64.5% though the dynamics of different types of companies was uneven (Table 7.6). The number of hotels has increased by 63% and their category indices have improved. In 2010, three- and four-star hotels were dominant in Lithuania. Many hotels belong to large international hotel families: “Radisson SAS”, “holiday Inn”, “Crowne Plaza”, “Best Western”, etc. In 2012, a 5 star “Kempinski Hotel Cathedral Square” hotel opened its door in Vilnius. It has become one of the ten top new world’s and European hotels. World’s largest travel site “TripAdvisor” included it in the category “Hot New Hotels” where it is first on the list of top hotels in Europe and fifth in the world.

In 2014, hotels accounted for 28.0% of the total number of accommodation establishments.

In 2000–2014, the number of motels, campgrounds and lodging houses also increased (Table 7.6). Yet, the highest rates of development were in the private accommodation sector. In the first years of the decade, the private accommodation sector only was in the embryo state. In 2014, it accounted for 54.1% of the total of accommodation companies. Yet, the number of rest houses, health care establishments and children’s summer camps decreased.

In spite of rapid improvement of accommodation network, it still has certain drawbacks. Youth lodging houses, tourist class hotels, campgrounds and other types of cheaper accommodation establishments are still lacking.

The distribution of accommodation establishments over the country is rather uneven. They are mainly concentrated in big cities, resorts and seaside areas. The greatest number of accommodation establishments was registered in west Lithuania, Klaipėda region with Klaipėda town, Palanga and Neringa resorts and seaside recreation zone. In the last years, the highest rates of development were observed in the private accommodation sector. According to the number of accommodation establishments, west Lithuania is followed by Vilnius, Kaunas, Druskininkai and other larger cities.

7.6.2 Dynamics of the Number of Beds in Accommodation Establishments

In the last decades, the total number of beds in accommodation establishments has been constantly increasing. Yet, its dynamics was different: it increased in hotels, motels, campgrounds, lodging houses and in particular in the private sector (Table 7.7) but decreased in rest houses, health care establishments, conference centres and children’s summer camps.

In 2014, the total number of beds reached 58,103. Almost half of the beds (47.6%) are offered by hotels, 14.0% by rest houses and 5.7% by children’s summer

Table 7.7 Number of beds in accommodation establishments

	2000	2005	2010	2012	2014
Hotels	11,112	19,075	23,137	26,559	27,661
Motels	377	865	1165	894	798
Rest houses	13,986	9825	7256	8003	8186
Campgrounds	864	963	2394	2496	2549
Tourism centres	556	428	830	0	0
Lodging houses	193	219	1448	1521	2398
Health care establishments	8721	6356	6048	6072	6344
Children's summer camps	5072	4456	4167	3556	3304
Private lodging sector	21	827	3435	5062	6863
Total	40,902	43,014	49,880	54,163	58,103

Source Lithuanian Tourism Statistics

camp. The private sector has only 11.8% of the total of beds, in spite that the number of its accommodation establishments accounts for 54.1% of the total.

In the last years, the occupation of the main hotels ranged from 44.0% to 46.0%. The figures differ by regions. This is preconditioned by seasonal character of tourism, town infrastructure and spectrum of entertainments and services. In 2014, occupation of hotels reached 61.7% in Vilnius, 51.1% in Klaipėda and 48.5% in Kaunas. Occupation of hotels in resorts was 58.2% in Druskininkai with its best infrastructure, 37.3% in Palanga, 32.7% in Neringa and 46.9% in Birštonas (Lithuanian 2014).

7.6.3 The Number of Accommodated Guests in 2005–2014 (Thousand)

Before the economic decline, the number of accommodated guests had been stably increasing in all accommodation establishments. From 1995 till 2007, their number increased by 1406.1 thousand or by 4.8 times. In the years of economic decline (2008–2010), the number of guests slightly decreased. It is expected that in 2011, their number will reach the pre-crisis level. The greatest number of guests stays in hotels.

The number of night stays varies considerably by towns. Vilnius stands out in this respect. In 2014, it offered 29.9% of the total of night stays. It is followed by Druskininkai resort: 18.8% and Palanga resort: 15.3%. In other towns, the number of stays for the night was considerably smaller: 7.1% in Kaunas, 6.6% in Klaipėda, 2.5% in Neringa and 3.7% in Birštonas.

The Lithuanian accommodation establishments offer rooms for guests from various countries and continents (Table 7.8). Lithuanians comprise the majority of

Table 7.8 The number of accommodated guests in 2005–2014 (thousand)

	2005	2007	2009	2010	2012	2014	Changes 2005— 2014%
European Union (excluding Lithuania) from:	508.47	601.91	525.71	559,474	1372,854	1432,686	(+181.8)
Germany	137.32	129.83	110.16	105,832	144,975	162,107	(+18.1)
Poland	94.88	128.09	125.66	135,856	127,033	1,174,96	(+23.8)
Latvia	43.66	69.97	62.82	66,519	76,431	104,773	(+140)
Finland	33	36.61	30.21	35,137	37,545	31,928	(+96.8)
United Kingdom	32.94	37.73	25.91	35,398	37,752	46,136	(+40.1)
Other EU countries	166.67	199.68	170.95	16,222	3,471	4260	(+2.6)
Lithuania	682.73	975.91	713.38	712,506	852,188	1,033,531	(+51.4)
CIS countries	89.92	150.88	142.93	177,305	331,374	410,135	(+356.1)
America	23.63	27.19	20.49	25,247	36,132	41,991	(+77.7)
Other continents	20.87	23.87	24.48	28,219	49,423	69,144	(+231.3)
Total	1325.62	1779.76	1426.99	1552,874	1977,526	2363,140	(+78.3)

Source Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania, 2014

guests. In 2005, they accounted for 51.5% of the total and in 2014 43.7%. In 2014, citizens of the EU were the second largest group of visitors. They accounted for 60.6% of the total in 2014. The highest numbers of guests arrive to Lithuania from the neighbouring countries: Poland, Germany, Latvia and Finland. The portions ranged from 2.0 to 7.0%. Many visitors come from Russia and Belarus: 7.0–10.0%. The portion of visitors from other countries is small.

7.7 Inbound Tourism

Inbound tourism is one of the main parts of tourism industry. Its importance for country's economy is appreciable and creates favourable premises for development of other branches of economy and culture. The income from tourism helps to improve the welfare of local residents. The inbound tourism affects the life of local residents, makes it more interesting and contributes to elevation of cultural level.

After the restoration of independence, Lithuania became a democratic country open to the world. It is easily accessible and fascinating for its natural environment. The visitors not only take interest in the rich historical cultural heritage but also in the domestic life of local residents, traditions, customs and national dishes. The visitors gain new experience and enrich their world outlook.

Table 7.9 Inbound tourism in 2007–2014 by arrivals (thousand)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Trips of tourists (overnight visitors)	872.4	934.6	728.8	790.1	926.7	962.7	1092.7	1183.1
Trips of same-day visitors	675.3	681.1	680.3	735.5	790.5	766.1	876.8	911.5
Viso	1502.7	1615.7	1409.1	1525.6	1717.2	1728.8	1969.5	2094.6

Source Tourism in Lithuania 2014

7.7.1 Dynamics of Visitors and Tourists. Modes of Arrivals and Their Dynamics

In 2007–2014, the number of tourists and visitors of same day varied only slightly (Table 7.9).

In 2014, compared to 2013, the number of same-day trips (including cruise ship passengers) decreased by 3%. In 2014, most same-day visitors arrived from Latvia (34%), Belarus (19%), Russia (17%), Poland (16%) and Estonia (8%). Foreigners usually went to same-day trips for shopping (34%) or for business purposes (24%). In 2014, same-day visitors spent in Lithuania 291.4 million euro, which is by 0.6% more than in 2013. Half (51%) of expenditure consisted of expenditure on shopping. Average expenditure per same-day trip of a foreigner totalled 92 euro (in 2013, 89 euro).

In 2014, most overnight visitors arrived from Belarus (21%), Russia (16%), Latvia (11%), Germany (8%) and Poland (8%). In 2014, compared to 2013, the number of overnight trips from Latvia increased by 15%, from Estonia—by 7.2%. The number of trips to Lithuania from the EU countries increased by 2.7%, from other countries—increased by 2.3%. Trips from the EU countries accounted for 50.3%.

In 2014, the average duration of a foreigner's stay in Lithuania was 4.4 nights; compared to 2013, it remained unchanged. In 2014, compared to 2013, the number of shorter trips (1–3 overnight stays) increased by 1.2%; such trips accounted for 70.7% of all overnight trips. In 2014, the total number of nights spent amounted to 9.1 million and, compared to 2013, increased by 1.4%.

In 2014, average expenditure per foreign overnight visitor in Lithuania amounted to about 372.8 euro which is by 1.1% more than in 2013. The highest expenditure per tourist trip was recorded for tourists from Japan, China, Israel and the USA—about 570 euro per trip with 6 overnight stays, and the lowest—for tourists from Latvia and Poland (on average, EUR 250 per trip with 4 overnight stays). In 2014, the total expenditure of foreigners on trips with one or more overnight stays amounted to 768.9 million euro, which is by 3.6% more than in 2013.

Most arriving foreign tourists stated that the main sources of information about Lithuania were the Internet (45%), relatives and friends (44%), and the previous visit (31%). Almost all (95%) foreign tourists gave a very good or good assessment to their trips to Lithuania.

The favourable geographical position of the country makes it easy to be reached. Visitors arrive by cars, trains and air and water transport. The modes of travelling mainly depend on the geographical position of a visited country, season and purpose of visit.

In 1996, even 71.1% of visitors arrived by land roads, 23.7% by trains, only 3.2% by air transport and 2.0% by sea transport. In 2010, the portion of arrivals by land roads decreased to 58% and by trains to 5%. The number of arrivals by air transport increased to 34% and by sea transport to 3%.

In 2014, the number of foreigners' trips with one or more overnight stays increased by 2.5%. Most foreign visitors (70%) arrived in Lithuania for one or more overnight stays for personal and 30%—for business purposes. More than half of foreigners (58%) arrived by road, while 36% arrived by air, 5%—by railway and 1%—by *sea*.

7.7.2 Purposes of Arrivals

Actually nobody crosses the state border without a purpose. The purposes of travelling also are very variable. They are subject to seasonal changes. They also depend on the countries of departure. Yet, the greatest differences are observed between the purposes of tourists and visitors (Table 7.10).

The purposes of tourist arrivals in different years varied (Table 7.11). In 1997–2006, tourist arrivals for recreation and holidays increased almost threefold whereas their relative portion doubled. The largest relative portion of vacationers was registered in 2006: 38.7%. Since then, the portion of vacationers and arrivals for other purposes has decreased. Only the portion of arrivals for business purposes has increased. In 2014, most foreign visitors (37%) arrived in Lithuania for one or more overnight stays for rest, recreation, holidays, 29.6%—for business and professional interests, and 23.0% for visiting friends and relatives purposes.

Table 7.10 Main purposes of arrivals, %

	1997	2002	2006	2008	2014
Rest, recreation, holidays	16.7	33.8	38.7	30.9	37.0
Business and professional interests	34.4	22.8	23.6	34.8	29.6
Visiting friends and relatives	37.2	30.9	24.1	25.7	23.0
Other purposes	11.7	12.5	13.6	8.6	3.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source Tourism in Lithuania 2014

Table 7.11 Main source countries of arrivals

	2008		2010		2012		2014	
	Thousand	%	Thousand	%	Thousand	%	Thousand	%
Russia	227.3	14.1	224.5	14.9	328.4	17.3	326.3	15.8
Belarus	208.6	12.9	291.5	19.3	373.8	19.7	424.8	20.6
Latvia	182	11.3	146.3	9.7	191.1	10.1	228.5	11.1
Germany	166.9	10.3	159.2	10.6	161.7	8.5	174.2	8.4
Poland	181.5	11.3	166	11	190.5	10	162.0	7.9
5 countries	966.3	60	987.5	65.5	1245.5	65.6	1315.8	63.8
Total	1611.3	100.0	1506.9	100.0	1899.5	100.0	2062.7	100.0

Source Tourism in Lithuania 2008–2014

The purposes of arrivals from different countries were different. The greatest numbers of arrivals for vacation were from Germany, Poland, Italy, Norway and France. Belarusians, Russians, Poles and Latvians mainly arrive to visit their relatives and friends. The greatest numbers of arrivals for business purposes were from Russia, Belarus, Poland, Denmark, Sweden and Finland. Russians, Poles, Germans and Belarusians usually visit Lithuania for medical services.

7.7.3 Tourists by Citizenship

At the end of the 20th—the beginning of the twenty-first century, tourists from the CIS and neighbouring countries were the dominant ones. In later years, the number of arrivals increased from Germany, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark and other EU countries (Lithuanian 2009).

In 2003, tourists from the CIS accounted for more than a half (53.2%); in 2008, for 30.2%; and in 2010, for 34.0% of the total. The number of tourists from Latvia and Estonia did not change. The number of tourists from Poland and other EU countries increased twofold (Table 7.11). In 2008, tourists from the United Kingdom accounted for 4.7% of the total, Finland 3.1%, Sweden 2.9%, Italy 2.7%, etc. In 2010, tourists from the EU member states accounted for 58.3%. The changes in the number of arrivals mainly were predetermined by political decisions. The introduction of visa regime for the CIS countries brought down the number of arrivals from them. In the last years, their number tends to increase due to promotion of tourism possibilities, availability of information about Lithuania and strengthening cultural and sports contacts.

In 2014, the number of tourists from 7 countries in the list of TOP 10 countries of arrivals increased. The flow of tourists decreased from Poland (−11.4%), Russia (−11.6%) and Finland (−8.1%). The total number of tourists to Lithuania increased to 2062.7 thousand (+2.5%). The decrease of the flow of tourists from Russia was

rather marked yet counterbalanced by the flows from other countries. The number of tourists from Poland has been decreasing since 2011. In 2014, Germany occupied the fourth position in the TOP 10 leaving Poland behind, whereas Latvia mounted up into the third position (+14.9%). In 2014, after an interval of two years, the number of tourists from Sweden started to increase (+5.4%).⁶

7.7.4 Sources of Information

The information for tourists about the country of destination is available in different sources. It has been determined (through survey) that tourists to Lithuania get information about the country mainly from their friends, acquaintances and relatives. In 1999, visitors who received information from the mentioned sources accounted for 58%, in 2008 48%, in 2010 45% and in 2014 44% of the total. This is not surprising because Lithuania is the country of origin of parents and grandparents of many visitors. They have many friends and relatives in Lithuania.

Up to 45% of information was provided for tourists by mass media: Internet, literary sources, journals, newspapers, radio and television. Only a small part of tourists gained information from those who visited the country before, business sources and travelling agencies.

In 2014, almost all (95%) of foreign tourists gave a very good or good assessment to their trips to Lithuania.

7.7.5 Most Popular Tourist Destinations

Tourists arriving to Lithuania for a few days usually visit Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Palanga, Neringa and Druskininkai. Vilnius is distinguished for the number of visitors. In 1996–2014, it received the larger part of visitors to Lithuania: 65–80%. About 12–15% of Vilnius guests visited Trakai.

In 2014, among the most popular places visited by foreign tourists were Vilnius (70% of the total of tourists to Vilnius), Kaunas (28%), Klaipėda (24%), Trakai (17%) and Palanga (14%).⁷ Even fewer tourists visit other interesting destinations in north-east Lithuania, the western part of the country Žemaitija and its south-eastern part Sūduva. Interesting natural, historical and cultural objects are scattered all over Lithuania (Fig. 7.7).

⁶Valstybinis turizmo departamentas prie Ūkio ministerijos. 2014 m. atvykstamojo turizmo apžvalga.

⁷Valstybinis turizmo departamentas prie Ūkio ministerijos. 2014 m. atvykstamojo turizmo apžvalga.

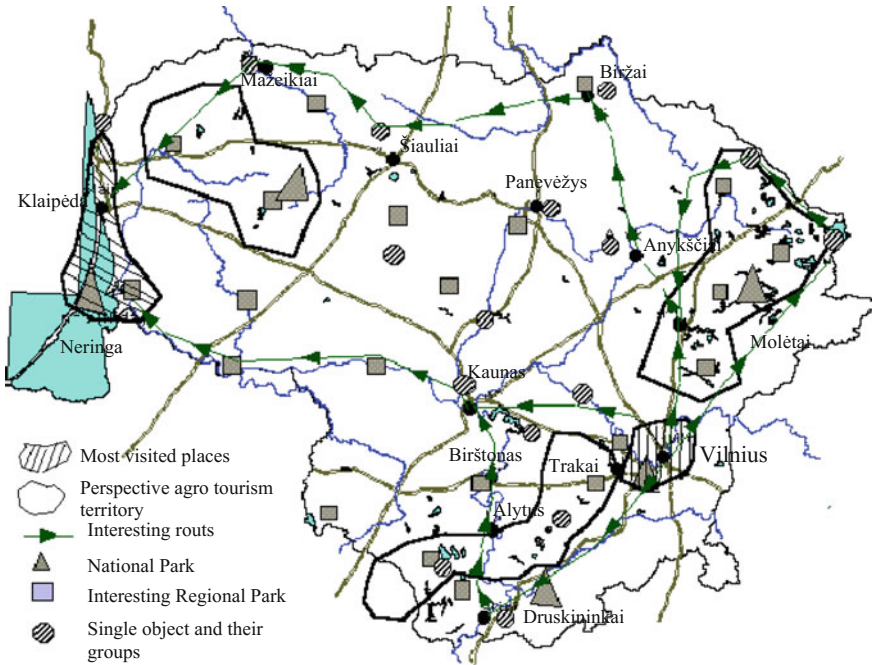


Fig. 7.7 Most interesting territories, tours and individual objects

Many interesting objects are included in the main travelling tours. They are mainly concentrated in south-east Lithuania and along Nemunas. Many tourists arriving to Vilnius also visit the second largest Lithuanian City Kaunas which sometimes is called the “petit Paris”. Those who want to get the best idea about north Lithuania should use the tour Vilnius–Molėtai–Anykščiai–Biržai–Pakruojis–Hill of Crosses near Šiauliai–Mazeikiai–Būtingė–Palanga.

The most interesting natural, historical and architectural tourist destinations are grouped into individual territorial units: historical centres of towns and national and regional parks. Besides, international tourist tours cross the country: Baroque Way, Hansa Way, Pilgrims’ Way, etc.

7.7.6 Opinions About Visits

The absolute majority of opinions about visits to Lithuania are positive. In 1996, 92% of foreign visitors appreciated their visit to Lithuania. The ratings were 41.1% very good, 51% good and 2.5% bad. The best ratings were given by tourists from the USA, Russia and Poland and the worst by tourists from Belarus and Estonia. Similar ratings were given in 2014. 95% of foreign visitors highly appreciated their visit to Lithuania.

Foreign visitors liked the beautiful nature of Lithuania, its clean lakes and picturesque landscapes. They emphasized good services, tasteful dishes and friendly people. The guests took pleasure in visiting Vilnius and its historical centre, Trakai with its castles, Palanga and Druskininkai resorts, and Curonian Spit. The survey of opinions showed that 55% of visitors rated their visit better than they had expected: 15% by far better than they had expected and 40% better than they had expected. About 1.5% of visitors rated their visit worse than they had expected. Tourists visiting Lithuania not for the first time noticed good changes in the sector of services, infrastructure of visited objects and other sectors.

Among the drawbacks were mentioned: lack of information along the roads, unfriendly police, uncultured drivers, lack of culture in buses, aggressive driving by young people, lack of public conveniences and bureaucratic approach.

7.8 Prospects of Tourism Industry

In the last decades, rapidly developing tourism trade has not yet made the best of its potential. There are still many opportunities to develop different branches of tourism in the future. The development potential is related to better use and promotion of historical, cultural and natural tourism resources.

The following factors are supportive for successful development of tourism industry in Lithuania:

- Favourable geographical position of Lithuania in the geographical centre of Europe and easy access by different means of transport.
- Abundance of natural, historical and cultural tourism resources. This is especially true about the national and regional parks, health resorts and historical objects of different centuries.
- Little urbanized natural landscape, clean water of lakes and rivers, clean air and picturesque landscapes.
- Attractive, wide spectrum and comparatively cheap tourism services, natural fresh food and friendliness and hospitality of local residents.
- Traditionally multiple and strong relations with the Lithuanian emigration all over the world (not only in Europe).
- Increasing interest in Lithuania as a new specific tourism region and in its natural potential and historical cultural heritage.
- The stably improving international image of Lithuania (as a result of better advertisement and participation at different international events) as an interesting country for tourism.
- Many large tourism markets around Lithuania and increasing number of arrivals from them.
- The ever strengthening and expanding international relations in the fields of scientific research, culture, business, municipality administrations and sports.
- Stable macroeconomic situation, growth of economy and improving living standards.

- Possibilities to use the EU structural funds and country's material resources for development of tourism industry.
- Successful inclusion into the international tourism routes: Baroque Way, Cultural Heritage, Abbeys Way, Hansa Way, etc.
- Possibility of developing new interesting tourism routes within the country and including the neighbouring countries.
- Increasing number of international events and traditional local famous events: Song and Dance Festival, Kaziukas Fair, Days of Living Archaeology, Sea Festival, etc.
- The development of tourism industry in Lithuania requires many improvements in using local and external financial means. This is the main prerequisite for successful results. In order to achieve this objective, it is necessary:
- Reduction of the seasonality of tourism. The season favourable for educational and recreational tourism lasts only for 3 months. In order to prolong it, it is necessary to improve the network of leisure centres.
- Many interesting localities (national parks and historical objects) have not yet been fitted for mass visitations. Their infrastructure, accessibility and promotion are still to be improved.
- The promotion of tourism and recreation possibilities is insufficient. The spectrum of health care services and leisure entertainments is to be broadened.
- The system of accommodation establishments should be expanded and more evenly distributed. Cheap accommodation establishments are especially lacking: campgrounds, lodging houses, tourism camps, guest houses, etc.
- The number of rural tourism homesteads should be increased. Their number could be a few times as large as it is now. Also, it is important to even their distribution.
- It is important to improve accessibility to Lithuania by air and sea transport, to organize trips by air and sea from potential tourism markets to the most important recreational destinations.
- The unorganized tourists should be better acquainted with the available tourism resources. So far, many interesting tourism objects are not visited.
- Also, it is essential to improve the qualification of persons employed in the tourism sector. Their competence is an important factor in creating the image of Lithuania as one of the attractive tourism countries.

In general, the prospects of tourism industry in Lithuania are favourable. Yet, their implementation requires large investments and efforts of all people occupied in this economic sector.

References

- Baškytė, R., et al. (2006). *Lietuvos saugomos teritorijos. Informacinis leidinys – žinynas*. Vilnius: Leidykla "Lututė".
- Čižiūnas, G. (2007). Palanga: faktai ir datos. *Žemaičių žemė*, 2.

- Džiovėnas, G. (2003). Lietuvos turizmo istorija ženkleliuose ir medaliuose. *Lietuvos muziejai*, 2. Eidukevičienė, M. (2009). *Lietuvos geografija*. Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla.
- Juodokas, A., & Raguckas, J. (1988). *Turizmas. Tarybų Lietuvos enciklopedija*, T. 4. Vilnius: Vyriausioji Enciklopedijų leidykla.
- Kriščiūnas, A. (2005). Kurortai ir kurortologijos plėtra Lietuvoje. *Medicina. Medicinos istorija ir raida*, 41(4).
- Lietuvos ekonomikos apžvalga (2015). [http://ukmin.lrv.lt/uploads/ukmin/documents/files/ Apzvalgos/Lietuvos%20ekonomikos%20ap%C5%BEvalga%20\(2015\)%20m.%20kovo%20m%C4%97n.pdf](http://ukmin.lrv.lt/uploads/ukmin/documents/files/Apzvalgos/Lietuvos%20ekonomikos%20ap%C5%BEvalga%20(2015)%20m.%20kovo%20m%C4%97n.pdf).
- Lietuvos kaimo turizmo asociacija. (2004). *Atostogos Lietuvos kaime*. Vilnius.
- Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės nutarimas “Dėl gamtos paminklų paskelbimo”. (2000). M. kovo 20, D. No 311.
- Lietuvos statistikos departamentas. (2013). *Lietuvos gyventojai (2011) metais. (2011) metų gyventojų surašymo rezultatai*. Vilnius.
- Lithuanian department of statistics. (1994–2014). *Statistical Yearbook of Lithuania*.
- Logminas, V., et al. (2007). *Lietuva. Gyvūnija. Visuotinė lietuvių enciklopedija*, T. 12 (pp. 82–91). Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidybos institutas.
- Radvila, M. K. (1990). *Kelionė į Jeruzalę*. Vilnius: “Mintis”.
- Sirutienė-Lamanauskienė, R. (2009). *Lietuva, Atostogos kaime 2010–2011*. Kaunas: M. UAB „Arx Baltica”.
- Stanaitis, A. (2000). *Lithuania, the land worth its visitors interest. Viskas turizmui*. Vilnius: Telemedia UAB.
- Stanaitis, A. (2006). Lithuania as a country of ecological tourism. In J. Wyrzykowski (Ed.). *Conditions of the foreign tourism development in Central and Eastern Europe*, Vol. 9. Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski.
- Stanaitis, A. (2008). Selskij turizm i ego perspektyva v Litve. *Gospodarka regionalna i Turystika*, 5(1). 243–252.
- Statistikos departamentas (2004–2014). *Lietuvos apskritys. Ekonominė ir socialinė raida*. Vilnius.
- Šeimos enciklopedija. (2005). *Lietuva. Nacionaliniai parkai, draustiniai*. Vilnius.
- Turizmas Lietuvoje. (2014). [http://www.tourism.lt/uploads/documents/Turizmas-Lietuvoje_\(2014\).pdf](http://www.tourism.lt/uploads/documents/Turizmas-Lietuvoje_(2014).pdf).
- Vaitekūnas, S., Valančienė, E. (2004). *Lietuvos geografija*. Vilnius.
- Viltrakytė, S. (2007). Poilsis kaime – viliojanti perspektyva. *Lietuvos žinos*, 34(11691).