Lifelong Learning 2010: Towards a Lifelong Learning Society in Europe: The Contribution of the Education System
Subproject 5

The Access of Adults to Formal and Non-Formal Adult Education

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SECTION 1 / RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

1.1. Aim and objectives / research questions

Unification was characteristic of former Soviet education system including higher education sector (Zelvys, 2005), which was under a very strict control following a certain hierarchical structure. All decisions were made centrally in the Ministry of Education of the former USSR and reached education institutions being transformed into detailed directions and regulations. Such strictly controlled system of higher education had no concern for quality assurance (Zablacke, 2009).

The Lithuanian higher education reform influenced all spheres of this education level: the legal basis and state regulation, the network of higher education institutions, the structure of studies, finances, and international cooperation. Assurance of the quality of higher education studies became one of Lithuanian priorities.

The history of Lithuanian education of the recent fifteen years could be divided into several relative phases (see table 1.1.)

Table 1.1. Five stages of Lithuanian educational strategy

1988-1991	1992-1997	1998-2002	2003-2008	Since 12th of May 2009
The Concept of National School (education) (formation)	The Concept of Lithuanian Education (implementation)	Approval of the priorities of Educational reform	Approval of the main attitudes towards Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 and there implementation	The new Law on Higher Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania come to force (No.XI-242)

During *phase 1, corresponding to the first stage of the Lithuanian education reform*, much effort has been expended to reform the *contents of education* (curricula, textbooks, pedagogy). Centralised changes were introduced to the contents of education of general education schools: it was humanised, shifted to liberal education, modernised, interdisciplinary links were strengthened and efforts were made to move from reproductive pedagogy to interpretative. New guidelines (programmes) of pre-school education were developed. Changes in the tertiary and vocational training curricula were not so steady and even because it was impossible to change them in a centralised way.

Another direction in the educational change of this period was *the expansion of opportunities for learning choices* by implementing the principles of humanity and democracy. The inherited system of unified school types was supplemented by youth schools for teenagers with insufficient learning motivation and by gymnasia for capable and motivated youth. General education schools with the languages of instruction of the largest ethnical minorities Russian and Polish were retained; textbooks for such schools were prepared by the State. A new stage (the so-called stage I-a) was introduced for pupils without basic education in vocational schools. Pupils with special needs who earlier received education in segregated specialised schools were offered integrated education in general education schools. The development of the network of pedagogical and psychological services was undertaken.

Major *structural and administrative changes* in the first stage of the reform took place at the level of tertiary education: legitimised autonomy of higher education institutions, shift from two-stage to three-stage university studies, some students start paying tuition fees themselves. New universities and study programmes they offer came into existence.

In the area of *education assessment and quality assurance*, most of the attention has been focused on the teachers of general education schools: the system of attesting and granting qualification categories for teachers was designed and tuned to the system of professional development; the attestation of school managers commenced.

In 1996, the National Examination Centre was established for organizing national *matura* examinations in a centralised way. The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education was founded with a view to assessing tertiary education in 1995.

The period of 1998-2002, corresponding to the second phase of the education reform, pursued the course taken during the first phase and aimed at solving the problems brought about by vast novelties in education and society developments.

In order to reduce the dropout rate of youth leaving the educational system, a shift from compulsory nine-years schooling to that of ten-years was made in 1998-2000 and the pre-school education of one year was introduced in 2000. A conception and structure of the permanent educational system designated to ensure continuous universal education was presented.

Continuing the trend of making education more individual, profiling was introduced for the last two grades of general education schools. It was brought into line with the national *matura* examinations system and the latter with the system of admission to higher education institutions.

With the strengthening of the national economy, more attention could be paid on the provision of education, textbooks, computerisation and other teaching aids. On the

other hand, the decreasing number of children and population migration signal that some schools are emptying and that the historical pattern of the school network is ineffective preparation for its regulation are undertaken.

In order to speed up the solution of these problems, the financing of general education schools was restructured in 2002: the principle of the pupil's basket was introduced according to which the amount of funds received by the school depended on the number of pupils. Preparations were made for the introduction of the pupil's basket in vocational schools.

The third phase of development of education in the independent State of Lithuania is linked with the *National Education Strategy 2003-2012*. The Strategy sets the following key aims for the development of education:

1) to develop an efficient and consistent educational system which is based on the responsible management, targeted funding and rational use of resources;
2) to develop an accessible system of continuing education that guarantees life-long learning and social justice in education;
3) to ensure a quality of education which is in line with the needs of an individual living in an open civil society under market economy conditions, and the universal needs of society of the modern world.

The last stage since 2009 means the new financial policy in education and various institutional transformations.

There have been impressive changes since Lithuanian independence, but *inequality* seems to be re-made again and again in many societal arenas and in ever-changing forms.

1.2. Methodology
1.2.1. Sample plan

In this subproject we used the qualitative research method of the in-depth interview. In total, 15 individuals working in different institutions were interviewed.

In the sampling process it was important to give consideration to the diversity of adult education provision in Lithuania. There are several different types of formal and non-formal adult education institutions and context. The sample in this study reflects this diversity and the information collected demonstrates the variation in the educational sectors (see table 1.1.).

For gaining access to the interviewees a two-step approach was used.
As a first step in the sampling procedure seven institutions were selected:
- four institutions for formal adult education;
- two institutions for non-formal adult education;

- one prison (were adult education is offered).

In the stage two of the contact and sampling procedure the interviews were arranged. The person that was contacted in the institution was asked to select one senior manager or project coordinator in the organisation and one tutor (or teacher/lecturer). Both of them were contacted directly or through the contact person of the institution and were asked to participate in an in-depth interview.

In addition to the interviews with the managers and employees from the seven institutions, two senior governmental department officials with responsibility for state policy in relation to access and underrepresented groups were interviewed.
All interviews took place face to face, between the 16th of March and the 14th of May 2009.

Table 1.2. Sampling in Lithuania

	Type of education	Institution	Number of interviews	Interviewees	Institution/state official
A	Formal adult education	Institution 1 (A1)	1 interview (01)	A1_01	VILNIUS BUSINESS COLLEGE (PRIVATE)
		Institution 2 (A2)	2 interviews (01/02)	A2_01 A2_02	VILNIUS COLLEGE (STATE)
		Institution 3 (A3)	2 interviews (01/02)	A3_01 A3_02	VILNIUS PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY (STATE)
B	Governmental state officials	Official 1 (B1)	1 interview (01)	B1	State Department
		Official 2 (B2)	1 interview (01)	B2	State Agency
C	Prison education	Institution 1 (C1)	2 interviews (01/02)	C1_01 C1_02	LUKISKIU PRISON (full name: Lukiskes Remand Prison – Closed Prison)
D	Non-formal adult education	Institution 1 (D1)	2 interviews (01/02)	D1_01 D1_02	Lithuanian Labour Market Training Authority (LLMTA)
		Institution 2 (D2)	2 interviews (01/02)	D2_01 D2_02	UAB Lyderio akademija (Leadership Academy)

					a unit of UAB Eurointegracijos projektai (Eurointergration Projects) (PRIVATE)
E	Extra: Formal adult education	Institution 4 (E1)	2 interviews (01/02)	E1_01 E1_02	VILNIUS OZAS SECONDARY SCHOOL
TOTAL			15 interviews		

1.2.2. Research method and analysis

The existing qualitative literature on case selection offers a wide range of suggestions. Several case selection procedures were considered, each of which facilitated a different strategy for within-case analysis. The case selection procedure considered focus on typicality, diversity, influential, most similar, and most different cases in order to address the following research questions:

Third level Institutions (Formal Education) Case Study	Secondary School Case Study	Non-Formal Education Case Study	Prison Case Study
1. Institutional developments of a systemic approach to better promote the access of adults to the education system; 2. Readiness of third level institutions to change their admission policies and become institutions of lifelong learning; 3. Examples of good practice; 4. The literacy needs of marginalized adult groups; 5. The main obstacles to	1. The role of schools in meeting the lifelong learning challenges; 2. Systemic supports to prevent alienation of students from the education system and to promote active citizenship for students; 3. Schools readiness to act in the situation of a decline in educational monopolies over diplomas, as well as to facilitate making adult education community based;	1. Informal education sector as a key systemic bridge for access to the formal education sector; 2. Informal education sector as a key systemic bridge for access to the formal education sector; 3. The main obstacles to establish a mechanism for the recognition of prior non-formal learning and work	1. Current practices and future plans for providing adult prisoners with access to education in prison. 2. Promotion of prison education be promoted through system level change in prisons. 3. The literacy needs of marginalized adult groups in

establish a mechanism for the recognition of prior non-formal learning and work experience for opening access of adults to the education system.	4. System level changes required to promote adult education on the school site, including distance education.	experience for opening access of adults to the education system.	prison.

Government Department Officials Interviews:

1. Contribution of national level policies and structures to system level change to better promote access and social inclusion in education;

2. The development of strategic systemic approach at national level to drive and implement policy to better promote access to education for traditionally underrepresented groups – including at levels of prison education, non-formal education and high school.

1.2.3. Understanding and definition of adult education

Organisation of Adult Education[1]

In Lithuania, adult education is implemented in several forms: formal learning, which is organized on the basis of approved programmes in the centres for adult education and schools; upon completion of these programs elementary, basic, secondary, upper

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[1]Based on Adult Education Infoservice website (see also References)

secondary and higher education is acquired; nationally recognized diplomas and qualifications are granted; non-formal learning is related to the acquisition of additional competencies and enhancement of qualifications; this type of learning is provided in workplaces and in various private and public organizations conducting relevant courses; informal (self-directed) learning is the learning which is naturally going on a daily basis, related to personal daily activity, individual interests or hobbies; it is usually based on a person's needs, vocational/professional factors or family.

Funding

Funding of adult education system in Lithuania comes from several sources: state aid (budgetary funds), EU assistance (Structural Funds) and investment made by the private sector. The below mentioned figures serve as illustration of the situation related to adult education in Lithuania: the share of GDP allocated for education amounts to 6 percent, that is 1,4 billion euros. The total EU assistance to Lithuania in 2004-2006 was 1 billion 150 million euros, 435 million of which was allocated for the development of social and economic infrastructure, 200 million for the development of human resources. With regard to funding of adult education, tax-relevant provisions are applied: providers of adult education receive tax relief, e.g. a reduced rate of VAT. The persons involved in the process of learning are entitled to claim partial refund of the taxes paid for the services provided.

Legal system

The policy of Lithuanian adult education is regulated by several national legal acts: The Law on Education, National Education Strategy, Lifelong Learning Strategy and the Law on Non-formal Education. The most relevant document regulating the field of adult education, namely, Lifelong Learning Strategy, had been renewed and updated. The renewed strategy, takes into consideration the attitude of a wide range of stakeholders, is expected to systematically solve the problems of interinstitutional cooperation and to secure the accessibility of lifelong learning in various educational and non-educational institutions.

Trends

According to Adult Education Information Service, with regard to trends and tendencies of the development of adult education, the following priorities within the policy of adult education should be identified: promoting the system of Lifelong Learning Strategy coordination and interinstitutional cooperation, enhancing mechanisms of LLL strategy; improving the supply and accessibility of services for adult education, with an emphasis on the development of non-formal non-professional education (quality of life, sports, safety, health, civil awareness, etc.); upgrading the infrastructure of adult education centres; establishing a system of recognizing the competencies acquired in a non-formal

way; promoting research and monitoring, as well as informing adults about learning opportunities. More pronounced systematic changes in the field of adult education are expected to be introduced during the implementation of the strategy of using the assistance from the EU Structural Funds programming period of 2007-2013, in particular the program of Human Resources development measures. The activity on legislation in the field of adult education is a continuous process in Lithuania. Among the nearest steps in this activity are: the creation of juridical basis for developing modern distance education and recognition of non-formal learning, accreditation of some type of courses for adults as well as formalisation of the coordination of adult education on the state level.

1.2.4. References

System of Adult Education in Lithuania - National Affairs - Background reports. Adult Education Infoservice, [accessed: 2010-04-19] http://www.infonet-ae.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=321

Zablacke R. The influence of university studies accreditation process on the institution evalued // Socialinis ugdymas, 2009, Vol.9 (20), part 2, p.128-139.

Zelvys R. Governance of Higher Education in Lithuania: Challenges of the Soviet Past and Perspectives of the Global Future // Pedagogika. – 2005, No.76, p.7-11.

SECTION 2 / FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION

2.1. Background information on formal adult education in Lithuania

The concept of **formal education** in Lithuania means education implemented according to the curricula approved and registered in accordance with a procedure prescribed by legal acts, the completion of which results in the attainment of a primary, basic, secondary, post-secondary or higher education level and/or a qualification.

The Law on Science and Studies adopted in April 2009 (Article 4) distinguishes two types of higher education: *Higher College Education* and *Higher University Education*. Professionals with the highest qualification have been prepared by 49 institutions – 22 universities and 27 colleges (of which 7 private universities and 12 private colleges). The number of private higher education institutions, as compared with the 2007/2008 academic year, remained unchanged, while the number of students in them grew from 24 to 26 thousand. The number of students at universities over a year grew by 5 thousand, in colleges – by 1 thousand, and made, respectively, 149 and 61 thousand. In 2008, universities were graduated from by 31 thousand, colleges – by 12 thousand professionals.

National policy documents on access to formal adult education

1. The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania was presented on June 25, 1991.
2. The Concept of Lithuanian Education Reform and General Programme Project were announced (in 1992-1994).
3. EC's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (1992): Lifelong learning is viewed as a continuous process of skills and knowledge updating.
4. The Law on Support of the Unemployed (1996) defined the possibilities for continuing education and provided for the training, retraining and re-qualification of the unemployed. It also provided for the possibility of setting quotas for employment in the private sector of persons from certain groups disadvantaged in the labour market including persons with a disability of I and II groups.
5. The order of the Minister of Education and Science of 1998 "On the Order of Career Guidance" defined the aims and objectives of career guidance of (…) learning youth, adults and young people who are not prepared for the labour market.
6. The Law on the Social Integration of the Persons with a disability (1991, amended in 1998) determined the possibilities of education, training and career guidance for the persons with a disability. It states that "an employer may not refuse to employ a person with a disability or discriminate against him or her in any other way for the sole reason of invalidity." "Persons with a disability" shall be advised in the selection and acquisition of a profession in general and special institutions of development and training in accordance with the programme prepared by the Ministry of Culture and Education of the Republic of Lithuania and taking into consideration the

capability, interests, and physical and mental condition of the persons with a disability."

7. The Concept of the Adult Education (prepared by the Ministries of Culture and Education of the Republic of Lithuania (a document) (1999).

8. The White Paper on VET (1999) sets out the scope of information and services, and refers to this as a "life-long and targeted process".

9. Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Lithuania 2000 (21 March, No.VIII-1586); new ed.2005 (June 30)

10. Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (by Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania) (2003 July 4, No. IX-1700).

11. Career Guidance Strategy (by the Minister of education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania and the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania) (2003, November 19, order No.ISAK-1635/A1-180).

12. Lifelong Learning Assurance Strategy (prepared by he Ministry of Education and Science) (2004, March 26, No.ISAK-433/A1-83) (The Strategy for Life-long Learning (Official Gazette, 2004, No 56-1957). New edition on October 15, 2008 (Nr. ISAK-2795/A1-347).

13. The Plan of the Implementation of the Lifelong Learning Strategy (prepared by he Minister of Education and Science and the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania) 2004 (March 26, No.ISAK-433/A1-83).

14. In 2004 the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved the new edition of the Concept concerning the Law on Vocational Education and Training (Official Gazette, 2004, No 88-3231).

FUNDING OF FORMAL EDUCATION

Primary and secondary education is funded by local governments;

Higher education – about half of student places are funded by the Ministry of Education and Science and the rest of students pay a fee for their studies.

Adults normally pay a tuition fee for higher education. Full-time students can cover their expenses partially from a study loan which, however, is not sufficient for both paying the tuition fee and to cover the expenses of living. This limits the opportunities of people with low income and those belonging to a risk group to continue education at tertiary level.

2.2. Case 1: Formal education institution (college) – Vilnius College of Higher
-            **Education (VIKO) /** Vilnius Business College (PRIVATE)

- *Type of education* : Formal adult education
- *Type of institution*: College (state and private)
- *Name of institutions*: VILNIUS COLLEGE (STATE) & VILNIUS BUSINESS
                           COLLEGE (PRIVATE)
- *Interviewee 1*: Director (A1_01)
- *Interviewee 2*: Deputy director for study (A2_01)
- *Interviewee 3*: Teacher (A2_02)

2.2.1. Background Information on the Specific Institution in the Case Study

A college is a higher school providing higher non-university education. A college is also a higher school where research & development, applied research is carried out, professional art is developed. College studies are one-stage professional studies oriented towards practical activity that by help of applied research and/or R & D allow attaining certain professional qualifications. In the new Law on Science and Studies adopted in 2009 the colleges in Lithuania have a right to use „university of applied sciences" term in their name and this is likely to happen in the future for the majority of colleges.

Vilnius College of Higher Education (VIKO) is the largest accredited higher education institution in Lithuania. It provides higher college education in the sectors of Tourism, Business, Information Technologies, Electronics, Teacher Training, Economics, Health Care, Agriculture and Arts. The College was established in 2000 with the adoption of a new Law on Higher Education which introduced a binary system of higher education in Lithuania i. e. university and non-university studies (i.e. college and university studies as of 2009 Law on Science and Studies). A basis for the establishment of Vilnius College of Higher Education was provided by the former higher vocational schools: Vilnius Higher Vocational School of Electronics, Vilnius Higher Vocational School of Economics and Vilnius Higher Vocational School of Business. Having received the external national and international evaluation and developed their new study programmes the former

vocational schools merged to become a new type of higher education institution – College.

In this case study interviews with Vilnius College management and teacher are employed as well as the interview with Business College management. The interview with the management representative of Business College was aimed to highlight additional aspects of adult education in private formal (higher) education sector.

Vilnius College has 8363 (as of October 2009) students, who study here under 42 study programmes in 8 faculties: Electronics and Informatics, Economics, Business Management, Health Care, Pedagogic, Design and Technology, Art and Agrotechnologies. The duration of full-time studies is 3 years and 4 years of part-time or evening studies. Those who successfully finish studies are awarded Bachelor's degree and can continue at universities or other higher education institutions for Master's degree. The college itself does not have a right to award Master's degrees.

Short-time refresher courses for adults are offered in the fields of accounting, healthcare (massage courses) and agriculture.

There were 506 teacher positions and 489 teachers working at Vilnius college in 2007/2008 academic year, which means that some of them have had bigger workload than 36 hour week. The student ratio for one teacher was 19,95 (as of October 2008), the drop-out rate was higher than the average of all Lithuanian higher education institutions - 19,95 percent a year.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES, STRUCTURES AND REVIEW PROCESSES

The number of students at Vilnius College was decreasing slowly from 10333 students in 2004 to nearly 9000 in 2008. This decrease in number of students is a characteristic feature of the majority of Lithuanian colleges and universities as is influenced by Lithuanian demographic situation: the low birth rates and high levels of emigration result in less students at secondary schools (see the chart below).

Number of Students at Vilnius College

Year	Number of Students
2004	10333
2005	10169
2006	9659
2007	9412
2008	8996
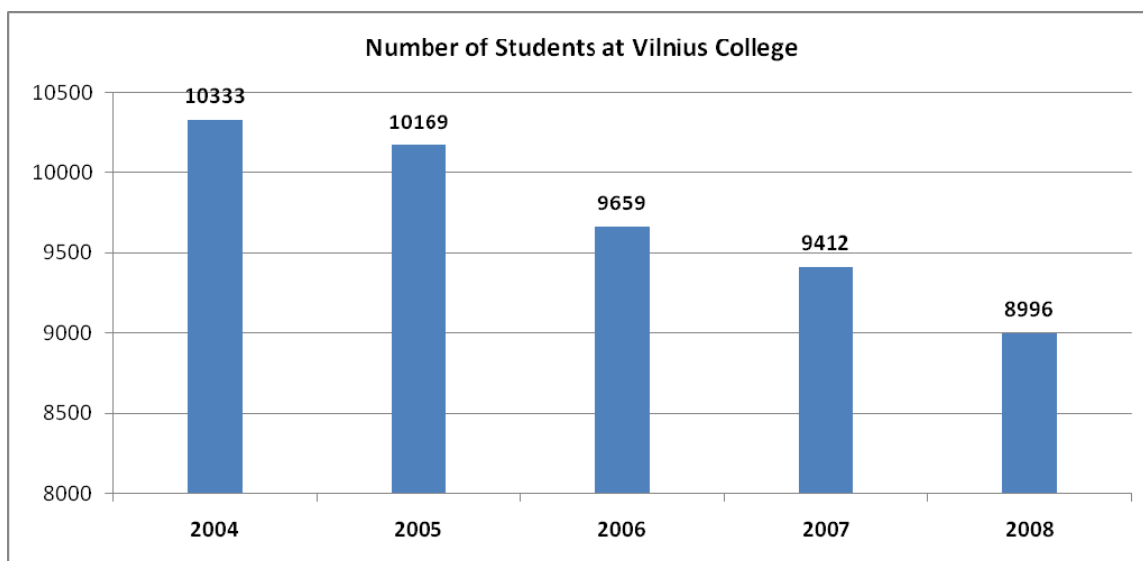
Chart 2.1. Number of students at Vilnius College 2004-2008. Source: Vilnius College Annual Report, 2008

Live births and natural increase / decrease of population by administrative territory, statistical indicator and year															
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Live births per 1 000 population	11.6	11.4	10.8	10.6	10.4	10.3	9.8	9.1	8.6	8.9	8.8	8.9	9.2	9.6	10.5
Natural increase / decrease per 1 000 population	-1.1	-1.1	-1.1	-0.9	-1.1	-1.0	-1.3	-2.5	-3.2	-3.0	-3.2	-3.9	-4.0	-3.9	-2.6

Table 2.1. Source: Statistics Lithuania, 2009, db1.stat.gov.lt/M3010501

The worsening demographic situation is addressed in the strategic plan for 2009-2013 which states that the consequences of low birth rates will be most serious after 2009. The college strategic plan also addresses the goals of 2000 Lisbon strategy: development

of human capital, life-long learning and information society. The mention of Lisbon strategy is followed by references to State Education Strategy for 2003 -2012 goals: developing culturally and socially competent personalities, participating in the community and acquiring education and qualification relevant to the development of technology and most importantly to create life-long learning environment (literary: conditions for life-long learning). The need to internationalize study programs is also addressed by mentioning global powers that „demolishes national boundaries".

The college mainly attracts students from Vilnius region as almost 60 percent of students residing Vilnius County chose to study there. The chart below demonstrates that the nearer the student resides the more likely s/he will choose the education institution which is in proximity (e.g. the college in question). An interesting fact may be that 10, 9 and 7 percent of students residing Utena, Panevezys and Alytus counties choose Vilnius College, despite the fact that college education is also available at these counties.
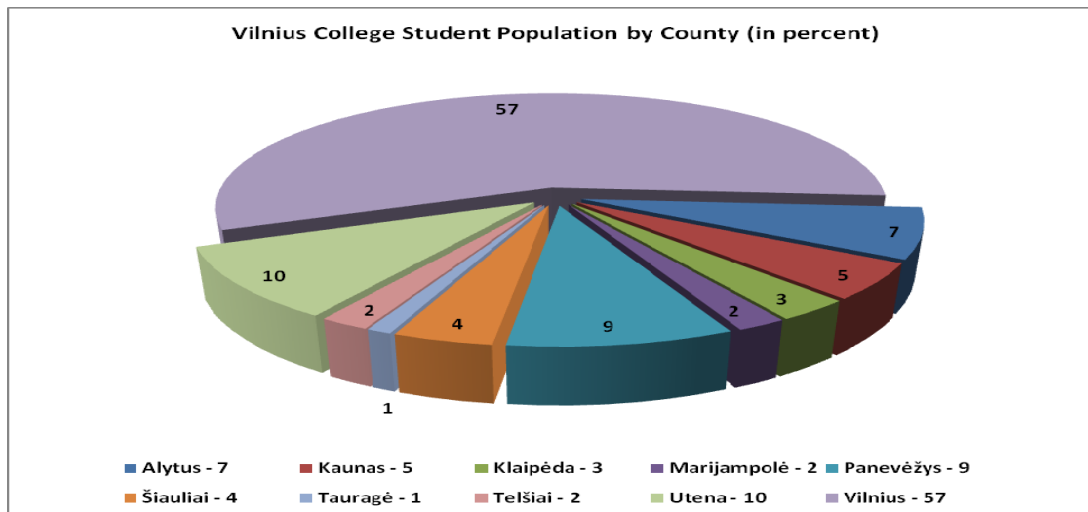
Chart 2.2. Vilnius college student population by county, 2008. Source: Vilnius College Annual Report, 2008

The college does not provide any public information on student social profiles. The only information available is student's academic achievements (average exam results of the groups, according to study area etc.). The college does not collect information on migrant/mobile students. Also it is not possible to say how many mobile/migrant students are enrolled. It is important to note, that migrant/mobile adult students are primarily understood as persons of Lithuanian origin who work in Ireland or in the United Kingdom. "Other" migrant students are perceived as "international" Erasmus students, who come from EU countries.

Speaking about different groups currently present in college student population both the management and the teacher mentioned those students who grew up in the countryside and whose parents are farmers:

"A few years ago there was a priority to farmers' children given in order to help them to enter those agricultural study programmes. But later it cleared out that we cannot distinguish any group. The entrance only depends on achievements at secondary school." (A2_01)

The tutor also mentioned those belonging to middle class but residing not in the capital and students of Polish origin:

"They have colleges in their home towns, but we are in the capital and this attracts young people. Polish [speaking] students come from regions around 20-30 km" (A2_02)

The question about different groups seemed unexpected to the management, as she could not answer it promptly:

"Everybody talks about formal education....life-long learning… then I don't get it... Why should we distinguish any groups? If a student has a certain „amount" of knowledge, then s/he can enter [higher education] easily. Motivation of the students it is not state's business, it is students' business" . (A2_01)

The management representative of private institution was more precise:

"They come from the so called middle class, whose parents are employed in public sector or are business people and own private companies […]. There are a few students from risk groups: 2 of them are orphaned persons who grew up in the children's home, also we have a few students with disabilities."(A1_01)

As the formal requirements for entering college do not provide any "discounts" for traditionally underrepresented groups there are efforts to create "inside" opportunities for such groups in college. The sign language study programme can be considered as the example of good practice. The labour market needs are considered to be the main reason why this study programme is popular:

"Sign language interpretation study programme is the only one for people with disabilities. Of course not only people with disabilities choose to study it. There is no competition – we are the only one in Lithuania providing sign language studies and the labour market trends demonstrate that demand is great of such specialists".(A2_02)

The situation of sign language study programme is advantageous to Vilnius College. However the college has a national monopoly in Lithuania over sign language interpretation studies. Moreover, this study programme is provided in Vilnius region only but the demand for sign language interpreters is also high in other regions.

The data presented in the diagrams below demonstrates that the number of students with disabilities was increasing at colleges by 19,3 and universities by 6,6 and decreasing at vocational schools by 7,4 percent. On the one hand, such change is structural and desirable and may indicate that the universities and colleges become more accessible to students with disabilities, (despite that this is happening at a very slow pace). On the other hand, the available data is insufficient to explain neither why this change is happening nor why there are 4 or 6 times more students with disabilities at vocational schools. However it can be discussed that such differing proportion may indicate that students with disabilities experience difficulties of integration character and do not enter colleges and universities because of disability.
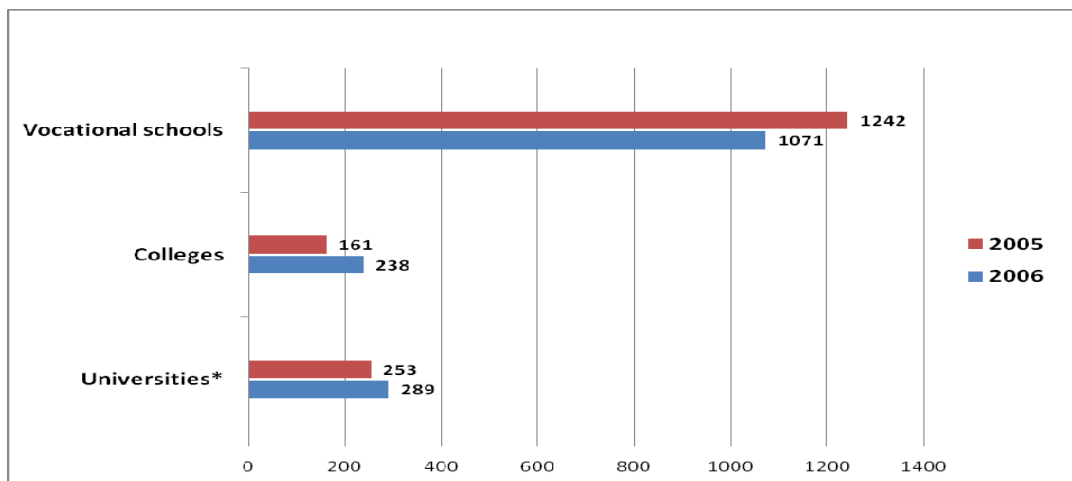

Chart 2.3. The number of students with disabilities at universities, colleges and vocational schools (2005 – 2006); Source: www.smm.lt/svietimo_bukle/docs/tyrimai/sb/spec_poreikiai_smm_07.pdf
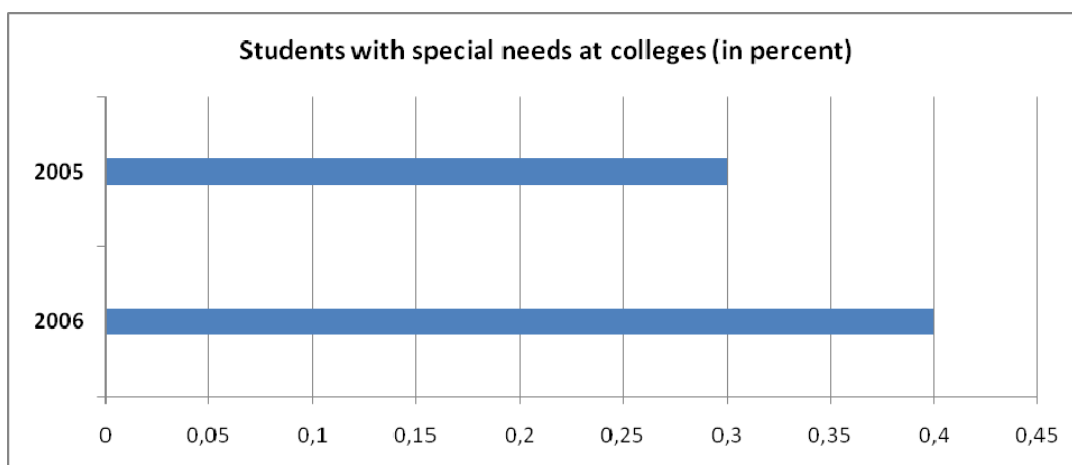

Chart 2.4. The number of students with special needs at colleges (2005 – 2006); Source: www.smm.lt/svietimo_bukle/docs/tyrimai/sb/spec_poreikiai_smm_07.pdf

The increasing number of students with disabilities at colleges may be a significant indicator that college education potential for students with special needs is growing in Lithuania. The introduction of a two year Masseur vocational study program at Vilnius College for the blind persons could be considered one of the very few examples of fulfilling this potential. As of October 2008 there were 20 students in this programme. One group of students is admitted every two years.

The education of people with special needs is described as part of social integration policy in the study published by the Ministry of Education and Science in 2007. This policy is implemented mainly by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour and Ministry of Health. Anti-discrimination of people with disabilities in education rules are established reasons in the Law of Equal Opportunities (adopted in January 2005). The Law on Education and the Law on Education of the Special Needs (1998) are two main legal acts ensuring the rights of the persons with special needs. The Article 15 of the latter states that the purpose of education is to ensure the possibility to study, enable each person to acquire qualification and combat social exclusion.

However, the answers of the teacher and management can also indicate that the state initiatives to provide further incentives for third level institutions to increase access for risk groups are not sufficient. The teacher could not mention any of them and quoted some recommendations from accreditation experts which reveal that ethno-linguistic backgrounds of the students can also become an obstacle to access education:

> *"In 2005 when there was an accreditation it was mentioned that we have to pay more attention to Lithuanian language teaching. If a student [of Polish or Russian origin] does not speak proper Lithuanian s/he should have a possibility to study it for some extra hours. I should say that these students [of Polish and Russian origin] are culturally marginalized as studies at state universities and colleges are in Lithuanian language only. Experts from abroad advise us to be gentle and hard-working with those students".* (A2_02)

The article 49 of Law on Science and Studies states that the language of instruction at state-owned higher education schools is Lithuanian. Other languages can also be used, however, only in certain circumstances: 1) if foreign language is part of study programme; b) if teachers are not native speakers; c) if studies are implemented in the framework of joint-degree or double diploma; d) studies are organized for exchange students or studies are organized for foreign country residents.

Social Inclusion/Access/Lifelong Learning Committee at institution level does not exist. This kind of support is based on personal will and initiative. Also it depends on the faculty situation: if there are students in need at the faculty they get the necessary help and attention:

"The Faculty of Health Care has a workgroup who is responsible for blind students. It is Student Body that looks after them. The Student Body is quite sensitive to the problems of the persons with a disability". (A2_01)

"Such committee does not exist, but the content of studies is continuously being optimized. I think that our institution is well accessible."(A1_01)

However, the situation about the risk groups (especially the persons with a disability) is likely to be in the vicious circle. There are only a few students with a disability; this is why the accessibility is not a priority issue. Knowing that the premises of the college do not have enough accessibility may discourage students with disabilities to choose the college. Thus the idea of Inclusion/ Access/ Life-long learning Committee is too "fresh" and at the moment such committee is not „needed":

"During 8 years that I work here, I did not see a student with a disability in the auditorium. The infrastructure is really bad: no lifts, no entrance to the building suitable for them. Maybe this is why they do not choose our faculty because we do not have the infrastructure". (A2_02)

The opinion of the management coincides with that of a teacher :

"*The faculties try to make the best conditions. Students are encouraged to help each other. Of course, there's nothing to be proud about. All the help is organized personally and on a voluntary basis*". *(A2_01)*

It is possible to make a conclusion that when the number of students with a disability is small a volunteer help based on personal relationships between students and teachers can be regarded positively. However, if there were more students with disabilities, the *ad hoc* help would be insufficient.

There is a disagreement between the management and the teacher on whether the college sets targets for percentage of students from risk groups. The teacher expressed the view that on the whole institution level such targets exist, however she mentions the lack of cooperation between college management and faculty management. The management only stated that there are no such targets. Another reason why faculties target to attract students from risk groups according to the teacher, is faculty's strategy to survive:

"*There are a lot of efforts to attract those students, but not only in order to help those groups. These efforts also relate to ensuring a sufficient number of students, so the faculty can survive*". (A2_02)

The monitoring of those targets does not exist. In the strategic plan of the college promoting increased access and resources is mentioned indirectly i.e. the aim to develop distance education in order to promote a better access to studies.

The college is typical of most state-owned higher education organizations in terms of the promotion of access for traditionally underrepresented groups. Speaking about the efforts of the college that the students were not eliminated the management strongly disagrees that students drop out from the education system because of their social background:

> "Students are eliminated not because they are from a particular social group. It is because of their academic achievements only. On the contrary if we see that a student is e.g. a person with a disability we act even more humanistic and sometimes ignore the official procedures e.g. we extend the period of time during which the student should retake exams etc." (A2_01)

The teacher thinks that the efforts to keep students at college are somewhere in the middle: neither too strict nor too liberal. She also expressed the view that teachers try to act humanly, but according to her the „indulgences" are not excessive.

The management thinks that some institutions are stricter than others in this respect, but the college is in the middle position. The teacher, however, noticed that the studies are less demanding in Lithuania than in other countries.

The existing procedure of elimination of students is regulated by the Studies Regulation which was adopted by college director (approved prior by the college Academic Council) in 2008 (with changes in 2009). According to Studies Regulation students are eliminated in these cases:

1. For not meeting the requirements of the study programme;
2. For not making financial commitments (e.g. not paying study fees);
3. Not registering at college after one year academic leave;
4. For not registering to repeat the studies, to take final exams or to defend final thesis;
5. First year students who did not register in the beginning of the studies (full time students – during September);
6. For breaching the College Statute or other college requirements;
7. For violating national law (when studies have to be stopped because of conviction to the prison).

This excerpt from the Studies Regulation demonstrates that academic results are the only reason to eliminate students directly connected with the study content and study quality requirements. Regulation only states the reasons for elimination, but the

procedure is described by other internal documents. The general practice is that student is eliminated if s/he fails to retake 3 exams.

> "*At the moment I think it is quite normal at our college. The student has to take up to 7 exams each semester. If s/he fails three exams – it is 50 percent of the studies of the semester requirements! – s/he still has a possibility to retake these exams*". (A2_01)

The management thinks that the system is quite liberal. To her mind it could be even more liberal, however such students who study longer than 10 years are difficult to administer. She also mentions the motivation issues:

> "*If we allow more liberal attitudes to studies the motivation of those who want to graduate in 3 years will be lost. This is why we try to find a compromise. If half of the studies s/he overslept and we allow continuing – it is normal*". (A2_01)
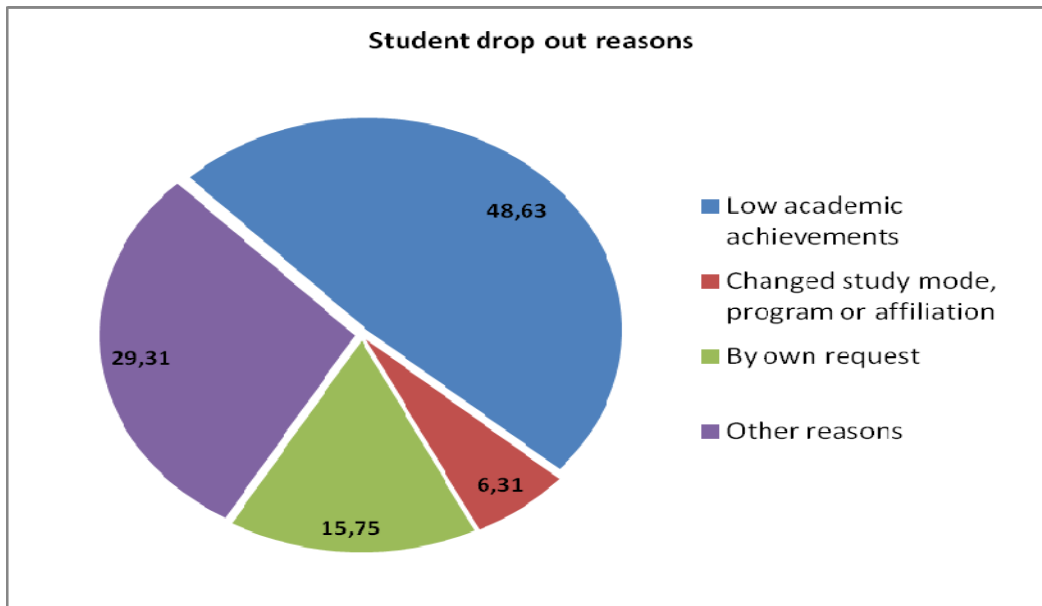
Chart 2.5. Source: Vilnius College Annual Report, 2008

A diagram illustrates the reasons why students dropped out of the college in 2008. The main reason why students were eliminated is low academic achievements. Almost a third of students drop out because of "other reasons". According to the management, "other reasons" might be also related to part-time studies i.e. some part-time students (especially adults enrolled for evening studies) drop out because they are unable to reconcile their work/career and studies. However, there is no exact data on working adult students available.

The management and teacher's points of view on the special strategy or plan for enabling access to the education for traditionally underrepresented groups are

conflicting. The management thinks that distance education is the best means of access to education for the underrepresented groups. She also addresses the problem of human resources, the lack of qualified teaching staff to prepare distance learning study programmes:

"*If we prepared what we committed in the strategic plan! I mean full study programmes. Of course we need teachers for this and the requirements for the quality are the same and the competences gained have to be the same no matter that you are a person with a disability or an immigrant*". (A2_01)
"*No we do not have any special strategic plan [to enable access to education for underrepresented groups]. We do not take any specific measures to attract these groups.*"(A1_01)

The teacher expressed her point of view in a very laconic way:

"*There are no strategies ... I am afraid there's nothing we can be happy about in this area...*" (A2_01)

However, the opinion of the teacher can be considered only partially true: the strategic plan of the college has the provisions to equip each faculty with a lift suitable for persons with a disability by the year 2013, if the necessary funding will be received by the state.

INSTITUTIONAL CLIMATE

The management was not informed what percentage of staff from target groups are employed in the college. She told that we should contact human resources department. She mentioned only one teacher with a disability. It is clear that there is a disagreement in the answer of management and a teacher. Teacher seems to be more informed. This can be explained that management structure at the college is hierarchical and management does not get much feedback from the teachers or other departments (e.g. human resources department).

"*There are pensioners; widows and widowers, there are separated people and single parents. If the faculty has 100 teachers and staff then about 10 percent would be from the target groups*". (A2_02)

The student population at colleges and universities in Lithuania is not diverse. The xenophobia and ethnic intolerance rates are still high, despite the fact that in some 10 years the situation was much worse. Lithuania struggles to become an open and diverse society, but in education this is slowed down by a small number of study programmes offered in English or other foreign languages. Bellow there are general statistics on foreign student population in Lithuania.

Speaking about the diverse student population both the management and the teacher were enthusiastic. For the management the diversity means getting to know cultural differences and diversity of opinions and attitudes. The management also thinks that students lack the possibilities to learn about cultural differences as the student population is very homogenous.

For the teacher, diversity means more solidarity among students and an impulse to be more curious about the environment. The teacher also mentioned that diversity of students is an impulse to improve teachers' competences and to reflect more on the study content.

> "*A lot of students have a closed attitude towards the environment. When I ask who the minister of education is or who the Prime Minister is, I do not get the right answer. I think that diversity obliges students and teachers to be more curious about the environment you live in. The more homogeneous students are the less committed teachers are to reflect on the study content*". (A2_02)

The management of private college stressed that diversity promotes tolerance. Another point the teacher mentioned is a freedom of speech and opinion that diversity brings:

> "*There was a student newspaper in one faculty, where every student could express their point of view. However, there were attempts to regulate what has to be published and what has not. I do not know why they do not publish this newspaper anymore*". (A2_02)

The problems of having a diverse student population were also mentioned. The management mentioned a student of Roma origin who did not have any adaptation problems as students accepted her enthusiastically but her Lithuanian skills were quite low this is why she had taken a whole year academic leave in order to catch up with other students. The management also mentioned communication problems:

> "*On the one hand the communication problems are usual, it's because of the different attitudes towards one thing or another. But this is interesting on the other hand*". (A2_01)

> "*Sometimes there may be misunderstandings […]. But this however, teaches us how to deal with diversity issues.*" ". (A1_01)

The diversity is also increased by mobile/migrant (Lithuanian) adult students. The management representative of private college stated that additional efforts are taken to encourage these students to continue studies. The curriculum plans are discussed with each individual separately. Both private and state college management representatives agree that mobile/migrant students are not numerous. The data on drop-out rates of

such students is not collected; however, both management representatives agree that it is more difficult to reconcile career and education commitments for such students:

> *"The situation when for example an adult is working in Ireland and is a student at college requires additional efforts from the teachers. Some teachers complain about additional workload and consultations they have to provide for such students. […] But more or less they are helpful. I think a lot depends on adult migrant/mobile students themselves: if their motivation is strong to continue, then they do not experience any major difficulties." (A2_01)*

The management of private college thinks that distance education facilities would increase migrant/mobile students' interest in studying at their college:

> *"The system is quite flexible in this respect. Maybe it is more complicated for teachers. Sometimes they are surprised [of how such students manage to work in another country and study here]. But if the student is able to meet the requirements and study independently and s/he manages to be present in the exam, then everything goes quite smoothly. Of course the administrative problems also exist, but we try to be as flexible as possible." (A1_01)*

The management also mentioned some cases when adult students lost jobs in Lithuania and went to work abroad. In this case the possibilities to continue studies without interruption are discussed individually and according to management every effort is made to advise such students on how they could continue studies.

There are no formal procedures on how to administer the studies of migrant (Lithuanian) workers neither in state nor in private college. Although both management representatives agree that the issue of migrant adults in education is topical. However no specific provisions and measures exist in strategic plans. According to both management representatives, migration experience sometimes even increases adult motivation to study:

> *"Those who were employed for some time in 3D jobs abroad [3D- dirty, dangerous and difficult] value education and are not indifferent to study quality. They understand the value of education and are not only interested in paper qualifications." (A1_01)*

In both colleges the teachers are not trained to work with migrant adults as there are not many such students. Both management representatives stated that teachers can get informal consultations with the management on how to deal with migrant adults in education.

However the opinions of private and state college management diverge on the topic of future trends:

> *"In the future I think the numbers of such students will increase, but not drastically. Also the numbers of non-Lithuanian origin students will increase. In our strategy we have provisioned to prepare study programs in English for such students." (A2_01)*

> *"I don't see a radical change in the future. I think those Lithuanians who emigrated and have established abroad will not return in high numbers. There will always be individual cases, but I doubt whether there will be a significant increase." (A1_01)*

Speaking about training of the employees at the college the management mentioned trainings inside the college in foreign languages, and information technology (ECDL). These and other trainings depend purely on teacher's will and the planning of trainings is quite sporadic. The management also mentioned two-year long administrative staff trainings in management competences (conflict management, art of presentation, public relations and image of the company etc.) which were initiated by the college and supported by European Social Fund.

All the rest of the trainings and short courses for teachers are planed and attended by the teachers themselves. When they are absent for short one or two week courses they are paid all the salary for this period. The college usually reimburses the course fees for trainings in Lithuania if they are directly connected with teacher's profession. In rare cases if a course fee for the trainings abroad and travel expenses can be reimbursed (usually partly), or they are funded using LLP/ Erasmus budget. In every case the teacher has to prove the benefits of the planned training to the college. The decision to reimburse is made informally by the dean of the faculty, the general manager and the chief – accountant, if the requested sums are available from the budget.

The teacher mentioned two areas where improvement of teacher qualification course would be necessary:

1. The college has enough human resources to organize inner trainings for employees, but these resources are not used because the system of payment is not clear;
2. Teachers' participation in conferences abroad.

> *"Courses are usually organized outside college. In my faculty there was a centre established in the framework of the European project. It was called "Centre for*

Education Change"and operated until the end of the project. Teachers were attending seminars and used to get certificates of their qualification." (A2_02)

When the project ended the centre was closed (despite that there was a strong will by some teachers to continue the activities of the centre by incorporating it into the institutional structure of the college).

Speaking about conferences abroad the teacher mentioned financial and administrative problems.

> *"If you want to attend a conference abroad it is very problematic. Firstly, you have to get permission from the faculty and the travel expenses are almost never covered. The difficulty is with the planning of finances. Finances are planned in advance, but you cannot plan a conference you want to participate a year in advance. And when you ask for the money they inform you that you cannot participate because it is not planned. Sometimes you send your paper to conference organizers and when the day of the conference comes, you cannot go because you cannot pay for that. It is also a question on budget management. The administration decides how to distribute the money... and they have their „unwritten" rules".* (A2_02)

OUTREACH

There are plans on management level to improve the access to the education for the people with a disability. This is mentioned directly in the strategic plan. However other groups and/or underrepresented communities are not mentioned.

> *"There are plans to improve the conditions for persons with a disability. At some faculties the preparation"of the facilities the persons with a disability started, but it stopped..."* (A2_01)

In private college the access to the education for the people with disabilities is aimed to ensure by informal measures:

> *"In case when there are persons with disabilities we consider the possibility for them to find a balance in how much time they have to be present at college and time spent studying at home. Here the use of information technology is important. In the future I think we will have to pay more attention to this issue."*(A1_01)

The main reason why the facilities to the persons with a disability do not exist is lack of financial resources. The other problem is that architecture of the college premises (some faculties use 19th century buildings, others are in the premises constructed in the soviet period) makes the reconstruction very expensive and sometimes impossible.

The number of students attending evening classes remains stable, although the number of students in part-time studies decreased gradually from more than 5000 in 2004 to 3881 in 2008. The number of full-time students remained stable. In comparison to the year 2007 the number of students decreased most sharply in evening classes (by 15.9 percent), followed by part-time (decrease by 9.09 percent). The least significant decrease was in full-time studies – 1.65 percent.

Summer courses are not provided at the college except the introductory summer camps for first-year students. Bu this is a promotional event that has nothing to do with learning. The 4 evening study programs are organized at 2 faculties (out of 8) The strategic plan aims to develop the evening studies and by 2013 to introduce 4 more evening study programmes. The state funding for evening studies is not provided and the students have to pay full price for the studies which last for 4 years. Management also thinks that the possibilities to organize evening studies are not used fully:

> "*Everything depends on the state funding. We could provide more evening studies, but the students have to pay full price. If the state could fund evening studies at least partially we would attract more students*"(A2_01)

In private college the situation is different: evening studies are integral part of the whole study process. This means that private college is more orientated towards adult education:

> "*The classes are well equipped and in the evenings they work until 10pm. We also have facilities for summer courses, but the demand is not high.*"(A1_01)

The management also mentioned human resources problems:

> "*Teachers are not very willing to work in the evenings. A few years ago we used to pay more money to them. But now the demographic situation is changed, teachers need students they need work*" (A2_01)

There is a disagreement between management and teacher. The teacher thinks that evening studies are not relevant and part time or distance education is a better option for working parents:

> "*If you are employed it is better to study part-time than in the evenings. Physically and psychologically for young families it is very hard to work and attend college everyday*"(A2_02)

Both the management and teacher agree that child-care facilities would be needed.

"I work at Teacher Training faculty. Having a child care facilities would be a great help not only to parents who study there. It would be also a good place where our students could have professional practices instead of going to kindergartens". (A2_02)

At the moment there are no plans for installing such facilities at the college. The teacher mentioned that she would like to initiate this project. According to her the Ministry of Social Security announced a few new projects where child care in enterprises is considered to be a priority. However the teacher did not receive moral support from the faculty.

The open days are organized annually. They are usually targeted at secondary school students. Students and parents are invited to college where they are provided with all necessary information. A few times each year faculty representatives and teachers visit secondary schools in the region and promote college studies. The risk group members are not targeted by open days, but the teacher mentioned some indirect effect of promotion:

> *"A few times students and teachers went to Šalčininkai region secondary schools. When they mentioned that each student can be accommodated in college hostel for very low monthly payment I felt that this information was appealing to children of lower social backgrounds"* (A2_02)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION TO PROMOTE SOCIAL NETWORK SUPPORTS

There is Mentoring programme prepared as a handbook for practice supervisors and tutors coordinating students' practice:

> *"As practice supervisors are usually businesspeople they lack pedagogical knowledge. Speaking about students – it is just the beginning of mentoring. The third year students are asked to „look after" first year students and consult them. But this is voluntary and not always efficient"*(A2_01)

There is a disagreement between the teacher and management. According to the teacher;

> *"Mentoring at the college is based on personal communication and interaction. The problem is that students are not willing to collaborate on voluntary basis"*. (A2_02)

In order to make mentoring more popular it would be useful to introduce mentoring studies or at least study modules. Migrant/mobile students receive support from the teachers: they sometimes are given individual assignments and tasks. The support from teachers is not formalized or institutionalized: teachers' willingness to provide

additional support depends on personal student-teacher relationship. There is no practice of formally assigning older students to act as mentors to migrant/mobile students.

Speaking about teacher to teacher mentoring, the management thinks that we are returning to the past as such employee mentoring was compulsory for all institutions in the soviet period. When a new employee started work s/he used to have a responsible person for integration. This person would be the first point of contact about any questions or problems at work.

At the moment new employee/ young teacher integration at the college is neglected. Human resources department does not have a responsibility for new employee integration. There are 2 persons working for this department and serving approximately 1000 people (500 teachers and 500 other staff). The integration of newly employed staff takes place through personal relationships only and with the help of heads of departments. However this is based on volunteer basis and there are no formal requirements for the heads of department to be responsible for integration of newly employed staff.

The teacher regarded social interaction to promote social network supports among students positively. She thinks that more or less students come from similar backgrounds and there's no antagonism between them.

Speaking about feedback from students regarding courses, outreach strategies, or availability of relevant information to underrepresented risk groups, regarding access supports and entry process the situation is glimpse. Such feedback is not collected.

The only feedback collected is annual student surveys on satisfaction of studies. The information gathered concerns the study quality and teachers performance evaluation, however no information regarding underrepresented groups is collected. It is worth to mention that teacher regards these surveys very sceptically:

> "*I don't know the purpose of these surveys. There are no guarantees that the students will tell you the truth*". (A2_02)

TRANSITION PROGRAMMES

There are only preparatory courses organized for those students who would like to study arts and design related programmes. There are no other preparatory courses.

The college at some point is involved in collaboration with the local community but the involvement is quite pragmatic and sporadic. According to the management the cooperation with secondary schools is based on „customer-client" relationship.

Secondary schools need to professionally orientate the school-leavers whereas college needs to recruit more students.

The only cooperation with primary schools and kindergartens exists at Faculty of Teacher Training where students have practice periods. However the teacher regards this cooperation as quite inactive:

> "*Two meters away from the Teacher Training Faculty there is a Centre of Orphaned and Abandoned Children. Our faculty prepares social workers. I think these students should live there, but there's no contact with them*". (A2_02)

The teacher mentions other forms of cooperation that she finds missing in the college i.e. research activities with other higher education institutions and joint projects. She thinks that college should not think of other colleges and universities as competitors. Competition according to her is less important than mutual benefits. She thinks that college lacks such initiatives.

ADMISSION POLICIES

Speaking about admission policies it is important to note that admission to all public and almost all private colleges and universities in Lithuania is centralized and is organized by the Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions. The rules of admission vary for each institution, but the success of a candidate depends mostly on the academic achievements at secondary school which are mathematically calculated according to the college or university requirements for a certain study programme. For art and music study programmes some colleges and universities organize entrance exams.

The college is also participating in this centralized system. The system itself is based on electronic system, to which each participating higher education institution has an access. The secondary school graduate, the would-be student, has to arrive at one of the registration centres (usually at university central buildings in bigger Lithuanian cities) and submit his/her paper and electronic application. The would-be student has a right to apply for 16 university and 16 college study programmes in different higher education institutions. The application procedure starts in May and finishes in August (see Table 1):

Table 2.2. The timetable for admissions to universities and colleges in Lithuania in 2009

Application to universities and colleges period announced	May 19
End of application to university study programmes period	July 18
Successful candidates to university study programmes announced	July 22
End of application to college study programmes period	July 25
End of registering at universities for successful candidates	Until July 31
Successful candidates to college study programmes announced	July 28

End of registering at universities for successful candidates   Until August 4
Additional admission to universities and colleges announced *   August 5 – 10
End of registering at universities for successful candidates   August 10 – 13
* If places to some study programmes are available
Source : http ://www.lamabpo.lt/apie_2009_trumpai.pdf

> *"The rules for admission are decided by the school itself, but the most important criterion is academic achievements at secondary school. To students from those at risk social groups there are no priorities or privileges. Those applicants who have won international contests get some additional points. For the persons with a disability or orphaned people (of whom both parents are dead) there is priority given if they collect the same number of points as someone else"*. *(A2_01)*

According to the teacher the selection of students would be necessary for arts and music related studies. From her answer it is possible to conclude that sometimes there are absurd situations meant not to violate equality

> *"The College participates in the general procedure of enrolment of students. This means that there are no exceptions to any groups. E.g. a few years ago if student wanted to study music teachers used to check if they have an ear for music. Today, when the number of students is decreasing, you risk losing some number of students if unfortunately they are bad at music"*. *(A2_02)*

It is clear from the teacher's interview that higher education institutions are more willing to attract sufficient number of students than to attract students from risk groups in order to help these groups and foster social cohesion.

> *"It used to be college business such students a few years ago. And it used to cost us a bit as we used to give the so called social scholarships to some students. Now it is not our business anymore, we can themselves distinguish these disadvantaged groups. The Government has decided on priorities, we only have to prepare the rules for those who would apply for social scholarship"*. *(A2_01)*.

The priorities are as follows: I persons from disadvantaged families, II – parents with children, III – students who have a family with 3 children.

> *"Students from disadvantaged groups are financed according to the requirements set by the government or Ministry [of Education and Science]. Each case is individual and has to be well documented"*. *(A2_02)*

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Speaking about recognition of prior non-formal learning the management sees it as an obstacle to access of adults to the education. At the moment there is no legal framework that would offer general guidelines. There is only recognition of those qualifications acquired at other higher education institutions.

In the strategic plan of the college there are provisions to prepare the guidelines for the college on how to recognize prior-learning. However this is not possible as the national legal framework does not exist.

According to the management of the college the problems of recognition sometimes arise. Some experience of dealing with these issues in the college exists. Usually the practice periods are recognized after careful examination of the goals and objectives of this practice. The management expressed the view that the college has some experience and they already know in what ways they could recognize the prior learning.

> *"It is five years already that we plan to prepare guidelines for the college on how to recognize non-formal learning. We would be able to do this very quickly, but there's no legal framework that would allow to do it". (A2_01)*

The teacher suggested institutionalizing the process of prior learning recognition:

> *"We should establish a centre in the college or to make this the function of the career centre".* (A2_02)

The teacher also expressed an opinion that if non-formal education was recognized the motivation to increase the qualification would be higher. She also thinks that the market for „qualification certificates "would disappear as nobody would need „paper qualifications".

The questionnaire had questions about initial assessment of needs and skills, including literacy skills however the initial assessment does not exist at the college. The management instead expressed her views on the system of assessment in general:

> *"6 out of 10 possible grades in Lithuanian system of student assessment are „pass" grades. The system does not equal the European one. I see some progress in the new Law on Science and Studies, as we will gradually turn to European system, with credits. When we have the system harmonized then it will be easier to have student exchange". (A2_01)*

> *"The students are satisfied with the assessment in general. The system at the college is clear and easy to understand. I think the assessment system lacks ideographic assessment or as you say qualitative assessment*". (A2_02)

The teacher also mentioned art and sports studies where current assessment system is quite irrelevant.

SUPPORTS AND COURSE CONTENT

There are no emotional support services or staff responsible for this area. Students receive emotional support, according to the management, from the teachers and staff members and their fellow colleagues. This is based on personal relationships.

The strategic plan only mentions support for students and creating better environment for students with a disability. The support in strategic plan means financial support. No hints to emotional support were mentioned. According to college statistics 1723 students in 2008 received scholarships and 575 students have taken study loans form the bank. However this can be considered only symbolic support as the sums of money are relatively low. For students at risk of poverty there are funds allocated by the city municipality.

A Career Centre at the college started to function in 2008. Up to this time the activities of career centre were mainly done by the faculty teachers and administrative staff with the help of students. This was the reason why the situation in each faculty is very different. Some faculties were very active in establishing good relations with businesses and some faculties lacked this initiative. The career centre established in 2008 started coordinating career activities centrally; however the results of its efficiency could not be evaluated at the time of research. The management mentions the change in relations with businesses during economic recession:

> "A few years ago businesses were very active in trying to find new employees. Now the situation changed. It is more difficult to find practice placements in companies. I think the employers are active when they need workers. They usually need lower level workers, maybe they need "brains" too, but they show us more initiative when they need lower level workers". (A2_01)

The teacher also mentioned that career planning can be part of the studies and gives this example:

> "Students are attending seminars where they can learn about their careers. In my faculty they have Education Policy seminars. Indirectly it is connected with career planning". (A2_02)

There is a disagreement between a teacher and management:

> "The career centre does not exist. The only career possibilities for students are notice boards at faculties where they can sometimes find ads for jobs". (A2_02)

Speaking about academic support the management mentions teacher consultations for which they are paid. According to her it is the main academic support students can get. The management also mentioned students' independent work at libraries; however she thinks that students lack motivation to study and that the culture of learning does not exist:

> "*There are no libraries or internet reading rooms open 24 hours a day or at least 12 hours. But if you went to a college library after 5 pm on Friday you would see that the place is almost empty. Maybe our students are not mature enough, maybe we need to educate them and promote the culture of learning?". (A2_01)*

There are no provisions in the strategic plan of the college mentioned about increasing student motivation and promoting learning as activity-centred and as a social practice. The teacher agrees with management opinion. She stated that there is a lack of computers, the libraries do not allow taking books home, and copying them is expensive.

> "*There is a lack of scientific journals. The problem is that our students are not asked to read them. I see here a lack of cooperation between foreign language and subjects teachers*". (A2_02)

DISTANCE EDUCATION

College has a Distance Learning Centre which is a structural part of College Computer Centre. The Centre was established in 2003 and is a member National Distance Learning Association and Lithuanian Distant Learning Network. In their website they state that they provide e-learning services for students, teachers and staff members. Out of 11 areas of activity mentioned, 2 are related to life-long learning and/ or adult education:

1. To organize and provide computer literacy and continuous education services for adults;
2. To cooperate with other organizations in providing qualification courses.

The strategic plan aims at developing distant learning at the college. There were two distance learning classes in 2009 and it is provisioned to equip one more. The strategic plan also provisions to prepare Distant Learning Quality Regulation and Distance Learning Course Preparation, Accreditation and Delivery Guidelines which regulate the distance education at the college. At the moment such documents do not exist. Distance studies are fragmented as there are no full study programmes. However, by the year 2013 it is provisioned to introduce at least two full distant learning study programmes. The college in 2009 provided 28 non-accredited study modules (most of them in management and IT fields). Also it is provisioned that by 2013 more that 80 percent of the courses taught at college will be accompanied by online learning materials.

"I think that there are higher education institutions which made more progress than we did. We have only a few modules, other universities have full programmes. This our weakest point". (A2_01)

The distance learning facilities is a priority of private college:

"The distance learning is not very well integrated into studies, but we are working on it. This is our strategic aim. Of course we can be proud that our students have a possibility to attend a lot of "contact" lectures, but for working adults this is not always convenient."(A1_01)

The teacher seems not informed about Distant Education Centre at all.

"I think that the college lags behind the universities. I did not hear about any possibilities at our college". (A2_02)

As distance education is considered to be the weakness of the college. There are no links mentioned which directly or indirectly promote distance education for traditionally disadvantaged areas/groups in these areas. According to the management the first aim of distance education was to make studies more flexible, but the aims of the Distant Education Centre itself may suggest that promotion to access traditionally disadvantaged groups will be done in the future.

Speaking about the effects, if any, the recession may have on access policy and practice, for traditionally underrepresented groups in college the management is quite positive. She relates the recession with the systemic education reform that was launched in April 2009 after the new Law on Science and Studies had been adopted. The main aspect of the reform is the voucher based payments of studies or the "student package" based studies. This means that part of the secondary school students get a "student package" which allows them to choose any state university or college and study there for free. The state pays the money for the studies directly to college or university. The amount of study fee depends on each study programme (from 1000eur for business management studies to 5000eur for art or music studies). The rest of the students who do not receive the study package have to pay full price for their studies. They have a possibility to take a state guaranteed student loan with low interest rate. The reform intends to increase students' motivation in choosing a study programme and competitiveness among colleges and universities. It also adds some equality between the private and public sectors. The fees in private universities and colleges are usually higher but if the student chooses a private institution and s/he has got the „package" from the state, the private body receives the "package" and only part of fee which exceeds state support has to be paid by the student. Previously private schools could not expect to get any state funding for the studies.

Although the reform caused a lot of (positive and negative) publicity there was a lot of uncertainty about the outcomes of this reform as it coincided with the economic recession. However, the management doubts whether the reform will ensure a better study quality in the short run:

"If the higher education reform will create a tough competence among education providers, the quality of studies will improve". (A2_02)

"If the situation gets worse and the state decides to cut teachers' salaries the study quality will suffer. It is good that students will be accepted to higher education according to the secondary school exam results and not on „want to study somewhere" or „do not want to study" basis". The reform will have positive outcomes if we do not relate it to economic recession"(A2_01)

The private college management representative mentioned the following outcomes of economic recession already felt:
   a) working adult students lose their jobs and stop their studies because of emigration;
   b) there are more delays in paying study fees than usual;
   c) more financial flexibility is required to administer study fees.

But according to private college management representative the dropout rates did not increase so far.

2.2.3. The access of adults to formal education (state and private college cases studies integrated)

○ The current situation states that promotion and implementation of agenda for increased access is considered rather additional work than the main work for some employees at colleges. Most additional work for increased access is "put" on teachers' and students' "shoulders": they act as informal mentors and consultants etc. Such practice can be regarded positively, however; a systemic approach to a better promotion of access should be developed instead of relying only in the personal will and general institutional climate.

○ The number of migrant/mobile adult students has never been visible – it is not possible to say whether it has been increasing or decreasing, as the college does not collect information on migrant/mobile students. Also it is not possible to say how many such students are enrolled. It is important to note, that migrant/mobile adult students are primarily understood as persons of Lithuanian origin who work in Ireland or in the United Kingdom. "Other" migrant students are perceived as "international" Erasmus students, who come from EU countries.

○ Members of underrepresented groups, migrant/mobile adult students, single parents, persons with disabilities etc. do not receive direct or "visible" services (such as extended study programmes or distance education). As these adult students are not numerous there are no formal strategies and activities designed to promote mutual respect, trust, and support. All support is voluntary and informal (personal).

○ A problem of developing a systemic approach could be solved if "paper" strategies and implemented programs were more interrelated (especially in the public sector). The financial resources are not sufficient to implement every "paper" goal.

○ The interest in adult learners lies mainly in the concern to recruit a sufficient number of students. The goals of lifelong-learning are a secondary concern.

○ The colleges recognize the necessity to change some applicable laws regarding and creating the acknowledging system when it comes to non-formal education and previous work experience. Also, they witness the advantages of attracting people with working experience in the relevant field.

○ The distant education potential is not fully used at the state college. It is recommended to combine distant/ e-learning and regular studies in a more flexible ways.

2.2.3 Model of good practice: Vilnius College Sign Language Study Programme

Background information:

The sign language is not recognized by the Constitution, but by another law. In 1996 the Lithuanian sign language was recognized as the mother tongue of the deaf people by the Resolution of the Seimas (Lithuanian Parliament). According to the statistics of 2001 Census there were 7700 deaf people in Lithuania. In 2008 according to the Lithuanian Association of the Deaf data there were 256 deaf students who graduated from higher education institutions and 159 students who finished vocational schools. There were 958 students who finished secondary and 1891 that finished basic education schools. 45 of them entered higher education system that year, 89 – vocational schools, 130 – professional education centres, 544 – special schools for deaf persons and 311 continued at secondary schools together with other students. In 2008 according to the Association of the Deaf 6300 deaf people in Lithuanian were users of sign language.

There are 5 basic education schools for deaf and hard of hearing people, 1 secondary education school, 1 vocational training school, 3 kindergartens for deaf children, 9 integrated deaf education schools – classes.

Sign language interpreters are trained at Vilnius College (3 years programme leading to Bachelor's degree), Vilnius Pedagogical University (1 year specialization: Lithuanian Language Unit, Sign Language specialization). Interpreter's qualifications courses provided by Lithuanian Association of the Deaf unit, responsible for sign language research. There are 5 big centres/ clubs in Vilnius, Kaunas, Panevezis, Klaipeda and Siauliai. These centres provide different services: employment services, consulting, culture, activities. Every centre has small clubs in regions. In total around 45 clubs are located in regional towns.

Overview:

As sign language is tool for communication between deaf or hard of hearing people Vilnius college for the first time gives a support to these persons by introducing a three-year sign language interpreting study program. The sign language at Vilnius College aims at including those already struggling with specific difficulties into education system. The arguments for creating this study program are in favour of Lifelong Learning – increasing competitiveness in the labour market and strengthening social cohesion.

Sign Language Interpretation studies at Vilnius College of Higher Education were introduced in 2002. Is is the only sign language interpreters' training programme in Lithuania leading to Bachelor's degree. It is a 3-year programme (180 ECTS) the students of which get the qualification of sign language interpreter.

The introduction of the programme aimed at developing not only new study program in Lithuania but also sign language interpreters' professional training and development system as sign language interpreter's study programme is new in Lithuania. This is why more experience and human and financial resources were needed. In 2005 the sign language study programme received a funding from European Social Fund worth 1,1 million Litas (approx. 318.000 EUR) for two years. The support was used to create modern learning facilities, train the teachers and to create up-to date learning materials. The college management regards this study program as a social investment.

The support also had social benefits for the community of deaf people. Firstly, the community can now receive interpretation services of high quality. Secondly, as stated in the project website, to form a community of deaf people as a linguistic and cultural group in the society which today is quite isolated because of intolerance and discrimination by the rest of society. Moreover, the sign language interpreting study program would also solve one of the biggest problem of the deaf – the lack of integration in the society because of communication and access to information restrictions.

The main aim of the project:

Sign language study programme aims at preparing high quality interpretation specialists which are greatly needed in the labour market.

The main objectives of the programme:

➢ To establish an up-to-date basis for sign language interpreters;
➢ To prepare highly qualified sign language teachers and practice supervisors;
➢ To prepare learning and methodological materials for sign language interpreting courses;
➢ To improve the quality of sign language study programme.

Long term objective is to improve the integration of the deaf people into labour market.

Target groups:

➢ The would-be sign language interpreters
➢ Sign language teachers, researchers and practice supervisors;
➢ The deaf people community in Lithuania;

Subjects studied to obtain professional qualifications:

o Lithuanian language (phonetics, lexicology, morphology, accentology, dialectology, stylistics, syntax);
o Investigations in the sign language area;

- o Lithuanian sign language;
- o Basics of surdology;
- o Theory and practice of interpretation;
- o Tactile and visual sign languages;
- o Special pedagogy;
- o Art and music course.

Practice periods:

- o 1 sem. – cognitive practice (3 ECTS)
- o 2 sem. – introductory–experimental practice (6 ECTS)
- o 3 sem. – experimental practice (7.5 ECTS)
- o 4 sem. – educational practice (10.5 ECTS)
- o 5 sem. – educational practice (12 ECTS)
- o 6 sem. – individual labour practice (15 ECTS)

Added value: A modern teaching infrastructure was created (two specially equipped auditoriums, specially equipped reading room for independent studies and a laboratory for applied research activities where teachers prepare for lectures and workshops). 8 highly-skilled teachers prepared, 10 practice supervisors prepared.

- o An innovative teaching and methodical material of 70 ECTS prepared;
- o Expert consultations and trainings for teachers and practice supervisors organised;
- o Teaching and methodological materials prepared and published;
- o Three new study modules prepared.

„Sign Language Interpretation is the only one such kind of study programme. It is aimed at people with disabilities. We have no competition from other colleges or universities. And it is a good example of social integration. Labour market trends demonstrate that the demand for such specialists is great. Not only people with disabilities choose to study it. The workplaces for them are concentrated in bigger towns and people who chose to study this programme think about their future and work". (A2_02)

Funding:

In 2005 the study programme received a funding from European Social Fund worth 1,1 million Litas (approx. 318.000 EUR) for two years. In 2007 when the support from EU funds was no longer available Vilnius College committed to continue to provide and fund this study program.

Project continuity:

This practice could be widened to other programmes and study modules or specializations as the beneficial aspect of developing education system. There are plans to introduce qualification courses and short trainings for sign language interpreters.

Problems/ issues to resolve:

o   Relatively new programme and lack of know-how;
o   Necessity of integrating deaf people and those with hearing impairment into the society;
o   Training of younger generation qualified teachers, practice supervisors;
o   Creating modern teaching basis, original educational and methodological materials.

2.2.4. References:

Vilnius College website: www.viko.lt

Lietuvos kurčiųjų draugijai 70-metų. Informacinis leidinys, Vilnius: Lietuvos kurčiųjų draugija, 2008

7,5 proc. Lietuvos gyventojų sudaro neįgalieji Statistikos departamento 2003 m. lapkričio mėn. 4 d. pranešimas spaudai, www.stat.gov.lt/uploads/docs/2003_11_04.pdf

2.3. Case 2: FORMAL EDUCATION INSTITUTION – Vilnius Pedagogical University

- *Type of education* : Formal adult education
- *Type of institution*: University (state)
- *Name of institution*: Vilnius Pedagogical University (VPU)
- *Interviewee 1*: Ass.prof. dr. Principal for Study (A3_01)
- *Interviewee 2*: Tutor/Lecturer and Organiser of the Education Programme (A3_02)

2.3.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE SPECIFIC INSTITUTION IN THE CASE STUDY

According to the Law on Science and Studies in Lithuania, university is a higher educational institution which provides university studies, conducts scientific research, pursues experimental (social, cultural) development and (or) develops professional art.
Vilnius Pedagogical University (VPU) is the biggest university qualifying teachers and pedagogues in Lithuania. VPU has long traditions of preparing the pedagogues for Lithuanian market. It was established in 1935 as a Pedagogical Institute in Klaipeda. In 1939 it was moved to Vilnius and called Vilnius Pedagogical Institute. In 1992 the status of university was approved for it. 10 faculties (of Physics and Technology, Natural Sciences, History, Lithuanian Philology, Mathematics and Informatics, Pedagogy and Psychology, Slavic Languages, Social Sciences, Philology, Sports and Health) and 2 institutes (of Cultural and Arts Education and of Social Communication) comprise VPU. There are Agro-biological station and institute of Vocational competences development. According to the statistics of 2008–2009, 11545 students study at Vilnius Pedagogical University. VPU staff contains 1318 persons of which 80 are doctor *habilitus* and 248 are associated professors.

Universities are institutions that perform an important role in lifelong learning. Lifelong learning becomes a challenge while organizing university's work. Nowadays lifelong learning should not be offered just as one of the university's service but the whole university should organize its work according to the concept of lifelong learning and to integrate it to each of the university's department's work. [2]

Lithuania adopted a Lifelong learning strategy in 2004 seeking to fulfil the requirements of the European Union. It declares that higher educational institutions perform a relevant part in lifelong learning while providing an opportunity to study in their informal courses and in evening and extramural studies. [3]

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[2] Regarding the approval of "Life-long learning strategy and action plan for its implementation "
[3] Lifelong Learning Strategy

Vilnius Pedagogical University declares they guarantee lifelong learning studies. The Statute of VPU establishes the opportunity to study in integrated studies, part-time studies and continuing education. VPU organizes the continuous training (retraining, studies of developing additional qualifications and vocational competences) for people who already have higher education or for those who are seeking it. For those who complete it, a special document is given.

Vilnius Pedagogical University Development strategy for 2006–2010 intends to create material basis and infrastructure for the persons with a disability, students with special needs, and continuing studies. It plans to expand and develop continuing studies by programs of requalification and programs increasing pedagogues' competences.[4]

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES, STRUCTURES AND REVIEW PROCESSES

In general, the profile of typical student of Vilnius Pedagogical University (hereafter VPU) is spontaneously described as any person from any social group in Lithuania. When talking about those who already work, i.e. mostly part-time students, it maybe both less qualified workers, and those highly-skilled. Thus, it is a very diverse profile. In terms of financial situation, it is rather more often depicted as youth from poorer families. It is important to note that respondent representing teachers' segment makes a distinction between working students and students that do not work.

However, the respondent from management sector spontaneously highlighted some different aspects. The distribution of finances was mentioned. A growing part of university's funds dedicated for the so called social scholarships is about to show the increasing number of students who are in need of financial support.

"...If we talk about extramural students, then it's a big variety of them. We could start from long distance lorry drivers and ending with those who work in municipalities and even in the Parliament... " (A3_02)

"...from those social groups where families are big and income is low. And for those studying ones we have to give social scholarships. Then less money is left for those with good study results. That's the main feature that we have more students from needy families. And the main parameter to prove it is funds for social scholarships. Now I cannot say the numbers and faculties. But there are many of them... " (A3_01)

Moreover, the respondent who represents management, named the issue of students' motivation. The interviewee finds it "painful and unfair" when mass media depicts a VPU student as a person with low motivation (or no motivation at all) and with the only goal to get a higher education diploma. It is regretted that stereotype is very strong but has no base. It maybe presumed that opinions shaped by mass media more or less

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[4] Vilnius Pedagogical University Development Strategy

affect the whole community of university, e.g. starting with administration and lecturers, and ending with current and potential students.

> *"...According to press, those with the lowest motivation come to Pedagogical University... Minister, deputy, and vice minister says that it is the worst university in their quality centre. They say, these are the least motivated. In my opinion, they insult those who came here to study"* (A3_01)

On the other hand, it is noted by interviewee that VPU students are stronger motivated compared to students of vocational schools since they seek for higher education and have aspirations. However, the VPU students' motivation is not compared to other motivation of other universities' students.

When discussing some particular social groups which VPU students belong to, both respondents name the students with a disability first of all. People with different physical disabilities, e.g. deafness, blindness, motor function disability, come to study. They are more visible than several years ago. It is admitted that the number of such students constantly increases. This statistics maybe one of the parameters to establish the improving access to Vilnius Pedagogical University. Otherwise, it also shows that there is a need for event better access. It is still insufficient because some faculties have more students with a disability than it is stated in the limits of their plans.

> *"...We have the students with a disability, those with vision, hearing, moving disabilities... "* (A3_02)

> *"...What does it mean other social groups? Let's say, the number of the persons with a disability increases and we have 50 students over the limit... They need this social education…"* (A3_01)

Social risk groups are perceived differently. To note the difference between teacher's and management's answers, alongside to the persons with a disability the teacher is recalling less social risk groups while the management's perception is wider. The teacher has also mentioned prisoners who study in their university, while the respondent who represents the segment of management is more likely to develop a topic of genders as social groups.

> *"...The convicted ones learn here. We go to Lukiskes prison and to Pravieniskes..."* (A3_02)

> *"...If we distinguish them by social group of gender, there men and women. We can say that number of boys increases. At schools the number of male teachers decreases but we have more and more boys coming here. The percentage is rising. Naturally we don't do any steps to promote it. There cannot be any privileges for men. Otherwise*

we could be accused of doing this by inspectors for equal rights. But we don't do it. The last five years this percentage is increasing. In education process the proportions are necessary. Some years ago there were know male teachers in primary schools, and now we have them. It is a good sign since in the world male teachers make half of all primary school teachers. The equal rights of different genders must be evident from the very beginning…" (A3_01)

Moreover, the management representative perceives males as a target risk group at university. The male students are considered rather difficult to attract to education institution of pedagogical profile. Despite this, the situation is viewed as being improved. However, it is a question of access in terms of motivation of the target risk group.

> *"...Boys could be one of risk groups because they make only one third of all students. And it is almost a risk group…"* (A3_01)

The rising men's motivation (regarding VPU) may be a consequence of changing stereotypes related to genders and particular professions, i.e. teacher is not necessarily a woman, and engineer is not necessarily a man. This could be obvious after some years when current students finish their studies and start working either as teachers at schools or some other institutions, or choose other field of activity. For now there is no data how many of the increasing number of male students is going to work in education sector. But this is a field of future research. This can be reviewed several years later. However, higher motivation could also be related to a better access compared to other universities.

Also, families (married students with children) are considered a risk group by the management representative:

> *"...Laws on those who have families… They have an academic leave, and then come back. You cannot do anything here. This is already a social sphere…it is not an academic problem. It is a social problem… Student union, it should be interested how students are doing, how many families there are, which families should receive a dormitory"* (A3_01)

To sum up, it is admitted that overall access is sufficient to those who seek for education and are motivated to study, and, of course, have necessary scores to enter university.

> *"...If a person is clever and wish to study, he should take advantage of the conditions which are sufficient... "* (A3_02)

> *"...What does good accession mean? Is the accession to Pedagogical University bad? One should have necessary scores, and if they have them they can get a state's fully financed study place. We are looking forward to accept those*

students. We go to schools, we agitate them, and we promote it. The access and scores are overall. We only wait them to point out the Pedagogical University first of all…"(A3_01)

Regarding the means the state could use to provide incentives for increasing access of risk groups, opinions are slightly different between two segments of interviewees. The difference is the following.

Teacher is more likely to attach the responsibility to the state. Financial issues are also touched when discussing the ways for incentives for institutions. Management, on the contrary, emphasizes the role of person and its importance in the whole process.

"…State should provide better finances to create better conditions. Blind people need special literature, don't they? University is not able to purchase it. Moreover, it is not possible to take all the books to the prison and leave it there. There is a lack of some conditions. Our University tries to implement a project of equipping an elevator for the persons with a disability. However, until now we have no finances… " (A3_02)

"…State is its citizens. Thus they should think about it themselves…" (A3_01)

Regarding the targets for percentage of students from specific risk groups, respondents could not give clear answers. Management representative indicated that no percentage can be provided since all terms and facilities are arranged, and anyone with motivation is welcome. When asked about it the management interviewee mostly discussed the situation of the persons with a disability. Neither by teacher, nor by management respondent are the targets for percentage distinguished.

"…We have such conditions, and if a person wants to study but he fails somewhere he can always agree with the lecturer or administration. The conditions are offered, if a person wants them… We help our students in terms of consultations, and we have a lot of literature as well. No lecturer is abusive or willing to throw the student away… " (A3_02)

"…We cannot have such targets for percentage. We offer all possibilities to them. And even when we have during the admission days we have a special entry, a WC for them…" (A3_01)

Regarding the specialized committees at institution level to promote and implement an agenda for increased access, the teacher is not informed about it.

According to management representative's comments there are no sufficient finances for specialized committees working on increased access. The ordinary employees of university, e.g. lecturers naturally do this work alongside other duties. Everything depends on their personal motivation. The salary for such work is considered twice

lower than the one for giving lectures. Financially it is rather demotivation than motivation. However, current situation states that promotion and implementation of agenda for increased access is considered rather additional work than the main work for some employees at university.

"...There is no such department because there is no money for it. Only 47 percent of funds indicated in methodical indications are coming…What does it mean to observe them? Lecturers do observe them and manage the process. They give them tasks, they show them direction and organize their self-learning… " (A3_01)

When it comes to a strategic plan for promoting increased access, both respondents find it valid rather in papers than really applicable in nowadays situation. It is remarked that general state's situation matters and many different factors play role when promoting the increased access. However, it is also noted that now strategy is used for preparing the study programs. Thus it is more or less implemented through some of the programs at least. It shows that steps are made forward.

"...As for strategic level it has not been necessary yet. Problems should be solved in the state level. Because now it is not clear how things will turn regarding the student's basket. Some students are considering foreign universities since studies at home become unattractive. They go to Germany and receive a full scholarship and can normally live there. They can also get a different quality of studies… Motivated students will definitely go away to study abroad... " (A3_02)

"...There is a strategic plan of university. There are all those things, when there are all papers. What we are going to do and how – every minute we go to check the plan what we are going to do. Strategic plans are only general strategy showing direction, and then we make programs in regard to this direction…" (A3_01)

Discussing the evaluation of good practice with regard to promotion of access, some steps are done as well. However, some of them are criticized by management respondent. First of all, self evaluation is done constantly. And this is regarded positively. When it comes to external evaluation, guidelines for institutional evaluation are being prepared. There haven't been particular tasks for external evaluation yet. Rating is considered being one kind of such evaluation. However, because of lack of proper preparation and adaption to Lithuanian situation, it is very much criticised by the representative of management segment.

"...We do much of self-evaluation, and we have no projects for external evaluation when someone else is evaluating our efforts because we didn't have institutional evaluation, we are working on it. There are those parameters there. Rating, yes, we received the rating questionnaire. They ask how many Nobel prize winners work at our university…There are researchers who do those ratings. They

take some questionnaires, and don't even adapt them. It's nonsense. They only show they are very clever…" (A3_01)

To conclude, it may be presumed that sceptical attitude to institutional strategies maybe a reason why there is no clear structure and systemic approach while promoting the access of adults to the education system. It is acknowledged that institutional strategies work only through study programs which are more or less based on those strategies. Moreover, even though internal evaluation is being constantly conducted, there is no external review process. A problem of developing a systemic approach could be solved if "paper" strategies and implemented programs would be more interrelated. Also, the system of external review should be better elaborated. The review process is a kind of precondition for implementation of institutional strategies and their effect in daily academic life situations. The systemic approach to better promotion of access now could be developed by motivation of university employees. The finances are not sufficient to motivate with the help of funds. Thus, lecturer rather chooses direct work with students than paperwork when preparing strategies and structures. The management should find other ways how to motivate people working on these issues. Either it could be some privileges or some exemptions. Overall, the situation very much depends on institutional climate as well.

INSTITUTIONAL CLIMATE

During the interviews different attitudes to target groups of staff and their percentage are expressed. The issue is perceived differently.

The teacher mostly gives examples on the colleagues with some disabilities who successfully work at university. The professional competence is stressed not the physical abilities. The same rule is valid when talking about elderly people who still work at university. Their competence matters first of all.

The age as a parameter for risk groups was stated by the management representative as well. Moreover, some more target risk groups are mentioned spontaneously. Alongside to older lecturers, those with some invisible physical disabilities or medically weak spots (e.g. some are having a heart stimulator; are being shunted; have throat disorders). It was stated that employees with addiction to alcohol are also one of risk groups. However, management respondent admits that such cases happen in their university.

> *"...We have employees from socially vulnerable groups, e.g. those with physical disabilities, old ones or the ones who are in poor financial situation. We don't know how many of them are because neither the material well-being, nor the life rate matters but the competence itself... "* (A3_02)

"...If a lecturer tends to come drunk, it is already a risk group. If a professor has the heart stimulator, is he a person with a disability? We have people like this and it is mostly among older ones. I cannot indicate the percentage because no one counted them but there are people like this. Their age is a crucial factor as well as their work which is tensed and stressful... " (A3_01)

When it comes to advantages and challenges for university having a diverse students' population, the following ones are stated (Table 2).

Table 2.1.Advantages and challenges for university having a diverse students' population

Advantages (and reason why it is an advantage)	Challenges (and reason why it is a challenge)
The persons with a disability – humanity of other students is encouraged; communication among students is improved	The persons with a disability – for some groups specialized literature/ books for studies is needed; external conditions (e.g. buses, elevators) for access are not sufficient
Migrant students – additional income from immigrants to university; communication with local students;	Migrant students – if they emigrate, the conditions to give exams in a distant way have to be established; asking to continue studies although do not come back to certify their wish to study next year;
Increasing number of male students – the number of studying men and women (and number of working pedagogical work afterwards, hopefully) is getting more balanced;	Students from needy families – more funds have to be dedicated to social scholarships to support those students; material situation of students influence they behaviours and interrelations (e.g. the is disbalance and lack of communication between wealthy and

	needy students), also, the academic field suffers;
	<u>Students with their own families</u> – more funds have to be dedicated to social scholarships to support those students; children room/ mini kindergarten is needed at university;
	<u>Students who are orphans</u> – support has to be ensured (social scholarship, students' hostel for free, onetime benefits);
	<u>Prisoners</u> – questions of material for studies should be solved; security is not ensured in lecturers' work contracts;
	<u>Student from national minorities</u> – lack of methodical guidelines (e.g. Lithuanian and Polish study Lithuanian linguistic but methods differ).

"...If a person wishes to study, the disability is not a problem for her/him. Because all conditions s/he needs are established. Our students are committed to bring them to the auditoria. There is also a daily help for each other. We do not motivate students. It's simply the humanity... " (A3_02)

"...In students' community there is no exclusion. All of them listen to the same lectures together... " (A3_02)

"...There are students who go to foreign countries to earn some money. They ask to take an exam in a distant way... Some exams can be taken in the distant way but not all of them… " (A3_02)

"...If a student with a disability from the town of Marijampole wants to come to us, the buses are not suitable for her/his needs. How should we bring her/him here? This means additional costs. On the other hand, s/he will not do it without any support. In the future these conditions will improve. We develop the system… " (A3_02)

"...There are many immigrants from Turkey, Korea and their number is increasing. Of course, it is positive because it is finances, also, communication with our students… " (A3_02)

"...Immigrant from Turkey and China study here. They came to us individually not by the exchange programs. They pay for their studies..." (A3_01)

"...Regarding the children's room necessity... We try to have it. We participated in the project of day centre but the project was not financed. We have no children's room but there is a demand for it... " (A3_02)

"...State made decisions to support them. First of all, it is for orphans... " (A3_02)

"...Work with other nationalities living in Lithuania has some nuances, especially regarding the terminology... " (A3_01)

"...There is a problem of alienation... Lack of collectivistic approach... Material imbalance among students gives academic imbalance... " (A3_01)

To sum up, it may be presumed that diverse student population is rather a challenge than disadvantage for university. It is challenge in terms of financial recourses mostly. And financial resources correspondingly influence many of other factors, i.e. insufficient development of physical access for the persons with a disability, lack of adapted informational sources (books, hardcopies etc.). Respondents' opinions do not differ here. The respondent representing teacher sector delivered more examples on challenges and advantages evoked by having a diverse student population.

OUTREACH

Building bridges to underrepresented communities to promote increased access is a controversial issue. On one hand in some cases such as prisoners, not much space for promotion is given. The possibilities are offered; employees of Social Communication Institute go there and work with the prisoners. However, much depends on personal motivation and optimism regarding one's future, e.g. especially in case of those with the life-sentence.

As mentioned, security issues are not completely solved regarding studies in prison. University lecturers have right to refuse teaching in prison since they have no conditions in their working agreement in regard of their own safety while working with prisoners. The presumption can be made that if these issues are solved, building bridges to prisoners as community becomes easier and more effective.

"...We are not searching for them [prisoners] because this risk group is in prison. These prisoners are life-sentenced. The workers of social communication institute go there and work with them individually...It is not possible to bring them here. The prison management cannot guarantee our security then. Why lecturer has to risk, not knowing where this risk would end... They say we refuse to go there

because it is not in our work contracts. We can talk about ideologies very nicely but life is different…" (A3_01)

When it comes to community of the persons with a disability, university is considered being more advanced in building bridges to promote the access.

"…We have a cooperation agreement with the Lithuanian Union of People with Disabilities. Our students help them to arrange theatres for instance…The press was writing about it…" (A3_01)

In general, it is observed that new shapes of communication and "bridges" are in demand. Simple example is given. Some years ago Open Door Days at university used to be much more popular compared to the recent ones. Teacher respondent admits that lack of finances is the only weak side of this event. Students themselves are considered the best informational source for potential students. However, respondent representing the management find the situation being vice versa in terms of who should show the initiative first. In his opinion, not the potential student should come to university but university itself could visit potential students. This direction is to be taken and developed further in the future as well. Going out of the university building, directly or indirectly, is important for better promotion of increased access. Finding social partners and building relationships with them is also planned according to VPU Development Strategy for 2006-2010. Thus university is working on that.

"…Although it is necessary to have more finances in order to organize celebratory Open Door Days, it is missing in the budget of university. There no other problems here. Every faculty is doing this more and more original. It is much more attractive when students are telling the potential student about studies and problems...Finances are the problem. We have many young lecturers, so they have the initiative. And what if we put an advertisement to the newspaper? Who is going to read it, what percentage of youth?" (A3_02)

"…Open door days are organized but their problem is that they are not so popular anymore. The information is spread through other different channels. We have many agreements with other schools, and they don't need to go here as it if was some guided tour…" (A3_01)

Statistics from the year 2005 indicates that 56% of university's budget comes from the state's education budget assignments, and 37% is collected from the paid services. 361,000 litas is charged for the rent of university's premises. Universities funds are increasing[5]. However, the educational budget assignments from the state are not sufficient. Thus, more money could be collected by renting the buildings.

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[5] Vilnius Pedagogical University Annual Report, 2005

Regarding the practical use of university building, it is being used in summer though the process could be even better elaborated. According to interviews it is obvious that there is no systemic use of the building. Some small groups coming for language courses are using the building in summer.

It is being refused from the evening classes as part-time studies in the state level. Now the situation is described like "this and that is happening". University should use more enterprising approach and be more business-orientated in summer season. However, now it is a big gap in this field. Moreover, funds collected and experience gained could be also useful when promoting the increased access to underrepresented groups.

> *"...There are part-time students studying in the evenings. However, in summer all lecturers have a right for summer holidays. Then some projects are taking place here. If there training in the program of projects, then training also takes place here... "* (A3_02)

> *"...We have part-time studies in the evenings. However, it is soon to be eliminated according to our laws… There is a problem of transportation and access in the evenings. It is a problem to those who are outside Vilnius. In Vilnius the demand for the evening studies is lower compared to extramural studies…As for the summer courses, we have only some short Lithuanian language course. There are also introductory English course for those who will study this language. We do it just episodically. We have no system for that. We advertise about that to the whole Lithuania, we make a small group, and that's how they work…"* (A3_01)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION TO PROMOTE SOCIAL NETWORK SUPPORTS

During the interviews it was stated that mentoring program is established, and it is working not in papers only. Money from EU funds came to implement the program, and now the mentors are ready. However, no detailed view can be presented on how it works and how strong the demand for it is. It may be presumed that some of students may be not be fully informed about mentors' possibilities. On the other hand it is clear that those students who need some help and apply for it, they receive it. In this regards the mentoring program is working well.

> *"...In case a person needs some help it is delivered to him. We have a mentoring program. It is established through the ES funds. Student to student is also a social partner here... "* (A3_02)

> *"...We have prepared the mentors. There are about 70 mentors for the school… The coming students have their mentors. In Soviet times we had special tutors. Now this is still working in some faculties…"*(A3_02)

Some of opportunities for social interaction to promote social network supports among your students generally have been already considered at university. One of it could be monitors in each student group. Students of the group delegate their monitor who is responsible for different daily tasks, e.g. to lock the auditoria etc. Also, for the administration it is easier to communicate with a representative of the group than the whole group at one time. This kind of "mobilization" is considered helpful and useful for the students themselves as well. It is presumed that this kind of interaction could encourage other types of social interaction, especially when promoting social network supports and coping with alienation among students.

Students' representation is criticized for being too autonomous and far off real life situations at university. They are related to one of the most visible functions of them, i.e. issuing the students' cards. However, there are more expectations towards them. To sum up, they could be much more involved in social interaction when promoting the social network support. The negative comments towards the students' representation and union are mostly expressed by management respondent.

When it comes to students from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds, e.g. big families, they are supported financially. However, no exact means of social network support for such groups are mentioned. In terms of social network, these groups are not somehow distinguished during the interviews. It is admitted that support is ensured to anyone who needs it according to the laws.

> *"...If a student comes from big family with many children or his parents are the unemployed, all privileges are applied. This information is constantly collected...For those from risk groups the entering procedures are applied in regard of the applicable laws. There are no special criteria for selection when entering university...The rules are normal... If student encounter some problems, we solve them... "* (A3_02)

> *"...We also want to revive the students' monitors...We can invite all monitors and spread the information through them to other students at university...Students' representation is a real self-management, but they have all the premises...Students' unions should not only care about how to earn from issuing the students' cards. They don't want to hear about anything else, but there are risk groups, the persons with a disability..." (A3_01)*

As for the feedback from students regarding courses, outreach strategies, and availability of relevant information to underrepresented risk groups, regarding access supports and entry process, it is more deeply discussed during the interview with the management segment. Teacher is not presenting any comments on this topic. The respondent from management admits that feedback is received through the questionnaires. They have a possibility to evaluate every lecturer and other aspects. However, he admits that there are no questions regarding underrepresented risk groups

such as the persons with a disability. The reason why is there absence in the concrete faculties.

This may show that some separate surveys are not done. It is more likely a general evaluation of lecturers work. Questionnaires are rather a way to collect ratings for teachers than ascertain "painful" points regarding courses, outreach strategies, and availability of relevant information to underrepresented risk groups, regarding access supports and entry process.

> *"...Students answer the questions in the questionnaire and express their opinion on this or that lecturer. It is a benevolent survey. There is nothing about the persons with a disability because there are no students with a disability in that course… Information amounts are sufficient because we have it in our website where admission policies and rules are presented. We receive those questions…"* (A3_02)

TRANSITION PROGRAMMES

The summer camps for the coming students are organized by VPU. Also, the preparatory courses are taking place before the academic year is started.

Moreover, the groups such as teenagers from the social risk groups are involved in on-campus activities. Social work students spend time with them and in this way they have practice for their future studies and work. In this way the local community is involved in academic process, and both sides get positive experience. However, these schemes could be better developed and involving more students, e.g. giving spring/ summer language courses to the risk groups of other communities etc.

> *"...There are summer camps organized. There they can get acquainted with the preparatory courses ..."* (A3_02)

> *"...Social communication institute, social pedagogues, they have different projects, web-sites, and even a homestead where they organize a summer camp for teenagers. It's because they will have to do this work every day afterwards. When working as social pedagogues at school they must be able to find those kids, to penetrate their problems. Here they have this in practice. These are study programs where they work with teenagers…"* (A3_01)

Different initiatives from students and management come when encouraging different communities' visits to university. As mentioned above, there are agreements with secondary schools, union of the persons with a disability. This communication is viewed very positively.

> *"...We sign the agreements. Tomorrow the Alytus town Putinu secondary school is coming to us...We have an agreement with the union of the persons with a disability.*

Ours students helped to prepare a theatre there. They went to Punks, Balstoge together…Their theatre and our students…These activities are out of auditorium, and it is meant to involve students and to teach them how to communicate with such people, how to spend time with them…" (A3_01)

"…During the Russian invasion to Georgia I offered to students' union to attract 50 Georgian students to study in English or Russian…This would not request many expenses. We would know their problems and globalization problems better…"(A3_01)

ADMISSION POLICIES

Traditionally disadvantaged groups are not somehow distinguished when discussions the admission policies. This may evidence that reserved places are not limited yet. Also, this shows that there is still some room in promoting the increased access. Any schemes provided for reserved places for traditionally disadvantaged groups at university are discussed neither by teaching, nor by managing respondent.

"…For socially disadvantaged groups the admission policies are the same as it is provided by the state. There are no special screening criteria because we just have an admission policy and university has to follow it… " (A3_02)

From scholarships, grants, fee reduction schemes operated by university, social scholarships are to be used the most often to support the traditionally disadvantaged groups. These funds are taken from university budget. One more rather frequently used way of support is providing with the dwelling place. Students maybe exempted from the fees for accommodation.

"…There is no counting like this. The social scholarship is paid; they may get a room in students' hostel free of charge or some other one-time payments. State intended paying this… " (A3_02)

"…There are many funds we have to give away for social scholarships for needy students… Our students with families may get a place in students' hostel easily because we have plenty of places there. We can offer the students' hostel but there is nothing else we can do for them. Yes, they can get a social scholarship, even if she is unmarried mother…"(A3_01)

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

The problem of recognition of prior non-formal learning or work experience is very much highlighted throughout the interviews. The main reason for such situation at university is the applicable laws and general legal base in Lithuania. There is no legal base for doing this. Situation is better with previous education. Some subjects can be accepted. Everything is based on how kind is the university and administration.

In higher education system the position of non-formal learning and work experience is much weaker in terms of its acknowledgement.

The opinions between teacher and management representatives differ in regard of non-formal learning. Teacher respondent gives examples on how the non-formal education can be accepted at least in some cases. In her opinion, it is possible to check what sort of non-formal education it is (e.g. courses etc.) and learn whether these courses are acknowledged, and if yes, it is possible to accept it instead of some subjects. However, the management is rather strict in this case, and he quotes the current laws. As he remarked, the applicable laws give no chance for non-formal education.

Therefore, it maybe presumed that the main obstacles to establishing a mechanism for the recognition of prior non-formal learning and work experience in order to open access for adults to the education system is non-existence of relevant legal base. Editing the laws on education is one of the first steps to be done to overcome these obstacles.

 "…Situation is even more beneficial for students who gained education many years ago. We count even higher points for them. But when it comes to the work experience, recognition is missing either in our, or in other universities. If the competition for extramural students wouldn't exist among universities, it would be beneficial to attract people who worked in similar field as the study subject. If one has finished courses, their recognition is questioned. And only then one can individually negotiate regarding their acknowledgment at university… " (A3_02)

"…The weakness of non-formal education is a lack of lawful mechanism to formalize non-formal education. It is a weak side of law…We have no complete self-management. There are regulating documents how this should be solved. However, there is no acknowledgement for this non-formal education, it is not accepted…" (A3_01)

Literacy is considered being a challenging issue. On one hand people who are motivated to study seem to be literal enough if we understand it directly. However, literacy in its wider meaning may be also a computer literacy which is necessary for modern pedagogues. Moreover, students whose main subject is linguistics should do well at language culture and mother tongue or foreign language they study. This is very much related to literacy in general. So these are often a problem.

Teacher is not giving clear opinion about the students' literacy skills. The respondent of management segment observes the scope and the existing problems of literacy at university. In terms of mother tongue language knowledge the situation is considered worse than years ago. This might be influenced by invasion of other languages, e.g. English, in Lithuanian language, also by fewer opportunities to write by hand. But these are only the presumptions, and it is a field of further surveys.

"...Literacy problem is the following: they come being literal, but computer literacy is a different thing. There is a subject of language culture; there is a studied language, foreign one. Students need to work a lot to obtain that literacy. There are more and more illiterate ones. When writing dictations at lituanistics studies we delete them from the list if they make several mistakes ..." (A3_01)

SUPPORTS

New shapes of emotional support providers at university are searched. The former centres for psychological consultation are not forgotten. On one hand it is considered unnecessary for the purpose of solving personal problems. It is admitted that students are able to find psychological help they need. However, as mentioned by management respondent the consultations regarding students' professional and career planning are in demand. And now it is going to be satisfied by the specialized so called culture centre.

"...There is no emotional, psychological support for students. It would be wanted to help solving personal not study-related problems... It would be good to have such kind of support at university. This issue should be considered. In foreign universities there is no such specialized help either. It's because there study grown-up people here, and they can address to psychologist on their own..." (A3_02)

"...There is no need for it now....We had a psychological consultation centre where one could test his psychological abilities in advance of becoming a teacher. One could find out whether he is suitable, and whether one would not encounter problems. And if you have problems, they say how to solve them. Our culture centre now will do al these things..." (A3_01)

A career centre is about to start working in full capacity. Additional services are going to be added to this centre. It will be modern as it will start working in a virtual space. This may increase the accessibility of the services provided. Both teacher and management representative were rather proud about the career centre and emphasised its capabilities.

"... We have a university career centre being established. This career centre is being implemented virtually. Students can always consult with their lecturers by finding their consultation timetable. Students may also get an academic support but they usually don't use it unless they write their final thesis... " (A3_01)

"...In the career centre we already have a manager, maybe we will have a position of a consultant who will help dealing with psychological issues as well… Now we have a worker, who is an advisor for employment possibilities, where and what you can find, what opportunities you have… Academic support for students is all consultations, organization of their independent work…"(A3_01)

DISTANCE EDUCATION

Distant learning service is considered controversially. Teacher has more practical and rather reserved point of view while management representative is more excited about having this novelty offered by university. To sum up, it is recommended to use both, distant and direct communication in the studying process.

"...The distant education system is being implemented. However, it would never be the same as direct communication with lecturers. Using only this distant way doesn't give the same. There are teachers who like this distant education service but sometimes their students are disappointed because direct communication has its own strengths... " (A3_02)

"...The number of modules for the distant education constantly increases… It is necessary to have the working instrument, I mean computer. Two months ago we equipped the website for distant studies where one can login as a guest…There is one third of all modules there. We thing it is a sufficient number of them. We only don't have any full registered study program where one could find everything in the virtual space…"(A3_01)

"...Maybe for the socially disadvantaged groups it is easier to search literature by browsing the internet... " (A3_01)

COURSE CONTENT

According to interviews it is mostly the social pedagogues who are learning and having social practice while working with the target risk groups. In general neither teacher, nor management mentions any strategies to promote learning as a social practice. However, from their comments it is clear that such directions exist at university.

"...We prepare social pedagogues… Those students who go abroad and work in English or Irish rest-homes or at children's home, they work and try hard… But there are not a lot of students like this… The mobility is encouraged at us… " (A3_02)

"...They work with risk prevention groups… Here they start to understand how it is working in practice…Those who spend their holidays abroad but work there with youth or something… It can be acknowledged as her practice at university…" (A3_01)

2.3.2. The access of adults to formal education: Conclusions

○ The current situation states that promotion and implementation of agenda for increased access is considered rather additional work than the main work for some employees at university. A problem of developing a systemic approach could be solved if "paper" strategies and implemented programs were more interrelated. The system of external review could be better elaborated. It is a kind of precondition for

implementation of institutional strategies and their effect in daily academic life situations. The systemic approach to better promotion of access now could be developed by motivation of university employees. The finances are not sufficient to motivate them. Thus, lecturer rather chooses direct work with students than paperwork when preparing strategies and structures. The management should find other ways how to motivate people working on these issues. Overall, the situation very much depends on institutional climate as well.

○ University recognizes the necessity to change some applicable laws regarding and creating the acknowledging system when it comes to non formal education and previous work experience. Then their admission policies would be changed in accordance to the legal base. Also, they witness the advantages of attracting people with working experience in the relevant field. Thus university seem to be ready to become an institution of lifelong learning.

○ To avoid alienation (which has been getting stronger among students recently) it is not recommended to only distant education model. To get advantages of distant/ e-learning and regular studies both models could be used in the studying process.

○ The literacy is becoming a problem not only for the marginalized adult groups but all students in general. The meeting of needs is considered satisfactory.

2.4. Case 3: FORMAL EDUCATION SECONDARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY: VILNIUS OZO SECONDARY SCHOOL

- *Type of education* : Formal adult education
- *Type of institution*: Secondary school (state)
- *Name of institution*: Vilnius Ozo Secondary school
- *Interviewee 1*: Principal for Study (E1_01)
- *Interviewee 2*: Tutor/Lecturer (E2_02)

2.4.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE SECTOR IN GENERAL

General schools in Lithuania work with the programmes of pre-school, primary, basic, secondary and certain programmes of special education.

Pursuant to the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania, education in the first class starts at the age of 7 or earlier if a child reaches this age in the calendar year. Four-year primary education is provided by kindergartens, primary schools and other types of schools.

Primary education is followed by the basic one. A six-year basic educational programme can be accomplished by gymnasiums, secondary, basic, youth (the so called adult schools) and other schools. Basic education of a school student is followed by secondary education. A two-year secondary education programme can be accomplished by gymnasiums, secondary schools and other schools.

The so called youth (adult) secondary schools are institutions responsible for return to secondary education of the adults who for various reasons (e.g. lack of motivation, adaptation difficulties) did not receive a school leaving certificate till the age 18 or 19. There are 25 such youth schools in Lithuania located in bigger towns of Lithuanian regions. The youth schools were established in the period 1992 -2005 by town municipalities. Up to 2008 there were 6333 students who finished basic secondary education and 5112 students who received a secondary school leaving certificate allowing access to first stage of tertiary education. According to the 2004 data 50 percent of students at youth schools were 16 years old or older. In the period of 2004–2005 there were 2200 students 8 percent of whom did not study earlier, 18 percent repeated the same course for the second time, 3,2 percent – for the third time. Another 18 percent of them were on the list of police criminal records, 9 percent were convicted for various crimes before.

Basic training in vocational schools is carried out by four-stage programmes which differ in their contents and length, and are meant for the youth of different age and education. According to the Lithuanian Classification of Education, vocational training is stage-limited and can be assigned to the following levels of education: second (I stage),

third (II and III stages) and fourth (IV stage). Vocational schools can carry out a one-stage programme, programme consisting of several stages and programme including all stages. Those who finish a training programme receive a diploma of professional training or a qualification certificate. Those who finish a III stage programme receive a secondary school leaving certificate (see Levels of Education in Lithuania below)

The decreasing population in Lithuania conditions changes in the educational system. In 2008, against 2000, the number of youth under 30 decreased by 191 thousand, or 13 per cent.

At the end of 2008, there were 654 preschool education institutions operating in the country, of which 503 in urban areas and 151 in rural areas. 234 general schools had preschool education groups integrated. At the end of 2008, kindergartens and preschool education groups in general schools were attended by 89 thousand, or 75 per cent of children aged 3–6.

The major changes took place in general schools. The number of students in general schools from 2000 decreased by 139 thousand (23 per cent). In 2008, against 2007, the number of general schools decreased from 1472 to 1415, the number of students in them – from 490 to 465 thousand. In 2008, against 2007, the number of first to fourth graders decreased by 6.4 thousand (5 per cent), that of fifth to tenth graders – by 18.4 thousand (7 per cent).

In 2005–2008, 47 thousand students, on average, would annually receive upper secondary education in general schools. In 2008, lower secondary education certificates were received by 47.6 thousand students, of whom 40.7 thousand, or 86 per cent, continued education in the 11th grade and pursued upper secondary education (92 per cent of female and 79 per cent of male students).

The number of youth having upper secondary and higher education has been, although insignificantly, growing. In 2008, 89 per cent of youth aged 20–24 had at least upper secondary education. In 2005–2008, the number of persons who received upper secondary in general schools alone made 148 thousand, or, on average, 37 thousand every year. In 2008, upper secondary education in general schools was received by 36.4 thousand school-leavers, or 97 per cent of all twelve graders. Almost 7 thousand students annually, alongside a school-leaving certificate, acquire a profession in vocational education institutions.

Students with special needs integrated into general schools Beginning of the academic year				
	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Students with special needs integrated into general schools, *of whom*	51968	53029	51955	49593
those attending special and catch-up classes in general schools	865	797	796	852

those integrated into general classes of general schools	51103	52232	51159	48741
Share against the total number of students, %	**9,6**	**10,3**	**10,6**	**10,7**

NOTE: Enrolment rates for a given age are the ratio of the number of pupils/students of the given age registered at a given level of education to the total population of this age.

Students with special needs integrated into general schools Beginning of the academic year				
	2005-2006	**2006-2007**	**2007-2008**	**2008-2009**
Total number of students, of whom students with a disability	51103	52232	51159	48741
Mentally impaired	3209	3118	3086	3077
Recognition disorders	7108	7006	6533	6120
Speech and communication disorders	24681	29613	26704	26144
Impaired vision	674	385	237	166
Impaired hearing	574	377	317	304
Physical and movement disorders	1706	1507	996	586
Emotional behavior and social disorders	886	1237	877	899
Chronic somatic and neurological disorders	3051	3441	2524	1219
Complex disorders	5113	5567	5781	6139
Other developmental disorders	4101	4260	4104	4087

School graduates in general schools				
	2005	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**
Basic school graduates	45591	47594	48940	47627
daily schools	43888	46450	47928	46467
adult schools	1703	1144	1012	1160
ratio of graduates to persons aged 16, %	87,4	89,4	94,2	92,2
Secondary school graduates	**36154**	**37758**	**37629**	**36435**
daily schools	33236	34795	34093	33448
adult schools	2918	2963	3536	2987
ratio of graduates to persons aged 16, %	65,0	71,5	72,5	68,7
Students who have completed the secondary school course, but have not received a school-leaving certificate	1612	1685	1322	1280

Source: Statistics Lithuania, Education Statistics, 2008 www.stat.gov.lt

2.4.2. Background Information: Ozo Secondary School

Vilnius Ozo Secondary school was established in 1990 July and started functioning in September the same year. The forms of studies organized are full-time, evening classes and distance learning can be provided. Language of instruction is Lithuanian. Basic activities: education (secondary, basic, primary and adult general education). Secondary education school leaving certificates are issued according to the requirements of the Ministry of Education and Science. The students are accepted on the basis of place of residence according to the territorial planning by Vilnius municipality (the school is located in the urban district (Šeškinė) area some 10 km from the city centre). If there are places available students residing in other areas are accepted if they meet the requirements of the school (e.g. foreign languages studied earlier corresponds to that available at Ozo school etc.). For students less than 16 years of age parents' consent is required. Students older than 16 years can apply individually. In both cases they have to provide personal identity information and health records and fill-in an application form. If accepted, students or their parents (depending on students' age) have to sign a study contract with the school where the responsibilities of the student and school are indicated.

INTRODUCTION

The management views on ensuring that more students continue at school until they are 18 are based on education policy perceptions: the secondary education system in Lithuania according to the management lacks the integrity of humanistic and pedagogical ideas.

> *"The attitudes towards students have to change and then they will feel better at schools. [...] at the moment students are selected under the criteria „good" and „bad" and those who get the „bad" label do not want to stay at such school – they leave it"(E1_01)*

The views of the management indirectly add to the opinion of the teacher who thinks that the management has not a lot to do with how the students feel at school. According to her teachers are the ones most responsible that students were not discouraged:

> *"The management? I think this depends more on teachers' support than on the management. Especially on those teachers acting as class supervisors. The management can only encourage or demand more attention to students from the teachers"(E2_02)*

In the interview neither the manager nor the teacher quote any statements from the mission statement or strategic plan. It is likely that strategic planning is in the „paperwork" category and when speaking about strategic goals and mission of the

school the main point of reference is the everyday practices and interactions with students.

> *"We have a strategic plan. It is a long document. But the words are difficult to translate into practice. [...] The current secondary education system is quite utilitarian – some schools select „better" students and try to get rid of „bad" ones and create a better environment with „easy" students and the rest then have to go to „street school".(E1_01)*

In teacher's opinion distance education classes at their school are partly targeted at the drop-outs. That is one of a few references to life-long-learning she could make. She also mentioned those students who have reached second stage of basic education (i.e. ISCED Level 2 lower secondary education) and want to continue with upper-secondary:

> *"There are adults who, let's say, 10 years ago finished basic education, and they return to us and some of them already finished 12th class"(E2_02)*

Despite that the interviewed persons did not quote the mission statement and/or strategic plan during the conversation they both referred to school's internet site where the most important documents are published.

The vision of the school states the importance of active citizenship and democratic values in education and the connection between education and knowledge economy. The mission statement includes the education of humanist values, high moral standards and active role of students in learning. Among the most important objectives stated are improvements in student participation in decision making, school attendance and the high academic achievements of students. There are also accreditation plans, computerized data management and distance education development provisioned.

With regard to provision of supports for students at risk of early school leaving the management considers their school to be above the average in comparison to other schools. They explain their answers in detail:

> *"It [our school] is much better. We deliberately choose to work with „tough" students. We take this „load", we do not refuse to accept such students. It is our mission, and I can say that other schools are going the easier way [...] it depends a lot not only on the management, but also on the teachers. School students are children. It is difficult to ask them [to attend school]. But they are future citizens and the professionally-trained people – teachers – have to take this responsibility, to work hard to keep them at school, to make them feel well". (E1_01)*

The teacher, however, could not make any comparisons with other schools:

"There is a lot of drop-outs here. But it is mainly because we have adults in distance education. But if to compare with other schools where students are under 18 it is difficult to make any comparisons. We work with this „tough" kind of students. It is a different case... I do not know... but our teachers work really hard to keep them at school, I do not know how they work at other schools" (E2_02)

With regard to provision of adult education, including distance education facilities, the school can be said to be more developed than other schools. There exist no other secondary schools in Lithuania which provide full distance learning programme designed to award students a secondary school-leaving certificate giving access to tertiary education. The distance learning/teaching has been provided for three years at this secondary school. The opinion of the management is very optimistic:

"Well, we are the best, as we are the only one such school". (E1_01)

The main drawback of such situation is that the school holds the monopoly of secondary distance education in Lithuania. However the school is not closed for those who are willing to cooperate in distance education:

" However the collaboration with other secondary schools in distant education is not possible at the moment as we are the only one such distance education provider in Lithuania. This is our unique experiment at the moment. But of course we promote the idea and share our experience with other schools. We received a lot of visitors and guests from other schools. We demonstrated how the system works and how we created it. The dissemination is very active and a lot of people know about us".(E1_01)

It has to be noted here that the dissemination of the experience is quite spontaneous (i.e. on demand) and is not planned by the school itself, but the answers of the management clearly demonstrate that the school is not protecting their experiment and are willing to „lose" distance education monopoly in Lithuanian secondary schools:

"Those who are interested ask the permission to visit us and we receive guests with pleasure. We are willing to present our distant education to any interested organizations and they can get all information they need." (E1_01)

"This is difficult to compare as we are the only one such school in Lithuania [..] other secondary schools are trying to do something similar but at the moment it is not a full study programme. It is more independent learning where students can use distant learning facilities to find information on specific subjects, but there are no such possibilities in other schools as we have here. In our school it is a „regular" type

of secondary education i.e. it is not independent, nor extra-mural, nor part-time"(E2_02)

It has to be stressed that it is not an independent learning as the number of lessons of each study subject corresponds to the formal requirements of the secondary school curriculum plan approved by the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science. Every study subject has its place on the weekly timetable which is analogous to that of traditional school timetable i.e. the students are supposed to take for example 4 Lithuanian literature, 4 mathematics, 2 history etc. classes on a weekly basis. The number of hours a week varies according to the ministry requirements for each school year. The students are virtually consulted by the tutor who provides homework tasks and assessment. Every month students have to complete an assignment or pass a monthly test for which they are evaluated. This enables them to study and keep the pace with their fellow students at traditional bricks and mortar schools. The progress of students is administered accumulating information on the results of learning outcomes and presenting this information to students with comments on the progress made. If there are convincing reasons to miss some lessons, the tutor can postpone the class, task or test for longer period, but more or less the system is strict and this is not a regular and encouraged practice. Despite that some flexibility is missing, the system allows those students who are only interested in specific subjects to choose one or a few study modules. E.g. there are students who choose to study only Lithuanian language and Lithuanian history. In the interviews the school representatives mentioned that Lithuanian language and history classes are most popular among the students of Lithuanian origin who attend secondary schools abroad in their countries of residence, but are willing (or are strongly encouraged) to learn the language and culture of their parents.

The final exams take place at the very end of XII form. The final exams cannot be taken online i.e. in exam period students have to be physically present in the school premises. The final school exams are taking place at the school itself. The final state examination takes place at premises designated by the municipality (usually other secondary schools). The exams are taken together with "traditional" school-leavers. Those students who pass the exams are awarded a school-leaving certificate which gives them access to the first stage of tertiary education.

SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS TO ENABLE THEM TO STAY ON AT SCHOOL

Speaking about supports that are available for students in the school the management relies on the distance education:

"Well [hesitates] we can talk about something special, but the distance education makes best conditions for everyone who wants to study. It is for all: persons with

psychological and communication problems, the persons with a disability, those residing in the remote areas, parents (women) with small children." (E1_01)

The management considers distance learning to be a tool to provide academic support for students.

"This is how, even unintentionally, we do what other schools don't – distance education allows to meet some special needs of our students"(E1_01)

An interesting comment by the tutor:

"Supports? What do you mean? I don't get the point..." (E2_02)

As it cleared out the supports for students means to her simple everyday interactions between teachers-students-parents. The tutor does not see support for students as certain institution, centre etc.

"The class supervisor provides all supports. S/he is responsible to take care of those students who skip classes, s/he is responsible for getting in touch with parents. If they are not indifferent it is possible to do something, but if the parents are indifferent – there's nothing can be done" (E2_02)

"Teacher is a universal person in all areas. S/he actually work with those students. When all means are used then the teacher applies to social worker, it this does not help, then I apply to the police officer for minors" (E1_01)

Speaking about supports for students with learning difficulties, special needs, or literacy difficulties the management explains:

"We do not have any psychologists. Each pedagogue must be a psychologist. I do not appreciate the idea that the teacher is only a source of information on specific subject – each pedagogue must be a psychologist – it is compulsory part of teacher's competences" (E1_01)

The tutor's answer adds more specific information on the subject:

"Illiteracy...? No we do not have it [support] here. There are teaching programs for students with special needs. Each subject teacher prepares these programs if s/he has students with special needs. In distance learning classes, we have some students with a disability and as much as possible we differentiate the tasks for them"." (E1_01)

The teacher's and management's views on the availability of a counselor for students with emotional problems, including bereavement issues diverge. While (as mentioned earlier) the management thinks that counselor-teacher-psychologist should be a three-in-one option, the tutor thinks that a counselor or psychologist would be needed:

"Teachers have to study psychology and be themselves psychologists. It is a nonsense when after the conflict in the classroom the teacher „sends" the student (the spoilage of their work) to be consulted by psychologist or someone else, be it a counselor. The teachers have to learn how to deal with students' problems"(E1_01)

No we do not have a psychologist at school. I think s/he is needed. Then it would be easier for us to understand why students behave the way they behave". (E1_02)

The answers to the question if a career advice person would be needed at school also differ. The management thinks that career advice is again teacher-psychologist-counselor's responsibility. The management explained also that there is a lot of information available on the internet about professions and he thinks that teachers of each subject or class supervisors could give some advice for students. According to him career advice and teaching the subject should be integral part of the classes.
However, the teacher thinks that career advice would be needed for some students:

"Maybe career advice people are more needed at bigger schools, but I think yes, maybe it would be easier for students to choose". (E1_02).

Speaking about the situation in school regarding these above supports the situation is more or less typical than in other schools in Lithuania although the tutor thinks that it is difficult for her to make any comparisons.

The services that exist to support and monitor those students who are not attending school regularly exist at school, but the social worker is responsible for this. S/he is employed by the school

"The social worker takes care after it. It is her/his field. But it is just a formal side... we can speak about the formal side as institution, group of people or a service provider, but in practice – it is a teacher who takes all the load".(E1_01)

" The class supervisor is the first person here. S/he looks after those students who skip classes. S/he has the best contacts with family. If the family is interested in school affairs, then there's some hope to change the situation. If parents do not care, then it's hopeless". (E1_02)

According to the teacher if the „soft" means (conversations with teachers/parents) do not help most often the students who do not attend school are discussed with the

school council and usually a period of „observation" is given for one month (the time can be extended). During the month, teachers are encouraged to notice and write down all progress the student made. It can be either his/her academic achievements or behaviour. This period is followed by another discussion of the school council. The topic discussed are academic achievements, behaviour and school attendance. The council can make a decision whether to prolong the period or not. The feedback gained from the teachers is very important, although only positive information is collected in order not to discourage the student. The last step is applying to the police officer for minor affairs and if the student is older than 16 s/he is eliminated from school.

The general support chain can be illustrated as follows:

Teacher →   student →   parents → social worker → school principal or/and council (numerous   probation periods of one month)   → police officer for minor affairs → elimination from school.

The chain is quite extensive in time as no law regulates how many probation periods should be given. There can be cases when after one probation period of one moth a student demonstrates better academic results and behaviour. However after a few months s/he starts skipping lessons again and the same process starts again. It is obvious that the teachers of school are always acting as the main mediators in this support chain.

The teacher again is the main point of reference when the students need to be taught according to individual education plans. These plans are unusually needed not only for students who spend extended periods of time at hospitals or sanatoriums, but also for those not attending school for „social" reasons. According to the school management the individual learning plans are not formal i.e. they are not written on paper. All individual tasks and assignments are a matter of communication between a student and a teacher.

> *"Formal, official individual plan writing is not necessary. Let's say I write a plan, but the student does not show up. It's each teacher's task to choose different assignments for students so that to motivate him/her". (E1_02)*

> *"If teachers write individual education plans, than there's no real work in the classroom. The energy the teacher should give to teaching is used for plan writing, and when it is time to teach there is no more energy. No formal plan writing is needed. Each teacher should be flexible and have freedom to decide how to teach and what tasks to give in order to help students to catch up with other students.* (E1_01)

There are quite a lot of extracurricular activities available for students. Most of them are free of charge and concentrate on the areas of sports, drama and painting. There are some attempts made to involve those at risk of early school leaving in sports activities. There is a football team at school specially made of „tough" students. There is a body-building activity that is particularly suited for those at risk. However, according to the views expressed by the management the interest in these activities can last for a very short time.

Speaking about attempts made by the school to target students most at risk of early school leaving and their families the management mentioned two distance education projects where the funds of EU Structural funds were used. One of the aim of these projects was to encourage drop-out students to return to education.

Although the special strategy aimed to make the school environment more flexible to accommodate the needs of those most at risk of early school leaving does not exist, the tutor assured that all the activities of school are aimed at those at risk of early school leaving. In distance education classes about 85 – 90 percent of students are drop-out students.

ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

The drop-out rates are not available from the statistical sources. The only data for Lithuania that is available is the number of students attending the same class for the second time. In the opinion of the management and the teacher, the student drop-out rate is about 10 percent. They both mentioned that the drop-out rate is higher at their school if compared to other schools, but they do not know the exact data. If we suppose that the hypothetical drop-out rate at secondary schools in Lithuania varies from 0 to 10 percent, we can state that most of the drop-out students do not choose to repeat the class as only less than one percent of them is attending the class for the second time. In the table below we see that the number of those students decreases sharply when they are in 11-12 (or 3-4 gymnasium) classes i.e. 16-18 years old.

According to management and the teacher interviewed approximately 10 percent of students are expelled from school in each year. The reasons are usually behavior problems, bullying, harassment, aggressiveness i.e. non-academic reasons prevail. The teacher mentioned that there were no expelled students for not attending classes. The statistics, according to the management can be collected, but this will not solve the problem:

> *"Statistics can be collected, but there's no need for the statistics. The manager has to see the trends, and statistics will not help"* (E1_01)

As the alternative strategies and services used by the school for students with behavior/discipline problems as alternatives to suspension and expulsion those were

mentioned: friendly relationships between teachers and students, democratic management and openness for discussion.

> *"Students are not afraid of us, we know and are encouraged by the management to talk to our students. We achieve good results by maintaining good relationships with the students". (E1_02)*

A CURRICULUM TO ENGAGE AT RISK STUDENTS

The management thinks that the changes to the school curriculum to engage the interest of those students at risk of early school leaving are not the main solution to the problem. In their opinion the curriculum is quite flexible at secondary schools and it is possible to differentiate the level of difficulty as students in higher classes can choose either the extended or only the basic course.

> *"[...] the main thing is the relationship between the teacher and the students [...] all problems should be solved at the psychological level not on the level of the curriculum" (E1_01)*

However, teacher expressed a different opinion:

"I think for those who do not attend schools the course is to difficult. When it is too difficult, then it is not interesting. [...] the standards for academic achievements set by the Ministry of Education are quite high. We cannot meet these standards if we present less information to students i.e. if we make our lessons just easy and fun. [...] we have to prepare them for the exams we MUST prepare him/her for the final exams".(E1_02)

The school management thinks that the assessment system is not appropriate. According to them it is based more on the quantitative criteria, but not on the qualitative.
The management presents an example:

> *"We have even three (1,2 and 3) marks who mean „fail". This is absurd. Why is this confusion needed? [...] our secondary schools are dominated by soviet understanding: the students' diligence is more usually assessed than the competences. The girls are more diligent than boys: girls always done homework always take notes and we can say that the system of assessment is more favorable to* girls. Imagine a situation: a student who always done homework but is quite mediocre will get better marks than the one who is gifted, but almost never does homework. Then this mediocre student will easily enter university, and this gifted one will not" (E1_01)

We can come to the conclusion from these statements that assessment in the secondary schools does not mean improvement of competences of the students. It is based on formal, quantitative criteria.

The teacher interviewed also thinks that the system of assessment should be more flexible. This is especially complicated as there are highly performing sportspeople studying at this secondary school. For this reason the school has introduced a „pass-fail" assignments i.e. if the student misses some classes, s/he has to take the assignment later, but it is evaluated using only „pass" or „fail" system. In distant education classes they have a different system – there is a minimum number of tests and assignments, as in distance learning it is not possible to postpone the assignment in order to be sure that the assignment is done by the student her/himself and not by someone else.

Speaking about students personal development needs for example, self-awareness classes, relationship and sexuality classes, parenting or life skills, conflict resolution skills the opinion of the management again turns to teachers.

"Maybe other schools have something like these lessons, but I think that these subjects should be integrated into each subject. E.g. sexuality should find its place in biology workshops. If the teacher is open-eyed, and we try to educate such open-eyed teachers, and s/he knows that they prepare children for life not for universities, they should find some time to include these subjects into their lessons". (E1_01)

The tutor could not answer about this question as she is only involved with teaching in distance learning classes, and according to her this is impossible in distant learning.

The school has arts, carpentry, drama and music classes. Some of these subjects are compulsory to all students (or they have to choose one of them, depending in what class they study). There are also extra-curriculum classes in arts, drama and music. In distance learning classes the students can choose music, photography, arts or design classes. The school has one person employed not as a teacher but as event organizer, who in collaboration with teachers and students is responsible for all events at school. At the moment of the interview there was a musical prepared for Mother's Day in May

"Some students are responsible for the equipment, some are singing, others will be dancing. All school, all classes are involved into this production." (E1_01)

Please describe any innovative models your school adopts in these areas

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AT SCHOOL

The attention to students' contribution to their local community is given, however is not formalized or institutionalized. All ways of contribution to local community are on voluntary basis. The school council or management is authorized to make decisions on important ways of involvement into local community. The school council consists of five parents, five students and five teachers. According to the management, the students' opinion is most important.

> "We pay attention to school's contribution to local community, but this attention is not formalized. Although the school council is important in decision making, in reality it is much simpler. Students come to me with their proposals. It can be an event, a meeting, or sometimes they propose their decision on school's proposals. We regard every initiative positively and usually approve students' plans" (E1_01)

Speaking about attempts made to foster a sense of active citizenship in students through arranging for them to participate as volunteers in activities beneficial to the community (e.g., charity fundraising, visiting the elderly, helping orphans, ethnic minorities, people living in poverty etc) it is possible to conclude that such activities are not very frequent and encouraged.

The main reason why such activities as charity and fund raising are not present is that the students themselves come from lower social backgrounds and according to the management would be not ethical.

The only way of promoting active citizenship is cleaning up the surroundings of the school and urban area. This activity is organized with the local community each year in spring. In spring 2009 it was coordinated together with Darom 2009 public initiative (with more than 10.000 volunteers) to clean up Vilnius and other surroundings in Lithuania from waste.

As there is The Vilnius SOS Children's Village in the neighborhood in Ozo Street where there are 70 orphaned or abandoned children living, the school management and school teachers organized students' voluntary work there. However, this was only for two years and now according to the management only some individual students are involved, but no organized efforts are taken.

There are some differences in management and teacher's opinion.

> "The initiative was always from the management, class supervisors and teachers were the ones who implemented these activities with students. [...] yes the initiative is mostly form the management"(E1_01)

"This is only individual activity. At school, as far as I know, this does not exist. I only know that some individual students are involved in these activities, but it is not schools influence". (E1_02)

The involvement of students into active citizenship fostering activities also depends on personal initiative. The management mentioned one teacher who was a member of scout organization. He was very active and a lot of students were involved into scout activities. The scouts were present at school for 12 years. However, when the teacher left his job the activities with scout organization also stopped.

The school council according to the management is very active. The conditions for participation in the council exist, but according to the teacher the involvement of students is not actively promoted. Despite that according to the management and teacher the opinions and views of the students are always listened to and usually heard the activities of the student council are considered to be neutral at school with no interference needed.

ADULT EDUCATION ON THE SCHOOL SITE

Adult education classes take place only in distance learning classes. From 330 students currently studying on or another distance learning programme 200 were adult students. There are adult (or the so called youth) education classes available in the evening or at weekends. They start lessons at 3 pm and finish at 8 pm. Neither the management, nor the teacher sees any advantages and disadvantages.

" Students just come and study, maybe it is more inconvenient for teachers who have to work late". (E1_02)

Speaking about cooperation with local services or other schools in disseminating information about classes for adults the school does not actively promote evening classes. Instead they promote distance learning. They have organized trainings for teachers from other schools in the country. They also promoted the idea of distance learning and organized meetings with the communities of other towns. They had received guests form Hungary, Germany, Estonia and Austria and Lithuanian Ministry of Education. They advertised their distance learning classes in Lithuanian newspapers which are published in Ireland and the USA (Chicago[6]).

The credit or module based system for students does not exist in the school. Except that students at distance education classes can choose only some modules to study.

DISTANCE EDUCATION AND THE SCHOOL SITE

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[6] Chicago, for historical reasons, hosts the largest part of Lithuanian community in the USA

see 2.4.4. bellow: **Model of good practice: Distance learning at Ozo Secondary School**

LINKS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND THIRD LEVEL

The management thinks that the links between the school with universities are on the basis of professional orientation. The university and other higher education school representatives are invited to present their study programmes to interested would-be higher education students. The school also collaborates with Vilnius University Distance Education Centre in the domain of distance education.

The school management and teacher sees only distant learning as a form of cooperation with third level institutions. Distance learning according to them would make universities become more accessible for students who are traditionally underrepresented at third level. According to the teacher the persons with a disability would have more possibilities then:

> *"The ministry should decide on the forms of cooperation. Each year we have students with a disability who finish our school, but for them it is difficult to continue their studies. You know, the promotion of distance education would help to combat the problem of discrimination. Also there are students who have difficulty in communication with teachers and their fellow students. In distance learning we actually have no „problematic" students".(E1_02)*

> *" These things should be done through the institutions which decide on the content of studies. Let's say one school will do something with university, but what about other schools? The most effective way of cooperation with universities is the promotion of their study programmes."* (E1_01)

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND INSERVICE/PRESERVICE TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

Speaking about teacher trainings the management firstly mentions Teacher Professional Development Centre. On their website they say that every year 30 thousand educators from Lithuania and other countries attend about thousand events based on various courses, projects and programmes organized by Teacher Professional Development Centre (TPDC). TPDC is 51 years old (established in 1950, October the 1st) budgetary adult education institution, which is directly subordinated to Ministry of Education and Science

TPDC for a long time was the only such an institution in Lithuania. At the moment TPDC is the national institution which provides specific service package – ensure both re-qualification (in 2001 almost 700 teachers completely changed character of their qualification), diverse professional development of teachers, educators, specialists,

heads of the educational institutions and effective functioning of certification mechanism.

TPDC is one of the main institutions implementing modernization of education and training, improvement of the quality of education and socio-pedagogical study conditions, and harmonization of educational system, focusing on the needs and abilities/disabilities of children and preferences of educators, creating conditions for continuous teacher training and adult life long learning, promoting intellectual freedom and democratic relations.

However the school management does not agree:

"I think it is a waste of money. It is a huge political fiction. I think now [having in mind economic recession] there's a chance to get rid of this institution. I don't understand why a teacher who knows about teaching methods is not able to teach himself/herself. If there's something new in his/her area, s/he has to learn it quickly. The internet possibilities are unlimited. Speaking about this centre – it's more money making than real knowledge. There are a lot of courses where teachers come the first and the last day. On Monday they come to this centre to register and pay for the courses, and on Friday they come and get the certificate. The course fee is usually paid (or is later reimbursed) by the school. There's no test, no final examination. Just for being on the list of participants one gets a certificate. Teachers need a certificate, the centre needs money and it is a vicious circle – wasting money. Hundreds of people are paid by the centre and they say that salaries of teachers are low – teachers should get that money, not this centre." (E1_01)

The management goes on speaking about the culture of learning:

"The culture of learning exists. How can it be that a teacher does not how to learn? But how to promote the culture of learning when lobbies decide that without certificate teachers cannot be assessed and promoted. This is a self-programming situation: teacher has to increase their qualification, and get this certificate as a proof. If teachers did not need the certificate, they would never go to this centre. It is a 90 percent fiction" (E1_01)

"Speaking about in-service trainings, the management mentioned trainings which were aimed at creating distance learning teaching materials. There are a lot of teachers who choose their own personal development courses. Usually the school management encourages this practice and allows them not to be at work for a few days. The right to qualify for the job is included into Lithuanian Labour Code where it is sated that the employer must give up to 10 days-off for an employee to take a course. The general practice is that teachers are paid for the days they are not at school. The law also ensures that every employee has a right to apply for „study holiday" if s/he is a student of any university for up to 30 days.

In this case the employer has aright to decide whether to pay a salary for this period or not" (E1_01)

According to teacher paper qualifications are no longer needed:

"...well paper certificate is more or less needed, but the truth is that teachers want to learn something new. Maybe this centre is useful for less experienced teachers, but the supply of courses [in general] is very high, sometimes you do not know what you will get if you choose this or that course".(E1_02)

Speaking the developments needed for the training of teachers in order to improve school climate and to encourage more students to stay on at school the teacher commented that teachers have a lot of responsibilities and it would be better if the responsibility of the parents would be more encouraged.

"Sometimes parents say do what you want. But it is their child. I think parents should have more responsibility for their children and their future". (E1_02.

Management on economic recession:

"I do not think there will be much impact. Unless the salaries were reduced drastically. Then we would feel the difference as teachers would leave their jobs. If salaries were cut by 10 percent, nobody will leave. Teachers are in a privileged situation: they have stable income all social benefits and security" (E1_01)

The teacher however is not very positive about the impact of recession:

"We used to make consultations for 12 class students and we used to work on Saturdays. We used to get paid for this. This year we do some consultations, but we do not get paid for them. This is why we do less consultations. Well, the students will be more affected as they will not get the same possibilities as their fellows used to in the past". (E1_02)

The other problem – technical equipment. We have distance learning and the equipment sometimes breaks. We also have computer engineers who look after the system. If we do not have these people, the quality of our work will be less satisfying. But those who need our services will be most affected...

The demand for distant learning will not become lower. There are students in distance education that already complain: „ I lost my job..." And some of them are willing to stop learning. I encourage them and say that it is a chance for you to be at school and learn. It does not cost at all.

The content of the education reforms in Lithuania can be divided into four stages:
1. Education quality improvement, ideological independence
2. More equal distribution of education services
3. More effective functioning of the education system, modernization of the infrastructure
4. Marketization, social differentiation, internalization

The management views the education reform in Lithuania 2009 quite positively. He agrees that it should be given to free market forces, otherwise no changes will happen:

"This is a matter of responsibility: you value only those things that you pay for. Our society is not rich and cannot give everyone education for free. Higher education must be paid for, of course, students should have a possibility to take a bank loan" (E1_01)

However teacher views education reform quite differently:

"The reform will have a strong effect. Especially to our sportspeople. We have classes for highly performing athletes and the Department of Physical Education and Sports stopped paying them scholarships, a football club was closed, it is because of recession and reforms. You know it is a chain reaction which can affect anybody". (E1_02)

The Olympic Sports Centre shares the premises with Ozo secondary school and students under 18 who train at the centre attend the school. The Olympic Sports Centre is part of the Department of Physical Education and Sports under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania whose mission is to create conditions necessary for the development of a healthy and physically active society, to search for talented athletes and provide them with professional training for the representation of the country at major international sporting events.

2.4.3. Conclusions

Ozo Secondary School offers flexibility in education and this makes the school attractive and appealing to both adult students and those at risk of social exclusion. In many respects the school is typical of other secondary schools of Lithuania; however, distance education gives it the competitive edge as there are no other secondary schools in Lithuania that can offer full range of ISCED Level 2 courses which, if successfully completed, give direct access to first stage of tertiary education. This flexibility provides a diverse learner community (adults, migrants, persons residing in remote areas, drop-outs, people with disabilities, highly performing athletes and Lithuanian citizens temporary residing abroad) with opportunities to advance their education.

However, the school has not sufficiently developed student support strategies: the support is based on personal interactions between teachers and learners (and sometimes management). This can be regarded positively on the one hand, but on the other hand this increases the number or "roles" the teachers have to "play".

Education policies could facilitate the growth of adult education in a number of secondary schools. According to both school representatives, these policies should include expanding professional development opportunities by promoting the use of new technologies and providing more financial support.

The system of non-formal teacher (career, personal enrichment) training should be developed. There is a strong need to teach effectively in both traditional and online classrooms and teachers need to rethink their role and learn relevant skills for teaching and supporting diverse student population. However, firstly this requires changes at the state level as the current "paper qualification" system of non-formal teacher training is not always efficient.

2.2.4. Model of good practice: DISTANCE LEARNING/TEACHING AT SECONDARY SCHOOL

Background information:

As stated in *The Analysis of Quality Assessment of Distance Learning in Higher Education Institutions in Lithuania and Abroad* by Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (2005) distance education is not very widespread in Lithuania however, an intensively developing infrastructure already offers new learning opportunities to potential users.

According to the data from the questionnaire survey performed during the conduct of the *Analysis*, in December 2005 distance learning modules/programmes were prepared by 53.3% of state universities and 60% of state colleges. State universities provided on average 48 distance learning modules, state colleges – about 18 and non-state higher education schools – about 12 learning modules. Complete distance learning study programmes leading to Bachelor or Master's degree in 2004-2005 were provided only by state universities.

There is only one Ozo secondary school in Lithuania which is realizing two important distance learning programmes:

1. The distance learning/teaching course for the students of the VIII-IX grades (second stage of basic education i.e. ISCED Level 2 lower secondary education)
2. The distance learning/teaching course for the students of the X-XII grades (upper secondary education i.e. ISCED Level 2 designed to give direct access to first stage of tertiary education).

Other secondary schools in Lithuania offer some features of distance learning which are

intended to make traditional classes more attractive and appealing to students/teachers. Statistics show that 73 – 98 percent of secondary school teachers were using the Internet for non-computing teaching (Statistics Lithuania, 2008).

Distance learning in Lithuanian higher schools	Colleges		Universities	
	2005-2006	2008-2009	2005-2006	2008-2009
Number of schools with distance learning centres (classes)	7	9	8	12
Students who studied full programmes	158	1443	697	738
Students who studied certain modules of programmes	1442	8199	37097	24335
Courses for teachers	10	202	742	527
Courses for the public	18	10	2622	2534

Source: Distance learning at colleges and universities Source: Education. Statistics Lithuania, 2009

History/background of the model:

Vilnius Ozo secondary school started distance learning in 2002 as an experiment and up to 2003 a full online curriculum for 10th grade was created using school's own financial and human resources (i.e. it was created without any external financial support from funds or government). Vilnius University Distance Education Centre WebCT platform was used and the first e-classes started in 2003 using school's intranet.

In 2005 European Social Fund and Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science financed the project „The distance learning/teaching course for the students of the X-XII grades" by providing 501.000 Litas (approx. 150.000 euros) support. The financial support was extended later in 2006 to fund another very similar project under the title „The distance learning/teaching course for the students of the VIII-IX grades", the main partner of which was Vilnius City Municipal Government Administration. The sum of 507.690 Litas was provided.

Although these two projects are different, the school management presents both of them as one large project as they are serve the same purpose – to create an attractive learning environment, help adult people acquire secondary school education, introduce new learning/teaching methods and develop distance learning/teaching system in Lithuania. The system is currently being implemented and upgraded. It also encourages young adults who do not have secondary school education to return to education system.

> *„The distance learning at our school is a tool to encourage to return to*

education system those who did not finish schools because of subjective or objective reasons. These projects created the possibility to about one thousand people to finish secondary school. If these projects had not been launched i.e. our innovation had not been fostered there is a high probability that these adult people would not have returned to education system. If these projects had not existed the risk groups, the emigrants and people with disabilities and other groups would not have finished the secondary school". (E1_01)

Project Description:

This is a unique project in distance education at Lithuanian secondary schools. There exist no other secondary schools in Lithuania which provide full distance learning programme designed to award students a secondary school-leaving certificate giving access to tertiary education. The distance learning/teaching has been provided for three years at this secondary school.

> *"However the collaboration with other secondary schools in distant education is not possible at the moment as we are the only one such distance education provider in Lithuania. This is our unique experiment at the moment. But of course we promote the idea and share our experience with other schools. We received a lot of visitors and guests from other schools. We demonstrated how the system works and how we created it. The dissemination is very active and a lot of peole know about us". (E1_01)*

The system of distance learning/teaching is being created and improved in a secondary school for the reason to return the drop-out students to school, stimulate children and adults who haven't got the general certificate of the secondary education, to come back to school.

The teaching material of distance learning for the students was created and a well-equipped computer class is provided for tutors and learners. At the moment more than a hundred students are studying using the method of the distance learning. In the future school is planning to create teaching materials for V-VII grades in distance learning.

 The subjects for the students consists of the theory, practice, workshops, creative tasks and tests. All the subjects of these forms are placed on the internet (WebCT) in which the students work, communicate by e-mail, have discussions and video conferences and lessons are organized for them.

The created system of the distance learning/teaching at school guarantees that people of any age have the possibility to study at their suitable time and conditions. The place of the project is geographically unlimited: the course is available everywhere, where

there is the internet. The project seeks to promote the idea of life-long learning and ensures that people of any age and social background can study at the time which is convenient to them.

One of the strategic aims of the project is to encourage the development of information society in Lithuania, help people to integrate into world's information society and to open up more possibilities for them. The project also creates equal opportunities for men and women and people of different social backgrounds to acquire secondary school education.

The curriculum is divided into lessons. The lessons are interactive, feedback and assessment is provided by e-mail and Skype program. Each e-lesson contains video and audio material, self-evaluation and progress tests. Internet links to learning resources are provided.

It has to be stressed that it is not an independent learning as the number of lessons of each study subject corresponds to the formal requirements of the secondary school curriculum plan approved by the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science. Every study subject has its place on the weekly timetable which is analogous to that of traditional school timetable i.e. the students are supposed to take for example 4 Lithuanian literature, 4 Mathematics, 2 History classes etc. on a weekly basis. The number of hours a week varies according to the ministry requirements for each grade. Each day there are 4-6 lessons. The students are consulted by the tutor who provides homework tasks and assessment. Every month students have to complete an assignment or pass a monthly test for which they are evaluated. This enables them to study and keep the pace with their fellow students at traditional bricks and mortar schools. The progress of students is administered accumulating information on the results of learning outcomes and presenting this information to students with comments on the progress made. If there are convincing reasons to miss some lessons, the tutor can postpone the class, task or test for longer period, but more or less the system is strict and this is not a regular and encouraged practice. The system also allows those students who are only interested in specific subjects to choose one or a few study modules. E.g. there are students who choose to study only Lithuanian language and Lithuanian history. In the interviews the school representatives mentioned that Lithuanian language and history classes are most popular among the students of Lithuanian origin who attend secondary schools abroad, but are willing to learn the language and culture of their parents.

The final exams take place at the very end of XII grade The final exams cannot be taken online i.e. in exam period students have to be physically present in the school premises. The final school exams are taking place at the school itself. The final state examination takes place at premises designated by the municipality (usually other secondary school). The exams are taken together with "traditional" school-leavers. Those students who pass the exams are awarded a school-leaving certificate which gives them access to the

first stage of tertiary education.

Target Groups:

According to the project aim and objectives the following target groups are distinguished (but not limited to):

- Lithuanians born and/or permanently residing abroad incl. children of diplomatic service employees;
- Young adults with psychological communication problems;
- People with disabilities, immobile people and people with hearing impairment;
- Working teenagers and adults;
- Pregnant women or parents with small children;
- Persons who have spent extended periods of time at hospitals or sanatoriums;
- Students who are taught at home;
- Highly competitive athletes and sportspeople who train abroad;
- Those serving for armed forces;
- Prisoners;
- Persons residing in remote areas where school access is limited because of lack of public transport.

In the period of 2007-2008 there were 330 distant learners from Lithuania, Norway, Ireland, England, Spain, Belgium, Georgia, Japan, Israel, UAE, USA, and Germany. There were 5 people with disabilities, 18 parents (all female) with small children, 3 pregnant women, 4 highly performing young athletes and 27 young people living abroad with parents. About 30 of students chose to study only Lithuanian language and history modules. According to the management, the school could provide distance education in prisons, but restrictions or no access to the internet in prisons prevents the school from doing this.

> „We have a legal right to teach adults and they choose distant learning. We provide secondary school education. There are 330 distant learners and 200 of them are adults. The adults are a particular group and we can say that they have „special needs" too, and the idea of distance learning is extremely attractive to satisfy their needs. All in all, students come from very different social backgrounds. The majority of them are of lower social background who left school for various reasons. But we have everything. We have almost all children of diplomatic service employees who travel with families. Highly performing young athletes are also our students. The spectrum of academic and social backgrounds is very varied in distant learning. About a third of students are the children of economic emigrants. There are cases when a son and a father take the same classes. [...] anyway, we realise humanist idea in education and do not divide

> *students into „good" or „bad". We do not try to avoid „tougher" students and so we prevent people from going to the „street school". [Generally speaking] the current secondary education system is quite utilitarian – some schools select „better" students and try to get rid of „bad" ones and create a better environment with „easy" students and the rest then have to go to „street school". (E1_01)*

Funding:

Both projects are funded by European Social Fund and Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science. Each project has received approx. 150.000 euros which were used to buy distance learning equipment and provide trainings for teachers/ tutors and technical personnel who create the content and who administer the system. Additional technical and administrative suport is provided by Vilnius University Distant Education Centre.

Tutors and teachers who work with the students in a distance learning environment are employed and paid by the school using a state funded monthly salary scheme (i.e. the same salary scheme as for teachers working in a traditional classroom).

The services for students are free of charge. The services are available for Lithuanian citizens or those having Lithuanian ancestry or those residing legally in Lithuania.

Problems/ issues to resolve:

Lack of know-how as distance education is relatively new;
Training of younger generation qualified teachers;
Improving teaching basis, original educational and methodological materials;
Cooperation with prison education providers.

2.4.5. References:

1. *The analysis of quality assessment of distance learning in higher education institutions in Lithuania and abroad*, Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, 2005 http://www.skvc.lt/files/publications/analysis.doc

2. Ozo Secondary School website www.ozovidurine.lt

3. Information Technologies in Lithuania, Statistics Lithuania, Vilnius, 2008

4. Education, Statistics Lithuania, Vilnius, 2009

2.5. THE ACCESS OF ADULTS TO FORMAL EDUCATION (CONCLUSIONS OF CASES INTEGRATED)

It is possible to conclude that all formal education institutions under consideration in these case studies are experiencing uneven transformations towards becoming institutions of lifelong-learning. For higher education institutions criteria such as study quality and sufficient number of students appear to be assigned higher status than lifelong learning goals. Thus, the promotion and implementation of agenda for increased access is considered rather additional work than the main work for some employees at college, university and secondary school. Most additional work for increased access is usually "put" on teachers "shoulders", thus, a systemic approach to a better promotion of access is needed.

A problem of developing a systemic approach could be solved if "paper" strategies and implemented programs were more interrelated (especially in the public higher education institutions). The financial resources are not sufficient to implement every "paper" goal.

In case of colleges, the interest in adult learners lies mainly in the concern to recruit a sufficient number of students. The goals of lifelong-learning are a secondary concern. Members of disadvantaged groups are not "visible" at university and colleges. This can be partly related to the lack of infrastructure for people with disabilities, which might be a reason discouraging them from education. Also, there is no data management system and this might add to the "invisibility" of students from risk groups, adults etc.

Both higher education institutions recognize the necessity to change some applicable laws regarding and creating the acknowledging system when it comes to non-formal education and previous work experience. Also, they witness the advantages of attracting people with working experience in the relevant field. The colleges seem to be more advanced and flexible in this respect.
The distant education potential is not fully used in adult education at colleges and university.

3. NON-FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION

3.1 Background information: sector non-formal adult education – national level

STATUS AND EXTENT OF NON-FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION

Non-formal education – education according to a variety of programs geared to satisfy individual education needs, to provide in-service education and to provide for acquisition of an additional competence. The purpose of non-formal adult education is to provide an individual with conditions for life-long learning, meeting the needs of cognition, upgrading qualification and acquiring additional qualifications. Non-formal education of adults is provided to each individual who has chosen this kind of education

and is at least 18 years of age. Non-formal education of adults may be provided by all educational providers. A person's competence acquired by way of non-formal education may be recognized as being a part of a formal education programme or a qualification as prescribed by the Government or its authorized institution, or by a school of higher education.

Non-formal adult education is regulated by the Law on Non-formal Adult Education (1998, May 30, No.VIII-822) commits the providers of non-formal adult education and their social partners "to provide assistance in implementing the inborn right of a person to lifelong development of his/her personality". The law determined the main goals of non-formal adult education – to create conditions for acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills needed for an individual's professional activities and for upgrading qualifications.

Self-education – continuous independent learning, based on information a person obtains from various sources and practical experience. The purpose of self-education is prescribed to provide an individual with possibilities for continuous independent learning supported by the surrounding information space (libraries, media, internet, museums, etc.) and life experience gained from other persons. A person's competence acquired by way of self-education may be recognized as being a part of a formal education program or a qualification as prescribed by the Government or its authorized institution.

The core principle of the implementation of LLL is that formal, informal education and self-education shall be joined (see Dėl Valstybinės švietimo strategijos 2003-2012 m. nuostatų, 2003). Non Formal Education, as defined by Eurostat, is any organized and sustained educational activities that do not correspond exactly to the above definition of formal education. Non-formal education may therefore take place both within and outside educational institutions and cater to persons of all ages. Depending on country contexts, it may cover educational programmes to impart adult literacy, basic education for out of school children, life-skills, work-skills, and general culture. The same definition is used in Lithuania where non-formal adult education is defined as education, training or studies based on person's will and/or society's needs for which a state recognised diploma (certifying certain education stage or achieved competences according to officially recognized study modules) is not issued. Non-formal education is available for all persons over 18 years of age according to their own choice.

The main objectives of non-formal adult education are these:

- To encourage people to satisfy their self-education needs and to satisfy their cultural interests;
- To develop people's competences and creativity;
- To help people to become active members of democratic society;

- To enable to acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills for people's professional activities, and to establish the conditions for developing qualifications.

The main goals of non-formal adult education system are:

- To help the adults of any age to educate themselves and train in appropriate areas using the means best available to them;
- To encourage self-education.

Non-formal adult education involves:

- The general cultural education;
- Acquisition of the knowledge and development of skills needed for professional activities;

The main forms of non-formal adult education are these:
- Organised self-education;
- Courses (full-time, part-time, evening, long-term, short-term etc.), seminars and lectures;
- Part-time, extra-mural (continuous) education;
- Education through the media (e.g. educational programmes) (see Law on Non-formal Adult Education, 1998).

Non-formal education aims at helping the members of all groups in society to develop their qualifications, to renew professional skills and practical skills, which are needed to find employment and self-employment activities. The competences acquired by non-formal learning can be recognised as part of the formal study programme or part of qualification according to the provisions by the Government, or government established authority or according to the rules set by the higher education institution (Valstybės žinios, 1998-07-24, Nr. 66-1909).

NATIONAL POLICY DOCUMENTS ON ACCESS TO NON-FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION

There are 7 national documents which include provisions and/or guidelines on the regulation of non-formal education in Lithuania:

- Lithuanian Education Concept (1992);
- The Concept of Lithuanian Adult Education System (1993);
- The Law on Non-formal Adult Education (1998);
- Education Policy Guidelines (Project of Strategic Provisions on the Development of Lithuanian Education 2003-2012);
- The Law on Education replacing The Law on Education (2003);

- Lithuanian Education Strategy 2003-2012;
- Lithuanian Lifelong-Learning Strategy (2004).
- The Law on Non-formal Adult Education (1998, May 30, No.VIII-822; (Valstybės žinios, 1998-07-24, Nr. 66-1909).

BACKGROUND DATA TO PROFILE TARGET GROUPS FOR ACCESS STRATEGIES

According to the survey by the Ministry of Education and Science (2006) the access to non-formal education for children (including organizational aspect e.g. transport and reimbursement of transport expenses and the organization of educational activities) does not cause any major problems as it is organised on a local municipality level.

Speaking about the access of adults to non-formal education it is noted that the self-education and training and gained qualifications are beneficial. Non-formal education increases work motivation of employees and organization's flexibility as it guarantees a certain level of "keeping"qualifications.

Data of Lithuanian Statistics Department shows that in 2006 about 500 000 people aged 25–64 participated in some form of non-formal education. Non-formal education services are provided by about 3000 state-owned or private institutions, including those whose main area of activities is not education.

POTENTIAL ADULT LEARNERS

The Statistics Lithuania data on target groups of non-formal education (2009) reflects some changes in number of adults involved in education. In the 2002-2008 the number of university students remained stable or was slowly increasing, whereas at vocational schools the number of students was decreasing. This data suggests that there might be a number of potential learners in non-formal education sector.

EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

In the report of the project "Return of the drop-outs to school" it is indicated that the percent of children who do not attend school is quite high. The children who leave school prematurely lose a possibility to acquire higher qualifications through education and they have fewer possibilities in the labour market. This problem is also addressed in the guidelines by the government that propose measures that would be beneficial in reducing the number of school drop-outs. At the moment there is no unique strategy for solving this problem. The model of how to encourage school leavers to come back to school does not exist:
- The system of monitoring early school leavers does not exist;
- There is no data on how many school students do not attend schools and which proportion of them do not have a school leaving certificate;

- There are no alternative schools for early school leavers and drop-outs;
- Negative teachers' attitude towards students who do not attend school regularly;
- Teachers lack of psychological and councelling skills when communication with those students;
- The psychological support is unavailable. It is difficult to get this support, the quality and efficiency of support is insufficient.

RISK GROUPS AND MARGINAL GROUPS

According to Lithuanian and EU legal acts (Non-formal adult education development in Lithuania: analysis of funding alternatives, 2007), persons who are describer as social risk groups are:
- people with disabilities;
- unemployed and those whose work contract will not be renewed;
- persons who have to combine work with family commitments;
- women with small children;
- cultural minority group members;
- prisoners;
- persons serving in the military;
- adults with no education;

In the previously mentioned report the characteristics of risk groups are described in more details:

a) lack of motivation to participate in the education;
b) limited information available to them about non-formal education services;
c) persons with special needs (e.g. persons with disabilities);
d) low academic mobility.

The main aim of non-formal education is to reduce social exclusion in this segment. This is why specific objectives are raised:

a) help to acquire a profession and/ or education;
b) bring back those belonging to risk groups into the labour market;
c) facilitate their integration into society;
d) facilitate adaptation to the living conditions;
e) ensure equal opportunities (especially to older persons and those residing in remote areas).

These goals and objectives are reflected in Lithuanian and EU strategic documents and legal acts.

FUNDING SOURCES

The Law on Non-formal adult education (Article 17) describes the forms and principles of funding. Taking financial support into account, the attention is focused on labour market oriented adult education. Non-formal adult education can be funded by either state or private bodies or other sources e.g. EU programmes like LLP/Grundtvig etc., other foundations, non-governmental institutions etc. One of the main sources of funding of lifelong learning is the investment from EU structural funds.
The main state support areas include the following:

- Direct funding of education institutions, project funding (state, local government, private organization's projects etc.), and funding through state programmes;
- Indirect funding: lease of state-owned premises, tax discounts, promotion of sponsorship and charity through tax discounts;
- Partial or full coverage of education fees, scholarships and aducation grants for persons from risk groups,;
- Free access to information and literature at public libraries.

Non-formal adult education programmes are funded by the state through targeted subsidies or projects (e.g. EU Structural Funds) (Žemaitaitytė, 2007; Non-formal adult education development in Lithuania: analysis of funding alternatives, 2007). For the development of non-formal education of employees in 2004-2006 period there were 2 measures provisioned in the Single Programming Document: a) Labour force education of competences and ability to adapt to changes (industry and business employee training); b) Lifelong learning development (Non-formal adult education development in Lithuania: analysis of funding alternatives, 2007). However, the following direct measures of funding only insignificantly influences non-formal education development in Lithuania.

In the Law on Non-formal Adult Education (1998) these measures of funding are provisioned: non-formal adult education can be funded by any legal or physical bodies including the participants themselves. It can also be funded by local authorities and state-funded by the rules set by the Government. In this document it is also provisioned that funding which is needed for qualification and re-qualification can be allocated from the annual company's payroll budget (up to 3 percent).

Courses for unemployed persons, including those who would like to start their own business and those who would like to practice a new or change profession are organized and funded from Employment Fund by the territorial Labour Exchange[7] office according

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[7] Lithuanian Labour Exchange at the Ministry of Social Security and Labour and its 46 local offices implement state employment guarantees on labour market, provide assistance for job seekers in finding job,

to the rules set by The Law on Support for the Unemployed. In this Law it is provisioned that the state can support non-formal adult education by funding:

- non-formal adult education participants;
- non-formal adult education programmes and targeted projects;
- increasing the qualifications and competences of non-formal adult education providers and implementers;
- procurement of technical equipment and premises needed to organize non-formal education.

There are no calculations made on how much state, local municipality and fund resources are used by youth non-governmental organizations. There is no common youth initiative and youth policy funding system. Youth NGOs can receive funding from State Youth Council, the Ministry of Education and Science, Department of Physical Education and Sports under the Government of Lithuania, Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Ministry of Culture and Drug Control Department under the Government of Lithuania.
53 (out of 60) municipalities have separate budget "lines" for funding youth projects.
In 24 March 2005 Lithuanian Government adopted a 2004–2008 m. programme. In this programme youth policy was mentioned for the first time (Part 11). One of the provisions states: „increase funding for youth organizations projects". There are two possible ways of funding: project funding and programme funding. The funding is provided at both – national and local- levels.

REDUCED CHILDCARE

The Law on The Minimum and Average Childcare aims at establishing children's rights and lawful interests of public safety and creating the system of socialization, education and social, educational, psychological, special educational, information or other assistance in order to meet the needs of children with behavioral problems, and to help the children overcome these problems. According to the above-mentioned law the minimum and the average child care is based on the following principles:

- The child's interests and welfare is a priority. Taking any action relating to children, their interests are most important. Children should be given such protection as is necessary to their well-being, and all necessary legal and administrative measures must be used to meet that aim;

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provide employers with necessary skilled labour force, involve registered job seekers into employment programs (vocational training and retraining, organisation of own business, placement into public works and works financed from the Employment Fund, establishment of new jobs, activities of job clubs) and pay unemployment benefits.

- Children participation in the decision making related to his/her status. Children should be given the opportunity to be heard in any judicial or administrative proceedings related to them, either directly or through their representative(s) prescribed by law. The child's opinion if it is not contrary to his/her interests must be taken into account;
- Individualism. Making decisions related to children the child's age and maturity, his/her mental and physical characteristics, needs, social environment and other relevant characteristics must be taken into account;
- The principle of children education to perform the duties and developing their sense of responsibility for their behavior in the family, educational institution, workplace and social environment;
- The principle of non-separation from the family, except in extreme cases (the separation must be of the shortest possible period);
- The principle of exercising supervision as close as possible to the child's residence. The child should be granted such minimum or medium-care measures that can be effectively applied without separating him/her from (or minimizing the distance from) his/her place of residence;
- Principle of local community involvement in child care and social integration. Local communities, NGOs, state and municipal institutions, agencies, businesses and organizations should be encouraged as much as possible.

REDUCED FEES

In Lithuania the current allowance on maternity (paternity) leave in the first year makes up 100 percent, (and 85 percent for the second year) of the earned wages, but it cannot exceed 5 insured income levels i.e. 7440 Litas (approx. 2000 €).

From 2009 September 1 already allocated maternity (paternity) allowances, and those that will be awarded next year till 30 June, will be reduced by 10 percent (90 percent if the wages earned) but will not be less than the minimum wage, currently set at 800 Litas (approx 200€). From 2010 1 July all the maternity (paternity) allowances will drop further, and will be paid by another procedure: during the first year, they will make up 90 percent and second year - 75 percent of the monthly wages earned.

FEATURES OF CONTEXT

Non-formal education is a relatively new area of public policy in Lithuania (Non-formal adult education development in Lithuania: Analysis of financing alternatives, 2007). It is also noted that Lithuanian population are among the least learning in the EU and especially a small part of it is learning informally.

Low education and, in particular non-formal education level is one of the largest Lithuanian economic competitiveness problems as employees with no education are

less productive and receptive to innovation and for those without education it is more difficult to find work in any economic sector.

Non-formal adult education in Lithuania is perceived as that of great importance, but the state's role in this area is largely limited to the legal regulation and segmented financial support to some non-formal education areas (Non-formal adult education development in Lithuania: Analysis of financing alternatives, 2007; Žemaitaitytė, 2007).

The emergence of knowledge and information society requires new educational characteristics, which can be described as the accelerated changes and the growth of complexity of the problems. The change of education and training system reform is a natural process and is constantly affected by both external economic and social factors. Lithuania is currently focused on formal education and training.

3.2. Case 1: Background information- Lithuanian Labor Market Training Authority[8]

- *Type of education* : Non-Formal adult education
- *Type of institution*: Agency (state)
- *Name of institution*: Lithuanian Labor Market Training Authority
- *Interviewe 1*: Director (D1_01)
- *Interviewe 2*: Tutor/Lecturer (D1_02)

BACKGROUND ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Lithuanian Labor Market Training Authority (hereinafter LLMTA) was created by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in 1992. LLMTA is the biggest organization in Lithuania. It works with the issues of adult education, professional preparation, guidance, and counseling. The main aim of the Authority is to increase the employability and competitiveness of adults in the labor market.

LLMTA participates in the formation of the vocational training policy, which would correspond to the changing needs of the society and labor market. Authority cooperates with various social partners. Under the supervision of the LLMTA there are fifteen labor market training centers which allow people 18+ to obtain marketable profession or/and to change the old one. According to the data provided by LLMTA, over 80 % of training courses' graduates found the job and 83 % of them found the job they studies for. Every year approx. 25 000 people attend the courses offered by the labor market training centers. Half of them are directed there by the Labor exchange offices, 25 % are sent by employers, and the rest of the students came to the centers on their own will.

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[8] In Lithuanian: Lietuvos darbo rinkos mokymo tarnyba. Website: www.LMTCS.lt or www.darborinka.lt.

Seven territorial labor market training and counseling services subordinate to the Lithuanian Labor Market Training Authority. They are located in the major towns of Lithuania: Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, Panevėžys, Alytus, and Utena and there are four sub-offices: in Tauragė, Akmenė, Kuršėnai and Ignalina. They are state institutions providing vocational guidance, counseling and information services for the students, parents, teachers, unemployed, people who were notified about the dismissal, inmates, soldiers, and any other person wishing to (re-)enter the labor market with a profession corresponding to his/her personal characteristics and meeting the labor market's needs. Services provided by the territorial labor market training and counseling offices are free of charge.

Territorial centres organize group meeting and Job Clubs where people meet each other, discus their situation, share experiences and raise the level of motivation. Additionally, individual consultations are available for everyone in need of advice in the area of work or vocational training.

Another task for territorial offices is to organize the licensing of enterprises and establishments seeking to carry out the labor market vocational training programs, to exercise the state control of labor market vocational training quality, to perform the examination of material training base, and to make the selection of labor market vocational training institutions and companies holding the license for setting external examinations.

This case study was carried out in one of the labor market training and consulting services (hereinafter LMTCS), which is a national advisory body that works with educational institutions, municipalities, labor exchanges, various associations representing employers and workers. Vilnius LLMTA is responsible for vocational guidance services for young people and adults in Vilnius city and county.

> „[...] the LMTCSs are state-funded organizations, which report to the Ministry of
> Social Security and Labour. The annual budget is 800 000 litas [approx 232 000 EUR]"
> (D1_01)

LLMTA tasks are: to help choose the right profession and career planning, depending on individual characteristics and labor market needs, provide information about the profession, retraining or professional development opportunities and conditions in order to tackle unemployment, skilled labor supply and demand issues, develop people's ability to successfully compete in the world of work, develop vocational training, guidance and counseling policies in order to help people adapt to the constantly changing environment, and actively develop their professional careers.

In the last 5 years there was an increase in the variety of courses and the participants:

„Vilnius Labour Market Training and Counselling Service is mainly attended by the persons with disabilities, the unemployed, persons who know that their work contract will not be renewed, women or parents after a career break (e.g. after parental leave), persons with low or no education or young people who do not have any professional training"(D1_01)*.*

Thus, the organization pays much attention to social exclusion groups because it is one of the target groups of vocational guidance services.

THE CONTENT

Non-formal education content depends on the choice of the providers, but to a large extent - to the participants themselves. The contents and forms of of non-formal education are more flexible compared to formal education. According to B. Leonienė and I. Bakanauskienė (1996) the following reasons are important:

- Constantly changing nature of work;
- Scientific and technological progress, generating the need for skilled professionals;
- Permanent staff training.

According to the Department of Statistics data on adult education survey results (2007), most people are studying independently (45 percent) which is nearly two times more than three years ago i.e.25 percent in 2003 (EU average - 33 percent). They were studying using books, specialist magazines, internet, audio, video tapes, took private lessons, used library resources etc. Every second and every third of rural resident was involved in some kind of learning. Younger (53 percent were persons younger than 35) and more educated people learned more frequently.

The interviews reveal that persons with low education are often poorly motivated to learn. In director's opinion, it is essential to actively support these people and help them remain in the labor market and to prevent social exclusion.

Such topics as self-knowledge, self-confidence building, social skills, adaptability to change and career planning are included in career guidance programs. The aim of all occupational guidance programs is to assist a person to choose education and / or pursue their professional goals in order to integrate them into the labor market and teach them how to adapt to permanent life changes. Therefore, most of these topics are related to psychology. In addition LLMTA advisors have a university education and are trained in psychology and have relevant work experience and appropriate expertise. The most popular course is a vocational guidance program for team-work - "Discover,

Understand and Act." The program is aimed at activating and motivating the participants to take personal responsibility for their personal and professional development and increasing their capacity to compete in the labor market. Vilnius LLMTA also contributes to the (local) community and business development:

> *„Since 1999 our organization is a member of Lithuanian Association of Adult Education. And each year we participate, and this became a tradition, in the Adult Education Week as well as various trainings and projects for the community."*
> (D1_01).

STAFF CONDITIONS

Educational efficiency significantly depends on how organization leader understands this important goal. However, expert interviews indicate that Vilnius LLMTA situation is standardized and formulaic:

> *„[...] We are state-funded organization and all consulting psychologists are employed on work contracts, their salaries are low as we receive annual funding from the state budget"*(D1_01)

TARGET GROUPS

In the organization classes are attended by both men and women, but the greater part of visitors are women:

> *„[...] women make up about two thirds of participants. But more and more we receive men who want to participate in the trainings"* (D1_02)

This coincides with the 2004 study, which found that more women are studying.

Department of Statistics in 2006 made a survey of 25-64 aged persons. The results showed that within one year 55 percent of the population participated in some form of education (in trainings, organized by various training providers, courses and seminars as well as self-learning) This is twice more than three years ago (2003 - 28 percent; EU average - 42 percent). More women were in the education than men (58 and 52 percent respectively). The urban population was more involved in the education than the rural (61 and 42) residents. Half of the participants of the survey attended training courses

once a year, 35 percent – 2 or 3 - three times, the remaining 15 percent - more than four times a year.

The majority of the population (89 percent) recognized that learning and knowledge were necessary to carry out work, of which one in five said that they studied because they were encouraged by the employer. The vast majority of the adult population (98 percent) was positive about trainings and hoped to use the knowledge for work. Most of them (almost 80 percent) believed that the improvement of knowledge and skills is not very important in securing their job, but are crucial to a successful personal career.

RELATIONS WITH FORMAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

The State Education Strategy 2003–2012 emphasizes the importance of the links between all forms of education, so that these links secured the availability, continuity and consistency of education.

This would enable the individuals to develop their skills and help each citizen of the Republic of Lithuania to realize the needs for lifelong learning. This document complements the Lifelong Learning Strategy (2004) which states that it is necessary to "optimize the use of all available resources provided by the State, enterprises, municipalities, communities, non-governmental organizations or individuals to develop a comprehensive, coherent and cost-effective life-long learning system offering opportunities for professional, social and personal development of all working-age individuals, as well as youth preparation for professional life, corresponding to the highest European standards. The analysis of formal and non-formal education links indicates that the non-formal education programs can be recognized as part of formal education. However, according to A. Garšvienė (2003), the status of non-formal education and formal education is not equal.

Competitiveness in the job market is growing and non-formal education demand is growing. Growing number of non-formal adult education institutions demonstrates that the desire to learn and improve skills and competences is becoming more urgent and important for the people of Lithuania. Experts say that:

> „[...]the more educated is a person, the more motivated, flexible and more willing to adapt to changes s/he is"(D1_01)

To ensure that formal education institutions closely cooperate in strengthening relations with non-formal education institutions experts suggest:

- „[...] The most beneficial is the implementation of joint projects, and collaboration on various cooperation and partnership agreements." (D1_01) and (D1_02)

THE RECOGNITION OF PREVIOUSLY GAINED EDUCATION

Statistics Lithuania (2007) data reveal that one in six adults who did not participate in education said that s/he wanted to learn. The main reasons which prevented them from doing so were intense work (31 percent), age or health status (28 percent), or education was too expensive (26 percent). Rural residents more frequently mentioned age, remote location and lack of motivation.

This case study reveals that adult education is funded by the state, municipalities, employers, sponsors and the learners themselves. The system of recognition of previous non-formal education or work experience does not exist. In order to avoid difficulties of recognition the experts suggest:

> „[...] there is a need to prepare such recognition mechanism and create the legal practice of its implementation. In 2008 there was a Qualification Council established, but now it stopped functioning" (D1_01).

Attention was drawn to the fact that similar problems were indicated in the previous studies on this topic (Garšvienė, 2003, etc.). The main problem is funding and lack of material base - the premises, technical equipment, teaching aids etc. Second most problematic aspect is associated with the lack of motivation to learn – even among those adult learners who are participating in the trainings.

COHESION WITH MARGINAL AND SOCIALLY SENSITIVE GROUPS

The study showed that the vast majority of customers are persons registered at Lithuanian Labor Exchange:

> „[...] There is a cooperation agreement with Adult Education Centres and secondary schools in Vilnius City and Vilnius Region secondary schools, as well as Vilnius region reformatory inspection and the societies of the people with disabilities" [...]" (D1_01)

Thus, the experience is applicable to and appropriate in other countries and this can be implemented through joint projects:

> „Vilnius Labour Market Training and Counselling Service provides free of charge services of professional orientation. The activities are organized in place; there are specials classrooms for them" (D1_02)

TEACHING METHODS

Lithuania's major non-formal education methods are sending people to seminars, conferences, qualifications courses. There are non-formal adult education courses and workshops for adults wanting to learn a foreign language, law and business, psychology, computer literacy, arts, literature, and philosophy. Also relevant trainings in citizenship, career management and personal skills development exist. The methods are oriented to practical skills, imitation of the real-life situations which help to motivate employees and employers to increase working efficiency, and employees to become qualified in various fields.

On the other hand, employers mainly link training to and seek, in particular, objectives such as improving the professional competence, efficiency and quality of work and increasing enterprise competitiveness. In this case study, it was found that high priority is given to "active" trainings:

"[...] in the work with audience active learning methods for adult education are used, theory and practice is combined and active participation of learners is encouraged as well as mutual dialogue and life experience is integrated into the learning process etc." (D1_01)

"In order to get feedback the participants of group work programs always fill in the evaluation questionnaires" (D1_02)

PERSPECTIVES

The content of the programs is focused on the participant's personal as well as labor market needs. However, there is a lack of human and financial resources, lack of services this is why the non-formal education program development prospects are limited:

„[...] in 5 years the organisation can be closed because of economic recession and low salaries as the most qualified employees can look for work somewhere else"(D1_02)

However there is a disagreement between the experts:

"Over the next 5 years, the organization can expand and employees' salaries rise if the state provides more funding. However, it is likely that non-formal education in Lithuania in the coming 5 years will remain in stagnation if there is no system of recognition of competences acquired through non-formal learning and self-education built. The positive step would be the creation of attractive, flexible system which would allow to combine the recognition of competences acquired in non-formal way or through self-education" (D1_01)

THE STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING NONFORMAL EDUCATION SECTOR

Other key problems: lack of motivation and the students differences in their background education, lack of modern methodological tools and professionals for the new programs. The experience of implementing projects with foreign countries as well as problems of certification appears to be obvious lack of non-formal education castor: sometimes non-formal qualifications are neither recognized by formal education institutions nor by the employers.

In addition, an increasing emphasis is on the four closely linked international initiatives: the Millennium Development Goals, Education for All, the United Nations Literacy Decade and the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development program. All these initiatives emphasize the local context, formal and non-formal education institutions and community unification, cooperation with civil society, interest groups, involvement in politics and government. They are also based on common and important issues such as poverty reduction, gender equality, human rights and biodiversity, the right of access to education etc.

Lithuania has Education Strategy, but non-formal education is not emphasized. Only the references to the existing Law on Non-formal Education are given. In expert opinion the latter is:

„[...] is quite outdated, it was adopted in 1998. [...]" (D1_01)

Each region[9] of Lithuania has its own Development Plan, however, non-formal education is not mentioned in these plans:

„First of all we should separate this area from formal education system, and promote educational activities which introduced the essence of non-formal education to the general public, and the benefits of it, including regional authorities, employers, educational institutions, consulting and non-governmantal organizations etc"(D1_01)

Thus, in order to establish non-formal education institution:

„[...] One needs to understand the essence of non-formal education system, as well as European strategic non-formal education documents and provisions, to learn about best practices in Europe and to have a clear vision on what programs are planned to prepare and what competences these programmes are aimed at, and

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[9] Lithuania is divided into regions (counties). Each county is divided into municipalities. There are 10 regions (counties) and 60 municipalities.

what benefits it will bring and to whom, and how the quality of services will be ensured." (D1_01)

The following strengths of non-formal education sector were highlighted:

„[...] Independence from many formal procedures in comparison with formal education system. The flexibility and orientation towards personal needs of the participants as well as labour market needs".(D1_01)

The weaknesses are:

„[...]there is no non-formal education system strategy, there is no funding and quality assurance system, no monitoring mechanisms as well as no recogniotion of competences of non-formal learning"(D1_01)

Therefore, in order to improve non-formal education and labor market relations it is crucial:

„[...] to include employers and their associations, as well as encourage their motivation and change their attitudes towards increasing competences of their employees. We also have to consider encouraging their involvement into active participation in employee career development and in the process of employee self-education"(D1_01)

According to the experts, child care facilities for parents who attend classes are important:

„[...] to establish child care facilities within training infrastructure and within organizations or to provide "mobile nanny" services"(D1_02)

At Vilnius LLMTA such child care services are not available due to a lack of financial resources. With regard to the impact of the current recession it should be noted that according to the experts:

- *„[...] the consequences will be more serious to non-formal education than to formal education system [...]."* (D1_01) and (D1_02)

3.3. Case 2 – non-formal education - UAB „Lyderio akademija"

- *Type of education* : Non-Formal adult education

- *Type of institution*: Agency (private)
- *Name of institution*: UAB Lyderio akademija (Leadership Academy) a unit of UAB Eurointegracijos projektai (Eurointergration Projects)
- *Interviewe 1*: Director (D2_01)
- *Interviewe 2*: Tutor/Lecturer (D2_02)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

UAB Lyderio akademija (thereinafter Leadership Academy) established in 2008, is a unit of UAB Eurointegracijos projektai (Eurointergration Projects). The company is providing services in non-formal education project preparation from 2003. From 2008 Leadership Academy offers market and personnel research services and organize internal and external company trainings for staff and managers. These trainings are organized and research carried out by social sciences (psychology, sociology, educational science) professionals with many years of experience in scientific research and expertise. These activities aim:

> „[...] to provide good services and ensure their quality as well as investing into certain matters that can bring added value to the company."(D2_01)

The financial resources are provided by stakeholders:

> „The funding consists of stakeholder's capital and profit gained from the activities. The annual budget is about… lets' say 100 000 litas … a year [approx 30 000 EUR]. It is not a lot."(D2_01)

Over the past 5 years the number of training courses, especially in 2006-2008, increased significantly. In 2009 the situation somewhat changed – there was a decrease in the market for all such services as companies refuse trainings or plan them for the "better" future. Attendance rates also fell.

The participants of the trainings are mainly specialists in various fields: business sector representatives, managers, industry workers, traders etc.:

> „Yes we worked with risk groups – people with disabilities, visually- impaired, with hearing difficulties etc."(D2_02)

> „The range is very broad. From the lowest backgrounds, but these are not courses for let's say … cleaners… the range is very wide." (D2_01)

Most of the participants are from business sector whereas social exclusion groups make up only a small percentage of the participants. The latter "pass" into the trainings if the company is implementing trainings funded by the EU structural funds:

„[...] actually we should include them in the trainings, I mean they themselves should organize some kind of trainings or maybe they should participate into the trainings of their groups or organize some kind of trainings themselves." (D2_01)

THE CONTENT

Leadership Academy has a wide variety of training courses: psychological, legal, managerial and economic-financial training:

„[...] the trainings in psychology, social exclusion trainings for social workers, and educators. Also various trainings for specially targeted audiences e.g. carriers are organised. Conflict management courses or courses for integration of social groups can be provided. It is a broad area, more connected with non-profit sector etc." (D2_01)

„[...] the content of trainings consists of communication skills, conflict management, stress management and negotiations." (D2_02)

The trainings provided by the company are largely based on forming social competences and personal development. For adults with no relevant education for the job market the trainings which increase self-confidence are organized:

„I myself teach psychology-oriented things. The focus is placed on self-confidence, self-analysis and the creation of social welfare for themselves. The content of the subjects I teach, as well as of other colleagues, is available at any time, as there is a system of administration, which allows to have everything either on paper or in electronic version." (D2_02)

„The majority are adults…of course, adult education and involvement into the community and understanding the need to change and the willingness to receive education which would be beneficial... i.e. to develop simply to feel well in the labour market, so that you feel competitive – and not lose the job in 5 or 6 years, let's say…" (D2_01)

The most popular courses are of managerial nature: strategic management, marketing, audit, etc. as well as psychological: i.e. self-awareness, leadership, communication skills i.e. the trainings:

„<..>that are beneficial in solving problems and which are needed to the company/organization employees [...]" (D2_01)

Leadership Academy is not focusing on the development of sence of community and a sense of belonging, but the psychological training can indirectly reinforce these things:

„[...] the participants of the trainings exchange information that is one thing. Secondly, maybe we will not create the community, but we provide knowledge and this is an advantage to the members of any community as we provide them with information which they can use for the community interests." (D2_01)

STAFF CONDITIONS

The company does not receive annual funding because, as it is funded by private shareholders' capital. Lecturers are employed by the individual short-term agreements, and administration is employed by the work contract. The salaries in this non-formal education institution are higher than in state-funded formal education sector (e.g. colleges and universities):

„I also work in formal education but the salary is much higher in non-formal education. There are a lot of teachers who work in private non-formal education companies as well as in state-funded formal education." (D2_02)

It is clear that salaries in private non-formal adult education sector are much higher than in state-funded formal education. This is why non-formal private sector appeals to teaching staff from universities and/or colleges as they can get additional income (i.e. more social security but lower salaries in state-owned education institutions vs more insecure and competitive jobs but higher salaries in private education sector).

TARGET GROUPS

The gender differences are not very distinctive among the participants:

„[...] we have more male participants, but I should say the proportion is 6 [males] to 4 [females]." (D2_02)

The participants in Leadership Academy trainings are mostly business and public institutions representatives: managers (of upper, middle and lower level). Participants from social exclusion groups are an exception. The trainings are organized in groups of 15 to 30 people.

LINKS WITH THE FORMAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

Informants unanimously agreed that cooperation between formal and non-formal education institutions is possible:

> *„[...]non-formal education and formal education could find a lot of links in collaboration in project activities and creating study modules [...]"* (D2_02)

> *„[...] the exchange of information is needed and maybe joint programmes which would combine theory and practice can be introduced. I think we should join the efforts in one whole but we need to know what the goals of doing this are [...] "* (D2_01)

The informants expressed the need to strengthen the cooperation between formal and non-formal education:

> *„[...] non-formal education could act as a compensation mechanism – to fill in the gaps of formal education – and this can be as a guarantee for continuous education"* (D2_02)

On the other hand the opinions of informants diverge:

> *„[...] we are too small to influence this [formal education] area, but there should be a common attitude to all education providers - formal and non-formal. There is no need for a lot of teachers, but there's a need for good teachers. The most important thing is quality. To my mind there should be an internet portal or a database which would allow exchanging information and participating in certain projects, involving persons who have certain competences and knowledge in certain fields. But this is complicated to do, and I think more initiative and efforts are needed from the formal education providers"* (D2_01)

There is a lack of inter-institutional cooperation and there is a need to introduce a common system of monitoring formal and non-formal education quality.

THE RECOGNITION OF PREVIOUSLY GAINED EDUCATION

In this case study, it was found that the previous non-formal education or work experience is not recognized by formal education institutions in Lithuania. The system of recognition does not exist and the following weaknesses were mentioned:

> *„[...] this is formalization of self-education and acquired competences at the institutional level. As long as this will not be done, the possibilities to continue education will not be fully realized"* (D2_02)

> *„[...]There are two things – lack of initiative and lack of funding [...] "* (D2_01)

COHESION WITH MARGINAL AND SOCIALLY SENSITIVE GROUPS

The company attracts (finds) the participants by using various advertising strategies, and modern mass media:

> *„[...] through advertising, marketing and other means. There are ads in the internet, cooperation proposals sent to companies and public institutions."* (D2_02)

> *„[...]we simply actively promote our services in the market, we participate in project work and try to spread information to various companies, communities and enterprises that might be interested in us."* (D2_01)

However, the promotion activities are not targeted at social exclusion groups. The proposals might be addressed to organizations which bring together such people but social responsibility is not stressed in these proposals. Social exclusion groups are sometimes involved in international and local projects, but the marketing strategy usually aims at business and company trainings. The models of good practice of working with risk groups do not exist.

In order to be more visible in the market and attract more participants Leadership Academy collaborates with other agencies involved in the business and associations. It is noted that non-formal education activities are paid and the price per person ranges from 200 to 600 Litas (approx. 70 to 170 EUR). Classes usually take place in rented premises: conference rooms or other private spaces, fully adapted for this kind of activities or customers' premises (i.e. in-company trainings).

TEACHING METHODS

There is no training for company employees:

> *„Teachers who work for the company are very competent and well qualified, trainings for them are not organised [...]"*(D2_02)

Speaking about the teaching methods informants stress practical aspects:

> *„[...]The main principle of the trainings is to focus more on practice than theory. During the training sessions we try to encourage the involvement of the participants, to share the decision making experience and reflect on their own experience. In this way theoretical models with practical things are integrated [...]"*(D2_02)

> *„ [...] I would say that 80 percent should be practice, 20 percent – theory [...]"* (D2_01)

In order to get the feedback about the efficiency of trainings each participant completes a questionnaire. The data is collected and analysed by the teachers and management.

To sum up, it is worth noting that teachers are not trained, they simply sell their knowledge to the company. The teachers stress the applicability of the knowledge to practice and focus more on active methods and active involvement of the participants into trainings.

PERSPECTIVES

The organization is planning to re-develop the courses that are the most popular and most needed: psychology and business management:

> „[...] conflict management, influencing, communication skills, career development and self-education [...]" (D2_02)

As well as:

> „[...] business management training with a focus on added value creation [...]" (D2_01)

In 5 years the organization can face difficulties because of economic recession:

> „[...] financial difficulties, as our potential clients became insolvent or have to solve survival in the market problems of their companies, this is why the attention to non-formal education is disappearing [...]" (D2_02)

> „[...] the unwillingness to learn or unwillingness to spend money [...]"(D2_01)

On the other hand, the organization is expected to survive in the market during the recession:

> „[...] I think we will become stronger and will meet our client's needs [...]" (D2_02)

It is obvious that Leadership Academy is currently facing difficulties, but these difficulties are faced by all non-formal education system:

> „[...] the search of funding and the possibilities to get funding; motivation of the participants, changing market situation and orientation to specific market segments [...]" (D2_02)

The informants noted that all non-formal education system in Lithuania should:

„[...] transform into very specific training. It is time to specialize in some specific activities which mean doing only one thing but doing it excellently [...]" (D2_01)

Lithuanian non-formal education system is seen as still having the potential to evolve and develop the training area, enhancing both its content and the methods used as well as maintaining the competitive edge:

„[...] to renew the content and increase the choice. Nowadays there are lots of companies who offer identical services [...]" (D2_02)

According to informants, non-formal and formal education should not compete but reinforce one another. Formal education provides general knowledge and non-formal education is more oriented to the future needs of the employee:

[...] the attractiveness can only be created by purposefulness, functionality of trainings [...]" (D2_02)

THE STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING NONFORMAL EDUCATION SECTOR

The Education Strategy in Lithuania exists, but according to informants, in order to institutionalize non-formal education we need:

„[...] to know well the objectives of non-formal education sector and have a clear vision and means how to implement objectives and achieve goals [...]" (D2_02)

These strengths of non-formal education sector according to the informants are:

„[...] it is an alternative to acquire knowledge about something that is very relevant at the given moment. Also the time needed to train is usually very short [...]"(D2_02)

The weaknesses:

„[...] non-institutionalized evaluation and recognition of competences in formal education system [...]" (D2_02)

„[...] lack of professionalism and large numbers of non-formal training companies in the market [...]" (D2_01)

Thus, it is important:

„[...] the people invested in themselves, the companies funded this investment, successful projects received state support and were promoted nationally [...]"(D2_01)

Speaking about the impact of economic recession on the non-formal education sector the informants noted some negative consequences:

„this will have influence on the choice, on the motivation of learners, and their social security. This will have more influence on private companies" (D2_02)

…and some positive views were expressed:

„[...] This will positively influence the market as only the fittest companies will survive. I think everything will be positive, we just need to work hard in order to achieve the results [...]"(D2_01)

3.4. The access of adults to non-formal education (both cases integrated)

The following conclusions about non-formal education in Lithuania can be made:

Lithuania has developed the legislative framework to regulate adult non-formal education and has prepared strategic development plans according to the European Commission directives and the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning. Non-formal adult education training system in the private sector is sufficiently developed and thus the individuals' needs are fully met.

The significant feature of non-formal education sector in Lithuania is rather fierce competition as the abundance of services exceeds market demand. The transition from traditional to more sophisticated services (i.e. from general to more specific needs tailored courses) is felt. However, there is a lack of inter-institutional cooperation and smaller private training companies are not likely to mediate the transition to formal education.

Lithuanian Education Strategy 2003-2012 emphasizes the need to secure the availability, continuity and consistency of education system. However even these non-formal education programs that have gained expertise may not always be recognized as part of formal education; the private training sector is not interested in this. On the other hand, non-formal education allows training participants to become involved in community life, revealing their entrepreneurial spirit, knowledge and psychological understanding. All of this certainly helps those individuals to further develop their personal capacity to decide and to act responsibly in today's complex markets of the world. However, non-formal adult education in the private sector is not always accessible to risk group members.

The main obstacles impeding the non-formal adult education development in private companies, can be distinguished as follows: a) the lack of funding (funding shortage complicates both public and private sector employers' activities); b) growing unemployment and lack of motivation; c) the absence of recognition mechanism of the knowledge acquired non-formally and through self-education; d) the absence of integrated non-formal education system in the private and public levels which complicates the competition in the market and eliminates the possibility of quality monitoring.

Lithuanian Education Concept (1992) emphasises developing permanent education system. All permanent education process can be divided into pre-school education, general education, vocational training and lifelong learning. Adult education in this cycle has a dual role. First, it enables the learner to constantly update their skills and make it possible to avoid losing work. Second, it ensures the education success for future generations. Currently Lithuania has developed the legislative framework to regulate the full adult non-formal education and has prepared strategic development plans that correspond to the EU Directives and the Memorandum on Lifelong Education goals. However, the adult education system is not fully developed, and individual needs are not fully satisfied. Therefore, non-formal adult education in the country lacks of official recognition mechanism. In other words, there is no mechanism for recognition of knowledge gained through self-education, which in turn reduces the attractiveness of non-formal education to adults.

Lithuanian Education Strategy 2003-2012 provisions the need to achieve education for all levels, securing the education system availability, continuity and consistency. It is stated that non-formal education programs which have gained expertise can be recognized as part of formal education. Thus, non-formal adult education sector can serve in many cases providing individuals access to formal education at different levels.

The analysis of non-formal adult education revealed the importance of state support. Non-formal adult education in private sector receives no state funding (except projects). This affects the curriculum quality and attractiveness, as well as those attending training courses.

The main obstacles impeding the non-formal adult education development can be distinguished as follows: a) the lack of funding; b) demographic variables (i.e. women are more involved in re-training and training than men or those having family comittments etc); c) growing unemployment and lack of motivation; d) the absence of a mechanism to recognize knowledge acquired through experience.

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21. Ušeckienė, L., Ališauskienė, R. (2007). Tęstinio suaugusiųjų švietimo galimybės. http://www.coactivity.vgtu.lt/upload/filosof_zurn/useckiene_alisauskiene_t15_no2.pdf [accessed 2009-06-16].

22. Valstybinės švietimo strategijos 2003-2012 metų nuostatos. http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=214370 [accessed 2009-04-13].

23. Žemaitaitytė, I. (2007). Neformalus suaugusiųjų švietimas. Vilnius: Mykolo Romerio universiteto leidykla.

SECTION 4 / PRISON EDUCATION

4.1. Background information on prison education in Lithuania

According to international statistics of criminal records, Lithuania takes the first position in number of persons in prisons (Kiškis, 2006). According to the Prison Department under the Ministry of Justice data, in the last 10 years, the number of imprisoned persons is slowly decreasing (see chart bellow). However, the declining numbers of imprisoned persons do not solve problems, such as overcrowded interrogation insulators, the social resocialization of prisoners, the safe conditions for convicted persons and safe working environment and protection of the prison personnel. This situation is influenced by such factors as 1) continuity of organized crime and criminal activities after the imprisonment, 2) the increase in number of illiterate and unmotivated prisoners, and 3) the increasing number of persons sentenced to life imprisonment. Moreover, the successful social integration is difficult to achieve because of negative public attitudes towards prisoners and prison system.[10]
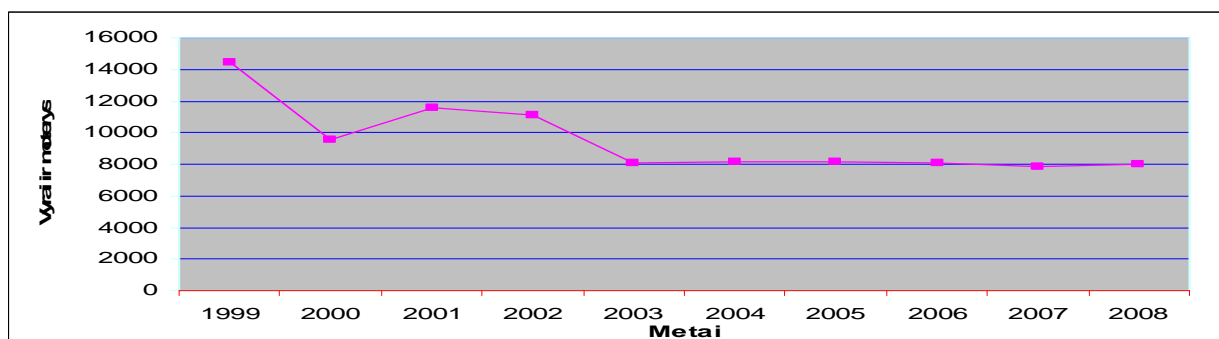
Number of prisoners at the end of the year

The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania ensures free general secondary education and free vocational and higher education for best performing students on the basis of personal abilities (the Lithuanian Constitution). One of the Lithuanian educational principles is equal opportunities which mean that each person should have access to education. Every citizen of the Republic of Lithuania has a right to study according to the Republic of Lithuania Law on Education. This Law also provisions that the individuals whose freedom is temporarily restricted must have a possibility to take on the initial, primary, secondary education, as well as training for qualification or self-training (Lithuanian Education Law).[11] The law mentions only education for persons whose freedom is temporarily restricted, but does not mention the education of persons sentenced to life imprisonment which may mean that they are excluded from the status of students.

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[10] Lietuvos Respublikos teisingumo ministro įsakymas //Dėl Kalėjimų departamento prie Lietuvos Respublikos teisingumo ministerijos 2009-2011-ųjų metų strateginio veiklos plano patvirtinimo. Vilnius, 2009 m. gegužės 11 d. Nr. 1R-160, 1 p.
[11] Lietuvos Respublikos Švietimo įstatymas. Vilnius: LR Seimas, 2003 m. birželio 28 d. *Nr.* IX-1630, 5 str. , 25 str., 35 str.

EDUCATION CURRENTLY AVAILABLE IN PRISON

As of 2008, the majority of persons carrying out the punishment had only basic education.[12] The 2007 data demonstrates that the level of education of prisoners follows a downward trend i.e. the number of prisoners with only primary or no education increased from 1206 to 1337 i.e. from 19 percent to 22 percent per year if compared with the total number of prisoners. This trend generates further problems as prisoners with only primary or no education are difficult to get enrolled into social rehabilitation programmes for example, integration into the labor market programmes etc..[13]

4.2. Case 1: LUKISKES PRISON

Type of education: Prison education
Type of institution: Closed Prison
Name of institution: Lukiskes Remand Prison
Intervieweee 1: Director (C1_01)
Intervieweee 2: Tutor/Lecturer (C1_02)

4.2.1. Background information

In the beginning of 2009 there were 960 prisoners at Lukiskės Prison (full name: Lukiskes Remand Prison – Closed Prison). Lukiskes Prison was built in 1904 and is the only top-level security prison. Located in the center of Vilnius Lukiskes Prison is a prison of adult persons who:

- are in pre-trial measure (the arrest to whom was appointed by Vilnius, Alytus, Utena and Marijampole courts);
- are sentenced to life imprisonment;
- persons whom a court set to make prison sentence;
- persons moved from the houses of correction to a camera-type facilities.

Lukiskes Prison is also equipped with 16-seat custody premises. The majority of prisoners are male persons appointed to carry out the punishment of the arrest by the courts, most of whom have a secondary education. The interviewees unanimously agreed that the possibility and conditions for learning exist at Lukiskes Prison. The conditions for learning according to the interviewees depend on external and internal

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[12] Kalėjimų departamento prie LR Teisingumo ministerijos Informacinių sistemų ir projektų skyrius Socialinės reabilitacijos tarnybų veiklos ataskaita 2008 m. sausio-gruodžio mėn. duomenys, Vilnius: 2009-02-03

[13] Kalėjimų departamentas prie LR Teisingumo ministerijos, Kalėjimų departamento ir jam pavaldžių įstaigų bei valstybės įmonių 2007 metų veikos pagrindiniai duomenys, Vilnius: 2008, 22 p.

factors, the most important of which are the implementation of Lithuanian social policy and human resources management:

„If the person is interested in providing the assistance, then s/he performs well. For example, be it a psychologist or a social worker... For example a Deputy director ...He performed really well in this field" (C1_01)

„Yes, these possibilities exist. And ... the first thing is conditions and opportunities [to learn]. All these factors depend on a lot of things, and we can not say that there are no possibilities. Of course we cannot say that these possibilities [to learn] are perfect, you know... Those who really want to learn, have the possibilities ..." (C1_02)

Some doubts about the lack of motivation to learn were expressed and according to the interviewee the prisoners' motivation (both internal and external) is even more important than the training facilities:

„There is such a wide variety of programs, but the prisoners are not motivated to participate in the programs and they participate only in case if they do not have anything else to do ..." (C1_01)

4.2.2. The access of adults to education in prison

BACKGROUND TO PRISON EDUCATION
TUTORS IN PRISON

How developed are current practices and future plans for providing adult prisoners with access to education in prison ?

The age structure of prisoners participating in prison education is from 18 to 40 years. Almost all learners are male and only a few women participate in training programs (note that Lukiskes Prison is a male prison; women who are awaiting the trial are accommodated here temporarily). Prisoners have the opportunity to enroll into various levels of education. As well as other prisons in Lithuania, Lukiskes Prison has a General Education and Training Center which provides educational services to the prisoners. All prisoners have the possibility to enroll into general education programs. As of 2008 data, there were 22 prisoners who finished basic education classes and 13 prisoners who finished secondary education classes in prison. It is also possible to study in higher education programmes. According to the interviewee, Vilnius Pedagogical University has implemented a program for the resocialization of prisoners supported by the European Union structural funds. Under this program 5 persons were enrolled into tertiary education. There were 20 persons sentenced to life imprisonment enrolled into general secondary education programmes.

It is difficult to measure the average duration of imprisonment, as according to the interviewee, the training center does not collect such data, but the average student age is easy to identify. According to the 2009 data, there were 157 prisoners, whose average age was 25 years. This average age of prisoners demonstrates that most of the prisoners are young persons who do not have basic education. It can therefore be assumed that they spent the entire time of the street i.e. they completed "street school". On the one hand, the school failure may be one of the reasons of delinquent behavior. On the other hand prisoners, especially those sentenced to life imprisonment are obedient and demonstrate respectful conduct to professors and teachers:

> *„ They are very regular... those who are sentenced to life imprisonment are restricted to exit to the inner yard and move freely inside the prison. This is why they say: "we wait for teachers like dogs at the door..."* (C1_01)

Lukiskes Prison has a library, but the books are very old. Textbooks and teaching material are provided by those who provide training. Prisoners learn according to Lithuanian basic and secondary education programs with the exception of physical education and technology, which, according to the possibilities are integrated into other subjects. There are no special or adapted programs for them. There are also qualification training programs. Prisoners learn independently, and teachers or lecturers are advisers, who facilitate their learning. In cases when prisoners take computer courses, they sit in a specially equipped computer class. There they learn only how to use computers, but they are not allowed accessing the Internet. According to interviewees, each exit from the prison cell to other premises is strictly regulated by law and they cannot access the internet. The interviewees think that access to the internet would allow having a computer screen in each cell and the teacher or a lecturer could give lectures and workshops using distance learning platform. Speaking about the possibilities to choose one or another study program or the right to decide whether to study or not there is a disagreement between the management and the tutor. The choice to study (or not) is influenced by two factors: lack of motivation, and strict prison or state regulations which aggravate access to the education:

> *„ In theory, yes ... But in practice... it is clear that nobody can force them to learn, but... the prisoners are ... hmm… a kind of subculture... and there is nothing you can do. This is just such a system..."* (C1_01)

> *„ Where the education plan allows, you may choose the subjects. Education plan allows choosing some subjects, but there are certain standards. In basic education programmes all the subjects are compulsory and there is no choice as such. Only the possibility to choose a foreign language exists."* (C1_02)

The prison management has a significant influence on the choice of prisoners to participate in the workshops. It largely depends on the prison management and on the

education of the prison personnel themselves whether they are willing to adopt innovative ideas:

> „They are not obliged to attend [classes] … they are free to choose. Again, I say I cannot talk about all prisons… hmm …it also depends on the team captain… if s/he is democratic s/he allows choosing, and there's no forced participation in classes „ (C1_01)

According to the interviewee, the time of participation of prisoners in the education is regulated by law and funding is provided with regard to the number of teaching hours. The law allows not more than one teaching (advice) hour per week on all subjects that a particular prisoner chooses to study.

> „ Again, the participation in the prison workshops is very clearly defined in the plan of education, and is it … in practice, I can say… it depends on how much financial resources we have to pay the teachers [...] Prisoners receive only a limited, very limited, number of teacher consultations. Limited, because, well, the funding is limited and inadequate…." (C1_01)

It can be assumed that due to the lack of funding, the quality of teaching is low. However, despite this, the interviewee considers that one of the main advantages of prison education is that teaching of prisoners is free of charge (as it is funded by the State or the European Union funds):

> "They can get free training in various areas, be it computer literacy courses, which are free of charge… People outside prison must usually pay for such trainings…" (C1_01)

The motivation of prisoners to participate in the education is generated by the use of "golden carrot" methods. This means that prisoners who enroll into the education are allowed to more dates and can receive guests and gift parcels from friends and relatives more frequently. They are also allowed to have more rest and relaxation periods. The enrollment into the education is also one of the means to commute a punishment.

> " The Penal Code provisions encouragement measures for the fair conduct, participation in the education and diligent work…" (C1_02)

> „This is a question perhaps not quite for me, but I can only say, that the participation in the resocialization programs, namely work, training and other, give them the opportunity to have lighter and less restricted prison regime…" (C1_02)

The study found that prisoners' motivation depends on:

• The family background;
• The type of crime committed;
• The duration of the sentence.

The interviewee expressed the view that persons imprisoned for life have greater intrinsic motivation to learn if compared to the prisoners, whose freedom is restricted only temporarily. The lower the education of the prisoner the less likely s/he will be motivated to learn. The lack of social workers and psychologists in prison is considered as on of the reasons why the prisoners' motivation to learn is low.

> *"[It] depends for what crime they are in prison and for how long. If the prisoner is sentenced to life their motivation is different. They are already motivated intrinsically …" (C1_01)*

> *"If there is a social worker, or if there is a psychologist who is very bright, and has the ability to excite something in the prisoner… well… or change at least one value and show that his [prisoner's] life is not only to satisfy their lower needs, it is clear that the motivation to change will increase. But when those opportunities to change are numerous, the social workers are few, and we really lack them. It is difficult to implement. Clearly, this is done, but with difficulties…" (C1_01)*

How can prison education be promoted through system level change in prisons?

It can be assumed that for most of the prisoners the motivation to learn increases when s/he hopes to obtain further concessions to gain knowledge and learn the language in order to emigrate abroad. The motivation is also strengthened by the implementation of the mentoring program and qualified and motivated professionals.

There are no strategies or processes that would encourage prisoners to enroll into the education. Prisoners are interviewed about their training expectations and motivation to learn. There are also prisoners who demonstrate high academic achievements. Maybe it is because they can spend most of their time studying. Learning can be also a solution to a problem of remaining human in inhuman conditions. Most prisoners are released this is why the emphasis should be placed on changing value systems with the help of training programs which provide opportunities to develop professional skills. These professional skills would help them to integrate into society, find employment and create family. Therefore, significant attention must be paid to prisoners' motivation to   learn.

> *"No one here promotes learning actively, we just keep asking them throughout the whole academic year: "when was the last time you studied something" or "how long and where did you study" or "would you like to start doing something instead of wasting your time"? It is not a secret that not everybody has a job, only a few have a job. And they demonstrate really good results of training and*

passing the state exams… there are cases when they collect ninety points or even ninety-six points [out of 100]" (C1_02)

Mentoring programmes cannot be implemented effectively, because Lukiškės prison is of the highest level of security, so the prisoners can only communicate with their room mates. Therefore, it is very difficult to assess the real benefits of prisoners' education programmes. It can be only said that the prisoners' motivation to learn is influenced by such factors as the type of the crime and personal characteristics.

The interviewees unanimously agreed that the prisoners' education receives a lot of attention. It was also stressed that the success of the education of prisoners and the results depend also on the education providers' motivation:

> *"I think that enough. For I tell you, if you are willing, you will always find a means…"* (C1_01)

> *"I think that enough…"* (C1_02)

The doubt was expressed that the ongoing resocialization programmes are not effective, as the training organizers have two functions: the criminal and educational function.

> *"… when we ask the students why resocialization programmes are not completely effective, the problem is that the supervisors perform two functions: the penal and educational function. This is not good, if the person performs two opposite functions; it is obvious that the educational function can never be positive. Therefore, the prisoners usually look down on supervisors."* (C1_01)

They learn in prison mostly independently as only a few hours a week of individual consultations from teachers or lecturers, who come to the prisoners in their cell is available. The exceptions are computer classes and art therapy classes which take place in a specially adapted room. Exams are also held according the rules of exam organization set by the government – the prisoners are taken into administration premises. There are no specially tailored, adapted and accredited training programs for prisoners. They study in accordance with generally accredited primary, secondary or higher education programs.

Lukiskes Prison strategic plan mentions one of the priority activities for 2007 (in cooperation with the Prison Department and subsidiary bodies of the respective agencies, governmental and non-governmental organizations and through the participation of international fund-financed programs and projects) to improve existing

and implement new social-psychological, rehabilitation and employment programs" (Lukiskes Prison - Prison 2008-2010 strategic action plan)[14].

Are the literacy needs of marginalized adult groups in prison being satisfactorily met?

Each institution provides 3 basic standardized and from 5 to 18 other social rehabilitation programs. The basic programs (adaptation of the convicted persons and integration into the society) form the main part of individual corrections plan, which provisions the participation of the individual prisoner into rehabilitation programs, taking into account the characteristics of the person, his/her education and training, the nature of crime and time spent in prison.

In 2007 there were 15 social rehabilitation programmes implemented in Lukiskes prison. In cooperation with Vilnius Pedagogical University a special university-level study program was developed and implemented. In January 2008 there were 5 prisoners who wee enrolled into this programme (Prison Department under the Ministry of Justice, 2008) [15]. According to the interviewee all prison education programs can be as follows (see the scheme bellow):

ADAPTATION

↓

INTEGRATION IN PRISON ENVIRONMENT

↓

RESOCIALIZATION

↓

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SKILLS AND DEPENDENCES

Which changes are planned?

Lukiskes Prison Regulation provisions the implementation of social rehabilitation and employment programmes as well as (together with the Ministry of Education and Science and Vilnius County Governor's administration) providing general training for persons in prisons.[16] The interviewees unanimously agree that in theory the lifelong learning and rehabilitation goals are mentioned in 2008-2010 year strategic plan, but expressed doubts whether the possibilities and conditions for prisoners' learning are met. According to the interviewees, Lukiskes prison is the highest security level of prison and according to the existing law; it is operated under strict rules. The success of prison training programs also depends on human resources:

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[14] Lukiškių tardymo izoliatoriaus – kalėjimo strateginis 2008-2010 veiklos planas, [accessed 2009.03.23] Prieiga per internetą http://www.lukiskes.lt/?m=66&kat_nr=69.

[15] Kalėjimų departamentas prie LR Teisingumo ministerijos, Kalėjimų departamento ir jam pavaldžių įstaigų bei valstybės įmonių 2007 metų veikos pagrindiniai duomenys, Vilnius: 2008, 23 p.

[16] Lukiškių tardymo izoliatoriaus – kalėjimo nuostatai. Vilnius: 2003 birželio 4 d. Nr. 168, [accessed 2009.03.23] Prieiga per internetą http://www.lukiskes.lt/?m=66&kat_nr=42

"Yes. There is a unit in each prison called Social integration and reintegration department and all these things are implemented by it. However. a lot depends on personal will and initiative..." *(C1_01)*

"Yes, that can be said that the prison is obliged to establish some kind of training opportunities. To what extent these obligations are fulfilled depends on the regime type of the prison". (C1_02)

Prisoner Education in Lithuania is financed from the state budget and the Structural Funds. Primary and secondary education programs are financed from the state budget. According to the 2008 data from the Department of Prisons 196 prisoners studied in general education programs. In describing the prisoners' education in Lithuania retrospectively the interviewees unanimously agreed that the changes after the restoration of Lithuanian independence are notable, however, Lithuania is not so advanced in comparison to Europe. Lukiskes Prison is the only prison in Lithuania where secondary school state exams are organized.

However, there is no continuity in education for those persons who were released. The ex-prisoners are themselves responsible whether to continue participation in the education system or not. When a person is released from prison s/he receives the documents from the prison authorities showing what study programmes s/he finished or what exams s/he passed. These documents allows him/her to continue the trainings.

Speaking about the higher education in prison, according to the interviewees there are practically no opportunities. Given that the prisoner can only study independently and receive only a few teachers and later s/he has to take exams together with other students the problem of exit from the prison arises. The exit from prison is strictly regulated despite that the idea that prisoners have the opportunity to study in higher education is much supported. The interviewees think that the procedures should be changed. One of the possible solutions would be allowing to use the internet for educational purposes in this prison.

"The only thing which is very unfortunate, and for me personally it seems very unfortunate, and perhaps it could be some way… (although I have seen it in Europe open prisons), there used to access the Internet) that the prisoners would be able to access filtered Internet , which could provide educational material ... Yes, at least to filtered Internet and the material for reading ..." (C1_02)

The interviewees also noted that the positive effects of prison education has the "openness." of the prison. They also expressed concern that the current extremely strict order aggravates changes in education of prisoners:

"Well… prison education is highly limited because of strict regime and frankly speaking, we do not expect very quick changes. Our prisoners are people whom courts imposed some restrictions of..." (C1_02)

DISTANCE EDUCATION

There is a disagreement between the management and tutor on the computer and distance learning models. Taking into account the fact that the prisoners may not use the Internet and distance learning classes cannot be provided:

" No, no, no, if only we can speak about the distance learning, we immediately have to mention that the access to the Internet for them is forbidden. Not limited, but denied ..." (C1_02)

Mykolas Romeris University introduced distance social work bachelor program, which is intended for prisoners. Then the problem is that the funds for program development are used, but according to the respondent, the prisoners can not use the Internet:

"Computer programs exist and all the possibilities exist, but one thing is clear - they cannot use the internet ..." (C1_01)

The respondents unanimously agreed that the plans to implement distance learning programs exist, but there acts prohibiting prisoners to use online services (internet). In October 2009 Cyprus will host international conference of Prison Education Association. One of the items on the agenda will be the prisoners' opportunities for distance learning. Lithuanian representatives are planning to participate in this conference and to contribute to tackling the issue. The funding is also very important the prisoners' distance learning: it is therefore expected to use the European Structural Funds to implement distance education:

"The internet, this is one of the obstacles, because the distance education is usually organized as online studies and we are not allowed to use internet in our prison. Another problem is funding. It is s a pretty expensive pleasure really ..." (C1_01)

"I very clearly stated that the regime of the prison requirements „... In that sense, you know, if we allow them e-mails to write without any control, then…."Prison Education Association will try to use EU various funds and so on and so on ..." (C1_02)

Prisoners' literacy is determined using the same methods as of any person who wishes to start or continue their education. Special techniques or procedures applied only to prisoners we do not have. As they learn according to general education programs across

the country and there's no need to have adapted or otherwise tailored training programs exclusively for prisoners. When a prisoner is realized to freedom, s/he shall become a citizen with the same rights and opportunities as people without a criminal past. They carried out the punishment imposed, so the general public should consider them as equal members of the society. The ex-prisoners should also accept and adopt the rules applicable in society and to follow them. In Lithuania today is negative attitudes towards prisoners predominates.

> „No, we ... in fact, you can scold me or not, but we're working with special needs students ... we cannot teach them, and do not know how you would say exactly, but the exclusion of certain social, educational, andragogical group in prison can even be dangerous ..." (C1_02)

To compare Lukiskes Prison men and women participation in education is almost impossible, because women here are only held here temporarily and are later transferred to the women's prisons. The respondents unanimously agreed that prisoners involved in training, are more disciplined and serious problems with teachers or lecturers never arise.

> "I think not ... I think not ... because it is very clearly stated in the society ..." (C1_01)

> "No, as far as I know, there is not ..." (C1_02)

Primary and secondary school teachers are involved in prison education through the long-term contracts. They act as consultants and facilitate the learning process. The teachers are only men, and according to the interviewee it is a kind of positive discrimination in order to protect the women, because all the prisoners are men. The teachers who work with prisoners are employed through personal networks with friends or using online job search or in collaboration with Vilnius Pedagogical University. Therapeutic groups are led by volunteers, with the exception of psychologists, who work under a contract of employment. If the project is implemented the people are hired temporarily for the project. The priest comes to prison on a voluntary basis too. Lukiskes Prison quite willingly accepts volunteers, if they can provide services and to demonstrate their continued value to their services. Prisoners are also supported by non-governmental organization "KRISS" members, but now, according to the interviewee, the organization's activities in Lithuania are quite passive.

As for the teachers coming from other countries to participate in the prisoners' training process, the opinions of the interviewees were different. One prevailing opinion is that they would invite teachers from another countries especially for the foreign language programs (and there were some initiatives to hire such teachers), however, is not possible to provide the necessary financial conditions for teacher from abroad. There has been only one case when the lecturer from Scotland took the initiative to train

prisoners in a foreign language, but at that time, in 1995, the prison did not allow the department to accept this teacher, because the authorities were not sure that the prison will be able to provide the necessary conditions and ensure proper security.. But now the situation has changed and the opportunities for teachers from another country to work with the prisoners exist.

"We would really be very willing to invite teachers from other European countries, e.g. to teach foreign languages. There were several such efforts to invite them on short-term contracts [...] In the meantime, there was only one case, when a man came from Scotland to teach English language [...] We can speak about international projects or exchange of teachers [...].but I doubt whether anyone here would work for such a comparatively low salary..." (C1_02)

Another view was expressed that foreign teachers often come to Lukiskes Prison, but only when the projects are implemented, as the project provides funding and accommodation that matches teachers' demands.

"Speaking frankly, there is one very simple thing. If the projects were not implemented they would not come. Each lecturer before arriving to another country has their requirements. And these requirements must be met. If we cannot meet these requirements, they [teachers] simply would not go ..." (C1_01)

The interviewees unanimously agreed that the prisoners would accept teachers from other countries because they do not get to see people from other countries very often:

"It is very normal, they are accustomed to it. Lukiškės is often visited by foreigners ..." (C1_01)

Also, according to the interviewee, the prisoners welcome teachers who have a scientific degree. Therefore, it can be assumed that maybe the teachers and lecturers with foreign degree, could have a greater impact on the prisoners' learning motivation and   better   results.

"[…] but if someone has already come there already with the doctor's degree, they already see him/her as someone extraordinary ..."... It may not even be the competences, but the mane that plays a role ..." (C1_02)

Summarizing the situation for teachers working at Lukiskes Prison it can be assumed that teachers form other countries can be employed but under the same conditions as Lithuanian teachers work i.e. salary and social benefits. It is not expected that the teachers who come from another country could be in advantageous position over the local teachers. Those teachers coming from abroad may only make use of newer methods, and this is why the most advantageous would be the teacher exchange programs and work under short-term employment contracts.

Respondents expressed unanimous opinions on the change of personnel in prison. According to them the prison staff turnover is not high. It was also noted that in the period when Lithuanian economy experienced difficulties there was an increase of unskilled workers in prison. in the past low wages were key factors in determining the motivation not no choose this kind of work. Other factors determining the stability of the staff: social security benefits and stable working place.

> *"Here ... no significant change [...] Now, because of the word "crisis", the prison has more employees; previously it used to lack workers [...] because their wages were not really high, and people do not want to be employed by the prison* (C1_02)

CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION

The teachers of Lukiškės prison use constructive techniques: active learning, critical thinking methods and debates. All prisons in Lithuania, as well as Lukiskes prison have a training center or training classes, so that all prisoners have the opportunity to learn the basic and secondary education programs. The situation is different with higher education in prisons: only a few prisons provide such education. The possibilities (pre-conditions) for development of prison education exist but there is sometimes a lack of "know-how" and "know-what" to develop or change.

> *"Opportunities to develop ... I have little understanding of that… For those who want to learn we provide opportunities of some kind [...] But, [should we] open more classes, or what ?..."* (C1_02)

There are several obstacles for the development of adult education in Lukiskes prison: funding, a substantial turnover of prisoners, negative public perceptions, and the lack of access to the Internet. Due to the large turnover of prisoners, it is almost impossible to carry out long-term programs (except when long-term program may be implemented with prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment). Negative public perceptions and social exclusion of prisoners as a group is one of the main obstacles to improve learning opportunities for prisoners. The solution to this problem could be more positive public attitude towards prisoners. .

> *"One of the main problems is the large "migration" of prisoners. Thus long-term programs cannot be implemented [...] (C1_01)*

> *"This change of people is enormous here [...] main possibility for development would be the possibility to make more use of computers and the online services..."* (C1_02)

In Lithuania a significant number of programs for prisoners' resocialisation are implemented but the resocialisation takes place if the project is on-going. When the project finishes the recocialization also "finishes". There's no continuity. According to the Prisons Department under the Ministry of Justice data, 2008, Lukiskes Prison carried out in 15 social rehabilitation programs for convicts (Prisons Department under the Ministry of Justice Ministry of Social Rehabilitation Services Activity Report, 2009) [17].

It is noted that the public opinion is greatly influenced by these factors:

- dissemination of information about learning opportunities for prisoners and their significance and lasting value;
- the "heritage" of the Soviet regime;
- the highest state officials negative attitude towards prisoners;
- the media.

"It is the same "heritage" of the Soviet regime, and here at present, for example, can you find at least one member of the Parliament who would speak positively about the prisoners? After all, the media is also forming the image. Thus, everywhere ... if we speak about convicted persons we usually make them look as the "evil" of the society. Nobody speaks and analyses the reasons why people commit crimes..." *(C1_01)*

There are doubts about the existing programs. The questions arise about the feedback, no matter that the effectiveness of the program is usually evaluated. As one of the possible means to improve the situation could be the improvement of working methods and forming positive public opinion:

"We declare that there is resocialisation and a significant number of programs exist ...[...] But when the program period ends, the resocialization also ends [...] this is why the majority of them say they will emigrate as they see no prospects here, as the society is not ready to accept such people [...] I think that there are many of those programs implemented. Another question to ask if they are effective? .." (C1_01)

"Half a year ago, when Lithuania was very successfully implementing Structural Funds supported projects, there were two projects, which obviously changed public attitudes towards prisoners. .There were also TV shows where I spoke. After these TV shows the prisoners told me that their families, their loved ones and relatives began to speak a little differently with them. This is the first major step in order to change public attitudes [...] And now the attitudes are formed by

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[17] Kalėjimų departamento prie LR Teisingumo ministerijos Informacinių sistemų ir projektų skyrius Socialinės reabilitacijos tarnybų veiklos ataskaita 2008 m. sausio-gruodžio mėn. duomenys, Vilnius: 2009-02-03

the media, just see what is happening [...] there are such cases when only negative information prevails in the media „ (C1_01)

"The attitude is ... the attitude of the society was not always the best, and especially when it comes to higher education in prisons..." (C1_02)

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Due the complex economic situation both worldwide and in Lithuania, the respondents were unable to accurately express their opinions on the impact the crisis will have on adult education in prison. The respondents mentioned that the decrease in funding will have an impact on staff motivation:

"To tell you the truth I cannot in fact, I cannot answer this question. [...] for everybody who works for state institutions the salaries will be cut. Then it is normal that the motivation to work better will not increase" (C1_01)

" It is very difficult to say what impact the crisis will have. So far we do not feel any impact. Neither the decrease in students nor the decrease in funding was felt „ (C1_02)

The respondents could not express accurate opinions on the reorganization of higher education system. On the one hand it is thought that both prisoners' education and other domains of economy will be affected. On the other hand expectations exist that the reform will not have a significant effect:

"I think it will affect as much as the other parts of educational structures. Education will be education only it will take different forms; the forms of education will change. […] if the funding decreases for all education institutions it will decrease for prison education as well". (C1_01)

"It seems to me that prison education will not be affected by higher education reform ...." (C1_02)

4.2.3. Conclusions

In conclusion it can be noted that prison education depends on prisoners' motivation (both internal and external) not only on the facilities provided by the prison. On the other hand the prisoner's choice is affected by their approach to learning and internal prison regulations. Prisoners to life imprisonment have more intrinsic motivation to learn compared with the prisoners, whose freedom is restricted temporarily. It can be assumed that the prisoners' motivation to learn is encouraged by the possibilities to get concessions while in prison, to gain knowledge and learn in order to migrate abroad later. The motivation is also strengthened by the ongoing mentoring programs and

competent and motivated professionals. It can be also noted that prisoners' motivation to learn depends on personal character as well as the scale and degree of the crime committed. The respondents unanimously agreed that there is a lot of attention paid to prisoners' education. It was also stressed that the success of the education of prisoners and the results depend on the personal motivation of the education providers too.

In theory, life-long learning and rehabilitation goals are provisioned in Lukiskes Prison strategic action plan for 2008-2010, but the possibilities and conditions for prisoners' education are restricted by other regulations i.e. the highest level of prison security restricts education possibilities. The so called human factor has a significant impact on the successful implementation of prison education programs. Released to freedom prisoners can successfully continue their education at any training institution. Speaking about higher education, the possibilities to enroll into higher education are almost non-existing, except a few cases. In the absence of such possibilities higher education is practically not accessible for the prisoners. There are plans to implement distance education programs, but the prisoners cannot use online learning platforms. They would accept teachers from another country for foreign language training programs, and such initiatives have been, but there is no possibility to provide the necessary working conditions. Foreign teachers are usually employed by short-term contracts.

There are also such obstacles as funding, a substantial change (migration) of prisoners, negative public perceptions, and the lack of access to the Internet. Lithuania carried out many programs for prisoners' resocialisation, but resocialisation takes place at a time until the project is on-going. When the project ends this process is disrupted. Also due to lack of funding, the quality of prisoners' training is low.

5.1. Background information

Adult education encompasses formal and non-formal education. Formal adult education is comprised of general education, vocational training, advanced vocational and higher studies. Those adults who have not acquired basic or secondary education may choose to study at adult training centres and secondary education schools for adults.

In 2004, the Lifelong Learning Strategy and its implementation plan were approved. The Strategy lays down the main goals of developing lifelong learning. Lifelong learning becomes a priority of the State of Lithuania, and adult education occupies a major part of continuing education.

In recent years Lithuania has been making active efforts in redirecting not only the activities of education institutions, but also the entire education system in the direction of lifelong learning. There is an upwards trend of increased adult participation in learning activities.
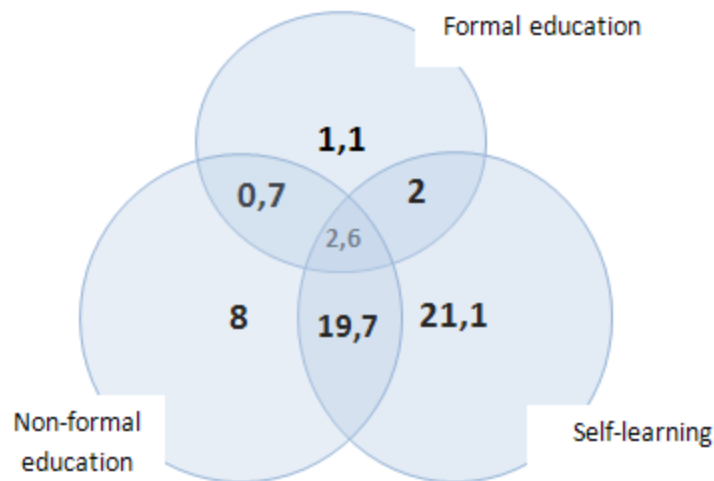
Picture 5.1. Adults' Level of Education in Lithuania, 2006 (percentage per year)
Source: Kaip padidinti suagusiųjų mokymosi galimybes? 2007, December Nr. 9(20)

The co-ordination of continuing education policy has improved: social partners are gathered together to implement the Strategy and various continuing education programmes. The Adult Education Division has been formed at the Teacher Professional Development Centre and the Lithuanian Distance Education Centre has been

restructured into the Lithuanian Adult Education and Information Centre. Access to education is undergoing improvement: legislation providing adults with more flexible opportunities to return to the general education system have been enacted. Professional development of the staff of adult education institutions is being enhanced through andragogic publications and introduction of andragogic teaching methods. Learning opportunities for adults are expanding: non-formal adult education projects receive increased financing. The monitoring of continuing education is being carried out: research is being conducted, learning motivation of adults and problems are being analysed, problem solving methods are being explored.

Adult Education in Lithuania

Professional education

Vocational education

Self-learning

Formal Education

Non-formal Education
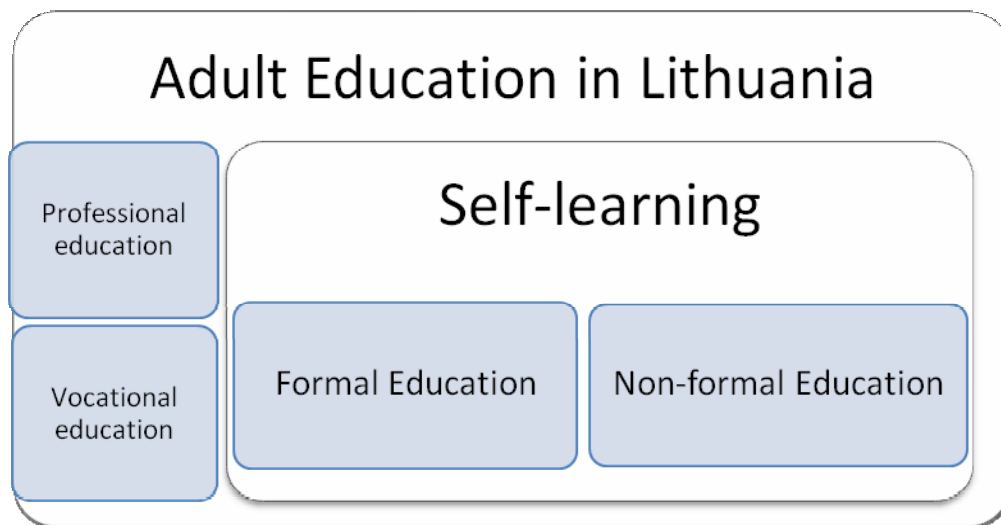
Picture 5.2. Adult Education in Lithuania
Source: Kaip padidinti suagusiųjų mokymosi galimybes? 2007, December Nr. 9(20)

University studies accreditation influence on the institution evaluated is multidimensional- assurance of accountability, recommendation on quality improvement, ranking of higher education institutions, regulation of state financing and of the number of students, permission or prohibition to offer a certain study programme or for an institution to operate are all involved here.

The declared objective of the 2009 reform of studies and science is to improve education and training. The number of 15 state universities and 7 private universities and more than 30 colleges is considered too high as a for small country like Lithuania to maintain such a system of 50 higher education institutions is expensive. Optimization of this system was proposed as small institutions without non-solid scientific base for training are ineffective, thus, combining them into larger is aimed to increase their efficiency.

However, a different approach was chosen. The introduction of study package means that high school graduates will optimize the system, as their choice will determine which study programmes (or institutions) will "survive". After the first year the introduction of

the new system actually resulted in less student packages than was planned for some education institutions.

Discussion about student packages raised the question of whether the student package method would introduce free market principles and encourage the competiveness. Some experts believe that neither the market nor the competition will increase study quality and they agree that the easiest route was chosen: the education institutions seek to reduce the cost of their studies in order to attract more students. On the other hand, higher education institutions welcome those students who are able to fund their studies. This is why. it is widely believed that institutions are only interested in "quick money" as they tend to accept every student who is able to pay study fees without any other criteria of selection. Thus, such student package system created two "classes" of students i.e. those, who study for free and those who pay full study fees (prof.V.Daujotis interview, Lietuvos rytas, 4/12/2010).

5.2. Translated interview 1

> Representative - deputy director of the Department of General Education and Vocational Training

1. Who is responsible in Lithuania for:
   a) **social integration**
   b) **education's integration into untraditional groups**
   c) **life long learning**
   d) **literacy**
   e) **non-formal education ?**

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania is responsible on the national level. Of course, it is working together with so called social partners, i.e. Lithuanian Association of Adult Education and Lithuanian Centre for Adult (Education and Information), which is under our control, and of course with the projects that take place.

2. Are there representatives from risk groups in those institutions?

Are there representatives in institutions? I think, I couldn't name the institutions, but there are projects, activities for representatives of risk groups that are implemented by those institutions. If we take prisoners or some kind of socially supported groups, they really participate because those projects are for them.

3. If no, is it known about any plans to establish structures which would develop politics and would supervise its implementation in each of those ranges?

Is it about groups of social risk?

It is about all the groups that were mentioned: a) social integration b) education's integration into untraditional groups c) life long learning d) literacy e) non-formal education. In other words, do representatives of these groups participate in planning those programs and so on...?

If we are talking about these groups that you mentioned, so of course, there are. There is a group for life long learning strategy implementation which involves both non-formal and formal education and so on. If we are talking about risk groups you mentioned. I imagined something different: prisoners, the unemployed, etc. and they are participators of the same education. As for the amount of those groups, their representatives participate in coordination groups and there is a department in the ministry that works for it. For instance, there is the department of continuous learning which works essentially for non-formal education, for adult education.

So do all representatives from risk and other groups in a way participate in adult education....?

We must agree on what those risk groups are. What do you call risk groups? I don't perceive what it means...

As you mentioned both prisoners and the unemployed ones....

Oh, those, yes, their interests are always visible. They are included in functions of institutions. It means the work with those risk groups. There is even a department at the Ministry that also has to work with those risk groups.

But do the representatives of those groups take part in, let's say, creation of programs.....?

Yes, when they create direct programs, the representatives always participate. If there's a project or a program that is related with them, so, of course, they are invited.

4. What are the main obstacles to establish those responsible structures in Lithuania?

How should we understand responsible structures? I could name one maybe the biggest problem. It is the lack of motivation in those groups. I mean, they are involved but they are not very motivated to form a better program or something else. So we need to find a way to motivate them and to get their opinion which is necessary when drafting either a program or some projects.

So are they passive?

They are quite passive. Quite passive... One or two of them emerge active but there are more passive ones, for instance, if we take the unemployed, they want to be on the lists of students but don't want to learn actively and motivated.

5. Is there a person/ a position in your ministry who is specially trained and who is supervising the following questions of:
a) social integration
b) opportunities for the representatives of untraditional groups to participate in education
c) life long learning
d) literacy
e) non-formal education?

Yes, there is our department of continuous learning, the official instruction for its specialists establishes the function of "working with risk groups".

6. On the other hand, if nothing is being done, who should be responsible for things start moving? That is to say, if there is no progress/ advance done in these fields, who should take responsibility to continue everything?

It's an interesting question of course. But I would say that the responsibility is already taken and if it hardly succeeds or something else…. Well I think that there is some governing scheme in the state, maybe that function will be assigned to somebody else. If it doesn't succeed it means.....

7. Are there any specific procedures which define direct cooperation/ communication between the region, the local and central government for:
a) social integration
b) opportunities for the representatives of untraditional groups to participate in education
c) life long learning
d) literacy
e) non-formal education?

At first I could name Lithuanian Education Council where all the groups that you mentioned are represented and as it (the Council) combines all sectors of education, so one of them is also the work with risk groups. There are regions and central government and experts' groups and I could even name such expert as Gitanas Nauseda who is also a member… That's what a qualified company means.

If we specify, do representatives from all the regions enter the Council…

Not from all regions. There is simply regional association of education and it is represented in the Education Council of the Republic of Lithuania. If there were from all,

then there would be such a crowd and now there are about twenty people in that council, so it means that there are representatives both from regions and from municipalities and from national level and from social partners and employers and representatives of trade-unions who participate there.

And they solve…

And they tackle all the questions related with education: accessibility, quality questions, and ones that are related with risk groups as well. We never try to exclude those risk groups, they are one of the groups and if we are talking about accessibility of education for different age, from the youngest to oldest, we must include risk groups and those who feel social exclusion and so on.

8. Do authorities give any kind of support to persons who are responsible for developing adult education on local or regional level, for example for adult education organizers?

Yes.....immediately. When we practically, when our ministry works with Association of Adult Education, there is such, where work is immediately… There is as I said Association of Adult Education in Lithuania. It embraces all levels; it is an immediate mediator for our ministry. We work together. I could give an example, when there was a research conducted by European Commission, well not a research, but a memorandum of life long learning was changed, so the process of spreading the information and presentation [of a memorandum] was made not by us but this was entrusted to the same Association of Adult Education. They did and risk groups did; discussions, presentations and so on took place across the whole Lithuania. And it was very highly assessed on the European level because there were maybe just few countries where this was done not by the Ministry but it was entrusted to some kind of associations to do.

9. Is there cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social security and Labour while creating a strategy for any of those fields? How is this dialogue going to be fulfilled?

Of course, it happens and at first I can say that cooperation with the Ministry of Social Security and Labour is mainly in the sphere of vocational training as it is related with the labour market. Council of vocational training is composed by trilateral principal. There is our Ministry and the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. We communicate with the Ministry of Justice mainly in those spheres which are intended in the laws, for instance, talking about education of those who have their freedom restricted or those who are imprisoned. So even when preparing documents and laws, we do this with the Ministry of Justice. It [the Ministry of Justice] is responsible for prisons and correctional institutions, we are responsible for education and then we make common procedures about who does which functions. They ensure security and conditions and we provide

educational content and teachers. So the cooperation is both with one and the other ministry.

But as you mentioned that you provide programs that are related with prisoners' education, so it seems that the Ministry of Education [and science] is responsible for teaching the prisoners.

I wouldn't say it is one ministry. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for organizing the process and conditions, the Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the content and the quality of education process. We split this. This mechanism is working quite well because we really can't interfere in organizing the conditions and how they come to the learning place. It's their competence. We care of how they learn and who teaches them.

And what about funding prisoners' education?

They get the same 'baskets' because there is the principle of 'baskets', so they get it the same as people who are free but the Ministry of Justice pays for the environment, heating and so on through the Prison Department.

10. Is there a national and/ or governmental strategy for these questions:

a) social integration
b) opportunities for the representatives of untraditional groups to participate in education
c) life long learning
d) literacy
e) non-formal education?

I think I would name two strategies that are lifelong learning strategy and its implementation plan which is always updated and national education strategy which was approved by Parliament. It also embraces these subjects.

11. If so, are there any concrete goals set for developing this strategy?

I think that at first the strategy has concrete goals and I don't think that we need goals for improvement. If we see that some goals are unattainable or stop somehow, then it [the strategy] is being improved. For example, the lifelong learning strategy this year, oh, in the end of last year it was reconsidered and some changes were made and it was signed by two ministers. This is our Ministry's and the Ministry's of Social security and Labour juridical base. Two ministers signed the renewed strategy and its implementation plan.

12. If so, are there any finances intended to improve the elements of this strategy?

Well, that word improvement, I just think that financial programs and finances are intended for both strategies' implementation.

13. How many percents of the Government's budget are allocated to adults' education: a) formal education, b) non-formal education?

You know, I really can't indicate those percents now…

Maybe we could specify them later?

Well I'll try. I don't know if such accounting of what you mentioned now is kept on. If you want to specify this, please write me an e-mail and I will give somebody to see it.....

14. What can you tell us about the means/ ways how the government promotes/supports life long learning not only in bigger cities but in rural areas as well?

The ways, the means… Firstly, the projects that target for instance adult education in municipalities or in regions are implemented. 'Target' means that courses are being organized according to the needs of those persons, especially in rural areas. I can give an example of computer literacy. There are simple things; I even have examples of educational compact disks. That is how to use electronic service, how to pay taxes, how to enter the bank, so that people could learn....Law knowledge ... Here as an example of the simplest user is a citizen, so that he could get some kind of understanding. What other examples....Well the similar things as various courses which are targeted to adults and which are available if a person wants, even funding is guaranteed, he doesn't need to pay anything.

You mentioned that it is according to the needs.

A research is being conducted to find out the needs and according to the needs programs are offered for a person to choose and take part.

And what about paying for those programs? Do they pay or not?

Or for free… One thing is that we offered the programs through the Funds' projects for free, there was such an opportunity. Of course another thing is that now we have exemption of personal income tax, so you can get back one third of finances if…

But is this just for formal education?

No. It can be for non-formal too if you show what you do in your professional sphere and it is not very hard to show this.

15. Could you make a comment on government's plans to expand lifelong learning at basic schools, at secondary schools, at vocational schools, at colleges and universities?

At first the National qualifications system contains each of those elements. Everything is being done towards this. It is that when a person obtains competences on the lower level then he can get himself on the higher level. That is National qualifications system which satisfies European qualifications system. This is just one main thing. The second is, and I often discuss this personally, about allowing continuity of studies for people who already have vocational qualification. Then it wouldn't be like now when a person runs to get any kind of diploma and then he thinks what to do with it. It should be that at first he obtains something, starts to work, then he feels motivation and goes to study and later to do something else.... Then he would not go to Ireland and work as a chambermaid with a master degree. That is...

So, the employers shouldn't require....?

Yes, the employers were ill but now they admit this. There was a moment when they thought that a cleaning woman must have a master degree. Now they are not ill like that anymore and now they often don't even look at the diploma, they want something more like a CV of what working experience you have, in what field you have worked, what you can, so a diploma becomes not very important and maybe this is true because the most important thing is what competences a person has. And if he has a diploma and doesn't know what to do with it, then it is possibly not very valuable.

So it's again, does a person have to seek higher education?

He has to. He has but only because of gaining competence he needs. Well, for example, I work at the car service and I want to become some kind of administrator, shift commander or something like that and I need technological knowledge, so then I go to the college and get it. This is normal.

What about universities? Whose aim would they be?

On one hand, it would be aim of those who have high abilities, who have a high academic mark; on the other hand, a person from a working place can go to the same university as well. If he has worked something and now he wants to become an engineer, he can go to study and become an engineer.

It means that he has to have baggage of experience....?

Yes, I think that it would be a very good thing if he goes to study after he understands what he wants to achieve and why he wants to achieve this. I listen to comments of higher education schools, so lecturers who seek quality are satisfied. They say that those

people know what they want and you can work with them, but when [people] come just to get a mark and later don't remember anything, so there's no benefit of them.

Is it about full-time students or about extramural students....?

I think it's more about extramural students. Maybe it's good that a person studies on his own and accounts on this, but if he dozes away at the lectures, then there's nothing good.

16. Do migrants (Lithuanians) apply to our higher education establishments? How many of them apply? What kind of assistance is offered to them?

Emigrants are Lithuanians mainly, yes, those who migrated from Lithuania. We have special quotas, so that children of parents living abroad could try for university. These are special quotas because according to national examination quotas they can't enter the same list, so there are special quotas for them. Those numbers are not very high, there are about two hundred, maybe two and a half, but it's enough, there are not many of those people who come from there. Well, there are courses of Lithuanian language traditionally; there are history levelling courses because they study other kind of history somewhere. So there are levelling programs where they get that kind of help before they start studying and even when studying. Special assistance is given for them. Some of it is given before their studies, some specific assistance is provided while studying. Summer camps are organized for them, so that they could learn and obtain knowledge that they need.

17. Can a student work, e.g. in Ireland and study at our higher education schools? Have there ever been any students like that? Did they finish their studies successfully? Comparing with all students, do migrants leave studies more often? Is the information about reasons of such persons dropping out is collected?

I think that I haven't seen any special facts but things like that really happen. Some of them lose their interest while living and studying here and decide to learn in the country they are working. There is an option like this. Some do a break; there are lots of different options. And there are no obstacles to study like that. There is no problem. I'm afraid to make a mistake, but I think that place of residence is not restricted in any laws. And now when students' mobility is free, a student from any European Union country can come and try for the university on the same conditions and nobody can forbid this, especially for Lithuanians. There are special quotas for Lithuanians because we must encourage their return and so on. They get those special quotas so that they could come back, live in Lithuania and so on. Foreigners enter universities by common procedures…. part of them we have by the European Union treaty but there are special quotas for Lithuanian emigrants and they can pretend to those places according to their results and motivation.

Are there students who finished studies like that successfully?

I think, yes. We don't watch them, we don't keep separate statistics, but I think, I try to remember and I think that I know some examples even personally, oh and even more... There are for certain.

18. How do lecturers look at such students? What kind of problems appear concerning studies' administration for such students? How flexible is the study system at our universities/ colleges concerning the aspect of organization of study process?

This is probably a question for lecturers....... but I don't think that there is some kind of sense against them or something like that, and problems are very clear. You must plan the calendar of exams very early and to follow it very strictly because a person won't change flight tickets from Dublin to Vilnius, especially when there is no direct one, and of course the question of price. If he plans his exam sessions for the whole year, so he wants to follow them and to come back on time for their exams. And the lecturer can't think of a new time and to inform five days before this, it's not allowed for him. I think that there is such kind of restriction.

So, is it like each higher educational institution's business to agree with a student on this....?

Yes. They have an agreement which defines the calendar and sequence of exams and if you can change it for Lithuanians a few days before, you can't do this there [for foreigners], a lecturer must follow this strictly. Sometimes it's used like a joke that our higher education schools have very big autonomy and any interference into academic process regulation can be defined as violation of the Constitution because they have academic autonomy and academic autonomy is: 1) the content of studies; 2) the methods of organizing forms. And even the best school of higher education having this autonomy must follow it. So, there is the Council and Senate of a college that contains people from outside, too. They approve the order that a school of higher education is guided by.

19. Is this problem relevant on the whole? What available means do ensure (could ensure) accessibility of studies for mobile workers?

I think that maybe the biggest problem considering schools of higher education or vocational training institutions is a language barrier. If a person knows Lithuanian, then there are no big problems and he can find the best form of organizing [his studies], but if a mobile foreigner wants to come here and study and he can't study in Lithuanian, so we have to organize studies in a foreign language. Well, then we and lecturers meet problems. The concern of lecturers is how to give the learning material in a foreign language. It's the biggest one.

20. In your opinion, is a student coming from abroad (a migrant) concerned about the quality of studies or is he concerned only about accounting and getting a diploma?

You know, as there are very different Lithuanians, it's the same with migrants. Those who come here and pay money for studies they really want to get quality and gain competences after finishing. Of course, there are those who want to go to another country not just to study. So, I think there are people like that, too. I don't even doubt. Well, I had two foreigners in my group while studying, too, so we could be jealous of their motivation, obstinacy and seeking their aim. Though one was from Columbia and another was from Poland. I mean they studied really obstinately and very genuinely.

What do you think, why do foreigners choose Lithuanian schools of higher education?

Well, I had cases when foreigners from Lithuania, I mean Lithuanians who live abroad, or children of Lithuanians living abroad, even those who emigrated a long time ago, some time around the war or after the war, but their children want to be in Lithuanian environment and their parents want them to live in Lithuania, so those come to study here.

And what about foreign-born who come to study here?

Well, I don't see foreigners very much, you know. Their motivation of arriving here can be dual. If we say 'the quality is super and I come to study willing to get better quality…', then we go to Harvard or some other world-known university because we want quality. [A student] can come here either for quality, or secondly as I said they come to get to know a new country, to experience exotica, adventures or something else. That's it, but those things are not related with the quality of studies.

21. Does the staff of the higher educational institution know the problems of migrants? Were they prepared somehow for that?

It's about higher education........of course, it's about that basket, it is called student's basket or. there really were some projects when they [lecturers] were preparing to work on those programs. Through the Leonardo da Vinci program, European Union's structural funds.... There really were such preparation but I would like to remind you that on one hand our higher education establishments have academic autonomy and higher education schools do this [preparation] on their own through projects and other activities. There was not any kind of central preparation done.

22. Are students-migrants mentioned in the strategies of higher education establishments?

But these questions are not for me. There are questions only about higher education..... I think, well, at least as much as I saw, our higher education establishments really arrange

strategies because they understand the object to enlist students, so they start offering programs in foreign languages and this really gets interest to attract students from outside as well.

23. What do you think, is the number of such students-migrants going to increase? Why?

I would think that at first it will depend on situation of migration or emigration on the whole... If there were waves of the former economic emigration, then it was clear that people living somewhere abroad would want to study in Lithuania but now when it [emigration] has stopped a little, there may be perhaps two incentives of studying here: a wish to come back to Lithuanian environment and further, the second is to seek studies' quality but for the meantime we don't have our schools of higher education at the first top fifty, so, it is hard to compete.

24. Does the government take any initiatives to qualify elementary and secondary schools' teachers at higher education establishments for work in little groups, such as of ethnic minorities, socially supported groups, who could later be teachers in a) elementary school, b) secondary school?

I think I don't know if there are such specialized schools but while preparing each teacher he is qualified. However, it's a part of study content. Attention is really paid for each teacher to work with those groups, but if we talk about specialized [schools], this would be too big luxury. We have, for instance, social training for teachers. Social pedagogue is a person for work with social groups, well, with those risk groups. And there is no special person for each of those groups. I think it is a part of specialization and separate content. A part of a separate subject and those subjects are in the content of studies. Yes, it is like that, there is a schedule of pedagogue's competency; it is what kind of competency must a pedagogue have and one of them is work with those specific groups.

25. In your opinion, what are the obstacles and/ or the opportunities while promoting such initiative?

What initiative? So, I say that, for example, there are social pedagogues. This activity saw the light from the government as an order for schools of higher education, so they started to prepare them, and... I can say one thing. Now, for example, regulation of teachers' training is working according the schedule of pedagogue's competency. So, there is a requirement there. It is the work with specific groups. This is a stimulus to include questions related with this to the content of training and the content of studies.

26. Does the state encourage and support the lecturers of higher education to attend courses and obtain professional knowledge important for the community, such as a) law, b) social work, c) work with youth, d) psychology, e) other?

Well, I think that it really encourages and supports, especially through projects which are oriented to this.

27. In your opinion, what does prevent or encourage this?

I think that the biggest encouragement is a concrete requirement. If there is a requirement formed, but, of course, all our education institutions form all studying and education programs according to needs of labour market or something else. So, if there is a need, then a new study program emerges or some subjects appear in a study program.

28. In your opinion, what does prevent or encourage using a school building for adults' education courses?

Encourages a thing that, well, all our education institutions practically exist according how many clients they have. And if a client is adult or youth, in the morning or in the evening, they provide services pleasantly via which money from the state or somewhere else arrive to that institution. These are financial mechanisms when money comes together with a student, now they are doing this in higher education as well. So, this is an
encouragement itself. Of course, sometimes the pedagogical community itself wants to get higher salary, to earn more but when they have to work in the evenings, then it's not very good. But this is already changing; I really don't hear difficulties if people want to earn. They understand that if he will teach and there will be students then the salary [would grow]. It is very good because the salary depends on how many hours and time I pay for teaching and the welfare and conditions of the education institution also depends on this. So, of course, the interest is very big.

29. Are there any gaps in adult education that, in your opinion, could show up in the nearest future? What kind of?

One is that I've already mentioned here. Firstly, it is that scheme which would let a person who obtained competency to rise on the higher qualification level. This is a national studies' structure and this is how qualification is obtained. This is a really encouraging mechanism and I think that it will really give results.

30. Which state institution is responsible for financing organizations of non-formal education?

Well, we cancelled organizations' funding quite a long time ago. We fund services for a person and if a person goes to learn in any institution formally or non-formally, then financial resources either governmental or from European Union's structural funds, or from instance employer's, or personal resources come together. So it means that we

ceased to support institutions. Institutions are supported through the payment of the service: if you teach adults, then you get money.

31. How could you describe the state of non-formal education 5 years ago? How did it change over those 5 years? Why?

I think it really intensified; there is a big supply of the formal education especially with European Union's structural funds. And there are many very different qualification development courses that were offered for people. Secondly, it is that recognition in the formal education of competences gained non-formally has started. I can learn something and I can come to the same university and show the competency I gained, it is recognized and formalized, and these are, I say, the first elements which really change the state of non-formal education. Of course, those taxing concessions that I mentioned also have a stimulating form.

32. In your opinion, what actions in the future should the government take in order to make identity perfection (or COMMON ABILITIES training) lessons available for people who seem to be left 'near' the education system (e.g. those who hasn't finished secondary school, the permanent unemployed, ethnic groups).

Firstly, it has to strengthen vocational orientation services. That is so called vocational orientating centres where people could apply. But this centre should search for such people who need such service and to offer it them. And, of course, it should give support and get it because projects are being implemented to that direction.

33. In your opinion, what actions in the future should the government take in order to make identity perfection (or COMMON ABILITIES training) lessons available for people who seem to be left 'near' the education system (e.g. those who hasn't finished secondary school, the permanent unemployed, ethnic groups).

National guidance program which will be implemented effectively is some carrier centre. It will work for searching of those people, providing information and offering them where they could study further.

34. What does it need to undertake in order to reduce the difference between the traditional and untraditional education groups (e.g. people who left school early, the permanent unemployed, ethnic minorities)?

Well, I raise a question if such differences exist because it's true that some groups need specific conditions for education. That's it, but even we go towards the integration. As an example I will give vocational training in prisons; we refused separate schools and there we have traditional education institutions' departments or branches. That is both lecturers and administration work not only with that specific group but with others as well. So I would like to emphasize that it's the same with people with disabilities or the

unemployed. As for the unemployed, we integrated basic and vocational training systems to one, so that there would be no specialized institutions but that institutions would teach both these and those groups, so that there would be no difference felt. So I think the main tendency is that through the integration to one institution the differences between those teaching groups disappear. Of course, you can do this only using necessary specific methodology. That is how the programs and methodologies are adapted, and it's not that we separate them [risk groups] and teach them only in specialized schools. So, our tendency is to reject this.
Community lectures.... Even that vocational orientation program, as I started talking about it, intends functions even for eldership's communities and so on.

35. What do you think about possible coming Government support while creating and developing community classes so that those social groups which are the most distant (people who left school early, the permanent unemployed, ethnic minorities, etc.) could obtain traditional education?

So, the answer here is the same. It is that each institution of education system establishes conditions for teaching those groups. They are not separated but they are invited offering specialized programs for those groups. If we take a vocational training school, a person who finished only four grades can come and seek and obtain education and gain vocational qualification as well. This I can tell as an example.

36. What are the main obstacles while seeking to create a system which would acknowledge the non-formal education and working experience and would enable adults to seek education?

I want to say that practically several years we practice this and the main principle here, to my mind, is the separation of competency assessment and the education institution. And when this separation is done, as in this case when vocational qualification is assessed and given by Lithuanian Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts where each person having competency can apply there and assess it [competency] independently whether he studied in institution or he didn't. We have such examples when people gained vocational qualification through their working experience; they obtain abilities through the non-formal education and self-education and they just simply formalize them. It's not that teaching is recognized, I mean I would never speak for that I bring certificate of courses. And if I have a certificate of courses then something is recognized for me. I have to show if I have this competency. If I know how to lay bricks, then I show that I know how to brick and I also give answers to the test of theoretical comprehension. And then it's hurray and I get this qualification. And such tendency is popular in the whole Europe. But I would never support the idea that bringing a certificate or being on the list of some kind of courses could let you formalize your qualification. It would be a perverted system totally and I think it would be very disadvantageous.

37. In your opinion, how can we overcome those obstacles?

What obstacles? We don't have big obstacles practically because we already have separate assessment today for qualification and learning, but I could name one [problem] – full implementation of National qualification system. That is already being done, so I come to an independent institution which assesses qualifications, there is a schedule what I have to know for a qualification and I show what I know, and that's it, there are no obstacles. And I can obtain it [competency] in all sorts of ways: at a workplace, through non-formal learning, doing self-education or in some other ways.

38. What plans are to be developed while seeking flexibility of accreditation system?

Whose accreditation? A question is not clear for me...... What accreditation means. I emphasize once more that we are not going through some kind of accreditation but through assessment of qualification. The main thing is to show what I have already learnt and if I know this, I get a document which certificates this. But it's not that if a Jonas taught me, that he taught me well, it also depends on whether I learned. It doesn't matter that Jonas who teaches very well taught me, but if I didn't learn and only slept and lazed around, then we can't give assessment for this.

39. In your opinion, what are disadvantages of government's priorities while seeking to improve the approach to education for people attributed to risk groups?

Strengthening the system of vocational orienting and consultation is what we see mostly now. That is a search of those people, giving information for them and choosing a learning program for them. This is happening but I think that we should intensify this work because as I say, they have where to go but nobody is looking for them. And now we are turning this to the idea that a search for them will be in municipalities, too. That is to find a person and to offer him where he can learn and what he can learn.

40. What kind of changes over the next 5 years do you expect to achieve while encouraging the approach to education for people attributed to risk groups?

As I mentioned, the question is the same. Simply those people are not very active in the market. Therefore, at first we must search for such people and provide information for them. They can get such a service and further it is only a person's decision and motivation.... Motivation appears from the need to have particular knowledge or abilities.

41. What kind of changes do you really expect that they will be achieved over the next 5 years while encouraging the approach to education for people attributed to risk groups?

- Reservation of places (yes or now)

- Free childcare
- Opportunity for employees to obtain higher education at any school of higher education
- Creating information strategy for each community

I think that is very much. Well, we have just started to implement the National vocational orienting program which strengthens that service that is vocational orienting that is a search for those people, their motivation and directing to learn. And creation of information basis which would let to offer where is the best place for them to study. So, this access will be guaranteed practically.

42. What would be your priorities while seeking to improve opportunities for those groups to obtain higher education?

Well, I go through the same again. I mean, it's a strengthening of one's carrier abilities. I talk about those people who are related to this. So, it is firstly about their motivation, direction and presentation of arguments why they have to do it. It is to show them by what ways and where they can obtain this. That's why this activity is the first thing, which brings closer to readiness of institutions to perform this. I think it is not the main problem. The main problem is the searching process, motivation and direction of such people.

43. What are the biggest obstacles while seeking to make education more available for people from groups with the weakest representation as well as groups of social exclusion, people who want to learn all life long, illiterates or people with non-formal education?

In my opinion, it is not fair to talk about availability of education in our country. It is rather sufficient, I guess. However, I come back to the topic, maybe I repeated it several times, and it is about that strengthening of professional orientating and information system. I say, it's about those persons' searching, informing them, directing where they can get it. It is the most painful spot, and institutions (it is a sufficient number of them), they want to take it. It's because we have means to motivate the institutions financially. The more customers they have the better for them. They want it, they teach them. It is important to find a person somehow and to direct one to that learning.

44. Does the state have any specific plans while seeking to improve education opportunities for adults in state prisons? Note them, please.

As I said, prisons have either separate education institutions or departments and branches of educational institutions which establish conditions under which people can both seek for education and gain certain qualification. As much as I can imagine, such an opportunity really exists in each prison. Having a joke, a problem exists that a prisoner who didn't manage to finish study doesn't prolong their imprisonment time for studying.

He goes to freedom having not obtained one or another degree of qualification or education. And later we see that there is a bigger problem to find him and to suggest him to prolong it [learning] in an open space. While being in a closed space they are quite motivated. They don't have what to do, so they seek for education and qualification. But when a person goes out to freedom, he needs to be worked with further. He shouldn't be left. Well, that vocational orientation system should direct him and help him to continue that activity. That is a problem, I see. They seek, they can study further according to what education they already have, they prolong basic education and they can obtain a profession. As far as I know, the Vilnius University has departments in one prison. It has departments and I think they [the prisoners] can study in extramural distant way. This is not forbidden but I haven't heard yet that somebody would try to found a university in prisons. But maybe it's not necessary as there are other kinds of 'universities' there.

45. What obstacles, in your opinion, do prevent from developing education in prisons?

What obstacles? I don't see any big obstacles. Well, I see one that I have already mentioned, that is reassurance of education continuity. So, again I'm telling this: those vocational orienting centres have a duty that is to find students who drop out. Those centres get information about a student who dropped out from a higher educational institution and then they contact him and offer him opportunities. It's the same with those who come out from the prison. He studied in prison, he came out from there and then this centre receives information according to his residence that this person has come back and they need to work with him and so on. That is a system of carrier training. I hope that it will start to function in few years.

46. In your opinion, how can the state support information system which tries to involve into traditional education system those who traditionally don't participate in education or are alienated from usual education system?

I think I've already answered this question and it's one and the same.

47. Are representatives from risk groups involved in a) creation and b) implementation of strategies and programs?

I think that when such specialized programs are being prepared, the representatives are really invited and they participate in implementation of those programs. I don't even doubt about this.

48. What state support is intended for funding childcare and education approachability for adults who want to participate in education courses (it doesn't matter if it is in formal or non-formal way)? Could you describe plans of prospective support?

At first I say that we don't have such examples as the whole Europe. There is one vocational training centre in Vilnius where everybody goes to learn. It has a program for nannies and for example a program for hairdressers, it means cosmetic and so on. A young mother can come with her child. That child becomes as a learning object for future nannies and at the same time a mother can learn how to cut hair, do cosmetics, sew or something more. Such forms are being searched for, so that a child is at the same place and a mother can come during the break and communicate with him, feed him and so on. She doesn't lose contact with a child and learns as well. So there is one centre like that. And at the same time there are kindergartens and other places where a mother can leave a child and go to school. This [centre] is a very big convenience but we have only one at the moment but this is a combination where both nannies and other specialties are being prepared...... You know, the support exists; the state supports that system of nurseries and kindergartens and other preschool institutions where a mother can leave her child and she can go to learn.

49. Many people of the needy families don't have opportunities to learn at home (don't have a separate corner/ room). What alternative places (in physical meaning), in your opinion, could be really given for teaching them?

I think that there are enough places. There are so called community houses, multifunctional centres where a person can come and find a library, a reading-room, a computer and he can successfully learn there. You can use vocational and secondary schools in the same way, they are open and you can come there and there are reading-rooms and libraries there. If there's a desire then he can learn successfully.

50. Have there been any efforts for trying to get places at common schools for adult education? Please, describe.

It's a very interesting question. So, practically there are either adult education departments or classes in our so called community schools and they are working well. There are even some specialized schools but in most cases schools have departments where adults study.

51. Does the state have some kind of a strategy and does it intend support for teaching/ educating a) community leaders, b) teachers working in those regions/ districts where are people attributed to risk groups?

We can take that life long learning strategy which intends special training for andragogues. And they take place for seven years already and each teacher coming to qualification training and development courses receive a special course about work with adults. They are not specialized [qualified] specifically but each teacher gives part of his time for work with children and part with adults.

52. Which state's institution is responsible for libraries' funding?

Funding of libraries, well, of those public libraries belongs to the Ministry of Culture.

53. Can all state's libraries be used/ are they adapted for distance teaching (learning)?

I think I couldn't name this a hundred percent but I think we can say that most of them. Maybe we could find one or another library in a village that doesn't have a computer but it happens very rarely. Our project took place recently when broadband internet was installed to each village's eldership if there is a village's eldership. So, there usually is either a library or a school. So the question of approach is solved here.

54. Please, make a comment on how to overcome digital exclusion among different social groups.

And what does it mean? As I can imagine how to increase computer literacy, I want to say that courses of computer literacy have been offered for the last five years already.

55. Can the present crisis have some kind of influence for life long learning? What?

It can. It can develop more because people will have more time for learning. A students' basket may decrease a little but the number of baskets is not decreased. If it happens, then we can reject some luxury things for a couple of years, for example, and that's it.

56. What influence will the financial crisis have (or has now) for adult education/ teaching at secondary schools?

I've already said that if some time ago the employers used to pull people from schools to their working places, now they will have more time to learn and to prepare themselves for the end of crisis because after the crisis they will need that knowledge which they can obtain now. I explain this like that now.

57. How, in your opinion, will the new education and science reform affect adults' education and your school?

I would think that it is being encouraged that both, an adult and a youngster, even a person already having working experience and some kind of qualification, could receive a student's basket. We even discuss this at the moment, whether he could get additional score for getting the student's basket. I think it will be like that. I hope.

Thank you for your answers and time!

5.3. Translated interview 2

Representative - head of Lower and Upper Secondary Education Division at the Ministry of Education and Science

1. Who is responsible in Lithuania for:
   a) **social integration**
   f) **education's integration into untraditional groups**
   g) **life long learning**
   h) **literacy**
   i) **non-formal education?**

So, as these questions are all different, I can put them like that: The Ministry of Social security and labour is responsible for social integration; education for all [social] groups is within the scope of The Ministry of Education and science....... I'm not really aware of what the untraditional groups mean. What kind of groups are they? As for foreigners, we are responsible for them. So what other groups are untraditional – we are not talking about gays, are we? No, so what do those untraditional groups mean? According to the Law on Education and Science, the Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the education on the whole. The ministry coordinates the life long learning involving social partners, and again the Ministry of Social Security and Labour involves them because the employers, industrialists are involved, and so on. The Ministry of Education and science is responsible for literacy, if literacy is understood as competences, and it is responsible for non-formal education as well. All in all, if there's a question of who is responsible for the result of education, the answer is a service provider, and that is various institutions. So it is MES [The Ministry of Education and science] plus municipalities plus schools according to their competence. The Ministry is responsible for the politics, for the laws, for their implementation and regulation as it is defined in the Law on Education but the provider of education is responsible for the process. The provider can be a school, qualification centres and so on.

2. Are there representatives from risk groups in those institutions?

In which institutions? Yes, there are in schools. In the Ministry, are they involved…? For instance, if we are talking about schools for adults and schools for children, there are special schools, socialization centres that are created for those groups which need help. It's obvious that there are people who are minded to break or who have already broken the laws. After all, even in Parliament there are convicts or people who served their sentence. People with special needs are not a risk group; they are people who need help.

3. If so, is it known about any plans to establish structures which would develop politics and would supervise its implementation in each of those ranges?

Repeat, please…First, about those structures. At the moment, the revision of state's administrative functions is in progress, so the new structures are not being discussed. Just the other way about, it is being considered to combine the work of some structures, so that they would better satisfy the needs and there would be fewer mediators. On the one hand, it is being considered to establish day-centres in institutions that provide education (even now the program of day-centres is being expanded), and multifunctional centres where adults and people with disabilities could come in those regions where schools are restructured. The projects from structural funds are intended; a lot of projects are intended for establishing and developing multifunctional centres.

4. What are the main obstacles to establish those responsible structures in Lithuania?

I don't think that there are obstacles but as there is a crisis now, I don't think that we should create new structures; we should coordinate the existing ones better. We don't need one more structure that would help to implement a life long learning strategy that you mentioned. What we need is that each level according to its competence would concretize its activities in this range. I don't think we need new institutions or structures, if we understand structures as a new institution, either budgetary or other. It would be better to liberalize that system more, let's say giving the adults some kind of student's basket or supporting programs of those institutions that could perform those functions and they could communicate and cooperate. Like that.

5. Is there a person/ a position in your ministry who is specially trained and who is supervising the following issues:
a) social integration
b) opportunities for the representatives of untraditional groups to participate in education
c) life long learning
d) literacy
e) non-formal education?

All the functions are intended in functions and positions of few persons, not one person. I'm telling you once more that those one, two, three, four, five are five directions and those five directions are included in functions of several specialists. The department of social policy is for social integration, not the department of socialization for children and youth, and at our department Cepuleniene is for untraditional education of ethnic groups, Totoraitis is for life long learning, and there are fourteen specialists for literacy which we understand as common literacy because literacy consists of mathematics, Lithuanian language and so on at our department; there is a specialist for non-formal education as well.

6. On the other hand, if nothing is being done, who should be responsible for things start moving? That is to say, if there is no progress done in these fields, who should take responsibility to continue everything?

I don't think that there is no progress. The researches are being done in fields of adults' education and literacy. Again there are very wide themes in the questionnaire. The progress can be measured as strategic plans, strategies, other means and those means are constantly observed. They are being observed and adapted in the progress. Let's say we take information literacy, so there are computers being developed, courses organized, for instance, analysis of this situation is being done and the means are being adjusted through the strategy of the Ministry. It's not that there is nobody responsible [for this], it's rather that we should define what we want to achieve with this. The Ministry of Education and science has to use the indexes of European Union. Those indexes are being constantly analyzed and conclusions are being made and the means and the finances are being adjusted respectively. So, at first, how literacy is measured. We have programs of primary, basic and secondary education. Well, the main achievements of the students are defined in those programs and when he fulfils one program, he moves up to the other program. After that program, there's another one again. Formal education is defined by achievements that are recorded in different education documents and so there is an opportunity to see how a person achieves literacy (that is both the tasks and exams) and [to see] basic education achievements and so on. As for the quality of literacy, there are researches and students' achievements, there are standardized tests of 4-6, 8-10 classes and they are continually analyzed what they [students] obtained, what level of literacy it is. When it comes to non-formal education and life long learning, there are no plans to create the evaluation system for non-formal competencies. For example, there is a perfect system of foreign languages and it is related with languages' portfolio. Foreign languages are described not as a subject but as languages – there are levels described, steps are described, there is a table of European languages assessment, and a person can [assess himself as] A B C D, and he can assess his listening, reading, communication [skills]... On the other hand, there are tests, plus he can, for instance, be A2 in listening in French but he can be B1 in verbal communication. It is like that in languages and in computer literacy; competences like that are being assessed in a basic subject, as I said, in maths, in other formalized subjects. It is more complicated with those non-formal competences, but it can also be measured if a person wants to approve his professional qualification.

7. Are there any specific procedures which define direct cooperation/ communication between the region, the local and central government for:
a) social integration
b) opportunities for the representatives of untraditional groups to participate in education
c) life long learning
d) literacy
e) non-formal education?

So at first, there are regional policy documents, there are laws of counties and local government that [define] who is responsible for what. These are regional structures, regions, councils, local governments and others. So there are regulations of county governors' administrations which are responsible in regions. Responsibility is also divided in regulations of both the Ministry of Education [and Science] and municipalities. Communication is the following: continuous meetings are held, round tables, common activities are planned, common plans are prepared, and then municipalities are invited to join the fulfilment of those projects; everything works mostly through projects.

8. Do authorities give any kind of support to persons who are responsible for developing adults' education on local or regional level, for example for adult's education organizers?

Any kind of support? It's a very vague question. Do you agree that it's vague? For those who organize [adults' education], we give methodical support. There is basic support with the pupil's basket, and such support is planned with the student's basket, but kind of support it is? What if he asks for a book or whatever he wants? It should correspond to the functions of institution. That is how that support is given.

9. Is there cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social Security and Labour while creating a strategy for any of those fields? How is this dialogue going to be fulfilled?

Yes, it is. Yes, there are common strategies, common action programs signed by ministries. For example, we enter poverty reduction, integration of people with disabilities into different boards. There are working groups as well. There is constant cooperation, and this cooperation is being coordinated by the Government because it is a plan of the Government's means and in this plan ministries, several ministries are responsible for that plan. And usually it happens that there are working groups from those institutions, then the plan is combined and it goes to the Government. When it is the competence of several ministries, then there is a decision from Government or act of ministries which is of higher-level than just of one department.

10. Is there a national and/or governmental strategy for these questions:
a) social integration
b) opportunities for the representatives of untraditional groups to participate in education
c) life long learning
d) literacy
e) non-formal education?

There is one. There is a conception of Non-formal education and a program, and these developmental guidelines of Social integration, Poverty reduction strategy. And there are

all documents, well, we have many documents. Well, although we have documents, we often lack means, or finances to implement them.

11. If so, are there any concrete set of goals for developing this strategy?

There are, there are target finances, it also includes finances from structural funds. For instance, if we lack finances, we enlist finances from structural funds, for example those multifunctional centres that I mentioned. Thus they are not only from ministry's budget but from structural funds as well, as it is called Human resources' and cohesion promotion program.

12. If so, are there any finances intended to improve the elements of this strategy?
13. What percentage of the State budget is allocated to adults' education: a) formal education, b) non-formal education?

I can't answer this. I don't know, write down this question, we have Alisauskas here, or you can ask Pusvaskis, maybe he can answer because I don't know about the money well.

14. What can you tell us about means/ ways how the government promotes/ supports the life long learning not only in bigger cities but also in rural areas as well?

So, there are courses of computer literacy that I mentioned. There are different courses of foreign languages, there are centres, there are multifunctional centres that I told you about, where people can come and learn, including employers as well, so that they would encourage their people. These are funded by the state. There is a research on general computer literacy, I will give you a link, and you'll be able to see it.

15. Could you make a comment on government's plans to expand the life long learning at basic schools, at secondary schools, at vocational schools, at colleges and universities?

Well yes, at basic, secondary… The first thing, what I can concretely tell you about the government's plans, it is regarding the national education strategy that we have now. The national education strategy has certain means which have several directions, so the first thing is infrastructure. Centres of distance learning are established so that a grown-up person could learn. As for the basic and secondary education, the accessibility for groups that need help has been raised. So there are schools being founded and expanded, and there is a system of schools for young people, for children who don't have motivation; the schools are being modernized so that all the children would have good conditions. Moreover, the schools and the work places for teachers are being computerized, also there is a concern for special assistance; special assistance that is the integration of people with disabilities. There are about 700 millions from structured funds and 40 new projects which will be used to increase quality in basic, secondary

education, in examination system, in vocational training and so on. I'll be able to show you. So here is the program of schools' development which also has 700 millions intended and the projects have already begun. For instance, projects for developing competences are very concrete ones, and I'll be able to show you these projects. The centres of vocational training are being established, vocational schools are being modernized... As for higher education, there is a reform of higher education which also refers to the revision of programs and moving to national scholarships. If we talk specifically about alternative programs, so the alternative programs are those that try to arrange the environment of youth schools, so that they would have modules of vocational training. Then there is one more program that is designed to expand different forms of education for people with special needs. It intends to improve the competences of those specialists who provide help, then to develop education assistance for those with special needs because about 10 percents of people are with special needs so we need to develop forms of help for them; there is a project for people who care for risk groups, and people with special needs; about 700 of them will be instructed. Specialists are instructed, advisers are prepared, devices are arranged for them and trainings are organized for them; and this is now being implemented. Special programs, methodologies are now being created and implemented. A project of people with special needs integration is in progress now too: new specialists are being qualified, they are supplied with devices, and textbooks are being adapted. S version of textbooks appears. It's the same textbook, it is just adapted for special people, it's taken from Swedes, they have S version. Computer programs are also adapted for special persons, so that they could acquire computer literacy and could learn this according to their capacity. They are involved in the same work; it's just that they learn it with S version. You see, it means that those children should be not in some kind of special schools, but they should be integrated into comprehensive schools. Special schools will be restructured into methodical centres. They already fulfilled their mission and now they have gained a lot of experience. They will create various kinds of methodology. They are usually in the counties, so the teachers from the region will be able to come there and study, seminars will take place on how to work with children from those schools. You see, how smart it is. Specialists and teachers (both of maths and Lithuanian language) will provide help for those children who [want to] integrate...yes.

16. Do migrants (Lithuanians) apply to our higher education establishments? How many of them apply? What kind of assistance is offered to them?

Are migrants those who live there or who arrive here? Some migrants have citizenship, some don't. They are very different... Which of them are you talking about: those who finished studies here in Lithuania or those who finished studies abroad? We have special university enrolment system for foreigners and people who acquired their education abroad. When Lithuanian citizens finish school abroad and have different kind of certificate, then at first, their certificate is evaluated if one can study at higher education school here and then he can try to enter the higher education institution. There are special quotas and places for them in every study program. They tried last year... I'm

talking about Lithuanians who went abroad and about 150 came back. There were 150 places but I don't know how many entered. Those 150 places are for Lithuanians. Foreigners and foreigners' children who came here earlier, four years till, how to say, if they come till the ninth grade, then they take the same exams, if they come to the ninth, tenth, eleventh or twelfth grade, they study at Lithuanian school, at home and they can take national-level examinations and they can enter those quotas. In a word, there's an attempt to encourage them to come back. When those who migrate come, they can have levelling classes to improve their Lithuanian language, so that they could study in Lithuanian. This is a separate program, education program for migrating employees.

17. Can a student work, e.g. in Ireland, and study at our higher educational institutions? Have there ever been any students like that? Did they finish their studies successfully? Comparing with all students, do migrants leave studies more often? Is the information about reasons of such persons dropping out collected?

I can't answer this, as I don't guide them but as much as I know, there are students who study here as part-time students. I know some students who work not in Ireland but for example in Dubai. They get the material and fulfil it via the internet and if his study form is distant, then he accounts on the exam. He can do this both theoretically and practically. The reasons of dropping out are being analyzed in general. There are researches made and I will show you all the researches. The reasons of leaving the higher educational institution and wastage are analyzed at first by the higher educational institution itself. Wastage is an index of analysis when the higher educational institution is making self-examination because it's its own business. There are qualitative researches on national level, too.

18. How do lecturers look at such students? What kind of problems appear concerning studies' administration for such students? How flexible is study system at our universities/ colleges concerning the aspect of organization of study process?

It's not a question for me again but in my opinion he [a student] can choose an individual plan and then he has an opportunity to study in a distance way. He accounts on the tasks he is given. For instance, the Department of Social Pedagogy allows him [a student] to conduct a research at similar institutions. It depends on the flexibility and attitude of the higher educational institution. This is the business of the higher educational institution. There is a general system so that a student could choose and collect modules. There is also the Erasmus program which promotes mobility, and there are all sorts of students' mobility [programs]. I think that nowadays there is no problem here.

19. Is this problem relevant on the whole? What available means do ensure (could ensure) study accessibility for mobile workers?

Well, it can be because of personal needs, we need a separate research for higher education establishments here. Distance studying is a very clear thing. Other thing is the recognition of competences of non-formal [education]. I mean recognition that I have a work and [I have] certain studies at work. If one practises and at the same time does other kind of work, why should not we accept this? And this is being applied very often when a student carries particular competences. Again I'm talking about what I know, for example, social pedagogues are being encouraged to bring competences, to show them and to get the evaluation. I'm not talking about all, just about my specialty but I know that there are similar things in other [specialties] as well.

20. In your opinion, is a student coming from abroad (a migrant) concerned about the quality of studies, or is he concerned only about examination and getting a diploma?

Quality… I think he is concerned about the quality. How did he come here and what does he want here? He wants the studies and certainly a diploma, too. Maybe it's because the studies are cheaper. Why do migrants and those others come to study medicine? He examines the market; maybe he needs what is cheaper and needs a diploma, too. I think that he considers why he comes here. But the whole system doesn't demand the quality. We are carrying the surveys but we should look in the Department of Studies, because I can't answer.

21. Does the staff of the higher educational institution know the problems of migrants? Were they prepared somehow for that?

I don't think that they know, you know, they start to know the problems only when they meet a certain problem. There is no separate preparation; there are some kind of courses, and the lecturers should prepared the modules for the migrating ones; as it is a national international program Erasmus, they are qualified for working with the Erasmus students. When the students arrive, there will be a turn, so you prepare for that mobility through the Erasmus program. It is about students to come, about the turning-points that will appear. One can be prepared for this kind of mobility through the Erasmus program.

22. Are students-migrants mentioned in the strategies of higher education establishments?

I don't know. We should look in the strategies of higher education establishments. The autonomy of higher education establishments regulates (there is mentioned) that national program is supposed for internationality and this program says that a lecturer could teach in a foreign language; the libraries shouldn't be closed; it should be the openness, not the exclusiveness of the universities. The university is open; the Chinese are studying medicine, so certainly the strategy is.

23. What do you think, is the number of such students-migrants going to increase? Why?

It is certainly going to increase because the world is becoming global, because of the European Union and mobility, because the world is becoming very mobile, look how many Turks and Byelorussians entered. The mobility among people is increasing, so the need of education increases, too. European Union and Labour market… They say, Byelorussians are coming, Turks are coming, someone else is coming… Workplaces are moving, and the labour force and people's work becomes more and more mobile. It will really increase; even this morning I saw a German who has enterprises… It will really increase in terms of both, the coming ones and leaving ones.

24. Does the government take any initiatives to qualify elementary and secondary schools' teachers at higher education establishments for work in little groups, such as of ethnic minorities, socially supported groups, who could later be teachers in a) elementary school, b) secondary school?

They are qualified, social pedagogues are qualified for work with those risk groups and there is no separate preparation for teachers but they must be prepared to work with eee children of all sorts of needs. Those programs integrate children with special needs and ethnic minorities and so on. Teachers of languages of ethnic minorities' cultures are being prepared.

25. What are, in your opinion, the obstacles and/ or the opportunities while promoting such initiative?

Qualifying the teachers falls under a complicated problem because there are very big requirements for teachers' preparation. They may not fill in those credits. If one gets a mathematics teacher's bachelor diploma after those four years, several specializations may not being promoted in Lithuania.
Secondly, the reticence of the universities is an obstacle. Universities are not flexible, especially those which prepare pedagogues, they do not orient to the market. Also, there will be no workload for teachers, if one is prepared only for work with migrant children, so the best way is to retrain the teachers. One thing is when they obtain education at one time and the other is to improve the qualification later. When you prepare a teacher, he may not start working as a teacher. From the six thousand of those who finish Pedagogical [University] only few hundreds start working as pedagogues. So the purposive preparation of those who won't go to work is very expensive. It's better to prepare and to improve the qualification of the already working ones, of those who already work with those children. If he, for example, works in Jonava at people's from Chechnya or some other school, then he could improve his qualification in work with those migrant children or adults. Improvement of qualification is a part of non-formal education.

26. Does the state encourage and support the lecturers of higher education to attend courses and obtain professional knowledge important for the community, such as a) law, b) social work, c) work with youth, d) psychology, and e) other?

The state supports quality of higher education establishments. There are conferences, internships, so that lecturers could teach each other psychology, law and other things; it's a business of every higher educational institution. The state has requirements for lecturers' competence. The higher educational institution engages them by competition which requires the competitors to be highly- qualified. So he has to think about this

himself as he is a lecturer. We are to raise his qualification, if he didn't understand that he needs it himself, so what kind of a high qualification we are talking about.

27. In your opinion, what does prevent or encourage this?

Competition between universities encourages this. The lecturers must feel responsible to work better, so that he could have more students. Higher competences, qualification and services attract the most, but the problem is that a lecturer has nowhere to raise his qualification. A high-level lecturer is neither an employer, nor a worker who finished eight classes. There must be a very wide supply of such programs for a lecturer but there are no specially made programs, and as a lecturer I have nowhere to go because nobody can offer me a module "Law". Such a program dedicated specially for lecturers' qualification is not being arranged. When it comes to other fields, they can improve their competences in their range as there are conferences, seminars, researches but there must be special programs for the lecturers of social work that you mentioned. There are no programs arranged so that he could learn something from other ranges. At least I haven't heard about that.

28. In your opinion, what does prevent or encourage using a school building for adults' education courses?

Nobody prevents. Nobody does. There is a support, and nobody prevents it. Nobody prevents. It takes place now, surely nobody prevents, in my opinion.

29. Are there any gaps in adult education that in your opinion could show up in the nearest future? What kind of?

The recognition of qualification and flexibility in recognition of competences of qualification is needed, so that one could acknowledge them [competences] better. And secondly, there is a need of sponsorship because we have to finance, motivate and promote learning at workplaces so that he wouldn't have to leave. A person will be afraid of going to study because he will be afraid of losing his job. If you go to study, another person will occupy your working position. When unemployment increases, employers should support learning at work as the acknowledgment of competences. Yes, the work with the employers, the work on possibilities for employee to work part time or have a shorter working day, is needed etc. Well, I don't know if this happens or not, it is both like this and like that.

30. Which state institution is responsible for financing organizations of non-formal education?

The Ministry of Education…The Ministry of Education and Science, not directly, not for financing……that's a good question….. You know – how to say – as the non-formal education is not financed from MES, so it is municipalities, municipalities, non-formal education belongs to municipalities.

31. How could you describe the state of non-formal education 5 years ago? How did it change over those 5 years? Why?

Is non-formal related to artistic, cultural and other? Non-formal education is very wide, it changed very differently. The adult non-formal education presumably hasn't moved up but children's non-formal education increased significantly. Children are closer to non-formal basket. There is a research which shows that there are more programs subject to municipality. Program funding increased, if we can say like that. Well, finances emerged till 2008. Documents and agreements emerged. It has really moved up both vertically and conceptually, more in conceptual level. It is funded both from the state and structural funds.

32. In your opinion, what actions in the future should the government take in order to make identity perfection (or COMMON ABILITIES training) lessons available for people who seem to be left „near" the education system (e.g. those who hasn't finished secondary school, permanent unemployed, ethnic groups).

What efforts? That's a question as well...... That is to intend, initiate projects. Those multifunctional [centres] should be included too; and I think that such specialists would help a lot in municipalities, we need to work more with the elders and people who approaches those groups, so that they could direct those groups. Those people need to be directed. There is nothing to offer them today. There is nothing to offer them in villages and little towns as there is no diversity of those forms, there aren't any forms being suggested. Different forms of service providing and education should be promoted and extended.

33. In your opinion, what actions in the future should the government take in order to make COMMUNITY ABILITIES lessons available for people who seem to be left "near" the education system (e.g. those who hasn't finished secondary school, permanent unemployed, ethnic groups).

I believe it's those multifunctional centres, so that a person could come to sit by the computer, read in the library, so that he could come and learn something.

34. What does it need to undertake in order to reduce the difference between the traditional and untraditional education groups (e.g. people who left school early, the permanent unemployed, ethnic minorities)?

What do we need to undertake? So I say it's about regional politics. We need to evaluate how many people like that we have, and to create communities which would work with those people. At first those people should be identified, those social workers should work with those people and ascertain what they want. Then those workers start searching. There must be programs for those people and I know there are programs such as of

social work, engagement of people with disabilities, retraining. It's being identified what they want, then desirable forms of learning are being searched for. Those intermediators or moderators, I don't know how to say, they would look for work and learning as well. On the regional level it's being encouraged that such people would emerge and could direct other people either after lessons, or to some other place.

35. What do you think about Government's possibly coming support while creating and developing community classes so that those social groups which are the most distant (people who left school early, permanent unemployed, ethnic minorities, etc.) could obtain traditional education?

I agree. I talked about that. It could be communities that would identify and bring [those people,] and [they] could [organize] formal and non-formal occupation.

36. What are the main obstacles while seeking to create a system which would acknowledge non-formal education and working experience and would enable adults to seek education?

There aren't any institutions like that, there are no criteria created and described. For instance, there was Qualification office that is going to be abolished now. It had to create a system but you see it will be abolished by sunset program. You'll be able to ask Pusvaskis about this. The Qualification office had to do this here.

37. In your opinion, how can those obstacles be overcome?

It's to create a service that will be organized now. There was Qualification office created which will be reorganized now. Yes, these are plans, and it is one of them… And which Ministry will take those functions.

38. What plans are to be developed while seeking flexibility of accreditation system?
39. In your opinion, what are disadvantages of government's priorities while seeking to improve the approach to education for people attributed to risk groups?

Disadvantages of priorities…. Maybe the priorities are abstract, common, they don't reach those people, and the priorities are for actions of institutions, not for people, not for the final consumer. These are priorities. The conditions should be created there. They should thing not only about how to attract people there. Afterwards, yes, they can look for the ways to attract people. There are priorities of common strategies' implementation. We have nice words that often don't become reality.

40. What kind of changes over the next 5 years do you expect to achieve while encouraging the approach to education for people attributed to risk groups?

Most of changes we are willing to achieve with the structural funds and with their second stage, that BPD stage.

41. What kind of changes do you really expect that they will be achieved over the next 5 years while encouraging the approach to education for people attributed to risk groups?
- Reservation of places (yes or now)
- Free childcare
- Opportunity for employees to obtain higher education at any higher educational institution
- Creating information strategy for each community

[I expect] some kind of changes in all those ranges, e.g. to involve people more, there is an index defining what people should be educated. Next it's a free childcare. I can't answer this because it's not ours. But I don't know if the opportunity to learn at higher educational institution will be realized, maybe the higher education will allow learning at postgraduate studies one time and unification of conditions for extramural and extension studies will maybe increase, or maybe decrease. We need to wait for real changes of higher education. It's about higher education. I don't know higher education. That's all.

42. What would be your priorities while seeking to improve opportunities for those groups to obtain higher education?

It would be to allow very concrete places where they could put themselves in. As student's basket is being introduced, it is important to distinguish those who could get into those groups, and compete among each other, not necessarily with the best ones. And it is necessary to give the purposive scholarships for groups of people with disabilities and those at social risk. This is a mechanism. There is just integration of people with disabilities, they can study and get service for them.

43. What are the biggest obstacles while seeking to make education more available for people from groups with the weakest representation as well as groups of social exclusion, people who want to learn all life long, illiterates or people with non-formal education?

It's their inner motivation, what it is for, because they lost some kind of belief, they often don't have jobs and that's why their involvement into something is needed because education gives them something. Relating themselves with work, employment and some kind of way of life, we need very integrated programs here.

44. Does the state have any specific plans while seeking to improve education opportunities for adults in state prisons? Please, name them.

There are [plans], that they could [learn] some profession and now it is being discussed about higher education too, so that they could choose modules and then they could be included.

45. What obstacles, in your opinion, do prevent from developing education in prisons?

Government decision on convicts' education development is being arranged right now. There is a concrete decision being arranged to expand opportunities for them, so that they could learn in prison.

46. How, in your opinion, can the state support information system which tries to involve into traditional education system those who traditionally don't participate in education or are alienated from usual education system?

At first it is social advertisement. Social advertisement is… on the television. For those who don't watch television, there is information at the elderships and it's for those specialists who work with them as well. A specialist who comes must carry information. He must see where he can direct [a person] and so on. We need to work with those who work with those risk families.

47. Are representatives from risk groups involved in a) creation and b) implementation of strategies and programs?

They are surely involved in implementation; there are working groups containing representatives from adults' associations. They are involved in creation, too - adult's association creates a strategy. For instance, [representatives] of ethnic minorities give proposals for ethnic minorities' [strategy], [representatives] of people with disabilities give them for their integration [strategy]. When there is a common document being arranged, for instance, for examinations' adaptation – [there were] representatives of the people with disabilities.

48. What state support is intended for funding childcare and education approachability for adults who want to participate in education courses (it doesn't matter if it is in formal or non-formal way)? Could you describe plans of prospective support?

You know, I really don't know this as it is a part of social politics, and I really don't know this. I can't answer this.

49. Many people of the needy families don't have opportunities to learn at home (don't have a separate corner/ room). What alternative places (in physical meaning), in your opinion, could be really given for teaching them?

Yes, there are libraries and multifunctional centres where a person can come and work. Now there is Gates' family fund, the libraries are being modernized, there is [internet] access, and maybe you've heard social advertisements on television. They advertise that you can come and learn at libraries and this is established while creating distance

learning centres. Distance learning allows you to come anywhere where is a computer, internet and this is how distance learning works. Distance learning advisers are one more of the means. It is planned to have distance learning coordinators and these distance learning advisers could provide service and so on in a certain region.

50. Have there been any efforts for trying to get places at common schools for adult education? Please describe.

You should ask this those who tried. But certainly, everywhere, for example me… The municipality has… There is no municipality school that definitely establishes it… There has never been a situation when somebody wants to establish a school and there are no places. Here, you know……in the afternoons, in the evenings all schools are open and especially in districts because the number of pupils is decreasing and they think how to accommodate those rooms.

51. Does the state have some kind of a strategy and does it intend support for teaching/ educating a) community leaders, b) teachers working in those regions/ districts where are people attributed to risk groups?

Yes, yes, yes, there are those multifunctional and distance learning advisers…they are really intended.

52. Which state's institution is responsible for libraries' funding?

The Ministry of Culture.

53. Can all state's libraries be used/are they adapted for distance teaching (learning)?

Yes. Mazvydas library, the biggest one, and universities' libraries are adapted. There are libraries' Litnetas, Liesis. Everything is good with the libraries' modernization, well, it's not perfect but a lot of millions are given now for libraries' modernization.

54. Please, make a comment on how to overcome digital exclusion among different social groups.

What [exclusion]? … [It is] general computerization. It is general computerization and opportunities for people to obtain basics of computer literacy. There is such a program.

55. Can the present crisis have some kind of influence for life long learning? What?

On one hand, people will evaluate resources and how they work, and on the other hand, it can be a negative [influence] because there will be no programs created, funding will decrease and so on. But on the other hand, maybe those institutions will think how to use room more rationally, to buy some kind of minibuses. I saw minibuses myself which

are both computers and libraries and they can ride around villages and so on. The influence can be both like this and like that. People will start to realize what else they can do with that computer and to teach children and parents, unemployed, adults.

56. What influence will the financial crisis have (or has now) for adult education/ teaching at secondary schools?

I don't know for adult education, but they haven't felt any real influence for learning at secondary schools yet. Maybe there will be fewer pupils in mobile groups, education plans will be tighter, and they will have to teach not individually but in bigger groups. But it won't affect common formal learning essentially because … formal education has pupil's basket which can, how to say, which won't be reduced but maybe the number of pupils decrease, and then the money could be given for adults. And that's it.

57. How, in your opinion, will the new education and science reform affect adults' education and your school?

You mean the higher education? It will affect very much because on one hand, higher education establishments will have to take care of the quality, the student's basket will come only when a student comes and one more thing is that programs will have to combine but there will be a lot of opposition, a lot of tension, a lot of negative things, a lot of, well how to say, hiding some kind of information and so on. Well, I think there will be a lot of tension but on the other hand those who look flexibly, they will analyze the market, will look how they can adapt, they will look for new programs. This can increase supply for adult education. Universities will have to think of distance [education], about different interest groups of those who didn't really enter [the university]. They must realistically consider the market and the studying ones.

Thank you for your answers and time!

Conclusions

This report has attempted to illustrate the extent to which the formal (higher and secondary), non-formal education providers and prison institutions are addressing the lifelong learning goals. The focus on access of adults to education has been central in this report. The report also includes descriptions of projects that serve as models of good practice for adult education institutions. The factual findings are intertwined with policy recommendations and recommendations for further study. The information provided in this report can serve as a framework for further study and evaluation of the progress being made towards implementing lifelong learning goals in Lithuania.

Trends in attracting new target groups and widening access

On the whole it appears that, despite policies and many strategic efforts, disadvantaging conditions in adult education had hardly been reduced for the groups under consideration in this report. The imbalance in support measures is evident in formal, non-formal and prison education providers.

In formal higher education, there is the division of 'work' between the management and teaching personnel. For the management, widening access and attracting new target groups primarily means improving the infrastructure and securing more funding. The promotion and implementation of the 'soft' agenda for increased access is considered rather additional work that is put on teachers' 'shoulders'. Members of disadvantaged groups are not "visible" at university and colleges. This can be partly related to the lack of infrastructure for people with disabilities, which might be a reason discouraging them from education. Also, there is no data management system and this might add to the "statistical invisibility" of students from risk groups, adults etc. Thus a systemic approach to a better promotion of access is needed.

The recognition and validation of prior learning and links between non-formal and formal adult education

Both formal and non-formal institutions acknowledge the usefulness of the recognition and validation of prior learning, but they recall different reasons why there are issues to resolve in this area.

For formal institutions (especially colleges and university) the context is firstly legal: there is no legal framework that would facilitate recognition of prior learning. Moreover validation of non-formal and prior learning remains a methodological challenge, despite the fact that some initial 'inner' institutional procedures and practices exist. However, these procedures of validation of prior learning have been so far applied unequally.
Non-formal education providers recall the lack of inter-institutional cooperation. Other important reason might be the 'flexibility' of curriculum and abundance of courses for which there is no uniform quality assessment. The fierce competition between non-

formal education providers might be 'used' to enhance their interest in quality assessment and inter-institutional cooperation with formal education providers. However, with regard to the competition between state and private non-formal education institutions, the former are likely to take an advantageous position.

Childcare

This report identifies that education institutions seem to find it hard to organize childcare for adult learners. Childcare is not part of their core activities and funding possibilities are limited or only available from project funding by EU Structural funds. Both formal and non-formal education providers recognise the need of childcare facilities. However, no efforts are put into making their study programmes and courses more flexible or varied.

Reduced fees

Reductions of tuition fees or exemptions of tuition are regulated by law and are usually category-based in formal tertiary state-funded institutions. Some means-tested reductions of tuition fees and/or single payments are available for adults in state-funded institutions, but these funds are usually limited. Moreover, in tertiary education measures are taken to keep the tuition fees as low as possible.

Private tertiary and non-formal institutions have more flexibility in this respect; fee reductions are usually means-tested, but they tend to be smaller than at state funded colleges or universities and are available to only a small number of learners. There is also more flexibility in paying tuition fee methods: the tuition fees can be postponed or regular (monthly, quarterly) payments can be made during extended period of time.

Secondary (distant) education is free of charge for Lithuanian citizens and all persons who have a permission to reside in the country.

Reserved places

The practice of reserving places or the imposition of quotas for specific target groups does not exist. All adults must have equal access to education according to equal opportunities and anti-discrimination laws.

Outreach to target groups

The case studies in this report show that reaching out to those coming from a disadvantaged background is not always the first or the only concern of the education providers. The interest in adult learners (and other target groups) lies mainly in the concern to recruit a sufficient number of students and the goals of lifelong-learning are a secondary concern (especially in tertiary and non-formal education). Open doors

events or arranging meetings with communities are aimed to attract 'mainstream' learners. In most cases, education providers do not have specific measures aimed at attracting adults or other target groups. The institutions of non-formal adult education try to provide education as close as possible to the needs of labour market, thus enabling adult learners' active role in choosing best suitable courses for them.

Models of practice: key issues and success factors

The implementation of the projects presented in this report as models of good practice has focused on three key areas: training, accessibility and support. Each project had a 'small beginning' which was later followed by expansion in terms of funding and scope. There are certain aspects of the projects which have helped to ensure the success of their implementation. Both projects recognise the importance of life-long learning and the importance of widening access of adults to education.

In case of Ozo Secondary School the distance learning project not only widens access to education for adults and target groups, but also secures work places for teachers (as low birth rates and emigration result in less students in traditional classroom and some teachers are losing their jobs).

In case of Vilnius College sign language project helps to strategically match human resources to labour market conditions, thus benefiting the community.
However, both distance learning and sign language study programmes hold the 'monopoly' of such activities in Lithuania. The graduates of sign language study program benefit Vilnius region labour market; however, such specialists are needed in other regions as well.

Impact of the recession

According to the findings of this report the impact of recession on adult education can have both negative and positive outcomes:

Positive outcomes	Negative outcomes
No visible rise of tuition fees	Learners are unable to pay study fees, they postpone making payments for longer period, there are more requests to postpone payments
Opportunity to come back to education (and take the advantage of having more time for studies, while unemployed)	Decrease in funding will have an impact on staff motivation
This will positively influence non-formal education market as only the most	Learners are less secure about their future decrease in motivation to study

competitive companies will survive	
The increase competition between institutions will increase study quality (or the „image of quality")	The 2009 education reform coincides with economic recession and this increases risk and insecurity levels

Prison education

The possibilities and conditions for prisoners' education are restricted by other regulations despite the prison's strategic efforts to foster education. The highest level of prison security restricts education possibilities. The so called 'human factor' has a significant impact on the successful implementation of prison education programs. Released to freedom prisoners can successfully continue their education at any training institution.

In higher education, the possibilities to enrol into higher education study programme are almost non-existing except a few rare cases. In the absence of such possibilities higher education is not accessible for the prisoners. There are plans to implement distance education programs, but the prisoners cannot use online learning platforms.

There are unresolved human resources issues. There are no perks and benefits or bonuses available for teachers. The volunteer work is encouraged, but the institution lacks the organizing capacity for volunteer work. The institution would accept teachers from another country for foreign language training programs, but there is no possibility to provide the necessary working conditions.

There are also such obstacles as funding, a substantial change (the so called 'migration') of prisoners, negative public perceptions and the lack of access to the internet. There were quite a few programs for prisoners' resocialisation, but the projects are limited in time and usually have no continuity. Because of the lack of funding, the quality of prisoners' training is also low.