



Sailing-boat Meridianas, Klaipėda city



Klaipėda Region, Lithuania

General overview

The Klaipėda Region is situated in the western part of Lithuania. It includes seven municipalities and has a population of 322 137 (beginning of 2022), representing 11.5% of the Lithuanian population. The territory of the Region covers 5209 km² and the average population density is 62 per km². In 2020, the gross domestic product per capita was €16 400 (1).

The main city of the Region, also called Klaipėda, is the third-largest in Lithuania and has the only sea port in the country. One of the three largest health-care centres in Lithuania is also found in Klaipėda city. Four multiprofile hospitals provide the highest level of qualified, specialized services. The city participates actively in international health projects, such as the WHO Healthy Cities Network, which it joined in 2011.

In 2020, the average life expectancy in the Region was 75.6 years (2020) – 70.6 years for men and 80.8 years for women – and the infant mortality rate was 3.3‰ (the average for the country being 2.7‰) (1). The crude death rate for the Klaipėda Region was 15‰, the three leading causes being cardiovascular diseases, malignant neoplasms and external causes (2). Life expectancy at birth per 100 000 was 70.6 years and 80.8 years for males and females, respectively (1).

The health system in Lithuania is funded through the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund, which comprises contributions from employers and employees, as well as revenue created through state and social-insurance activity. Public health is funded from state and municipal budgets. The municipalities support health care in their

respective territories by providing additional funding for basic medical aid and health care for pregnant women, unemployed people, people

with disabilities, children under 16 years of age, orphans under 18 years of age, and people who have reached retirement age (3).

Regional activities linked to the WHO European Programme of Work

The following activities are linked to the three core priorities of the European Programme of Work (EPW): (i) moving towards Universal

Health Coverage (UHC); (ii) promoting health and well-being; and (iii) protecting against health emergencies).



Moving towards UHC

The health system in Lithuania is funded through the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF). The scheme is based on compulsory, largely employment-based contributions, but it does not cover dental expenses for adults or, for most people, outpatient prescription medicines. The NHIF purchases health-care services on behalf of its contributors through five regional branches, covering the Regions of Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai and Panevėžys. The Ministry of Health regulates the health-care system by formulating health policy, setting standards and requirements, licensing providers and health professionals, and approving capital investments. It also governs the NHIF, which is under the Ministry. The municipalities are responsible for organizing the provision of primary and social care, as well as for public health activities. In the development of the public health-care system in Lithuania, there is particular emphasis on strengthening public health at the municipal level. The majority of the municipalities have established public health bureaux to implement public health functions assigned to them through legal acts. The main functions of the bureaux are the promotion and monitoring of public health and child-health care. The municipalities also own some primary-care centres, the majority of the polyclinics, and small- to medium-sized hospitals. The private sector is very limited in providing inpatient care, but plays a substantial role in other areas, such as primary care and dental care (3).



Promoting health and well-being

To improve the health of all citizens and reduce health inequalities, the Klaipėda Region has planned measures to:

1. increase the accessibility of health care and social services to meet the needs of the different population groups;
2. ensure the provision of public health services by implementing the Municipal Specific Public Health Support Programme in priority areas;
3. modernize municipal health-care institutions with the aim of improving the quality of health-care services.



Protecting against health emergencies

Lithuania has a thorough civil protection system with clear roles and responsibilities and a corresponding set of laws and regulations. Through membership of the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance and the United Nations, Lithuania is well connected to regional and international networks that help strengthen military, civil-protection, and national approaches to emergency preparedness. The health sector conducts its own annual risk assessment of health threats and available resources in the health-care sector. Furthermore, health-care providers are mandated to establish preparedness measures for disaster situations. The Ministry of Health is designated as the lead agency for communicable-disease events. Specific plans exist for identified threats, such as radio-nuclear events or pandemic influenza (4).

Initiative specific to the Klaipeda Region

The Klaipėda Region Specialization Strategy 2030

The Strategy document defines the vision and future development of the Region, agreed by the municipalities, and the business, academic and community structures. The core themes of the Strategy are:

1. marine economics
2. bioeconomics
3. sustainable tourism
4. advanced industrial economics
5. service economics (5).

The three most important topics for collaboration within the Regions for Health Network

These are:

1. strengthening cross-sectoral partnership for health at the local level, and public participation in the planning and implementation of health interventions;
2. reducing health inequalities and improving access to comprehensive, quality health-care services;
3. developing innovative programmes on the promotion of public health at the municipal level.

Main partners and collaborators

These are:

- the WHO Healthy Cities Network
- the European Social Fund Agency (Lithuania)
- Turku University of Applied Sciences (Finland)
- the Central Project Management Agency (Lithuania).

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