

ANNUAL TOURISM REPORTING TEMPLATE

1. INTRODUCTION

Council Decision 86/664/EEC of 22 December 1986¹ establishing a consultation and cooperation procedure in the field of tourism foresees that “each Member State shall send the Commission, once a year, a report on the most significant measures it has taken and, as far as possible, on measures it is considering taking in the provision of services for tourists which could have consequences for travellers from the other Member States”.

With the publication of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism”, the Commission announced that “in order to strengthen the collaboration with and among Member States, their current annual reporting through the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) will be used to facilitate the exchange and the dissemination of information about how their policies and actions safeguard the sustainability of tourism”.

This Communication was welcomed by the Competitiveness Council conclusions (22nd-23rd November 2007) and by the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 14th December 2007.

The main aims for the reporting process are:

- to be able to monitor the level of implementation of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism” by Member States;
- to facilitate the exchange of experiences among member States with regard to how they tackle issues which are important for the competitiveness and sustainability of European tourism.

MS reports referring to year n shall be sent to the European Commission by the end of February of year $n+1$.

If the reports are sent in English, the deadline is shifted to the end of April.

2. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

This section should provide an overview of the main organisational structure to illustrate how tourism is organised and managed, to identify linkages and to identify the engagement of other organisations/stakeholders.

The information required will only need to be prepared fully in year 1 as it will subsequently only be necessary to provide details of any changes.

¹ Official Journal L 384, 31/12/1986 P. 0052 – 0053.

2.1 Please identify the National Bodies responsible for tourism (Ministry and also any separate/related National Tourism Organisation), including key areas of responsibility, and their relationship to other national bodies. (maximum of 1.000 characters)

Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania, Tourism Policy Division is responsible for:

- Tourism policy-making
- Tourism planning
- International cooperation
- Planning of EU support

State Department of Tourism under the Ministry of Economy is responsible for:

- Implementation of Tourism policy
- Targeted tourism marketing
- Tourism market supervision
- Implementation of EU projects.

2.2 Please, describe what organisations/agencies are used to deliver services at the national and regional level and the services that they deliver. (maximum 800 characters)

The Lithuanian Tourism Association (LTA) established in 1991. It unites the most experienced Lithuanian tour operators and agencies (53 members). LTA represent interests of it's members at the Governmental institutions.

The Lithuanian Hotel and Restaurant Association is formed in 2002. Association unites and represents hospitality business in our country with more than 300 members. The Association: protects the rights and lawful interests of association members in governmental and management institutions.

The Lithuanian Countryside Tourism Association established in 1997. It unites 390 members and represents interests of the Association members against any and all institutions and organizations; coordinates activities of the Association members in developing rural tourism in Lithuania.

The Lithuanian Health Resorts Association is a non – governmental association, representing the interest of its members and promoting the Health Tourism. It was set up in 2007. Now it unites 8 Resorts Municipalities.

2.3 Please, describe which other bodies and organisations are involved at the national level and the process for involving them. (maximum 800 characters)

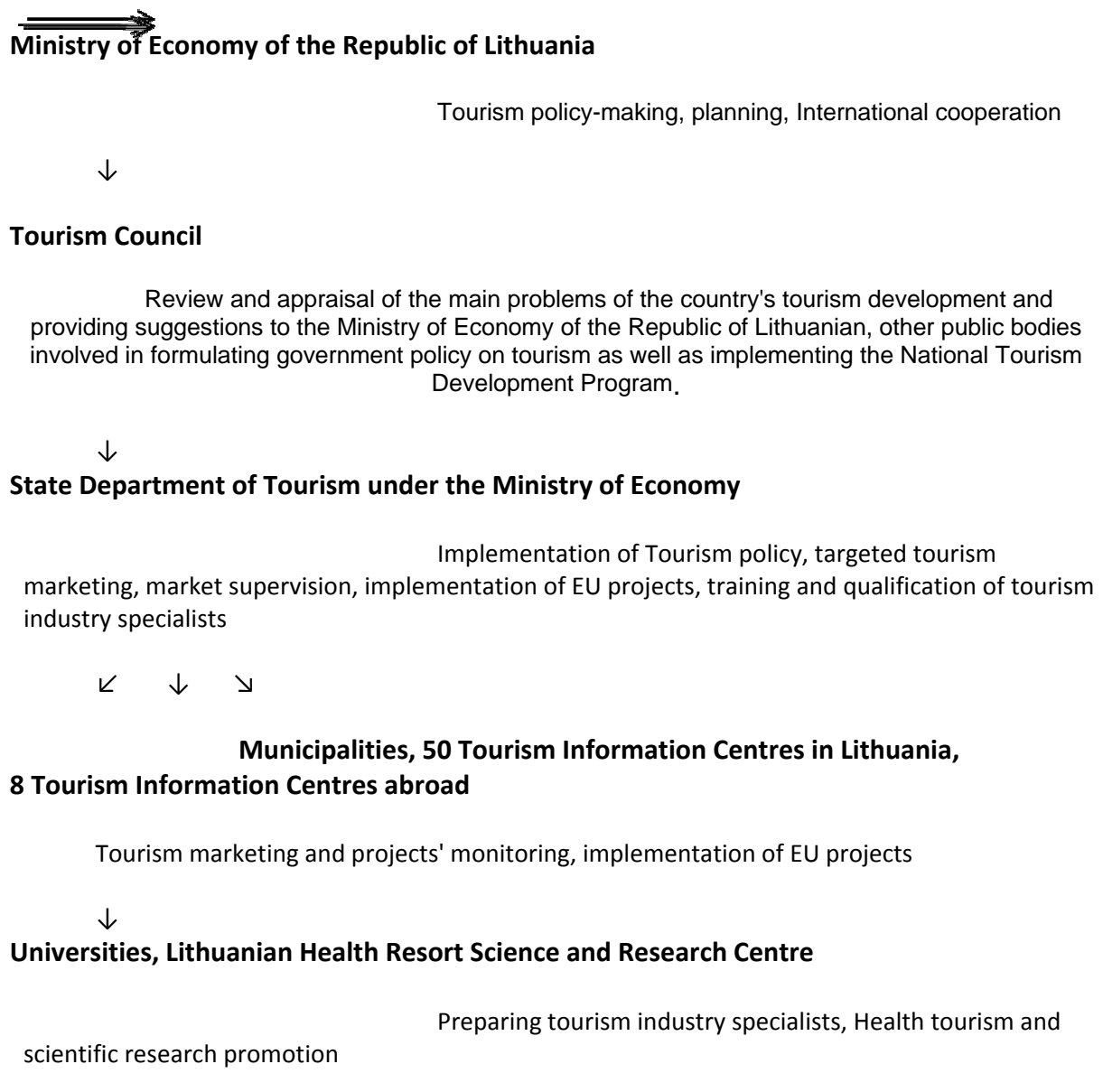
The Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture is the institution that performs functions of state administration of cultural heritage by organizing a preservation of the Lithuanian cultural heritage and passing it on to future generations and to create conditions necessary for public to learn about it and use it. The Department also cooperates with international cultural heritage organizations (UNESCO, ICCROM), coordinates Council of Europe programs in Lithuania, such as European Heritage Days and European Cultural Routes, organizes national and international

conferences, and conducts various educational campaigns.

State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment is responsible for creation conditions for cognitive tourism in protected areas.

Lithuanian Health Resort Science and Research Centre investigates health and its relationship to natural healing, a science-based tools and methods to strengthen and rebuild efficiency of health resorts, takes care of the health care, treatment and rehabilitation services provided by the Lithuanian resorts.

2.4 Please provide a diagram/organogram of the organisational structure for tourism identifying the relationship between national, regional and local bodies. Provide also a short description of the core responsibilities and competencies of each of the organisations. Include also information regarding the direct and indirect links between other departments, stakeholder organisations and unions. Information about mechanisms of decision making process participation from outsider organisations, e.g. forums, advisory committees is also requested. (maximum of 2.000 characters)



2.5 Please provide information about financial data, including spend/budget on tourism as a percentage of overall government spend/budget, the level of national funding support for tourism marketing, the amount of EU funding support made available for tourism and data concerning the support to SMEs and Destinations. (500 characters)

Tourism makes up to 4 % in the export of Lithuania. According to the information of the Bank of Lithuania, in 2010 revenue of Tourism made 779 mil EUR. Part of export of Tourism services is 25 per cent from all services.
2007-2013 Cohesion Promotion Action Programme – 239 mil EUR for tourism development.
National budget in 2010 – 0,64 mil EUR.

3. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

3.1 Is there a current National Strategy for tourism? Yes No

If yes, please, provide information in bullet point format about the key aims, objectives and priorities of the strategy highlighting those that are designed to address sustainability issues in economic, environmental and social terms in particular those related in the six aims included in the Agenda. In preparing the tourism strategy, explain how consideration has been given to the 9 principles set out in the Agenda (para2.3 p5) and given in the appendix. (maximum 1.000 characters)

National Tourism Development Programme 2010-2013 was prepared following the principles for achieving a competitive tourism. The main goals and objectives of the programme are to create a favourable environment for competitive tourism product development and to ensure a stable growth of the tourists' flows. Taking into account integrated approach, activities that affect society and environment objectives like development of public tourism infrastructure which stimulates the development of marketable tourism products; increasing the opportunities for resorts and resort areas and health tourism; supporting the development of private tourism sector services; improving the legal regulation and planning of the tourism sector; etc. were determined into the programme.

Programme stresses importance of using of the best available knowledge, development of professional skills in the tourism sector, sharing an experience and organizing training and pursuing the monitoring of the tourism sector.

In order to achieve an appropriate pace of tourism development, plan for the long term, the priority branches of tourism development were determined. Cultural, health, active and business tourism were designated as priority branches.

Using sustainable planning 7 priority territories of Tourism development were determined into the programme.

3.2 Who was the initiator and who is responsible for its implementation? (maximum 200 characters)

Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania, the State Department of Tourism under the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment, Lithuanian Health Resort Science and Research Centre, municipalities and private sector.

3.3 How is the strategy monitored and how often? (maximum 500 characters)

Quarterly and annually reports back to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on the implementation of measures, the use of funds and achievement of outcomes and indicators.

3.4 What tourism specific legislation exists? (maximum 500 characters)

- Law on Tourism;
- National Tourism Development Programme 2010-2013;
- Pope John Paul II's Pilgrimage Programme 2007-2013.

4. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES

This section provides Member States with an opportunity to outline specific initiatives and policies that are or are going to be adopted to manage and develop tourism activity in ways which respond to the key challenges of the Agenda and which fall within the six main aims of the Agenda itself.

1 Economic prosperity

- To ensure the long term competitiveness, viability and prosperity of tourism enterprises and destinations.
- To provide quality employment opportunities, offering fair pay and conditions for all employees and avoiding all forms of discrimination.

2 Social equity and cohesion

- To enhance the quality of life of local communities through tourism, and engage them in its planning and management
- To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, religion, disability or in other ways.

3 Environmental and cultural protection

- To minimise pollution and degradation of the global and local environment and the use of scarce resources by tourism activities.
- To maintain and strengthen cultural richness and biodiversity and contribute to their appreciation and conservation.

4.1 Please set out, briefly, the steps which have been or will be taken, if any, to address the 7 key challenges for the delivery of sustainable and competitive tourism, covered in the TSG report and referred to in the 'Agenda'.

Attention is giving for sustainable conservation and management of natural and cultural resources. Ministry of Economy in co-operation with Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Environment does planning of EU financial support for renovation of cultural heritage, for conservation and adaptation the cultural heritage for tourism.

Special initiative for organization of cultural events was suggested for reducing the seasonality, especially in the resorts.

Tourism experiences are available to all without discrimination as there is special regulations for accommodation establishments (special entrance, etc.), national and regional parks (pathways for disable people).

4.1.1 Reducing the seasonality of demand. (maximum 200 characters)

The most important tourism branches reducing the seasonality are:

- Health tourism (SPA and beauty services, healthy diet and lifestyle training, natural factors (mineral water, mud, air), medical tests and surgery, dental, care and rehabilitation services).
- Business (Conference) Tourism.

The National Tourism Development Programme 2010-2013 includes a measure „Support of cultural events in Resorts in order to reduce seasonality effect“.

4.1.2 Addressing the impact of tourism transport. (maximum 200 characters)

Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania co-operates with the Transport Ministry of the Republic of Lithuania implementing of Flight Promotion Programme. There are 3 international airports in Lithuania (Vilnius, Kaunas, Palanga). Vilnius Airport is the biggest and the most important. 15 airlines operate scheduled flights from Vilnius Airport and a few more local and foreign airlines operate charter flights. According to the winter schedule, the airport operates around 570 regular flights a week, and according to the summer schedule – around 685 regular flights a week, the rest of the flights are charter flights.

4.1.3 Improving the quality of tourism jobs. (maximum 200 characters)

Seminars, training and qualification of tourism industry specialists are organized annually by the State Department of Tourism at the Ministry of Economy.

4.1.4 Maintaining and enhancing community prosperity and the quality of life, in the face of change. (maximum 200 characters)

Many municipalities of Lithuania established Tourism Information Centre. Special training courses (tourism quality, new technologies in tourism, sustainable tourism, ect.) are organized by State Department of Tourism, by Lithuanian Hotels and Restaurants Association,

Lithuanian Tourism Association, Lithuanian Rural Tourism Association, etc.

4.1.5 Minimising resource use and the production of waste. (maximum 200 characters)

Lithuania is member of The Green Key programme that raise the awareness of owners and managers of tourism and leisure establishments on the necessity and possibilities of running a responsible tourism business. Besides environmental demands the programme includes demands on: training staff, monitoring energy use, washing and cleaning, food and beverages, indoor environment, parks and parking areas, education, etc.

4.1.6 Conserving and giving value to natural and cultural heritage. (maximum 200 characters)

The State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of Environment organizes the protection and management of protected areas. The Service coordinates the activities of 5 National Parks, 5 State Strict Nature Reserves as well as the work of the administration of 30 Regional Parks and one Biosphere Reserve. Protected areas occupy 15 percent of the total area of Lithuania.

There are 3 State Strict Nature Reserves (Cepkeliai, Kamanos, Viesvile), 2 State Cultural Reserves (Kernave and Vilnius Castles), 5 National Parks (Aukstaitija, Dzukija, the Curonian Spit, Zemaitija, and Trakai Historic National Park), 30 Regional Parks, Zuvintas Biosphere Reserve, and other protected areas. The Curonian Spit, Vilnius Old Town and Kernave vicinities have been included in the UNESCO World heritage list. The protected areas of international importance (Zuvintas Biosphere Reserve, the Nemunas Delta Regional Park, Cepkeliai, Kamanos and Viesvile State Strict Nature Reserves) have been included in Ramsar Territories' List.

The Lithuanian forests association has equipped more than 2000 objects for recreation such as: 1096 places of respite, 541 staging-posts, 143 different kinds of ways: educational, cognitive, recreational, and specialized, 79 review places.

Ministry of Economy closely co-operates with organizations responsible for the Lithuanian cultural heritage in order to achieve both objectives: conservation of cultural heritage and preservation of natural heritage as well as presenting it to a wide public.

4.1.7 Making holidays available to all. (maximum 200 characters)

Lithuania has some regulations that make favorable conditions for disabled travelers. According to the special requirements all 4-5 stars hotels and other 4 stars accommodation establishments are obliged to have at least 1 room tailored to the needs of disabled people. For all new built restaurants and accommodation establishments it is obligatory to have special entrance (a ramp) for disabled people. All new constructed pavements are tailored to disabled people needs. Last year 6 stationary piers has been built and tailored to disabled people needs on the river Nemunas.

4.2 As key challenges may change over time, please identify any other areas that are becoming a new challenge. (maximum 600 characters)

- Reducing the seasonality

- Solving visa issues
- Strengthen marketing activities
- Creating new touristic routes
- Improving Lithuanian accessibility (direct flights/transfer)
- Eestablishing National conference bureau

4.3 Please identify and describe a specific initiative, which is related to the 7 key challenges, that is innovative/ successful and which would be of interest to or of help to other Member States. (maximum 2.000 characters)

Project of the three Baltic States –The Great March across the Baltic States. The project helps tourists to find a new untraditional object of tourism, invite guests from abroad in order to show, how rich and beautiful Lithuania is, to learn history and traditions of the country. Members of the project are given 50 % and more discount in many touristic objects – museums, water routes and other.

Marathon of 600 Anniversary of Zalgiris Battle. Member of the Marathon are going to visit castles of Vilnius, Trakai, Medininkai, The Church of Vytautas the Great in Kaunas, mound in Birstonas, Merkinė, Veliuona, the Birute Hill in Palanga, the Battlefield in Pabaiskas, and Old Trakai.

5. MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Three mechanisms for implementing the Agenda were identified in the “Agenda”: sustainable destinations, sustainable businesses and responsible tourists.

5.1 Sustainable destinations: What support is given to strengthen destination management at the regional/ destination level (supportive policy environment, knowledge networks, training programmes, establishment of measures/indicators for benchmarking, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)

The National Tourism Development Programme stimulates creating sustainable destinations, market researches, planning and implementation of Tourism Marketing Plan. Marketing Working Group was established to strengthen destination management, to create marketing plan.

The Ministry of Economy is committed to promoting and supporting the development of sustainable tourism. We do this by encouraging tourism community to seek out, list and promote those travel service providers undertaking initiatives which support sustainable tourism objectives.

5.2 Sustainable businesses: What support is given to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of businesses (supportive policy environment, orientation of business support services to sustainability, training, financial incentives, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)

EU structural assistance for 2007-2013 is EUR 240 million provided in order to develop projects of tourism infrastructure and marketing:

- Establishment and development of eco, active, cognitive and wellness tourism infrastructure, EUR 45 million
- Preservation of cultural heritage and readjustment for tourism development, EUR 70 million
- Tourism projects of national interest, EUR 36 million

- Tourism information and marketing, EUR 7 million
- Regional public infrastructure, EUR 21 million
- Development of tourism services (products) and quality improvement of tourism services, EUR 61 million

Seminars and training of tourism industry businessmen are organized every year.

Information about SME's accommodation providers is collecting. It is a positive step towards improving sustainable outcomes for the destination. None of the initiatives are "certifiable" to existing standards, but they are good, they are meaningful to the SME's involved and address specific local needs.

Examples include employing and training orphaned children, supporting local schools, running a turtle hatchery, restoring a damaged coral reef, teaching traditional building skills, supporting volunteer workers, and restoring historical buildings

5.3 Responsible tourists: What support is given to promote responsible choices by tourists (e.g. sustainability in education, national marketing and media campaigns, promotion of certification schemes)? (maximum 600 characters)

The State Department of Tourism in co-operation with Universities organizes a special campaign to promote responsible tourism using national media.

6. DATA AND INDICATORS

Eurostat will provide, as an annex, the key statistical data required to support the reporting process covering around 20 indicators². These are mainly related to the aim of 'economic prosperity'.

Please, identify indicators that are being used or developed which could add to the range of information being provided by Eurostat, particularly in relation to social and environmental issues (other indicators from the TSG report, visitors/ residents satisfaction, etc.). (maximum 500 characters)

The Statistic Department at the Government of the Republic of Lithuania collects and process the data on tourism in Lithuania.

7. COMPLEMENTARY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If necessary use the following box to provide additional complementary information that has not already been covered.

² These indicators have been selected from the 50 TSG indicators on the basis of the possibility to calculate them at the European level.

APPENDIX

Principles of sustainable tourism:

- **Taking a holistic and integrated approach**

All the various impacts of tourism should be taken into account in its planning and development. Furthermore, tourism should be well balanced and integrated with a whole range of activities that affect society and the environment.

- **Planning for the long term**

Sustainable development is about taking care of the needs of future generations as well as our own. Long term planning requires the ability to sustain actions over time.

- **Achieving an appropriate pace and rhythm of development**

The level, pace and shape of development should reflect and respect the character, resources and needs of host communities and destinations.

- **Involving all stakeholders**

A sustainable approach requires widespread and committed participation in decision making and practical implementation by all those implicated in the outcome.

- **Using best available knowledge**

Policies and actions should be informed by the latest and best knowledge available. Information on tourism trends and impacts, and skills and experience, should be shared across Europe.

- **Minimising and managing risk – the precautionary principle**

Where there is uncertainty about outcomes, there should be full evaluation and preventative action should be taken to avoid damage to the environment or society.

- **Reflecting impacts in costs – user and polluter pays**

Prices should reflect the real costs to society of consumption and production activities. This has implications not simply for pollution but for charging for the use of facilities that have significant management costs attached to them.

- **Setting and respecting limits, where appropriate**

The carrying capacity of individual sites and wider areas should be recognised, with a readiness and ability to limit, where and when appropriate, the amount of tourism development and volume of tourist flows.

- **Undertaking continuous monitoring**

Sustainability is all about understanding impacts and being alert to them all the time, so that the necessary changes and improvements can be made.