

General Information



KEY INFORMATION ABOUT LITHUANIA

Capital: Vilnius
Official Language: Lithuanian
Population: 2,891,000*
Currency: Euro (EUR)
Calling Code: +37

KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS

GDP per capita in 2025: € 29,167**
Real GDP growth in 2025: 2.8%***
Unemployment rate: 6.5%**

DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is defined as an activity undertaken for the benefit of society by a volunteer of their own free will, under the terms set out in an oral or written agreement between the volunteer and the host and/or coordinating organisation.*****

The 2023 volunteering law update defined long-term voluntary activity as lasting at least 60 days and voluntary service as involving at least 100 hours within a set programme period. It also distinguished short-term from long-term volunteering, making it clear that volunteering must be done freely, and separated volunteering from employment by prohibiting the same person from doing the same functions as both an employee and a volunteer in the same organisation on the same day. In addition, it allowed volunteering-related expenses to be paid in advance, helping people with fewer financial resources to participate. At the same time, repeated studies on perception of what volunteering is continues to state that at 55% of respondents see volunteering as work without pay, and only 22% state its voluntary help to other people.

Statistics and Demographics

Volunteering rate of population*****

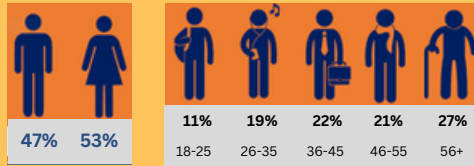


Depending on the source: According to Civil Society Institute in 2025 14% of Lithuanians had volunteering experience in past 12 months and 14% have volunteer experience prior to 2025.

14% volunteering experience in the past 12 months

Sava research showed 14% in the last 12 months. According to another official source, the 2025 survey data, the number of regular volunteers increased compared to the previous year (39% and 28% respectively).

Volunteer experience per gender and age group (percentage of the total population)*****



Total number of volunteers in 2024*****:

132,000 volunteers and 5,6 million hours

Annual economic value of volunteering:

Organisations have only recently begun reporting data on volunteering, starting in 2023, so the overall picture of voluntary activity in the country is still taking shape. If we take the latest data on number of hours 5,6 million and multiply by minimum wage per hour app, EUR 6.5 we would get € 36.5 million.

Education Levels and Volunteering*****

Higher education or incomplete higher education accounts for 42% of the population, while 53% have completed post-secondary, secondary, or specialised secondary education. The remaining 5% have incomplete secondary education.

Motivation for Volunteering*****

The main reason people volunteer is that they can help others (60%). Many also highlight that volunteering gives them a sense of personal meaning (39%) and makes them feel useful to their local community (40%). A further 29% say they volunteer because they believe in the idea of volunteering, 27% because they want to spend their free time in a meaningful way, and 17% because it makes them feel useful to the state.

The main factors that would encourage people to volunteer are state support and recognition (26%), the opportunity to learn useful and applicable things (26%), and the chance to gain professional experience (25%). A further 22% highlight the importance of volunteering opportunities that match their values and personal goals.

SOCIAL CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering in Lithuania is increasingly woven into the fabric of society, closely reflecting the country's needs and lived realities. Thousands of people stepped forward during the COVID-19 pandemic, or when Russia's war against Ukraine sparked a large influx of refugees/ Volunteers mobilised rapidly, organising reception, housing, integration support and humanitarian aid. Today, volunteering continues to play a key role in strengthening civic resilience, from community-based preparedness initiatives to training and support activities that help society get ready for potential threats in a tense geopolitical context, and it is also remains an important support mechanism to major social challenges such as an ageing society:volunteers support older people living alone, help to reduce loneliness and social isolation, or mental health issues in youth. Moreover, business sector increasingly steps up to help in up-skilling or support for education sector in STEM or IT skills not only by funding, but also through growing employee volunteer programs. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour aims for 22% of Lithuania's population to take part in voluntary activities by 2030.

Types of Volunteer Activities

The most popular type of volunteering is helping to organise cultural and art projects and events at 11.6%, followed by helping Ukraine and Ukrainians at 10.6%, collecting charity donations at 9.8%, helping older people at 9.6%, and helping to organise local community activities at 9.2%. Other surveys also suggest that helping seniors is among the most popular volunteering activities.*****

* Source: <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/>

** Source: [https://osp.stat.gov.lt/pagrindiniai-salies-rodikiai#Average%20earnings%20\(gross%20monthly](https://osp.stat.gov.lt/pagrindiniai-salies-rodikiai#Average%20earnings%20(gross%20monthly)

***Source: <https://www.valstybeskontrolis.lt/EN/Post/18706/nacional-audit-office-lithuanias-economy-grew-slightly-faster-than-forecast-in-2025-with-uneven-growth-expected-in-the>

****Source: <https://www.registrucentras.lt/naujienos/registru-centras-visuomeniniais-savanybais-praime>

*****Source: <https://www.civitas.lt/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Pg2025-www.pdf> / <https://www.savanybyste.com/> / <https://socmin.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/pilietines-galios-indeksas-2025-pilietine-galia-paaugo-CeW>

*****Source: <https://www.e-tar.lt/jportal/t/registrucentras/registru-centras-visuomeniniais-savanybais-praime>

*****Source: <https://www.civitas.lt/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Pg2025-www.pdf> / <https://www.savanybyste.com/>

Impact of Volunteering*

A SAVA study found that volunteering had a wide range of positive effects. Respondents most often said it helped them better understand society's problems (45%), strengthen their values (40%), gain self-confidence (31%), and place greater value on community (29%). Another study exploring the impact of employee volunteering found that it strengthened workplace relationships and culture. Respondents most often reported closer relationships with colleagues (39%), an improved workplace atmosphere (33%), and more internal initiatives (30%). What is more, the same study showed that employees that volunteer are much more engaged compared to their counterparts

Measuring the Impact of Volunteering

No framework is yet developed centrally.

Quality Standards in the Field of Volunteering*****

Since 2025 the National Volunteering Standard is being developed as a practical tool to help organisations ensure high-quality volunteer management, meaningful volunteer engagement, sustained motivation, and suitable conditions for volunteering. It was developed over the course of nearly a year by 16 organisations with extensive experience of working with volunteers, drawing on their own practice and active consultations with volunteer coordinators from nearly 300 organizations across Lithuania. The pilot implementation will take place in spring 2026, with implementation and training support open for application in autumn 2026. The project "Improving the Quality of Volunteer Coordination" is funded under the "Civic Engagement" component of the cooperation programme between the Swiss Confederation and the Republic of Lithuania, which promotes the development of volunteering and active public participation in the life of the state.

Challenges to the Development of Volunteering

One of the main challenges for volunteering in Lithuania are lack of financial support for volunteer coordination.

Other key challenges include ensuring that volunteering is clearly separated from employment and improving the quality and consistency of volunteer coordination across organisations.

Barriers for inclusive volunteering to different groups remain high. The availability of inclusive volunteer opportunities, norms and quality coordination is contributing to that as well.

Volunteering is unevenly developed across cities and regions, with rural areas relying heavily on informal volunteering and lacking adequate infrastructure.

Volunteering falls under the sole oversight of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (SADM), despite volunteers being active across many sectors – health, culture, sport, and environmental protection.

National E-platform for Volunteering

www.savanoryste.com

The volunteering platform has been introduced in Lithuania in 2020 and since then it had 4350 volunteers, 230 organisations, and nearly 17500 volunteer hours. The platform is managed by SAVA Visiems NGO, VolEver, a new mobile app in Lithuania that connects Ukrainian refugees with volunteers who are ready to help.

<https://www.refugees.lt.com/post/new-app-in-lithuania-volever-connects-volunteers-and-ukrainian-refugees>



Institutional and Legal Framework for Volunteering

Ministry of Social Security and Labour (SADM) – sets and funds national volunteering policy and programmes, including quality initiatives such as the emerging National Volunteering Standard.

Youth Affairs Agency implements a quality framework for working with European Solidarity Corps volunteers. The agency is also coordinating national youth volunteering program Lithuania's Youth Voluntary Service, (JST) a 6-month volunteering programme for young people aged 14–29.

The Lithuanian Youth Council (LJUT) network-whose members include 57 youth organisations and regional/youth councils -actively participates in coordinating voluntary activities and disseminating information at the local level.***

The Youth Volunteer Service (JST) represents an important sphere in institutionalising volunteering in Lithuania - It is the result of collaboration between the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (SADM) and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (ŠMSM), and is state-funded. Importantly, participation in the Youth Volunteer Service, alongside international volunteering, represents one of the strongest forms of formal recognition of volunteering, as certificates from both programmes increase young people's competitiveness when applying to higher education institutions.

"Examples of regional youth volunteer-coordinating organisations include 'Padėkime vaikams' in Druskininkai, 'Actio Catholica Patria' in Kaunas, 'Ne imti, bet duoti' across several municipalities, and regional youth councils such as 'Tauragės apskritis stalias' and 'Panevėžio apskritis stalias'.

However, while youth volunteering has a well defined structure and regional coordination, the government has not designated official regional volunteer centres for other type of volunteers, so major organisations like the Lithuanian Red Cross, Caritas, the Order of Malta Relief Organisation, and Maisto bankas often function as regional hubs for the highest volume of volunteer activity.

National Award and Recognitions for Volunteering**



Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania is awarding volunteers and volunteer coordinators in 12 award categories since 2020.



Financial Support for the Development of Volunteering

- 1. State budget via the Ministry of Social Security and Labour** – is the core funder of youth policy, including measures to "select and finance organisations organising voluntary activities" and to implement the Youth Voluntary Service (JST) model.
- 2. Ministry of Finance** – National Coordination Unit for the Switzerland–Lithuania Cooperation Programme "Civic Engagement", coordinating funding streams that also support volunteering infrastructure.****
- 3. Municipal administrations** – often fund or co-fund local volunteering projects, youth centres, social services with volunteers, and implement national volunteering policies locally.
- 4. Also European and international funds** supporting youth volunteering and related activities in Lithuania are the European Social Fund and other EU structural funds, the EEA and Norway Grants, Erasmus+, and the European Solidarity Corps.

Key Stakeholders in the Development of Volunteering

Ministry of Social Security and Labour – responsible for implementing the Law on Volunteering and overall volunteering policy, including support schemes and regulatory framework

Central Project Management Agency (CPMA/CPVA) – administers international cooperation and funding programmes that strengthen volunteering quality and coordination

The Non-Governmental Organisation Information and Support Centre (NISC). <http://www.3sektorius.lt/en/>

Agency of Youth Affairs – main public actor for youth volunteering (programme administration, accreditation of youth voluntary service, quality standards). <https://jra.lrv.lt/lt/> This institution is also implementing Lithuania's Youth Voluntary Service, Program (JST) a 6-month volunteering programme for young people aged 14–29.

Since 2025 creation of national volunteer standard project is implemented by the Blessed J. Matulaitis Social Center, a public institution, together with its partners – the public institutions "Actio Catholica Patria" and "SAVA visiems." In Lithuania, the Central Project Management Agency (CPMA) is responsible for administering the programme, and the Ministry of Social Security and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania also contributes to its success. The Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania serves as the National Coordination Unit, ensuring that activities are coordinated and consistent.

Trends in the Development of Volunteering*****

Crises such as the war in Ukraine triggered a mass "wave" of ad-hoc volunteering (over 150,000 people volunteered for Ukraine-related support), showing high potential but also exposing systemic gaps.

Projects on civic resilience to clarify the role of NGOs in emergencies, build networks, and prepare communities to act together in case of threats are at the core of current geopolitical climate.

Research in the Field of Volunteering

Civil Power Index conducted by Civil Society Institute (Pilietinės visuomenės institutas, often shortened as Civitas). It is a recurring, nationally representative public opinion survey in Lithuania that measures people's actual and potential civic engagement, as well as how powerful they feel as citizens. The research measures current civic activity, including participation in NGOs, communities, civic campaigns, protests, political actions, and volunteering.*****

In 2025, Sava Visiems also conducted a study on the motivations behind volunteering and the barriers that prevent people from volunteering. They also carried out a study on the state of corporate volunteering and its impact on employee engagement. (www.savanoryste.com)

*Source: www.savanoryste.com
**Source: <https://ocm.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/apdovanoji-aktyviausi-savanoriai-ir-organizacijos-skleidziantys-savanorystes-idejas-ir-vertybes-moz>
***Source: <https://www.eryica.org/the-network/3got-lietuvas-jaunimo-organizaciju-taryba>
****Source: <https://cpva.lt/en/news/successful-cooperation-between-lithuania-and-switzerland-strengthens-the-quality-of-volunteering-in-lithuania>
*****Source: <https://www.refugees.lt.com/post/volunteering-is-a-pillar-of-inclusion-aspirations-needs-and-opportunities-in-lithuania-s-evolving-and-increasingly-inclusive-project/engaged-for-civic-resilience/>
*****Source: <http://www.civitas.lt/research/pilietines-galios-indeksas/>

*****Source: <https://cpva.lt/projektas/savanoriu-koordinavimo-kokybes-gerinimas>