

Increase in the number of companies and employees in transport and communications sector and improvement of economic indexes

The Transport and Communications sector in Lithuania has seen an expansion of its activities during 2019. According to statistical data, the number of companies working in this sector increased by 3.2% and the number of employees by 11.1% in the first half year of 2019 compared to the same period in 2018. The main economic indexes showed an increase in gross added value (GAV) of 10.7% and service exports increased by 23.4%. The revenues of companies in the sector rose by 11.1%.

The export of transport services to all of Lithuania's principal export markets also grew in the same period – Germany +32%, Russia +8%, France +36%, Denmark +18%, and to the Netherlands +37%. The export of transport services to Italy was characterised by a particularly rapid growth of 43%.



Expansion Strategy for Transport and Communications Sector

The preparation of the long term strategy for the expansion of the Lithuanian transport and communications sector up to 2050 has begun. Its purpose is to foresee the optimal long-term directions within the sector and priorities for expansion. It is planned to finish the strategy by this coming July. When the strategy is developed, various scenarios for the expansion of the country's transport and communication sector will be set up as potential models, the good practice employed in other countries will be analysed, and the long-term recommendations of international organisations (OECD, WEF, WB, UN, etc.) in the area of transport and communications will be taken into account. Furthermore, proposals from the social partners of the Ministry of Transport and Communications will be considered.

Sector attempts to reduce transport-generated pollution

In order to further protect the environment and to reduce the impact of climate change, the Ministry of Transport and Communications has started cooperating with universities in order to search for solutions towards reducing the amount of gas that contributes to what is known as the greenhouse effect within the transport sector. One answer that is currently being put into practice is to reduce the number of older cars that are considered to be not fuel efficient, as well as encouraging the greater use of electric cars. Their use in Lithuania is increasing, however, they still account for less than 1% of all cars on the road. The network of public and private charging stations is also being increased.

Encouragement will be given to hauliers to transport their cargo by rail and in some cases by use of water transport as opposed to road transport. Currently, road transport is the predominant means of cargo transportation in Lithuania.

Master plan for Klaipėda State Seaport approved

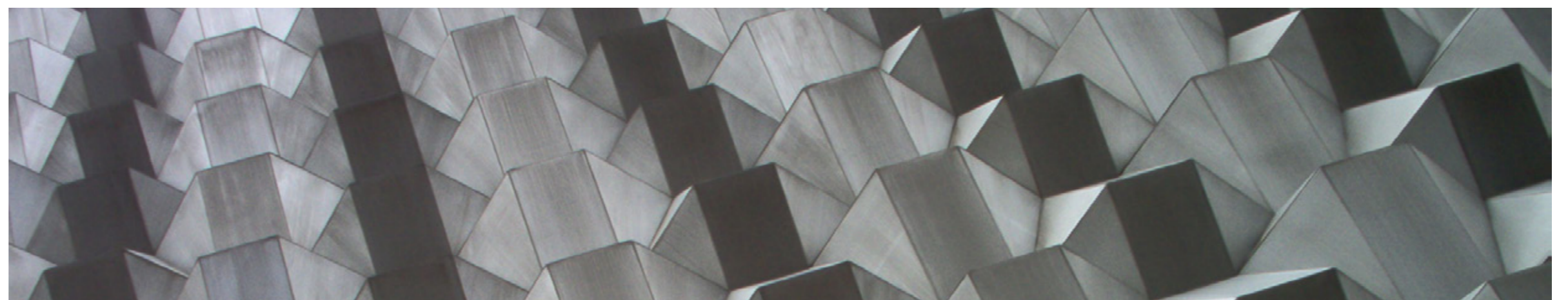
The Ministry has approved the master plan for Klaipėda State Seaport, in which the necessary and long-term trends for the port's expansion have been identified. The plan will create the preconditions for the port in order to maintain its competitiveness, to react expeditiously to the changing conditions of the global market and to develop the necessary infrastructure that the port will need in the future. The strategic trends for the expansion of the port and the special conception of development provided in the master plan, are for 25 years, whereas the concrete solutions have been prepared with a lifespan of 15 years.

The solutions for territory planning provided in the master plan, create the necessary preconditions for the complex expansion of the port and the related activities in the present and planned new port territories. The development of the communication and engineering infrastructure needed for these activities are also included.

Lithuania to promote the installation and development of 5G new generation mobile connections

The guidelines for the development of the 5G new generation mobile connection in Lithuania for 2020-2025 have been drafted and the tools for the creation of the legal and investment environment needed to achieve it outlined. In order to safeguard the economically reasoned and effective development of 5G, it is planned to install 5G connection from 2021, beginning with the major cities and places of strategic significance for the State, and then to roll out coverage to the entire country by 2025. The most important corridors of land transport and urban territories should be covered by this extremely fast mobile connection before 2025.

It is planned that 5G connection will be installed and its commercial services will begin in at least one of the five major Lithuanian cities before 2022, and in all five major cities (Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai, Panevėžys) the following year. It should then be operational in urban territories, international land transport corridors (Via Baltica, Rail Baltica), highways and roads of national importance and on the railways by 2025.



European Commission to evaluate whether the regular returning of trucks is in conformity with the goals of EU climate change

The agreement about the Mobility Package was reached in Brussels, but the European Commission will undertake an evaluation before the directives come into force, as to whether the regular return of trucks to their home territory will allow the Member States to achieve the ambitious new goals of the EU to combat climate change. Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Latvia, Romania, Malta, Cyprus and Estonia voted against the Mobility Package. Belgium and the United Kingdom abstained from certain provisions of the Mobility Package. As the number of cargo-free trucks will increase on the European roads, CO2 amounts emitted in the transport sector will grow inevitably.

Member States also stressed that the provision of the Mobility Package regarding the returning of cargo vehicles is disproportionate and discriminates against the majority of EU Member States. Such a decision cannot be made without the evaluation of impact and without learning of the possible social and road safety consequences.

Objective of the Baltic States – a speedy and coordinated implementation of “Rail Baltica”

The respective transport ministers of the Baltic States discussed the project's progress and the management of its implementation at a meeting held in Riga. They identified what could potentially be insufficient investments from EU funds as one of the major threats to “Rail Baltica” falling behind schedule.

In order to safeguard the smooth, speedy, and co-ordinated implementation of “Rail Baltica”, Lithuania has suggested the strengthening of the management of the project. It was recommended that the project should be a depoliticised joint venture, “RB Rail” with the creation of a high-level format of responsible ministries, where any political issues connected to the project's implementation could be addressed.



Lithuanian progress of “Rail Baltica” presented to the European Parliament

The progress in the implementation of this project was presented to the group, “Friends of Rail Baltica”, gathered from the members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. Among the Baltic States, Lithuania has advanced the most with regard to this project's implementation. At present, Lithuania is successfully implementing international transport projects. The country is the leader of the Baltic States in the implementation of “Rail Baltica”. The European rail line has already reached Kaunas and is continuing to the Kaunas intermodal terminal. It will connect this terminal with the main European railway network next year. The immediate goal for Lithuania is to employ the created infrastructure and to form transport flows for the “Rail Baltica” line.

Praise of Eurocontrol for Lithuania: more flights, less pollutants

Lithuanian plans introduced to Polish road-building companies

The Minister of Transport and Communications met representatives of Polish road-building companies during his visit to Poland. Road hauliers were invited to tender bids for the reconstruction of Lithuanian roads.

At the seminar organised by the Lithuanian Road Administration under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Polish road construction companies were presented with plans for public procurement tenders for the reconstruction of the Via Baltica highway in Lithuania and were informed about opportunities to participate in other public tenders in our country. This is the first such seminar for Polish road construction companies.

Lithuania strengthens its cooperation with Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail

The Minister of Transport and Communications, Mr. Jaroslavas Narkevičius, discussed the possibilities of promoting the transportation of goods by rail between Asia and Europe with Mr. Wolfgang Küpper, Secretary General of the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail, who was on visit in Vilnius. The present convention concerning International Carriage by Rail (COTIF) is very important because the number of carriages between Asia and Europe is growing rapidly, and the number of carriages between Lithuania and Western Europe is also growing.

The minister drew the attention of Mr. W. Küpper to the favourable geographical situation of Lithuania that allows it to offer good conditions for rail freight transit between Asia and Europe.

Well earned awards for companies in the transport and communications sector

The Good Governance Index showed 9 State Controlled Companies (SCC) out of 10 attributed to a positive rating (A; A+; A+) in the management area of the Ministry of Transport and Communications. Three other SCCs attributed to the management area of the Ministry of Transport and Communications received awards – AB “Smiltynės perkėla” (Smiltynė Ferry), AB “Lietuvos geležinkeliai” (Lithuanian Railway) and VĮ “Oro navigacija” (SE Air Navigation). The SCC Good Governance Index is one of the main tools that is used to assess the quality of SCC management. This index is formed and presented every year by the PI Monitoring and Forecasting Agency with regard to OECD recommendations, the NASDAQ Corporate Governance Code, Ownership Guidelines, Transparency and Selection Guidelines, as well as other documents regulating SCC activities and the best global practices for corporate governance.

Lithuania and Japan sign a memorandum of cooperation

The Lithuanian and Japanese deputy transport ministers signed a bilateral memorandum of cooperation during their bilateral meeting in the course of the meeting of the European and Asian transport ministers. Japan and Lithuania confirmed in the memorandum that their mutual objective is to share knowledge, experience, and ideas for effective, efficient, and sustainable solutions in the transport area. It is planned to expand cooperation in the areas of road, rail, sea and air transport at regional and local levels, and to include businesses and universities in these activities. The countries are going to strengthen their business relationship and to encourage business representatives to participate and invest in transport projects. The research and development institutions of both Japan and Lithuania will be encouraged to exchange their experiences in the transport sector.

Rambynas border control post established between Lithuania and Kaliningrad

The service between Lithuania and Kaliningrad District will be improved by a new Rambynas border control post (BCP) that will connect Panemunė and Sovetsk. The Government approved The creation of this border control post has received governmental approval.

The construction works on the Lithuanian side of Rambynas BCP have already been completed and Russia plans to finish its construction works at its respective border control post of Dubki by the end of 2020. Following its completion, it is envisaged that the new BCP will then be opened.

The border control posts Rambynas – Dubki will connect Panemunė and Sovetsk and will improve the service between Lithuania and Kaliningrad District. At present 4 road BCPs are in operation between Lithuania and Kaliningrad District – Kybartai, Panemunė, Ramoniškės and Nida.

