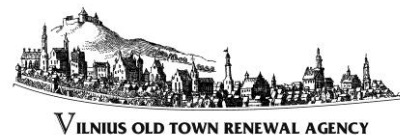




OVPM . OWHC . OCPM

Assistance Program in Case of Emergencies Diagnostic Report - Vilnius



1. Brief details

Vilnius is the capital of Lithuania. Unfortunately, it is very close to the Lithuanian (EU) border with Belarus (34 km).

Area: 401 sq. km.

Area of Vilnius Historic Centre: 352 ha

Population: 605 000 (2024)

Structure: 20 local districts

Cultural heritage objects in Vilnius Historic Centre: 865



2. Administrative information – Emergency Contact Details

Vilnius City Mayor, <https://vilnius.lt/?lang=en>

Director of Vilnius Old Town Renewal Agency, UNESCO Site Manager, <https://www.vsaa.lt/en/>

Director of the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, <https://kpd.lrv.lt/en/>

List of organizations that can be consulted about the crisis management process:

Civil Security Division of Vilnius City Administration, <https://vilnius.lt/struktura-ir-kontaktai/civilines-saugos-skyrius>

National Crisis Management Center of the Republic of Lithuania, https://www.lrvalstybe.lt/kontaktai/nacionalinis-kriziu-valdymo-centras-984#google_vignette

Voluntary organization of Lithuanian Red Cross Society, <https://redcross.lt/>

Fire and Rescue Department under the Ministry of Interior, <https://pagd.lrv.lt/en/>

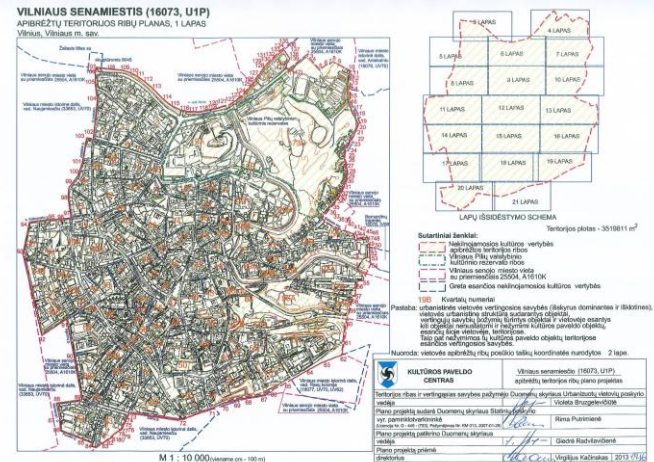
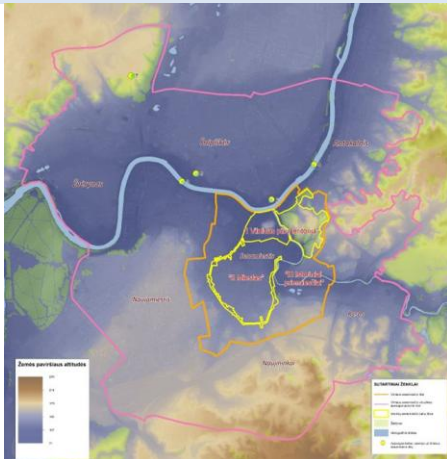
Emergency Operations Center of Vilnius City District, <https://vrsa.lt/civiline-sauga-ir-mobilizacija/ekstremaliuju-situaciju-operaciju-centras/881>

3. Geographical info

Protected area and buffer zone:

Vilnius Historic centre area is 352 ha.

Buffer zone is 1912 ha, the borders approved in 2010 by the Order of the Minister of Culture.



Borders of Vilnius Historic Centre

The buffer zone of Vilnius Historic Centre

Oldest parts of Vilnius Historic Centre

4. Property Ownership

The ownership structure of Vilnius Historic Centre property is a combination of public and private ownership. Large group of buildings (churches and monasteries) belong to Vilnius Archdiocese and other religious confessions. There is no data about proportion of ownership types. The residential function dominates. The commercial buildings are concentrated in the main streets, they are most of all private. The institutional buildings are most of all public (state or municipal).



5. Protection Level

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the state administration of the protection of the immovable cultural heritage (including *Vilnius Historic Centre*). The policy and state administration of the protection of cultural heritage in Lithuania is implemented by **the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture**. **Municipalities** are responsible for the protection of cultural heritage, registered as municipal protected objects.

Immovable cultural properties are registered in the national **Register of Cultural Property**. There are several levels of protection: national monuments, state protected objects, municipal protected objects and other registered objects. Vilnius Historic Centre – UNESCO World Heritage Site is registered as a national monument site. The area is 352 ha. Vilnius Historic Centre is surrounded by a buffer zone to safeguard its integrity; the buffer zone is 1912 ha, approved in 2010 by the Order of the Minister of Culture. There are 865 registered cultural heritage objects in Vilnius Historic Centre (in 2024). There are regulations governing restoration, maintenance and any alterations to the sites and objects.

6. Type(s) of risk/hazard to which the city is exposed

Natural – rain, humidity, lightning, heavy precipitation.

Mass movement. Causes: soil, slow-action erosion.

Human activity results. Causes: high speed of construction works, pollution, consumption

Fires. Causes: technical problems and human factor.

Crimes, criminal unrest, gang violence. Causes: human factor.

Terrorist attacks. Causes: intentional human activity.

Release of chemical substances. Causes: human factor and terrorist attack.

Radiological accident. Causes: human factor and terrorist attack.

Danger to cultural heritage. Causes: human factor, technical problems and natural disasters.

Considering Lithuania's geopolitical position and potential risks of natural and human-induced disasters, the potential danger to cultural heritage is defined as a very high priority.

7. Existing information about the site

Vilnius Historic Centre was inscribed as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** in 1994. Political centre of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the 13th to the end of the 18th century, Vilnius has had a profound influence on the cultural and architectural development of much of Eastern Europe. Despite invasions and partial destruction, it has preserved an impressive complex of Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and Classical buildings as well as its medieval layout and natural setting. The inscribed property contains all the attributes that convey its Outstanding Universal Value. Vilnius Historic Centre has maintained a radial street pattern that dates back to the Middle Ages. Its spatial structure reflects both the evolution from changes in style and the political and natural calamities that have struck the area. The buildings have been reconstructed throughout the ages, adding stylistic changes and incorporating old buildings into new ones. However, the forms, materials and construction techniques of many buildings are authentic.

The Management Plan for Vilnius Historic Centre – UNESCO World Heritage Site was approved on June 19, 2025 by the Order of the Minister of Culture. There is a chapter „**Resilience**“ in the Plan: objective - strengthening the disaster resilience of Vilnius Old Town, integrating principles of ecological balance and sustainability. Special actions are planned to achieve the objective. **The Site Manager** of Vilnius Old Town is **Vilnius Old Town Renewal Agency**, a public institution under the authority of Vilnius City Municipality, established in 1998.

8. Significance of the World Heritage City

Vilnius is an outstanding example of a medieval foundation which exercised a profound influence on architectural and cultural developments in a wide area of Eastern Europe over several centuries.

In the townscape and the rich diversity of buildings that it preserves, Vilnius is an exceptional illustration of a Central European town which evolved organically over a period of five centuries.

The property maintains exceptional attributes such as the 16th-century University ensemble, a Town Hall with its square, temples of all religious denominations and the complete street pattern without any significant gap. There are 6 main complexes and many other important buildings (865) demanding maximum protection.

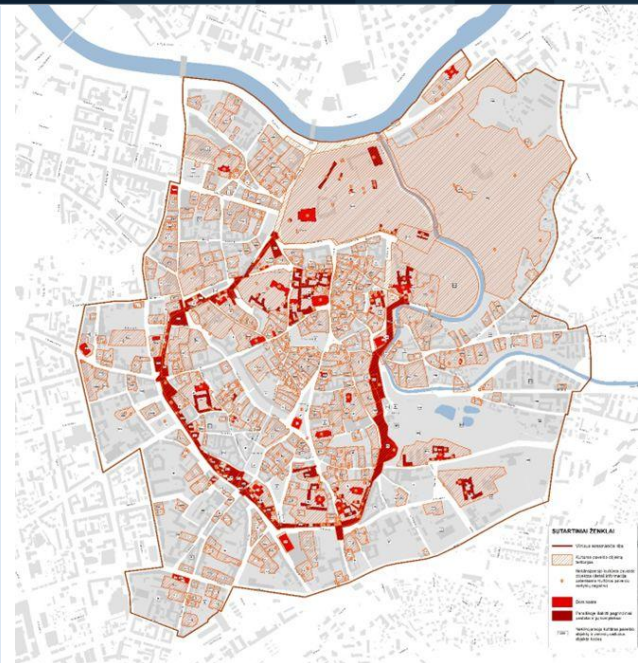


9. Summary of buildings and urban fabric

The condition of Vilnius Old Town and its change **monitoring data** are recorded in a fragmented manner, are not digitized and are not comprehensively collected and analyzed. Regular inspections of the built heritage in respect of risk are not carried out.

The Municipal Conservation Program supports the maintenance and the renewal of facades, roofs, balconies. Since 2025 the support covers 60% of the funds necessary for the facades and roofs, 80% for balconies and other facade elements in a state of urgent disrepair, 70% for the restoration of wooden architecture: <https://www.vsaa.lt/en/community-engagement/renewal-programme-updated/>

The Government of the Republic of Lithuania renewed and expanded the list of cultural heritage objects protected under The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. **38 objects** in Vilnius Historic Centre **were marked with the Blue Shield emblem** in 2025.



10. Existing risk assessment management / planning procedures

General regulations, rules, and algorithms have been developed by the Vilnius City Administration outlining actions to be taken in case of emergency. The updated **Management Plan of Emergency Situations** of Vilnius City Administration has been approved on July 5th, 2024. The Mayor ensures the implementation of the measures set out in the Municipal Emergency Plan. List of institutions responsible for cultural heritage and their responsibilities in case of emergencies are defined in this Management Plan. The **Plan of Prevention Measures for Emergency Situations** of Vilnius (2025 – 2027) provides the basis for developing a disaster risk management plan to manage a crisis situation in the world heritage site.

The Plan includes the preparation of the **Implementation of the Risk Management Plan for the Historic City of Vilnius**. Municipal Cultural Heritage Protection Division and Vilnius Old Town Renewal Agency are responsible for the preparation of the Plan.

11. Training plans and information programs

Vilnius Old Town Renewal Agency organizes educational and information activities for public. The Agency together with [Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO](#) organized the seminar on **heritage interpretation** which took place on November, 2024. It was designed to meet the needs of planners and managers working at UNESCO designated areas or other (cultural and/or natural) heritage sites. The seminar's training methodology was based on the principles used by [Interpret Europe](#) – the European Association on Heritage Interpretation throughout its certification courses. 14 managers from Lithuanian world heritage sites took part and have got Certificates of Attendance (27 academic hours).

Civil protection drills are held regularly at Vilnius City Municipality.

12. Useful contacts



Emergency Response Centre: **112** informs the respective emergency services about the need for help.

4 emergency services respond to requests for help when calling 112: the police, fire and rescue emergency service, emergency medical service and environmental protection service.

Instruction how to prepare for emergency situations (for residents): <https://lt72.lt/kaip-pasiruosti/>

Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, <https://lrkm.lrv.lt/en/>

Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, <https://kpd.lrv.lt/en/>

National Commission for Cultural Heritage, <https://vkpk.lt/en/>

Vilnius City Municipality Administration, Cultural Heritage Protection Subdivision, <https://vilnius.lt/struktura-ir-kontaktai/kulturos-paveldo-apsaugos-skyrius>

Information prepared by:

Specialists of Vilnius Old Town Renewal Agency, <https://www.vsaa.lt/en/> and Vilnius City Municipality Administration (Cultural Heritage Protection Subdivision), <https://vilnius.lt/struktura-ir-kontaktai/kulturos-paveldo-apsaugos-skyrius>