

Lithuania

Co-create

Kaip pristatyti Lietuvą užsienyje

Pozicionavimas

Faktai apie Lietuvą

Sritys

Visuomenės vertybės

Turinys:

Positioning of Lithuania abroad	1
Introduction of the country	2
Co-create Solutions	5
Co-create Life	11
Co-create Culture	15
Co-create Governance	20
Values	25

Positioning of Lithuania abroad

We are an open country to take on global challenges, co-create and grow together (trump. Lithuania is open for co-creation).

Lithuania is an open country, willing to tackle global challenges, co-create and grow together along the way. Together with our partners, we are eager to take on new challenges in financial technology, cyber security, life sciences and other sectors that will shape the future and the way we live. Innovative approaches, smart governance and open culture create ideal conditions for Lithuania to be a catalyst for change. We can offer cutting-edge solutions to problems that are local, global or anything

in between. In fact, some may say that openness, cooperation, and drive towards positive change are firmly rooted in our DNA. Already in medieval times, Lithuania figured it could achieve more by collaborating with others. In his famous letters to the people of Europe, written back in 1323, Gediminas, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, declared: 'we open our land, our dominions, and our kingdom to every person of goodwill.'

Introduction of the country

Geography

Facts:

Area: 65 300 km²

2.8 million people live in Lithuania.

Vilnius is home to 600 000 people

Forests cover 1/3 of the country.

6 000 lakes

A Northern European country on the Baltic Sea.

We work closely with the other countries of Northern Europe on an institutional, business and personal level. The values of freedom and democracy are important to us and we support them in other countries as well.

Lithuania is the largest Baltic country, bordering Latvia to the north, Belarus to the east, Poland to the south and Russia's Kaliningrad enclave to the south-west. We have 90 km of coastline on the Baltic Sea, on the other side of which are the countries of Scandinavia.

Vilnius the capital is always at the forefront of innovation, smartness and creativity.

Exceptional attention to incoming talent and open data initiatives ensure leadership for smart solutions. Vilnius attracts those who seek a balance of life and work, of nature and urbanisation. Vilnius is also one of the cleanest, greenest cities in Europe, with green spaces covering 46 percent of its territory. Maybe that's why people in Vilnius are among the happiest with their quality of life among European capitals.

Nature in Lithuania is always right beside you.

Whether you're in a city centre or outside the city limits, there's green everywhere. Nature is wealth to us, a value we all agree on. Maybe that's why the colour green is so dear to Lithuanians. You can enjoy forests and parks right in the city of Vilnius, the capital. And other cities too – which is why Lithuania, with its abundance of wellness offerings, is often compared to a resort. Having nature right beside you makes it extremely easy to switch from work to relaxation.

Four different seasons allow you to enjoy all the pleasures of nature.

The variety of seasons and weather ensures life is never boring in Lithuania. You can experience all four seasons here: in winter, fun in the snow, and in warmer months, active leisure time in nature, by the sea or the many lakes and rivers.

Lithuania's climate is pleasant too (we don't have earthquakes, tornadoes, tsunamis, volcanoes, mudslides, heat waves, avalanches or other natural disasters...).

History

Facts:

The earliest inhabitants date to 12 000-14 000 B.C.

Lithuania's name is 1012 years old.

In 1253, King Mindaugas was crowned.

In 1323, Lithuania's capital Vilnius was founded.

In 1918, the Lithuania state was re-established.

In 1989, the Baltic Way demonstration was held.

In 1990, Lithuanian independence was restored.

In 2004, the country joined the EU and NATO.

In 2018, Lithuania became an OECD member.

Lithuania's name has been known to the world for over a thousand years

A millennium is a long time for a country. Lithuania has survived the vicissitudes of history to become a creative and modern Northern European state and an active and responsible member of NATO and the European Union.

Lithuania's name was first mentioned in the Annals of Quedlinburg in the year 1009. But the first people to settle in the territory of Lithuania came around 12 000-14 000 B.C.

A country historically open, inviting and keen to collaborate

Openness, co-operation and initiative are in our genes. As far back as the 14th century, we realised we can achieve more by working not alone but together with the world.

Grand Duke Gediminas wrote in letters to European rulers in 1323 that "we open our land, our dominions and our kingdom to every person of goodwill." He invited knights, men-at-arms, merchants and craftsmen to Vilnius to work and create, promising them land and good conditions.

A royal realm uniting diverse peoples and lands

In medieval times, Lithuania built one of the largest states in Europe – the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL), which stretched from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. It was put on the map of the world when Mindaugas, ruler of a united Lithuania, was crowned king on 6 July 1253. Lithuania then became a major political power in Eastern and Central Europe. The reason for the GDL's impressive growth was its rulers' tolerance for other peoples' religion and traditions.

The singing revolution: a peaceful drive for freedom that sped the Soviet Union's demise

Lithuania was the first country to declare independence from the Soviet Union and became a beacon of freedom for other nations. Lithuanians' hunger for freedom and the difficult times they have endured have instilled deeply in us the values of freedom and democracy that we uphold today. On 23 August 1989, in one highly significant event, the Baltic Way, almost two million people joined hands in a living chain linking the three Baltic capitals of Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn, demanding independence from the Soviet Union.

Economy

Facts:

4th best fintech location in the world

24 hours to open a business

11th place for Ease of Doing Business

Lithuania's startup ecosystem ranks 15th globally

85% of professionals speak English

Growing innovation ecosystem

Lithuania's startup ecosystem is one of the most vibrant in Europe and is particularly strong in the areas of fintech, IT, life sciences and gaming. Lithuania ranks first in the European Union for the number of licenced fintech companies. Lithuanian lasers are used by NASA, CERN and world-famous companies like IBM, Hitachi, Toyota and Mitsubishi. And for life sciences discoveries, we have earned the famed Kavli Prize.

It's easy to do business in Lithuania

In Lithuania, bureaucratic processes are shorter and decision-making faster than elsewhere. With an electronic signature, you can open a business here in 24 hours. Lithuania is also becoming a top choice for foreign investors due to its favourable infrastructure: it has one of the fastest public wireless speeds in the world. In 2020, Lithuania was 11th on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business ranking.

A great place to innovate

An attractive regulatory and business environment and a government that's responsive to investors' needs create good conditions for innovation to flourish. Lithuania is working hard to be as appealing as possible to investors. In the most recent years, the country has attracted companies like Hella, Hollister and Continental, and earned a name as Europe's fintech capital. The startups operating in Lithuania – there are over a thousand today – unanimously say the country is a great place to try things out and experiment.

World-class talent

Lithuania has skilled, multilingual and motivated professionals with a broad, open-minded view of the world and the drive to tackle global challenges. Lithuanians are known around the world as excellent problem solvers and team players. Investors describe Lithuanian employees as entrepreneurial, open to innovations, eager for change, and creative. They are receptive to technological innovation and eager to learn and grow.

Practical information

- Member of the EU, NATO, Schengen, the UN and the OECD
- Official language: Lithuanian
- Currency: the euro
- Time zone: UTC+2
- Dialling code: +370
- Traffic: right-handed
- Standard voltage: 230 V
- Emergency number: 112

Co-Create Solutions

Main value: **An open platform for innovation**

Main message: While large countries could be seen acting as multinational corporations, Lithuania is like an agile startup. The path from idea to implementation is shorter here. With its exceptional business environment, world-class talent and growth ecosystems, Lithuania is the ideal innovation sandbox for tackling global problems and bringing disruptive solutions to life. **It's a place where solutions of global significance are born, changing lives not just here but all over the world.**

Subvalue:

<p>Innovation-friendly</p> <p>A leading regulatory and business environment and an approachable and open-minded government create good conditions for innovation and growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to do business. • Regulatory environment. 	<p>World-class talent</p> <p>The country offers a highly qualified, multilingual and motivated talent pool with both the skills and the mindset to take on global challenges. Lithuanians are known to be excellent problem solvers and team players.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly qualified, multilingual and motivated talent pool. • Stellar talents in science. 	<p>Growth ecosystems</p> <p>In Lithuania, you won't be scaling on your own – join our booming ecosystems of fintech, life sciences, lasers and ICT, plus one of the most vibrant startup ecosystems in Europe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial technologies ecosystem. • Life sciences ecosystem. • Lasers ecosystem. • ICT ecosystem. • Startups ecosystem.
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Co-Create Solutions

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Quickly adapting to a changing world, Lithuania provides the perfect launchpad for fintech, life sciences, software development, and other futureproof fields. World-class companies from a diverse range of sectors come here to co-create the solutions for tomorrow, while Lithuanian startups are working hand-in-hand with the likes of NASA and SpaceX.

The birthplace of CRISPR gene editing tools and the most powerful scientific lasers in the world, Lithuania blends science with an entrepreneurial spirit. Here, ideas find their way to the market faster thanks to a sandbox approach to innovation and a supportive government. Partnership is at the heart of most major breakthroughs, with businesses, universities and the public sector working in sync. This is a place where solutions with a global impact are born, changing lives of millions for the better.

Subvalue: **Innovation-friendly** **A progressive regulatory and business environment and an approachable and open-minded government create good conditions for innovation and growth.** Lithuania strives to offer investors maximally attractive conditions and fully satisfy the needs of innovators keen to try out their ideas in real life. In just a few years, Lithuania has attracted investors like Hella, Hollister and Continental, and earned a name as Europe's fintech capital. Reacting fast to a unique situation that emerged against the backdrop of Brexit, the country proved it knows how to seize opportunities and quickly put in place the regulatory framework needed for the development of financial technologies. Startups operating in Lithuania, of which there are over a thousand today, unanimously say Lithuania is a great place for trying things out and experimenting. Even the relatively small market is an advantage – it makes you think about going global with solutions and not limit yourself to just local needs.

In Lithuania it's easy to do business. Bureaucratic processes are shorter in Lithuania and decisions get made faster than in other places. You can open a business in 24 hours with an electronic signature, taxes are easy to pay, and commercial lease rates remain highly attractive in the European Union context. Lithuania is also becoming a top choice for foreign investors due to its great infrastructure – the country has one of the fastest public wireless networks in the world. Moreover, an impressive 85 percent of young professionals here speak English and over 2,000 IT specialists are trained every year. In the "World Bank's Ease of Doing Business" ranking for 2020, Lithuania took 11th place.

Companies have grown up in Lithuania in recent years whose solutions are trans-

forming the Lithuania and the world – look at Vinted, Trafi, Tesonet, Bored Panda, City Bee, Brolis, TransferGo, and Paysera. And the strong portfolio of foreign investors further confirms the country's reputation as safe and reliable: Danske, Nasdaq, Continental, Hollister, Hella, Thermo Fisher Scientific and other major international corporations all operate in Lithuania.

Invest Lithuania, a public agency to promote FDI and business development, works hard to ensure that Lithuania is listed among the countries that treat investors best.

Regulatory environment. In Lithuania, innovators can test their ideas in real life under the supervision of the competent authorities and only later present them to the world. The country has regulatory sandboxes for innovations in the areas of financial technologies, energy and transportation. The purpose of offering a friendly space for innovations is to speed up and simplify their path to the consumer. The Bank of Lithuania launched a first sandbox, for fintech companies, in 2018, and in 2021 Workpower UAB completed a year of testing of its "Ooniq" peer-to-peer insurance platform, which has created new possibilities in the market for financial services. The Bank of Lithuania has been recognized as one of the world's most progressive regulators. Guided by the aim of being a partner to the financial sector, and not only a watchdog, the Lithuanian central bank has a proven track record for ensuring a regulatory environment that's conducive to innovation.

Startup Visa. Lithuania opens its doors to startups with ambitions to work and create in Lithuania. A dedicated Startup Visa Programme aimed at attracting talent and investments to Lithuania has been set up for this purpose. Launched in 2017, it simplifies immigration and lets the creators of innovative startups from non-EU countries come and use Lithuania's infrastructure and well-developed startup ecosystem to develop their business. Those who present an innovative business that's deemed viable obtain the right to get a temporary residence permit and build their startup.

More than 60 startups already chose Lithuania as their entry point to Europe and develop their innovative businesses here using the Startup Visa Lithuania programme.

Subvalue: World-class talent

The country offers a highly qualified, multilingual and motivated talent pool with both the skills and the mindset to take on global challenges. Lithuanians are known to be excellent problem solvers and team players. Enterprising, open to new ideas, drivers of change, creative – that's how investors describe Lithuanian professionals. People in Lithuania are receptive to technological innovations and keen to learn and grow. They find the best solutions to problems and often amaze with the speed and quality of their work. Lithuania's talent is the main reason companies that have chosen to establish a presence here go on to add more jobs and expand the scale of production and services. Western Union's service centre in Vilnius, for instance, has grown from 250 employees at its launch in 2010 to a unit with 2,000 employees that company officials call the backbone of Western Union operations worldwide. It provides services in 34 countries and 30 languages.

Stellar talents in science. Lithuanian scientists have offered solutions that have changed people's lives around the world for the better. A Lithuanian scientist, Vilnius University Professor Virginijus Šikšnys, has made a revolutionary discovery in the science of gene editing, which will contribute to the saving of a millions of lives around the world.

Prof. Šikšnys name is linked to the revolutionary CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing tool, which makes it possible to modify the DNA of animals, plants and microorganisms with great precision. This genome editing technique is contributing to innovative cancer treatments. Virginijus Šikšnys was the first researcher to make this discovery.

Prof. Virginijus Šikšnys was awarded for his discovery of gene molecular scissors the Warren Alpert Prize by Harvard University and the prestigious Kavli Prize in 2018, won together with the winners of 2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry. He is also a laureate of the 2017 Novozymes Prize of the Danish Novo Nordisk Fund.

In honour of his achievements, an international scholarship has been established in his name. The city of Vilnius has committed to funding the scholarship, in the amount of €10,000 annually, for at least five years.

Professor Vladas Algirdas Bumelis has brought Lithuania and the world 32 significant inventions and patents while also developing pharmaceutical production technologies based on genetic engineering techniques.

Urtė Neniškytė studies the molecular mechanisms of brain network pruning. She focuses on mechanisms that shape our brains and may be linked to neurodevelopment and neuropsychiatric diseases like autism and schizophrenia. In 2019, Dr Neniškytė was named one of the world's 15 most promising female scientists by the L'Oréal Foundation and UNESCO. She previously held a L'Oréal-UNESCO Women in Science fellowship.

Achievements by young scientists

Students at Vilnius University (VU) are seeking solutions to global challenges. At the International Genetically Engineered Machine Competition (iGEM) held in Boston in 2020, the Vilnius-Lithuania iGEM team of students from VU won a gold medal and was identified as one of the top teams in an impressive four categories. The students' project, "Colight", presented one of the fastest growing areas of the life sciences – optogenetics.

Subvalue: Growth ecosystems

In Lithuania, you won't be scaling on your own – join our booming ecosystems of fintech, life sciences, lasers and ICT, plus one of the most vibrant startup ecosystems in Europe.

Global solutions in financial technologies. If in the not-too-distant past, Lithuania was known to the world mainly as a basketball country, today it's increasingly called the fintech capital of Europe (or even the world). The change in Europe's fintech map has been fast but not accidental. The continuing common efforts of government institutions and the Bank of Lithuania are one key factor in this success.

In 2017 there were 117 fintech startups operating in Lithuania; in 2020 the total rose to 230. Many of the companies chose Lithuania for its favourable regulation, excellent infrastructure, and talented specialists.

By the end of 2020, there were 4,000 people working in the sector – 18 percent more than at the end of 2019. It is estimated that additional 600 new jobs will be created in the financial technology sector in 2021.

Data show fintech has withstood the COVID-19 pandemic better than other sectors. A legal environment that favours advancing technologies and startups together with the Bank of Lithuania's leadership and community spirit provide a solid foundation for that. The financial technology sector is young and developing rapidly. Its strengths are agility and flexibility, and one forte of the overall fintech ecosystem is collaboration.

Currently the country ranks 1st in the EU as the fintech hub with the most licenced companies. Globally, Lithuania ranks 4th for attractiveness to fintech companies, alongside the U.S., the U.K. and Singapore.

Focus on life sciences. All the Lithuanian Governments agree on Lithuania's future as a life sciences country. Lithuania has set an ambitious goal to become, by 2030, a life sciences trendsetter in the region, with the sector generating 5% of GDP. EUR 678.9 million from the EU funds have been allocated to promote research and development, while EUR 400 million have been invested to advance the infrastructure dedicated to life sciences. The sector grows 22% each year, employs about 5000 people, and more than 15 000 researchers are involved in research projects in this area. In recent years, life sciences industry has generated 2% of GDP in the country, which is about 6 times more than the EU average. Vilnius offers everything needed for the life sciences to flourish. The capital has a world-class life sciences centre where top scientists have all the infrastructure they need to carry out their research. In 2020, the Life Sciences Centre of Vilnius University became home to the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) Partnership Institute to develop genome editing technologies. The institute will aim to attract top global researchers specialising in genome editing.

Lithuanian lasers are helping solve health and science problems worldwide. Lithuania can rightly call itself a laser country. Its special laser expertise is helping find solutions for medicine, science and industry all over the world. Lithuania's laser industry currently holds more than 50 percent of the global scientific ultrashort-pulse market and you'll find Lithuanian-made lasers on almost every continent. Lithuanian lasers are used by NASA, CERN and world-famous companies like IBM, Hitachi, Toyota and Mitsubishi. And 90 of the world's top 100 universities also currently use Lithuanian lasers and laser systems.

In 2019, the Lithuanian-made SYLOS laser system, one of the most powerful laser systems in the world, was inaugurated at an important laser research centre in Hungary.

Lithuania's laser sector, besides scientific institutions, includes more than 40 companies. As makers of specialised devices that export over 90 percent of what they produce, Lithuanian laser companies do not compete with each other and in some niches have no competitors anywhere in the world. Lithuanian lasers are exported to more than 70 countries.

Information and communication technologies. The sector's key strengths are its pool of highly qualified IT professionals and vast experience providing outsourced software services for foreign companies and public sector institutions. In 2018, ICT accounted for 4.9% of Lithuania's GDP.

Startups - drivers of change. The startups operating in Lithuania, which today number more than a thousand, unanimously say the country is a great place to try things out and experiment. Today over 10 000 talents are working in Lithuania's startup ecosystem. This is one of the reasons why Lithuania is often called a country with a startup spirit. The ecosystem's speed is also seen in the record investments that innovative Lithuanian companies have attracted in recent years and the emergence of the first "unicorn" – Vinted in 2019. According to StartupBlink Lithuania ranks 15 globally among 202 countries, based on the strength of its startup ecosystem. Startup representatives say that what most impresses them about Lithuania are the conditions for business financing, the community's level of engagement, and how attentive state institutions are in nurturing this ecosystem. Lithuania outperforms Scandinavian countries by the governmental financial support for startups per capita. Startups receive support from other public organizations such as Enterprise Lithuania, Go Vilnius, and the Bank of Lithuania, on visas, business ecosystem, and legal matters.

The brands of Lithuanian startups are known all over the world. Everyday life is hard to imagine without Trafi, Vinted, or other brands. These brands of Lithuanian founders and big international teams are united by the desire to find solutions to help the world solve mobility and consumption problems.

- **Trafi**, a startup founded in 2007, is offering mobility solutions not only in Lithuania, but also all over the world. The company operates in 10 countries, with

branches in Paris and Berlin, and expansion is planned in South America and Asia. It is estimated that Trafi technology is making a positive impact on over 50 million people per month around the world. The app promotes the use of the public and sharing economy.

- **Vinted**, Lithuania's first unicorn, valued more than 3,5 billion Eur, aims to make second-hand clothes the first choice around the world. Members from 11 European countries offer over 180 million items of clothes and children's goods on the company's platform. It is estimated that EUR 1.3 billion worth of transactions will be executed on the Vinted platform this year.
- **Tesonet** is one of the biggest Lithuanian startups, and is on the road to become another unicorn of Lithuania. Over a decade, Tesonet has developed a number of global products. In 2021, Tesonet Group Customer Service Department was turned into the CyberCare Service Center for cyber security products.

Co-create Life

Main value: **An open platform for personal growth**

Main message: Lithuania is a great place to be and to grow with its faster career possibilities and slower pace of life.

Subvalue:

Accelerated careers

In a professional landscape like ours, dominated by young companies hungry for talent with flat organisational structures, you get more responsibility at a younger age and more opportunities for upward mobility. The entrepreneurially minded, too, find Lithuania is a land of opportunity – one of the easiest places to launch a new venture.

- International career opportunities.
- International impact.
- Constant growth.

Relaxed living

Lithuania offers affordable living, shorter commutes and fewer barriers to high quality of life. The country is rated #6 for work-life balance in the OECD, and the people of the capital Vilnius consistently rank among the happiest in Europe.

- Everything within easy reach.
- Active recreation.
- Work leaves time for life.
- Focus on what matters.
- Safe to live and visit.

Nature everywhere

Whether you're downtown or out-of-town, here you're always surrounded by greenery. Nature – raw nature – is Lithuania's most prized national possession and a dominant feature of the country's life.

- Nature – even in the city.
- Making a splash.
- Clean environment.

Co-create Life

Main value: An open platform for personal growth

Main message: Lithuania is a great place to be and to grow with its faster career possibilities and slower pace of life.

For those seeking to escape the turmoil and tension of large metropolises, Lithuania offers an attractive combination of both faster careers and slower living. Opportunities abound here to join dynamic young companies and advance quickly, or create your own business, while at the same time maintaining a healthy life balance (thanks in part to the natural environment that's always nearby). It's a mix that lets you co-create the life you want, without compromise.

Subvalue: In a professional landscape like ours dominated by young companies hungry for talent with flat organisational structures, you get more responsibility at a younger age and more opportunities for upward mobility. The entrepreneurially minded, too, find Lithuania is a land of opportunity – one of the easiest places to launch a new venture.

Accelerated carriers

Youth is held in high regard. A whole generation of young ambitious politicians and businesspeople has come of age in Lithuania. After studies here or abroad, they're climbing the ladder of success with their knowledge and skills. Virginijus Sinkevičius, now a European Commissioner, became Minister of Economy in 2017 at the age of just 27. Current Economy Minister Aušrinė Armonaitė took office at 31. Young leaders are taking the reins of cities and businesses.

International career opportunities. More than 150 international companies offer jobs in Lithuania, including global giants like Google, Uber, Thermo Fisher and Revolut, and promising startups like Vinted, Trafi and Genus AI.

International impact. In Lithuania, talent is able to grow while addressing global challenges and contributing to developing companies. Lithuanian unicorn Vinted brought the world a circular economy solution, for instance, while Trafi has helped solve problems of mobility in the world's major cities.

Constant growth. Life here hums with opportunities to gain new knowledge and skills, with international conferences, seminars and trainings, prominent foreign speakers, active professional communities, and special programmes at universities. It's a wonderful setting for ongoing personal growth and broader horizons.

Women in science. Lithuania is Europe's leader for female representation in the engineering sciences, with women accounting for 57 percent of professionals and academics in the sector.

Equal opportunity in focus. Lithuania ranks 8th in the world for ensuring women's rights and opportunities, according to the Global Gender Gap Report for 2021.

Achievements in recent years include greater political empowerment of women.

After elections in late 2020, the share of women ministers in the government grew to 43 percent and the proportion women members of parliament rose to 28 percent. Prime Minister Ingrida Šimonytė joined the premiers of Denmark, Finland and Germany as the only female heads of government in the EU.

Gender parity in the labour force, meanwhile, has reached 97 percent, with over 77 percent of women active in the job market and 70 percent of professional and technical roles held by women. The wage gap is narrowing as well.

Subvalue: Relaxed living

Lithuania offers affordable living, shorter commutes and fewer barriers to high quality of life. The country is rated #6 for work-life balance in the OECD, and the people of the capital Vilnius consistently rank among the happiest in Europe.

Compactness is an advantage – distances here are short, making spontaneity a quite common Lithuanian trait. In one day in this country, you can experience more than in other places: land at Vilnius Airport in the morning, have a cup of coffee in the Vilnius Old Town, and arrive at the seaside in time for afternoon tea.

Short distances, wide-ranging services, entertainment and culture, and easy mobility lend Lithuania the feel of a country that is not in a hurry but never stops.

Everything within easy reach. The short distances within and between cities and modern modes of transport allow everyone in Lithuania to get where they're going conveniently. The average commute to work is just 30 minutes, and the seaside is only three hours away from the capital.

Active recreation. There's been an outdoor revolution in Lithuania over the past decade. It can be seen in hiking trails and cycling paths, a passion for running, and a variety of more extreme sports. No matter where you are, you're less than half an hour from a lake, and a green oasis is often just metres away. Name a sport, and you'll find the places and people to enjoy it with in Lithuania.

Work leaves time for life. Lithuania ranks #6 for work-life balance among all OECD countries. Just as an example, here a four-day workweek is nothing unheard of. Even a heating utility owned by the city of Vilnius works four days a week.

Focus on what matters. Education, healthcare, sports and leisure are available to all in Lithuania. And with parental leave that's among the most generous in Europe (up to 3 years) and lots of non-formal education offered, you can rest assured about your family's well-being.

Safe to live and visit. Aside from low crime, the Institute for Economics and Peace assesses Lithuania as one of the countries of the world where the index of terrorism is close to nil.

Subvalue: Nature evrywhere

Whether you're downtown or out-of-town, here you're always surrounded by greenery. Nature – raw nature – is Lithuania's most prized national possession and a dominant feature of the country's life.

Nature – even in the city. Vilnius is often called 'a city in a forest'. Of the 397,000 square kilometres occupied by the Lithuanian capital, only one-fifth is developed. The rest is green areas and water. That makes Vilnius one of the greenest capital cities in Europe. The country's other cities, also rich in parks, bodies of water and green oases, are not far behind.

Making a splash. With over 6,000 lakes dotted across Lithuania, you're never far from a body of water to dive into for some after-work relaxation. No wonder Lithuanian cities empty out on weekends as people go to recharge in nature.

Clean environment. Forests cover 33.5 percent of the territory of Lithuania, giving the whole country the feel of a large resort or spa centre. In fact, there are numerous actual health resorts here – in Birštonas, Druskininkai, Palanga and Anykščiai. Tap water here too is among the cleanest in Europe and is perfectly drinkable, coming as it does from pristine underground sources. And the air quality in Vilnius gets the best scores in Central-Eastern Europe.

Co-create Culture

Main value: **An open space for discovery and co-creation**

Main message: Lithuania offers unique unconventional, contemporary and historical - cultural perspectives, creative partnerships and liberating spaces where new ideas come to life. We turn spectators into co-creators.

Subvalue:

<p>New perspectives</p> <p>Lithuanian culture is dynamic, ever evolving, and full of experimental and collaborative projects in theatre, film, dance, music, design, illustration, and more. New globally relevant artistic ideas are born here every day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New ideas. • Recognition for unique creations. • Champions of quality. • Women at the forefront of classical music. 	<p>Creative partnerships</p> <p>Lithuania is a place where new ideas become reality in world-class co-productions and art projects. The potential of the country's creative industries is attracting global names like HBO and Netflix.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with global filmmakers. • Internationally praised filming locations. 	<p>Liberating spaces</p> <p>Lithuania is a great choice for space to bring new ideas to life. Lithuania invites international creators to join its existing community and create together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An open and international creative environment.
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New perspectives

You cannot really point to one or several areas of culture or the arts as getting more attention in Lithuania or as traditionally more promoted or supported. Our culture is unique for its variety, quality and accessibility. From an early age, young people have a choice of professional instruction in a wide range of cultural areas, and members of the public have the luxury of enjoying any field of art or culture that is professionally performed or rendered in Lithuania. The new generation of artists from independent Lithuania is garnering international honours and awards in music, theatre and cinema, and turning the world's gaze towards Lithuania.

Lithuanian culture has a unique artistic language influenced by specific historical factors. Consider the narratives of resistance and Aesopian language. A distinctive historical perspective conveying the country's unique experience inspires creativity.

New ideas. Lithuanian creators are challenging the world with their bold and unconventional approach. Artists of the theatre, dance and visual arts are posing vital issues to the world and inviting global dialogue. Lithuanians were at the forefront of new art moments – Jonas Mekas was a pioneer of avant-garde cinema while Jurgis Mačiūnas (George Maciunas) started the Fluxus movement.

Fluxus encouraged many young artists in different parts of the world to experiment, to be free. It thus contributed to the creation of an open society, a development of particular importance in Eastern Europe. Fluxus movement aims to provoke people not to submit to political and cultural routine, calling rather for spontaneity and a light-hearted take on even the most serious things.

Jonas Mekas, an American filmmaker, curator and artist of Lithuanian origins, is often called "the godfather of American avant-garde cinema", though he also has a second identity as a Lithuanian poet, publicist and writer. In his films, Mekas protested against art that depicts dramatic, important events – he sought to show people in their everyday lives, reveal their feelings, exalt life's insignificant moments. His style is characterised by improvisational composition, with short cuts inserted during filming and editing.

Today Jonas Mekas Visual Arts Centre (JMVMC), established in 2007, looks after the creative legacy of Jurgis Mačiūnas (George Maciunas) and Jonas Mekas. Its roughly 2,600 objects constitute the third largest Fluxus collection in the world, after those at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart in Germany.

Recognition for unique creations. Lithuanian artists' unique work has been recognized internationally. In 2019 all eyes were on Lithuania. Lina Lapelytė, Vaiva Grainytė and Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė earned the contemporary art world's highest award, the Golden Lion, for their opera-performance "Sun & Sea" (Marina), which was presented at the 2019 Venice Biennale as Lithuania's national participation. The piece calls for a pondering of the topics of climate change, our bodily nature, ecology and consumerism. The jury praised its experimental spirit, unexpected approach to national representation, creative use of the venue to present a Brechtian opera, and engagement with the city of Venice and its inhabitants. "Sun & Sea" (Marina) is a critique of leisure and life today, sung by performers and volunteers portraying everyday people.

Synaesthesia, a contemporary music ensemble with a unique vision for self-expression, won the prestigious Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation Ensemble Prize in 2020. Synaesthesia was founded in 2013 by composer Dominykas Digimas and conductor Karolis Variakojis. The ambitious young performers' main mission is to perform contemporary music by Lithuanian and foreign composers focusing not only on the sound but also on creating appropriate performance spaces, visuals and movements. "From the very early days, Synaesthesia was like a flow of energy which can not only be seen but also heard. For me personally, this energy is the most important part of the ensemble, because it fills the hall and invites the audience in to experience that energy with us," Digimas says.

Champions of quality. High-quality events are in high demand in Lithuania: the Vilnius International Film Festival "Kino Pavasaris" draws more than 120,000 attendees, while the Vilnius Book Fair, the largest in the Baltic States, attracts over 70,000 visitors each year. The fair's 20th edition was held in 2019. It lets book lovers not only see and buy publishers' newest offerings, but also meet authors and take part in book launches. The fair's programme is packed with book presentations as well as panel discussions on political and geopolitical issues as well as cultural and social change. Meetings with well-known international writers are included on the agenda too.

The MO Museum, for decades a museum without walls, today welcomes visitors in a building of exceptional architecture (designed by Libeskind) in the centre of Vilnius. Established in 2018, the museum offers exhibitions, film screenings, lectures and educational projects. It has been successful in its mission of bringing art closer to people and more people close to art. The MO has broken all attendance records and become a favourite leisure destination for Vilnius residents and tourists. In 2021 MO Museum has been awarded as the most welcoming and friendly museum in Europe in 2020.

Women at the forefront of classical music. In classical music, Lithuanian women are continually in the spotlight. In recent years, the world has gazed attentively on Asmik Grigorian ("the world's best female opera soloist"), Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla ("the world's best female conductor"), and Žibuoklė Martinaitytė ("female composer of the year" and a Guggenheim Fellowship recipient).

Asmik Grigorian is a Lithuanian opera soloist who was born in Lithuania and studied at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. She is a founding member of the Vilnius City Opera and a two-time recipient of the Golden Cross of the Stage, the highest theatre award in Lithuania. Grigorian was recognized at the International Opera Awards in 2016 as the best young female singer, and in 2019 as female opera soloist of the year. That same year, the Austrian Music Theatre Awards honoured her for best leading role for her performance in the opera "Salome" at the Salzburg Festival. She continues her soloist career on prestigious world stages – in Vienna, Paris and Madrid.

Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla is a conductor and music director of the Salzburg State Theatre (Salzburger Landestheater) and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. In 2019, the classical music portal Classic FM named her the world's best female conductor. She is also a recipient of the Lithuanian National Prize for Culture and Arts.

Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla is acclaimed for her musicality and ability to unlock the hidden depths of musical works.

Žibuoklė Martinaitytė is a New York-based Lithuanian composer. In 2020, she was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship. Her album “In Search of Lost Beauty...” received two gold medals at the Global Music Awards – for best composer and best album. She is also a recipient of the Lithuanian National Prize for Culture and Arts.

Subvalue: Creative partnerships

Lithuania is a place where new ideas become reality in world-class co-productions and art projects. The potential of the country’s creative industries is attracting global names like HBO and Netflix.

Work with global filmmakers. Lithuania is popular among international producers of TV series and movies. Even without a film studio, the country is putting its name on the map as a very attractive place for the international film industry. Among the reasons foreign producers give for choosing Lithuania are tax advantages, local production companies’ professionalism, the picturesque landscape, and the possibilities cities offer to adapt to their scripts. Lithuania’s portfolio speaks for itself: **Chernobyl**, **Stranger Things** and **War and Peace** were all filmed here.

“When we were considering where to go (to film), I talked to Craig Mazin, one of the creators of **Chernobyl**. His experience in Lithuania was fantastic,” says Shawn Levy, one of the creators of the Netflix series **Stranger Things**. “I didn’t know much about Lithuania, but while preparing to film here I looked into the country’s history. It’s amazing too,” Levy adds.

While 2020 will go down in the history of cinema as difficult and challenging due to the pandemic, for Lithuania it was a good year: in 2020, film producers made use of tax benefits and attracted investments of €11.3 million from Lithuanian companies. And the number of films financed almost doubled in the year. An impressive 58 new films were funded in 2020, including 37 local ones, 9 co-productions and 12 foreign films. Scandinavian countries showed particular fondness for Lithuania, as 8 of the foreign projects were Scandinavian. Lithuania introduced a profit tax incentive in 2014 to create better conditions for making films here.

Internationally praised filming locations. Vilnius and Kaunas are the most popular locations for filmmakers. Lithuania’s cities have an extremely rich cultural and architectural heritage. The Pažaislis Monastery in Kaunas, for example, is a true Baroque pearl. It was recognised as the best filming location at the 2020 European Film Commissions Network (EUFCN) Awards. In 2018, the four-part HBO and Sky TV mini-series **Catherine the Great**, starring Oscar-winner Helen Mirren, was filmed here. The Kaunas Film Office provides all-around support for filmmakers in Kaunas and the region, finds and manages filming locations, and arranges all necessary permits.

The strength of Vilnius is its diversity and multiculturalism, which is often given as one of the reasons for choosing the city for filming. The **Vilnius Film Office** ensures that Vilnius is a welcoming city for filmmakers.

The HBO series **Chernobyl**, filmed in Vilnius in 2019, sparked great international interest and revealed another side of the city. It appears in the series not as the modern European city that tourists are used to seeing. Rather, filming in Vilnius’s residential districts along with the professional work of the film crew and carefully chosen costumes helped create the atmosphere of the Soviet-era.

Subvalue: Liberating spaces

Lithuania is a great choice for space to bring new ideas to life. Lithuania invites international creators to join its existing community and create together.

An open and international creative environment. An open and international community of creators and cultural professionals, residencies for cultural practitioners, co-productions and other initiatives make Lithuania an important player in world culture. Global art projects are continually developed in Lithuania and ever more innovative ways are sought to collaborate with the world. The **Nida Art Colony**, the **Rupert Residency and Education Centre**, and the **Arts Printing House** are just a few examples of spaces where international exchanges of artistic ideas are born.

A flow of timely ideas and creative potential enables Lithuania to develop global art projects and co-productions and opens the way to innovative forms of international cooperation. Theatre, music and visual arts projects earn international acclaim thanks not only to the flexibility of the cultural infrastructure, but above all to the inspiring dialogue between Lithuanian and foreign creators.

Lithuania is gaining fame as a country with an extremely broad cultural map covering many fields of worldwide interest: from illustration to theatre, from literature to visual and interdisciplinary arts. Here every creative person is invited to turn their ideas into reality.

Co-create Governance

Main value: **An open platform for public sector transformation**

Main message: Lithuania is open to partnerships and innovative solutions that empower change on a national level.

Subvalue:

<p>Openness to innovation</p> <p>Lithuania's public sector strives to increase the effectiveness of its services by engaging with talent, business, science and society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital solutions. • Public invitation to experiment. • Empowering talent. • Government support for innovation. • State institutions as an engine of innovation. • Public and business support for science. • Attention to the environment. 	<p>Smart city solutions</p> <p>Vilnius is always at the forefront when it comes to innovative solutions, resourcefulness and creativity. Unexpected solutions during the pandemic that turned Vilnius into a huge open-air café inspired other Lithuanian and foreign cities to look for ways to stay in close touch with the population even in complex situations. A remarkable focus on incoming talent and open data initiatives underpin the capital's leadership in smart solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open data. • Smartness. • Talent. • Non-traditional solutions. • Always ahead. 	<p>International co-operation</p> <p>Lithuania is open to international partnerships and global challenges, and consistent in its value choices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable partners. • We support the pursuit of freedom and democracy. • Meeting global challenges. • Cyber security leaders. • Rapid Response Squad. • Passport power.
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Co-create Governance

Main value: An open platform for public sector transformation

Main message: Lithuania is open to partnerships and innovative solutions that empower change on a national level.

After regaining independence, Lithuania had to create its public sector anew. We needed to do more than other countries in a short time, so we set to work with energy, creativity and desire to continually improve. We learned from the best, and today we're already sharing our own experience with others. Lithuania has built flexible institutions, which are able to respond quickly to the challenges of the times. Business, of course, achieves most when it is not hindered, so at the state level our aim is to help, support and empower.

We do not fear playing an active part in international decision-making. Lithuania's unique geographical position – the West's eastern border – and its strong values give us an important role in the region. We are a beacon of freedom and democracy for the countries of the EU's Eastern Partnership.

Subvalue: Lithuania's public sector strives to increase the effectiveness of its services by engaging with talent, business, science and society.

Openness to innovation

Digital solutions. Lithuania has already digitized 90 percent of public sector services and we have no intention to stop there. Lithuanian IT firms have built and continue to develop a whole range of innovative public sector solutions for everything from governance and agriculture to infrastructure and healthcare. Today, more than 80 percent of the country's citizens use e-government services. For business, the figure is 97 percent. In a country of 2.8 million people, the main e-government website had been visited 16.9 million times as of 2020. Lithuania ranks 6th in the EU for digital public services in the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2020.

We rank 8th in the EU for digital public services for businesses.¹ Lithuania's acceleration of e-government solutions, praised across the EU, has helped create a single platform for public information and services for business: a fast online system for tax registration and payment that lets taxpayers submit all returns electronically. The online tax administration system, i.MAS, ensures efficient and modern tax administration. That, along with more than 50 bilateral double taxation treaties, creates a business environment which is convenient and economical.

Public invitation to experiment. Society, business and academia are being encouraged not only to use digital services, but also to contribute to developing innovative solutions. The **GovTech Lab** was set up to engage the latest technologies, startups and innovative businesses in further improving public sector services. There a team of ambitious professionals is organising a series of challenges whose goal is not just to seek solutions to public sector problems, but also to actively foster and expand the govtech community. The solutions developed so far in this format are a major

¹European Commission, Digital Economy and Society Index, 2020.

step forward in terms of breaking down barriers and stereotypes related to collaboration between startups and the public sector.

Empowering talent. Create Lithuania is the first and so far only programme for creative, proactive professionals who want to contribute to shaping the modern future of Lithuania. Participants with international experience can use the knowledge and innovative ideas they've gained abroad to help improve Lithuania's public sector.

Government support for innovation. In Lithuania, trying out new approaches and hypotheses in the real world is easy and safe. There are sandbox environments for innovations. They allow innovators to test their solutions in a real-life setting with the supervision and guidance of the relevant authorities. The Bank of Lithuania opened the first sandbox in Lithuania in 2018, for fintech companies, and in 2021 a year-long trial of Workpower UAB's "Ooniq" peer-to-peer insurance platform was completed, bringing new possibilities for the financial services market. Today in Lithuania you'll find successful fintech sandboxes, an energy sandbox, a transport solutions sandbox, and a proptech sandbox for real estate initiatives. There are also a number of active innovation collaboration hubs, like the Blockchain Centre Vilnius.

State institutions as an engine of innovation. Today Lithuania is known in Europe and the world as a hub for financial technologies. The authorities, by working together, managed to react quickly and seize opportunities that arose in the context of Brexit. The regulatory environment needed for this breakthrough was put in place with incredible speed thanks to co-operation between the authorities. Fintech companies have been turning their eyes to Lithuania in recent years above all because of the extremely favourable regulatory environment and the positive attitude of the regulator, the Bank of Lithuania, towards fintech startups. The flexibility and openness of the central bank has no doubt accelerated the flow of fintech companies to Lithuania, with 230 now operating in the country.

Public and business support for science. Lithuania is one of the EU countries where business invests most in public scientific institutions. Companies' investments in research and development has almost doubled over the last decade. In 2019, the latest year for which data is available, businesses invested a total of €208 million in R&D, or 0.43 percent of GDP.²

Attention to the environment. Lithuania is a European leader in the recycling of plastic packaging. The country has over 3,000 collection points where people can return single-use plastic packages. Beverage packaging collected in the last 5 years in Lithuania helped save an estimated 554.6 GWh of electricity. All EU member states have committed to recycling 90 percent of plastic bottles placed on the market by 2029, and Lithuania has already met that target, as more than 90 percent of plastic bottles are now returned to collection points. Public engagement with the cause is also reflected in a poll conducted in October 2020 which showed that an overwhelming majority of respondents (98 percent) support the packaging return system as useful.

In early 2021, Vilnius University took the historic step of becoming one of the first large organisations in Lithuania to use only green electricity for its operations. Vilnius University will reduce CO2 emissions by about 7,500 tonnes every year.

Vilnius Airport is among the renewable energy leaders in the Baltic region. In recent years, it has upgraded its lighting system, installed solar panels and added hybrid vehicles to its fleet. In total, the airport plans to save at least 168.18 MWh of electricity annually, which is like providing 90 average households with electricity for a whole year.

² <https://strata.gov.lt/lt/naujienos/8-naujienos/834-verslo-investicijos-i-mokslinius-tyrimus-didziausias-per-10-met-verslo-investicijos-i-mokslinius-tyrimus-didziausias-per-10-met>.

Subvalue: Smart city solutions

Vilnius is always at the forefront when it comes to innovative solutions, resourcefulness and creativity. Unexpected solutions during the pandemic that turned Vilnius into a huge open-air café inspired other Lithuanian and foreign cities to look for ways to stay in close touch with the population even in complex situations. A remarkable focus on incoming talent and open data initiatives underpin the capital's leadership in smart solutions.

Open data. Vilnius is an example of an open data policy. The city council offers free access to financial, procurement, real estate, transport and other data. The public can access information at any time on the city's planning, construction, investment projects, educational institutions, and so on. In addition, technology developers are being encouraged to help create even smarter urban solutions using the data the municipality has made available. In such conditions, the city is developing rapidly in smart technology areas like financial technology, IT (gaming, cybersecurity, data centres), biotechnology, electronics and optical systems.

Vilnius's open data policy is good for all tech startups as it means they can test products with real-life information. That, and the third lowest income tax rate in Central Eastern Europe, has helped make the city both inclusive and attractive for business.

Besides using the gathered data to improve the city's infrastructure, the country's capital is making it available to all residents and businesses. Trafi, a global mobility problem-solver that grew out of Vilnius's open data, has built one of the world's largest urban transport platforms – used by the residents of Berlin and visitors to the Rio Olympics, and with advances that Google and Lyft have exploited as well.

Smartness. The Financial Times' fDi Intelligence division published³ a list of the 30 cities that attracted the most greenfield foreign direct investment tech-startup projects per capita in 2016-2018. Vilnius topped the list, outranking cities like Singapore, Tel Aviv, Berlin and London. Vilnius has also been named one of the top 25 Global Cities of the Future for FDI.⁴

Vilnius has a vibrant startup community with more than 20 business hubs, accelerators and pre-accelerators, besides the regulatory sandboxes. Companies like Revolut, Transfergo, de Vere group and others have set up their offices in Vilnius, recognising the value of this environment.

Talent. The city also offers a good talent base for tech startups. There are 21,000 professionals employed in the ICT sector in the Vilnius region and over 6,000 more work in R&D. According to Invest Lithuania, 85 percent of young professionals in Vilnius speak English and the city is one of the youngest European capitals, with more than 50 percent of residents under the age of 40.

Non-traditional solutions. The capital has handled the COVID-19 crisis with creativity, turning empty cafés into fashion displays and the city into one big open-air café. As soon as the city issued its invitation, more than 400 restaurants, cafés and bars came forward to set up in the open air. Cities in other countries followed this happy example.

Always ahead. In Lithuania, a four-day workweek is nothing new. And not just private companies are choosing that employment model, since even Vilnius's municipal heating utility (UAB Vilniaus Šilumos tinklai) works four days a week.

³ fDi Intelligence, Tech Start-up FDI Attraction Index, 2019.

⁴ fDi Intelligence, Global Cities of the Future 2021/22.

Subvalue: International co-operation

Lithuania is open to international partnerships and global challenges, and consistent in its value choices.

Reliable partners. International organisations, including NATO and the EU, consider Lithuania a reliable member state and a partner that actively helps other Eastern European countries along the path of integration.

We support the pursuit of freedom and democracy. To express solidarity and support for the democratic aspirations of the citizens of neighbouring Belarus, we joined together in a Way of Freedom in August 2020, forming a living chain that stretched 32 km from Vilnius to Medininkai on the Belarusian border. We thus also marked the 31st anniversary of the Baltic Way, in which on 23 August 1989, more than a million people clamouring for independence from the Soviet Union joined hands in a human chain linking the three Baltic capitals of Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn.

In response to events in Belarus, Vilnius University has decided to establish “Grand Duchy of Lithuania Scholarships” for outstanding applicants, offering them an opportunity to study at the university free of charge along with other financial incentives. At the same time, Vilnius University offered to welcome transfer students from Belarus who have been persecuted there for civic or political reasons.

Meeting global challenges. Challenges related to countries closing their borders due to COVID-19 led Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to become the first EU member states to permit free movement of each other’s citizens, creating a Baltic “travel bubble”.

Cyber security leaders. Lithuania currently ranks 4th in the world on the National Cyber Security Index⁵, behind only the UK, the USA and France. As recently as 2017, Lithuania was 57th in this ranking. In just a few years, we’ve strengthened our cyber capabilities, promoted innovation and crime prevention, and improved public-private co-operation. But we’re not stopping there. Sustainable infrastructure and reliable and flexible IT talent continue enabling first-class cybersecurity services even as the country’s universities train cybersecurity professionals. Over 10,000 students are studying IT, and some 38,000 professionals are specialists in ICT.

Rapid Response Squad. Lithuania leads an international cyber rapid response team that assists key European Union institutions on security issues.

Passport power. The Republic of Lithuania has one of the world’s leading passports in terms of the possibilities it offers. In 2021, we are ranked 11th in the world, tied with Slovakia and Poland.⁶ Lithuanians can freely visit 181 countries of the world without obtaining a visa in advance.

⁵ Global Cybersecurity Index, 2018.

⁶ Henley Passport Index, 2021.

Values

Drive (Veržlumtas)

In Lithuania, we create and implement solutions while others are still just talking.

Why it's important to us: Instead of making assumptions, we make hypotheses, test them in real-life conditions, analyse the results, and then repeat the process until we have a solution in our hands that meets our extremely high standards. We're convinced that in a world that's evolving as fast as ours is, only the bold and proactive get ahead. So we foster that attitude and approach.

How the world experiences it: We're long-standing pioneers in lasers and biochemical engineering. We're also now leading advances in fields like financial technology and cyber security. Innovative minds from all the world gather here to solve today's and tomorrow's problems.

Business-friendly, we craft our laws so companies that invest in Lithuania can get up and running quickly – in its **Ease of Doing Business** report, the World Bank rates Lithuania as one of the world's most favourable business environments. We're a regional leader in high value-added industries. In fintech. In govtech. In green energy. And more.

In the area of culture, too, with our many artists, creators and athletes visible and recognized on the world stage, you can see the country's drive to excel and to achieve.

Constant growth (Siekis tobulėti)

The country's greatest resource is its insistence on constantly improving and advancing.

Why it's important to us: A small country without natural resources has only one option – to turn its know-how into a resource. Hence our attitude of constantly building competencies, developing skills and optimising processes. That's the engine of Lithuania's growth. Continually learning and improving, in a dialogue with the rest of the world that involves both adopting international best practices and sharing our own. And making sure education – serious business to us – is among the best in the world. In Lithuania, we're hungry for knowledge.

How the world experiences it: The major global companies that have come to Lithuania have been astonished by our professionals' intelligence, flexibility, perseverance and ambition, and by the high standards we like to set. We're also now growing one of the densest startup ecosystems in the world and are at the forefront of advances in digital technologies, biotech, and culture.

What the world is discovering here is a well-educated society, abundant tech-savvy talent, and highly qualified professionals and internationally respected specialists, all constantly seeking to further grow and develop.

Freedom to create (Laisvė kurti)

Facing new things with openness and courage creates huge opportunities.

Why it's important to us: In Lithuania we like to create, to experiment, to welcome innovations. For decades, our talents were stifled, free initiative prohibited. But amid all the restrictions, we mastered subtle and courageous forms of expression and creativity. It's a trait we kept even after regaining our freedom, one we cherish – that of boldly advancing and embracing change to make the world better.

How the world experiences it: Lithuanian artists are known internationally often for unexpected or provocative ideas that make us see the world from a different angle. From contemporary art to theatre, from classical to electronic music, from cinema to the visual arts, culture flourishes in a free environment.

Freedom shows itself in many other ways too: in innovation, new approaches, and progressive ideas. The abundance of startups in Lithuania reflects our desire to create solutions with a global impact. Technology clusters provide a setting conducive to actually bringing new ideas to life.

The freedom to create is also supported by and embedded in Lithuania's business climate: good infrastructure, a flexible regulatory environment, and the attention investors need and deserve.

Connection to nature (Ryšys su gamta)

Wherever you are in Lithuania, nature is only a few steps away – offering you peace and harmony, and rest from the rapid pace of modern life.

Why it's important to us: Nature has always been a part of Lithuanians' spiritual life. It's inseparable from ancient Baltic cultural and agricultural traditions. Interactions with nature – with forest, sea, river or meadow – are central to people's life and identity. Asked in a recent survey why it is good to live in Lithuania, the largest part of the population (45%) answered: "Nature is always close by!"

How the world experiences it: People seeking the perfect balance of nature and urban living, of convenience and ecology, fall in love with Lithuania.

Love of naturalness also explains the popularity here of organic production and natural products. Utenos Trikotažas is the first and so far only garment maker in the world to meet Greenpeace's strict environmental standards for textile production, while food producer Auga Group runs the largest vertically integrated organic farm in Europe – one that's both state-of-the-art and sustainable.

Changes in our energy sector, development of the green economy and advanced environmental solutions all add to the picture. Lithuania boasts Europe's most successful deposit system for beverage packaging and the world's first nationwide solar-power rental platform. Ecology is an integral part of how designers here think and was even highlighted in the award-winning opera **Sun & Sea (Marina)**.