LITHUANIA

Country Report on HEI types

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This report describes the structure of the national higher education system in Lithuania, focusing on the institutional types as defined by national categories. It builds on the Eurydice Report on the national higher education system but complements it with quantitative information on the role of higher education institution (HEI) types in national systems, based on data derived from the European Tertiary Education Register (http://www.eter-project.eu) for the period 2011-2019.

Types of Higher Education Institutions

According to Eurydice[1], the Lithuanian higher education system comprises two types of higher education institutions: **universities** and **colleges** and these may be state or non-state institutions. A state institution of higher education is a public legal entity functioning as a public establishment, possessing autonomy guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, and the special status defined by this and other relevant laws of the Republic of Lithuania. A non-state higher education institution is a public legal entity functioning as a public establishment or a private legal entity.

Universities provide university-level study programmes, conduct scientific research, and pursue experimental (social, cultural) development and (or) high-level professional art. The name of a higher education institution engaged in those activities must contain the word 'university' or 'academy or 'seminary'.

Colleges deliver college-level studies, conduct applied scientific research and/or develop professional art. The name of a higher education institution engaged in such activities must contain the word 'college' or 'higher education institution'.

Main institutional characteristics. Legal status and the right to award a PhD

Table 1 below provides a quantitative overview of the main institutional characteristics by HEI type. Universities (*Universitetas*) are mostly public institutions and, with one exception, have the right to award PhDs. In total, almost half of all Lithuanian HEIs are Universities and equivalent institutions. The remaining HEIs in Lithuania are Colleges (*Kolegija*), which are also mostly public but do not award PhDs. Overall, 1/3 of the Lithuanian HEIs are private.

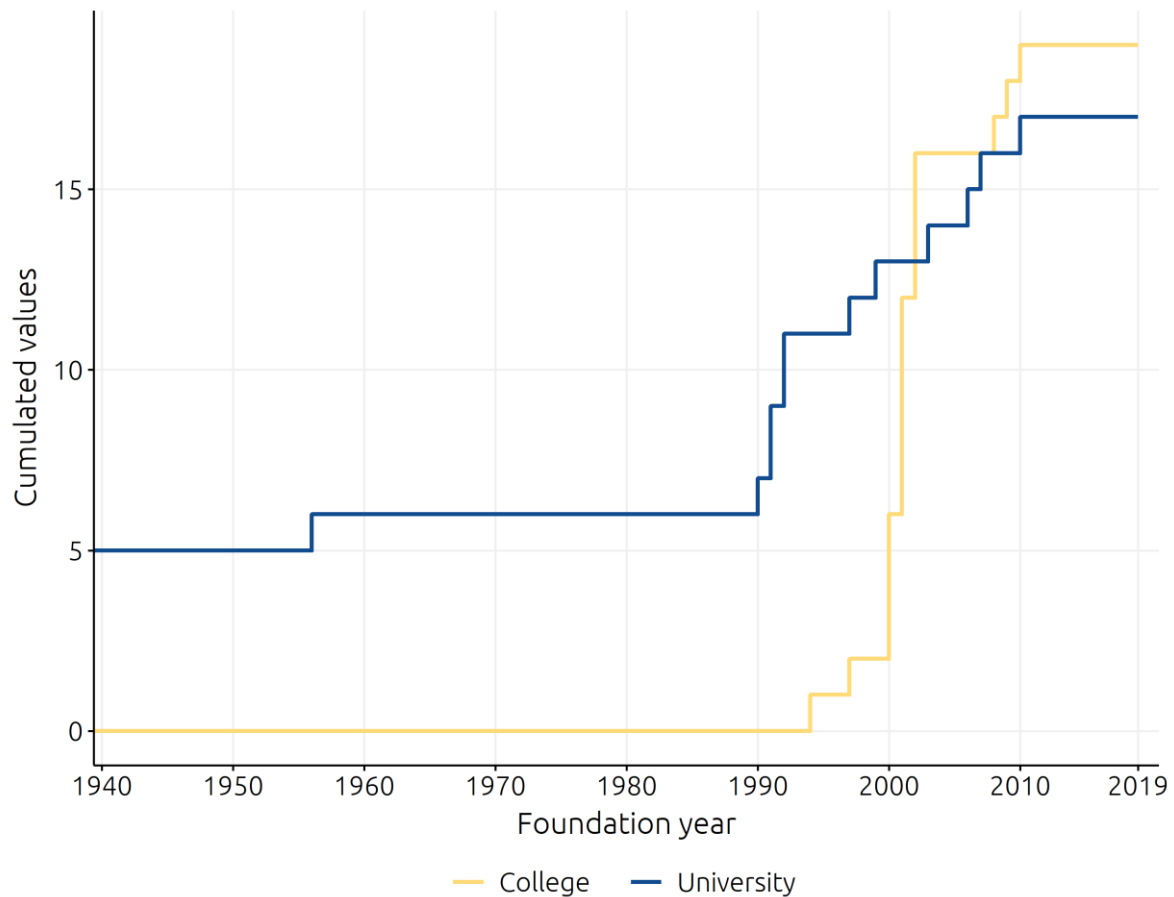[1] https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/types-higher-education-institutions-44_en

Table 1. Institutional type and legal status by HEI type, 2019

Category		N	Public	Private	PhD awarding
College	Kolegija	19	12	7	0
University	Universitetas	17	12	5	16
Total		36	24	12	16

Institutional history. Older and younger institutional types

Data on the HEI foundation year provide information on the history of Lithuania's higher education and its evolution over time.

Figure 1 below shows that, despite ancient historical roots, the expansion of the system in terms of the number of HEIs is relatively recent. While the Vilnius University, the oldest Lithuanian university, dates back to 1579 and the Vilnius Art Academy was founded in 1703, no other HEI was founded before the 20th century. Overall, however, Lithuanian HEIs are much younger; only three Universities (1922 Kaunas University of Technology and Vytautas Magnus University, 1934 Lithuanian Sports University) were founded before World War II and only the Vilnius Gediminas Technical University was founded between World War II and 1956, followed by a long periode without any foundation from the 1960s to the1980s. The figure therefore shows a distinct, relative recent, pattern of expansion in terms of the number of HEIs. This expansion included the foundation of 10 out of the 17 Universities between 1990 and 2019 and all the 19 Colleges. This expansion stopped in 2010 with the last foundation of an HEI in Lithuania being in 2010 (Lithuanian University of Health Sciences).
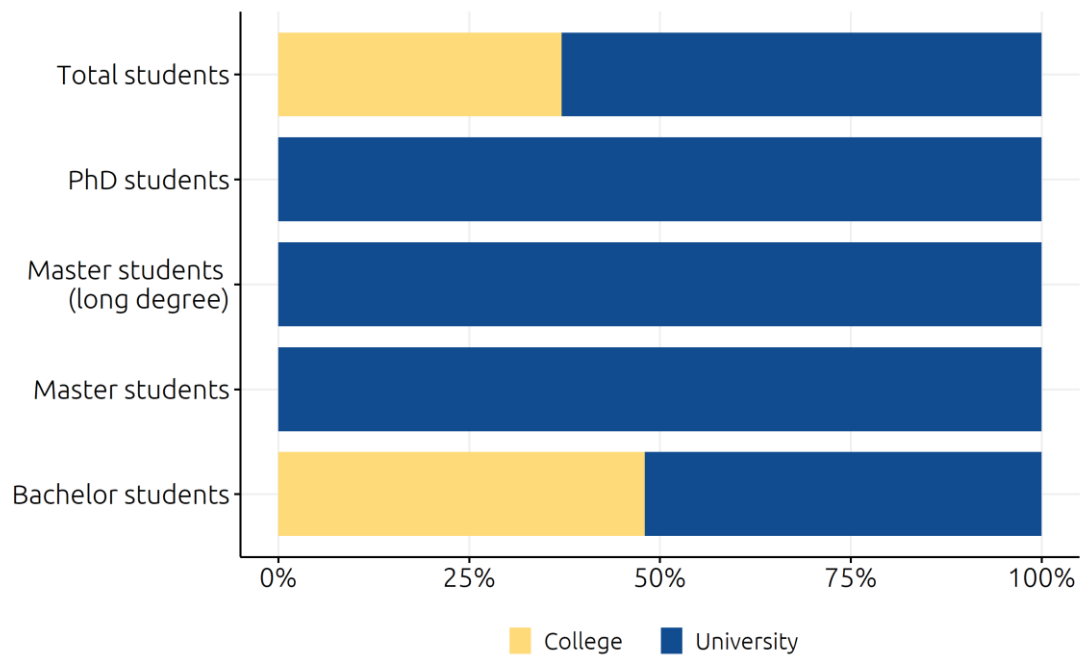
How are students distributed?

In contrast to the number of institutions, in terms of the number of students enrolled, Universities still account for 63% of all students and Colleges (*Kolegija*) for the remaining 37% (see Figure 2). While one out of three Lithuanian HEIs in ETER is private, these institutions enrol only about 12% of the students and, therefore, play a limited role in the national higher education system.

According to different institutional mandates, we also observe systematic differences between educational levels: Colleges account for about half of the bachelor students, while doctorates and master degrees' enrolments are within the remit of Universities

Figure 1. Students by level and type of HEI, 2019

Note: Total students include ISCED 5-7

Academic personnel and financial resources

As illustrated in Figure 2, in the year 2019, Universities account for more than 80% of financial revenues and more than 75% of academic personnel of the whole HEI system, i.e., substantially more than their share of students. This broadly corresponds to the fact that Universities also have an important research function. This difference is also reflected in the composition of revenues, where Universities receive a large proportion of revenues from (research-related) third-party funds, contributing over 40% to the total budget for these institutions. Student fees also play a role in Lithuania and are, with a share of 28% of the total budget, more relevant for Colleges than for Universities (16%).

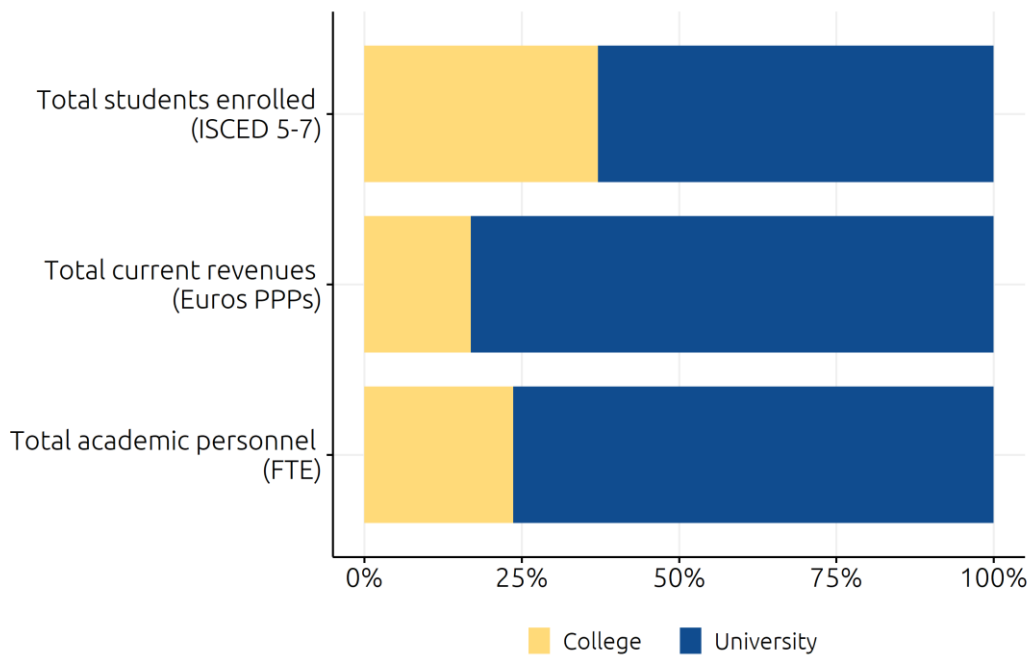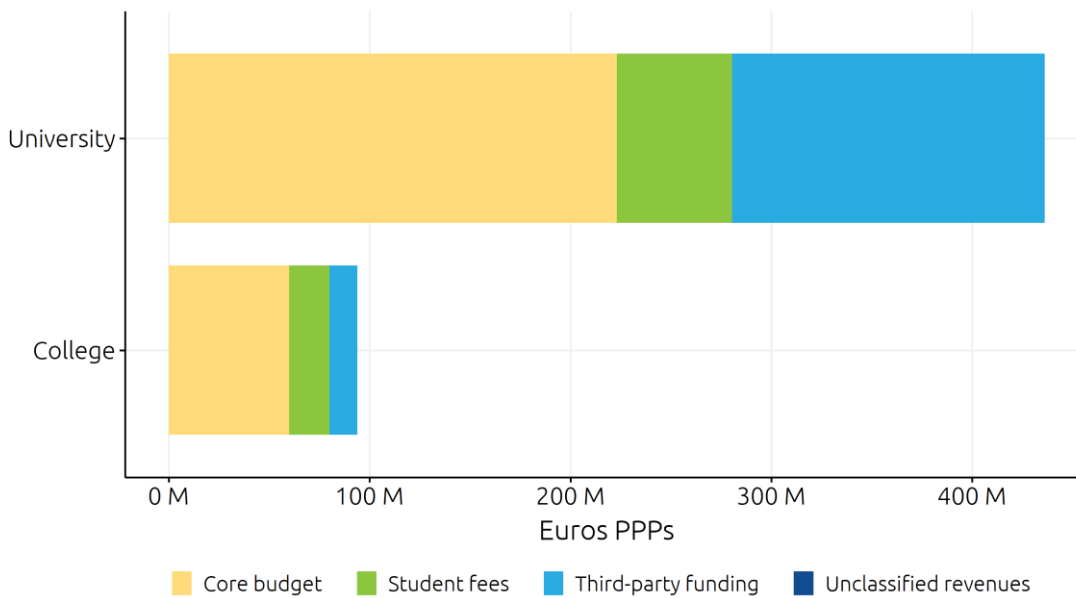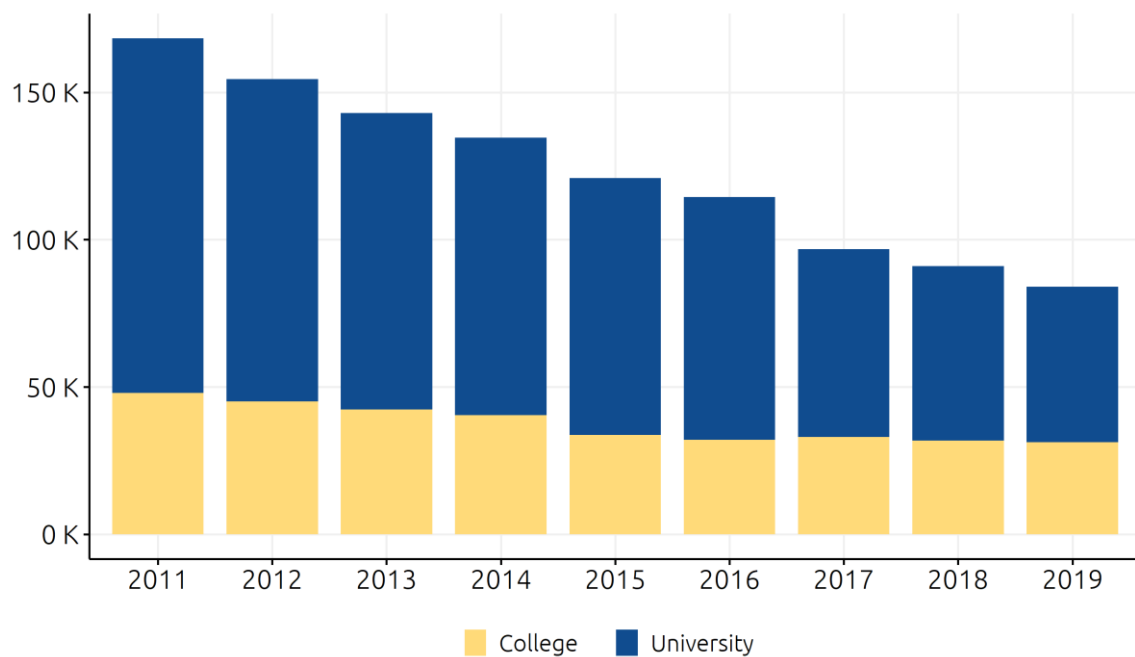*Figure 2. Resources, academic personnel, and total students enrolled by type of HEI, 2019*

Figure 3. Composition of resources. Universities (Universitetas) and Colleges (Kolegija)

Changing roles over time

When observed through the lens of the number of students, data show a decreasing pattern, with the number of enrolled students halving from 2011 to 2019. This decrease is mainly related to the Lithuanian demographic situation. However, while also for Colleges the absolute number of students declined by about one third between 2011 and 2015, the student numbers of Colleges recently stabilized and in turn the share of Colleges increased from 28% to 37% of the total students enrolled.

Figure 4. Share of students enrolled by institutional type

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