

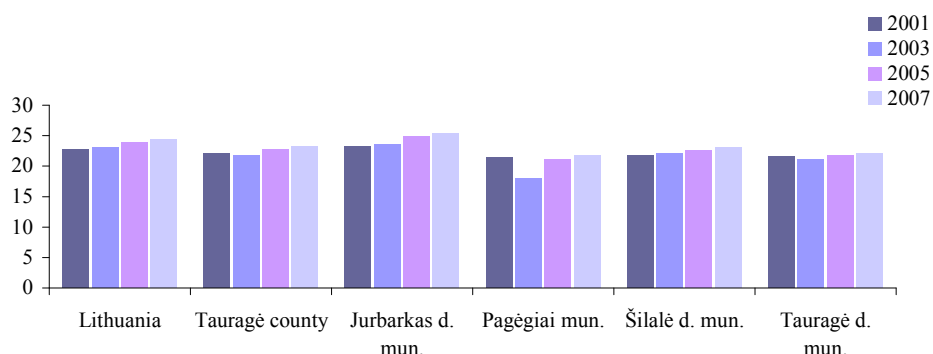
ENVIRONMENT OF TAURAGĖ COUNTY

Housing

The provision of the residents of Tauragė county with living space is poorer than the national average. Only in Jurbarkas district municipality the useful floor area per capita in 2007 was larger than the national average. The smallest useful floor area per capita was in Pagėgiai and Tauragė district municipalities. A larger supply of living space was only in Jurbarkas district municipality; therefore, provision of housing is not an important factor stimulating socioeconomic development in a major part of the county's territory.

Useful floor area per capita, 2001–2007

m²

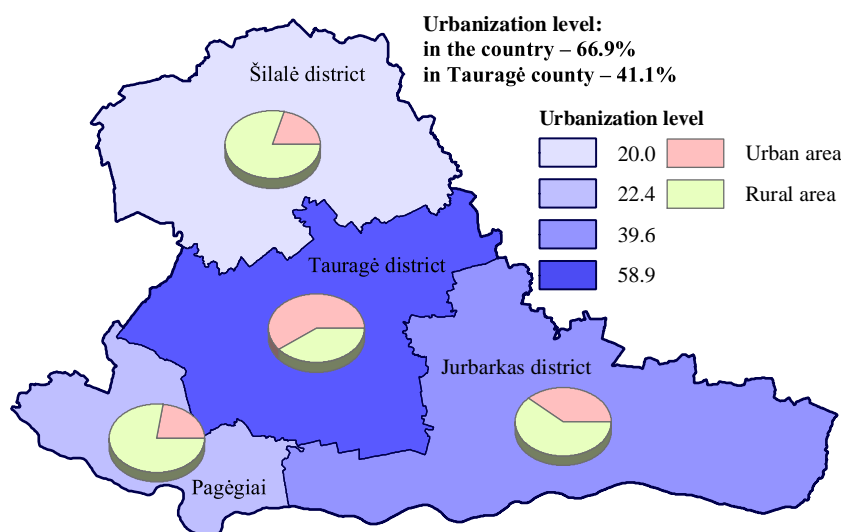


Social infrastructure

In 2007, residents of rural areas predominated in Tauragė county (59 % of the total population); the structure of the rural vs. urban population was opposite to that formed in the country. It was only Tauragė district municipality that was more urbanised; the share of the urban population in the said municipality made up more than 59 %, but did not reach the national average. Tauragė district municipality included the county centre – Tauragė town – populated by 27.8 thous. persons; the centres of the rest of municipalities were even smaller – Jurbarkas was inhabited by 13.3, Šilalė – by 6, Pagėgiai – by just 2.2 thous. persons. The share of the urban population in Pagėgiai and Šilalė district municipalities made up just about 20 %.

Urbanization level in municipalities, beginning of 2008

Per cent



The geographic distribution of the social infrastructure in the municipalities of Tauragė county often conditions the attractiveness of its territories for living. A larger share of the county's population live in rural areas; predominating municipalities are rural municipalities or mixed municipalities with a larger share of the rural

population. There is just one medium-sized town in the municipality; therefore, the accessibility of the social infrastructure to the locals depends a lot on the number of objects of the infrastructure in larger rural areas.

Preschool education institutions

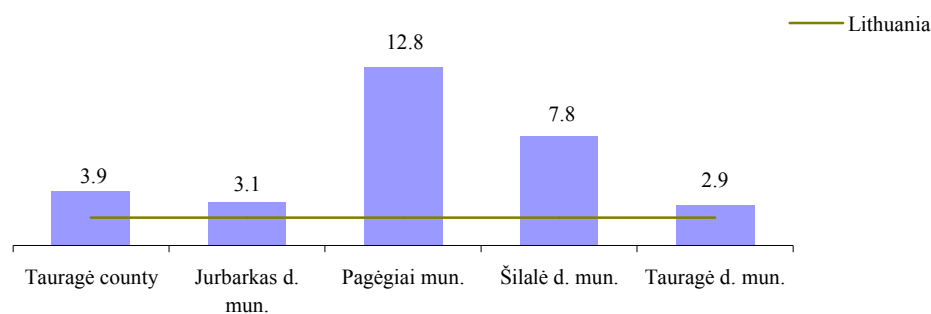
In 2007, Tauragė county had just 8 kindergartens; since 2001, their number almost halved (in Jurbarkas municipality – decreased as much as 4 times). In the said year, there was one preschool education institution in Pagėgiai, 3 – in Tauragė district, 2 – in each Šilalė and Jurbarkas district municipalities.

Number of preschool education institutions, 2001–2007

	2001	2003	2005	2007
Tauragė county	14	10	7	8
Jurbarkas d. mun.	8	4	3	2
Pagėgiai mun.	1	1	1	1
Šilalė d. mun.	1	2	1	2
Tauragė d. mun.	4	3	2	3

At the end of 2007, there were, on average, 2 children of preschool age per place in the country's preschool education institutions. The Tauragė county indicator was twice as high as the national average. The lack of places in kindergartens has been observed in all county's municipalities; however, a somewhat better situation was observed in Tauragė district municipality, where the ratio of the number of children to that of places in preschool education institutions was by 45 % higher than the national average. Meanwhile, in Šilalė district municipality, the number of places in preschool education institutions was almost 8, in Pagėgiai municipality – almost 13 times lower than that of children of preschool age. The number of places in preschool education institutions is much lower than the demand both in more urbanised and in rural areas, where the distance to the nearest preschool education institution is usually longer, whereas in two county's municipalities the situation is notably poorer than, on average, in the country – in most of the areas of these municipalities preschool education services are not available.

Number of children aged 1–6 per place in preschool education institutions, end of 2007



The density of the network of preschool education institutions in Tauragė county is much lower than the national average; in some of municipalities (those of Šilalė district (particularly in its rural areas) and Pagėgiai), there is a threat of them becoming less attractive to the youth and women wishing to participate in the labour market. The shortage of preschool education institutions may condition not only insufficient quality of provided services, but also further depopulation of scarcely populated territories and slowdown in their economic development.

General schools

In Tauragė county, as well as in the entire country, a trend towards the decrease in the number of general schools has been observed: from 2001, the number of general schools almost halved. In Tauragė county, this process was much faster as compared with a 35 % decrease at the national level.

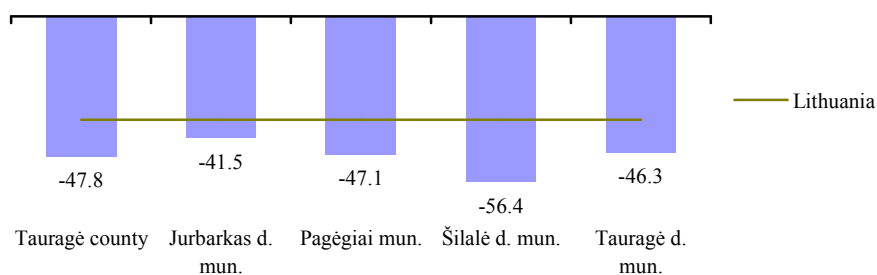
In 2001–2007, the most considerable decrease in the number of general schools – by 56.4 % – was observed in Šilalė district municipality. In the rest of the county's municipalities, the number of schools decreased by 41.5–47.1 %. The highest number of schools was closed in 2002–2003; however, their number was decreasing in all county's municipalities in other years as well.

Number of general schools

	Number of general schools				Number of pupils per general school			
	2001–2002	2003–2004	2005–2006	2007–2008	2001–2002	2003–2004	2005–2006	2007–2008
Lithuania	2270	1932	1534	1472	265.4	301.8	351.1	332.5
Tauragė county	138	83	79	72	187.8	303.7	291.6	284.7
Jurbarkas d. mun.	41	25	26	24	168.4	262.6	226.0	216.8
Pagėgiai mun.	17	11	11	9	139.3	206.4	186.6	205.3
Šilalė d. mun.	39	20	18	17	174.0	337.4	348.9	328.5
Tauragė d. mun.	41	27	24	22	240.5	356.4	367.9	357.5

Changes in the number of general schools, 2001–2008

Per cent



The decrease in the number of schools in Šilalė and Tauragė district municipalities conditioned the fact that these municipalities, which were previously characterised by small schools, by the indicator of pupils enrolled per school approximated the national average. In other municipalities, schools have been amalgamated as well; however, in 2007, the number of pupils enrolled per school in Jurbarkas district and Pagėgiai municipalities was by one-third lower than the national average, which was due to a previously developed very dense network of schools – even after quite a number of schools had been closed, the network remained relatively dense. The above facts were also impacted on by a decreasing number of preschool children. The network of schools thinned out in all county's municipalities; however, it remained relatively dense, based on schools which were smaller than, on average, in the country. However, a trend common both to Lithuania and to Tauragė county – schools serve more pupils, while in more remote areas general educational services become less accessible to pupils – should condition further thinning out of the network of schools, which would make more pupils attend general schools located in towns. Today, schools are already relatively big in Šilalė and Tauragė district municipalities; the schools in the rest of municipalities are also approaching the typical size of a school in the country.

With the further decrease in the number of schools and enlargement of the remaining ones, a heavier load in future should fall within educational institutions located in Tauragė, Šilalė, Jurbarkas towns, as well as enlarged educational establishments of Pagėgiai municipality; transport issues, related to trips to school of pupils living in more remote areas, will have to be solved; attention will have to be directed towards the demand for the teaching staff, which will be growing in future.

Cultural infrastructure

Tauragė county is characterised by a relatively well-developed local cultural infrastructure, which allows satisfying cultural needs of the locals, as well as provides them a possibility to engage in social activities. At the end of 2007, there were 93 libraries in Tauragė county, whose distribution among urban and rural municipalities was relatively even. As regards the number of libraries per 1000 population, not a single county's municipality lagged behind the national average, whereas in as many as three out of four county's municipalities the national average was exceeded twice, while the indicator of a more urbanised Tauragė district municipality, although lagging behind the indicators of the rest of the county's municipalities, still exceeded the national average by 50 %.

Libraries, end of 2001–2007

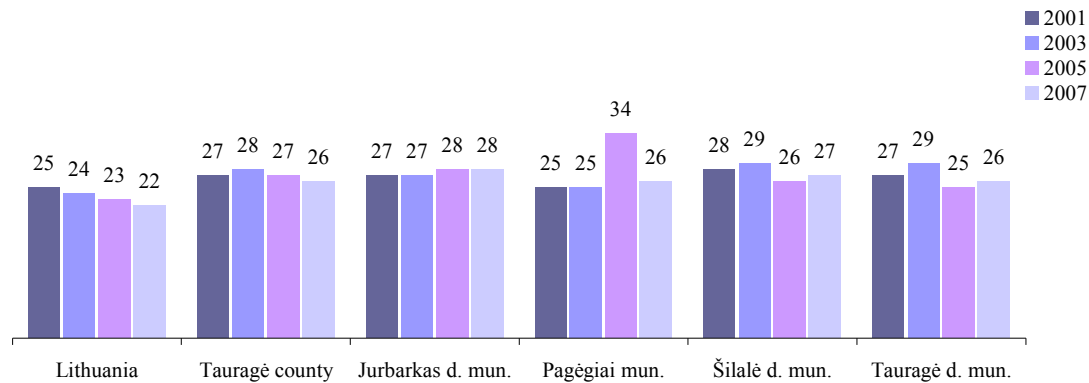
	Number of libraries				Number of libraries per 1000 population			
	2001	2003	2005	2007	2001	2003	2005	2007
Lithuania	1449	1418	1396	1395	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Tauragė county	94	93	93	93	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Jurbarkas d. mun.	28	28	28	28	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8
Pagėgiai mun.	10	10	10	10	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9
Šilalė d. mun.	27	26	26	26	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9
Tauragė d. mun.	29	29	29	29	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6

It was observed that in terms of accessibility of libraries a more densely populated urbanised Tauragė district municipality lagged behind the rest of municipalities. Most of the residents of peripheral settlements have a possibility to use library services.

Densely distributed and easily accessible libraries in the county are used more extensively than, on average, in the country – the share of library users in 2007 was higher than the national average (26 and 22 % respectively); the national average was, although inconsiderably, exceeded in all county's municipalities. In 2007, the highest number of users was received by the libraries of Jurbarkas district municipality (28 % of the total population), the lowest – by those of Tauragė district and Pagėgiai municipalities (26 %). Thus, the county's libraries received sufficient attention of the locals, whereas differences between the county's municipalities were just minor.

Share of library users, 2001–2007

Against the total population, per cent



In addition to their primary function of providing information, libraries have considerable potential for becoming centres of attraction to the population, contributing to the improvement of the residents' qualification and activeness, providing a possibility to use information technologies. Thus, the living environment and quality of life are improving namely in those areas where the supply of other social services is rather poor, whereas residents of the territories where this potential is underused may be faced with a problem of increasing "information exclusion". The conditions for further strengthening of the role of libraries as information and community centres in Tauragė county are relatively favourable.

The distribution of cultural centres in Tauragė county was relatively uneven; however, in all county's municipalities, their number was rather high. The highest number of cultural centres – 23 – was in Jurbarkas district municipality, Tauragė and Šilalė district municipality lagged behind the latter just inconsiderably; in a small Pagėgiai municipality, there were 5 cultural centres. It may be observed that the indicator of the number of cultural centres per 1000 population exceeded the national average even in those municipalities which had less cultural centres. In two municipalities (those of Jurbarkas and Šilalė districts), the number of cultural centres per 1000 population was twice as high as the national average. The number of cultural centres per 1000 population in Tauragė county exceeded the national average by 66 %, which was conditioned by a very dense network of cultural centres in areas that were leading by this indicator, as well by a network of cultural centres in the rest of the county's municipalities that was denser than the national average. The high number of cultural centres per 1000 population in Tauragė county allows making a conclusion that main cultural services are provided even in small settlements of the county.

Number of cultural centres, 2001–2007

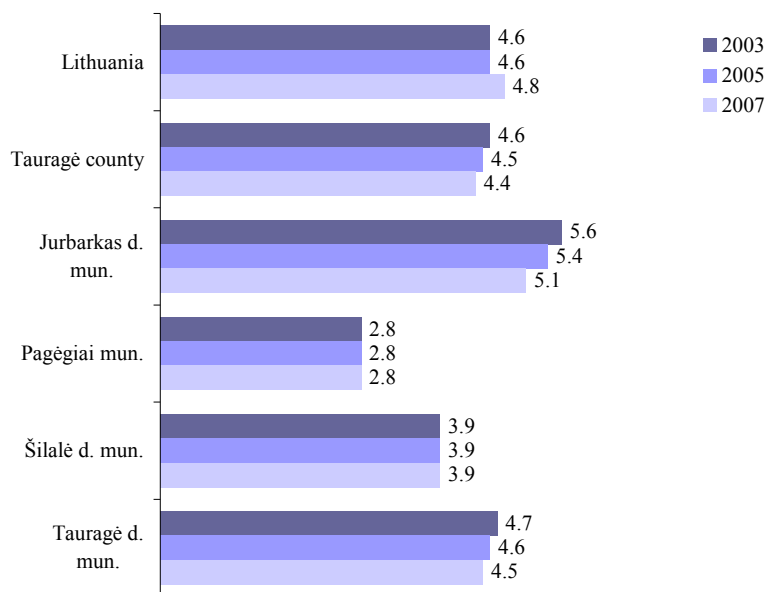
	Number of cultural centres				Number of cultural centres per 1000 population			
	2001	2003	2005	2007	2001	2003	2005	2007
Lithuania	947	882	850	853	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3
Tauragė county	72	71	68	66	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Jurbarkas d. mun.	26	26	26	23	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Pagėgiai mun.	8	7	3	5	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.4
Šilalė d. mun.	20	19	19	18	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Tauragė d. mun.	18	19	20	20	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4

The dense network of cultural centres and libraries allows most of the locals access main cultural services, provides favourable conditions for the provision of cultural services in less

populated municipalities and form centres of attraction to the population. The available infrastructure provides preconditions for the provision of cultural services, attracts the local community; however, the issues of qualitative development of cultural establishments both in urban and in rural areas remain crucial.

Trade and service enterprises

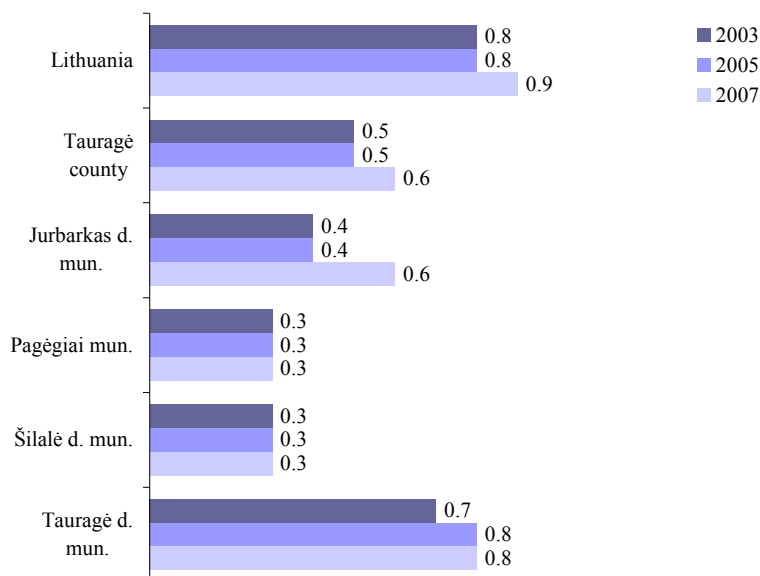
Number of shops per 1000 population, 2003–2007



It was observed that at the end of 2007 the number of shops per 1000 Tauragė county population was lower than the national average. This indicator, which in 2003 had equalled the national average, has been decreasing. In 2003–2005, the number of shops was decreasing in the leading county's municipalities, while in Pagėgiai and Šilalė district municipalities, which had been lagging in terms of this indicator, it remained stable. Despite the decrease in the

number of shops, their number per 1000 population in Jurbarkas district municipality in 2007 still exceeded the national average, while the indicator of Tauragė district municipality, which in 2003 had exceeded the national average, in 2007 lagged behind it.

Number of restaurants, bars, canteens per 1000 population, 2003–2007



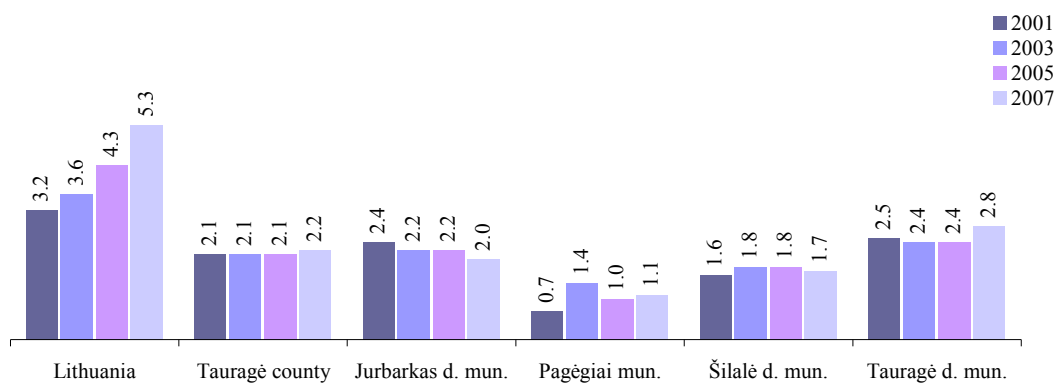
The number of restaurants, bars and canteens in Tauragė county was relatively low (by one-third lower than the national average). Only in the regional centre – Tauragė district municipality – the number of restaurants, bars and canteens at the end of 2007 lagged behind the national average just inconsiderably, while in the rest of municipalities it was 1.5–3 times lower than the national average. The distribution of public catering

enterprises in Tauragė county was rather uneven – the differences between the county's municipalities were more than twofold. Positive changes have been observed – the county

average has been growing faster than the national average; the national average was being approached by the indicators of Tauragė and Jurbarkas district municipalities.

In 2007, the number of service enterprises in Tauragė county was 2.4 times lower than the national average (respectively, 2.2 and 5.3 service enterprises per 1000 population); the indicator of Tauragė county was the worst, as compared with the rest of the counties. The service sector was poorly developed even in the county centre – the indicator of Tauragė district municipality was almost twice as low as the national average. However, the worst situation was in the rural municipalities of Šilalė district and Pagėgiai, where the indicators were lower than the national average as much as 3.1 and 4.8 times respectively. The number of service enterprises in the county has been growing at a slow pace (while in Jurbarkas district municipality – even decreased), whereas the national average has been growing much faster; therefore, the gap between the national average and the indicators of Tauragė county municipalities has been further broadening.

Number of service enterprises per 1000 population, 2001–2007



Negative trends in the development of the service sector in Tauragė county may have profound consequences, i.e. condition a notable deterioration in the living environment and quality of life in future. The very low number of service enterprises is an indicator of insufficient income of the locals. On the other hand, service supply and quality may be the decisive factors when choosing the place of residence, particularly in case of the high-income population. A low supply of main services provided by the private sector has been observed in all county's municipalities, especially in the rural municipalities of Šilalė district and Pagėgiai; the supply of public catering services lags behind the national average just inconsiderably only in Tauragė district municipality. As regards services, only the network of shops was developed sufficiently in the county.

Communication

The network of roads in Tauragė county was somewhat denser than the national average, which was, first of all, due to a density of the road network in Šilalė and Tauragė district municipalities. The sparsest road network was in Jurbarkas district municipality. However, not in a single municipality the share of roads with an improved roadway surface, against the total number of roads, was higher than the national average. The share of roads with an improved roadway surface, against the total number of roads, was especially low in Pagėgiai municipality – just 17 %. The density of the network of roads with an improved roadway surface in all county's municipalities, except that of Tauragė district municipality, was lower than the national average. In Jurbarkas district (due to a low density of the road network) and Pagėgiai (due to a small share of roads with an improved roadway surface) municipalities, the density of the network of roads with an improved roadway surface was twice as sparse as the

national average. Thus, in summary, it may be stated that the road network in the region is both uneven and sparser than the national average.

Density of the network of national and local roads, 2007

km/km²

	National and local roads			Share of roads with an improved roadway surface, against the total number of roads, per cent
	Total	surfaced	with an improved roadway surface	
Lithuania	1.2	1.1	0.4	29
Tauragė county	1.4	1.2	0.3	22
Jurbarkas d. mun.	1.0	0.9	0.2	24
Pagėgiai mun.	1.3	1.2	0.2	17
Šilalė d. mun.	1.6	1.5	0.3	20
Tauragė d. mun.	1.6	1.2	0.4	23

At the end of 2007, there were 435 private cars per 1000 Tauragė county population (national average – 429). From 2001, this figure grew by as much as 56 % – in 2005, by the number of cars per 1000 population, Tauragė county approximated, while in 2007 – outpaced the national average. It was only in Šilalė district municipality that the number of cars per 1000 population in 2007 was lower than the national average; however, even in the said municipality, the increase in the number of cars was much faster than, on average, in the country (from 2001 – as much as 74.5 %). The highest number of private cars was in Jurbarkas district municipality; however, due to a slower growth in this number in the said municipality and a very rapid growth in those municipalities which in 2001 had still been lagging far behind, the differences between the county's municipalities decreased and have been further diminishing, while the national average is already exceeded in three out of four municipalities.

Private cars per 1000 population, 2001–2007

	2001	2003	2005	2007
Lithuania	304	336	395	429
Tauragė county	278	308	391	435
Jurbarkas d. mun.	324	353	421	445
Pagėgiai mun.	191	159	363	437
Šilalė d. mun.	232	278	358	405
Tauragė d. mun.	294	329	395	444

Most of the areas of Tauragė county municipalities are rather easily accessible by private cars. Although the quality of the road network is not very high, the road network is relatively dense, and the number of private cars has been rapidly growing; however, the public transport system is developed poorer. The territory per bus route in the county was by 73 % smaller than the national average, while in three out of four municipalities – larger than both the national average and the median – in most of the country's municipalities, the density of bus routes was higher. It was only in Tauragė district municipality that the territory per bus route (in total – 53 bus routes) was somewhat smaller than the national median value; however, even there the number of bus routes was smaller than the national average. With the decrease in the number of bus routes in the country, their number decreased in Jurbarkas district municipality, while increased – in Šilalė and Tauragė district municipalities. In the period of 2001–2007, the county average was fluctuating; however, in 2007, as compared with 2001, it was higher. In Pagėgiai municipality, there was no independent system of regular buses.

Number of bus routes, 2001–2007

	2001	2003	2005	2007
Lithuania	3859	4001	3807	3155
Tauragė county	103	132	134	123
Jurbarkas d. mun.	49	58	53	37
Pagėgiai mun.	0	1	0	...
Šilalė d. mun.	14	33	33	33
Tauragė d. mun.	40	40	48	53
Territory per route, km²				
Lithuania (average)	16.9	16.3	17.2	20.7
Lithuania (median)*	30.8	29.9	28.1	29.3
Tauragė county	42.8	33.4	32.9	35.9
Jurbarkas d. mun.	30.8	26.0	28.4	40.7
Pagėgiai mun.	...	537.0
Šilalė d. mun.	84.9	36.0	36.0	36.0
Tauragė d. mun.	29.5	29.5	24.6	22.2

*the largest share of bus routes falls within the municipalities of major cities/towns; therefore, smaller municipalities may be compared with each other by means of estimation of the country's median – a middle (central) value of indicators of all municipalities.

The indicator of bus trips per capita shows that the public communication system in all county's municipalities was used averagely – although the number of bus trips per capita was lower than the national average, there were no big towns, whose residents would be in need of using public transport services daily. The indicators of all county's municipalities, except for that of Pagėgiai, were fluctuating around the national median value. An increase in the number of bus trips has been observed in all municipalities (except for that of Pagėgiai); the increase in the number of bus trips per capita was 1.7 times faster than the national average – the increasing mobility of the population allowed making more extensive use of services and the labour market, as well as more efficiently integrating rural and urban areas of the county. Thus, although communication by both the public transport and private cars in Tauragė county municipalities was developed somewhat poorer, the county was rather rapidly approaching the average national level.

Public safety

Tauragė county is attributable to safer regions of Lithuania. In 2007, the number of criminal offences registered in Tauragė county made 1557, which is by 29 % less than the national average. The number of crimes and criminal offences registered in Šilalė district municipality was twice as low as the national average. The criminogenic saturation in the rest of municipalities was impacted on by the vicinity of Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation – higher crime rates, which were, nonetheless, lower than the national average, were registered in Jurbarkas and Tauragė district municipalities. In Pagėgiai district municipality, due to the cases of smuggling registered per small number of residents of the municipality, the indicators of registered criminal offences and crimes exceeded the national average (the indicator of criminal offences – by 16 %). Thus, although public safety statistics in the region were better than, on average, in the country, the municipalities located at the border faced specific problems characteristic of border regions.

Registered criminal offences per 100 000 population, 2007

	Criminal offences	Crimes
Lithuania	2185	2014
Tauragė county	1557	1382
Jurbarkas d. mun.	1455	1348
Pagėgiai mun.	2550	2298
Šilalė d. mun.	1136	968
Tauragė d. mun.	1655	1447

Environmental protection and management

In 2007, 4 540 557 thous. m³ of domestic, municipal and industrial waste water was discharged into Lithuanian surface waters, of which 209 073.3 thous. m³ – that requiring treatment. The amount of waste water discharged in Tauragė county made 3789 thous. m³ – about 2 % of the total amount of waste water in Lithuania. In 2007, against 2005, the amount of waste water generated increased by 21 %. The largest share of waste water requiring treatment – 56 % – was generated in Tauragė district municipality; almost the entire amount of waste water was treated. The share of domestic, municipal and industrial waste water treated to meet the maximum allowable pollution (MAP) standards has been growing; in 2007, against 2005, the amount of waste treated in the county grew by almost 2 %. Part of waste water treatment facilities operating in the county were built just recently or are used just minimally.

Domestic, municipal and industrial waste water generated that required treatment, 2001–2007

Thousand m³

	2001	2003	2005	2007	Share of waste water treated to meet standards (MAP) in the total amount of waste water generated, per cent			
					2001	2003	2005	2007
Lithuania	171169.6	167064.5	192212.4	209073.3	17.8	54.6	70.5	72.3
Tauragė county	2757.0	2581.0	3136.0	3789.0	14.1	26.4	94.9	94.8
Jurbarkas d. mun.	518.0	472.0	894.0	955.0	28.0	46.0	94.3	91.4
Pagėgiai mun.	-	149.0	238.0	261.0	-	61.1	66.8	66.3
Šilalė d. mun.	206.0	283.0	402.0	468.0	81.6	96.5	94.3	95.5
Tauragė d. mun.	2033.0	1677.0	1602.0	2105.0	3.7	6.0	99.5	99.8

The amount of waste generated in the county has been decreasing. It may be related to the fact that enterprises have been introducing more precise waste accounting systems, as well as to the introduction of a container waste collection and waste sorting systems in the county. In 2006, against 2005, the per capita amount of municipal waste collected in Tauragė county decreased by 17 % and made 235 kg.

Municipal waste generated, 2004–2006

Tonnes

	2004	2005	2006
Tauragė county	52665.6	37317.6	30411.8
Jurbarkas d. mun.	25245.8	4294.0	4091.2
Pagėgiai mun.	0.0	0.2	3.0
Šilalė d. mun.	14445.0	16197.0	15220.0
Tauragė d. mun.	12974.9	16826.4	11097.5

Municipal waste managed, 2004–2006

Tonnes

	2004	2005	2006
Tauragė county	52415.0	34524.0	28974.1
Jurbarkas d. mun.	25233.0	3680.0	3635.0
Pagėgiai mun.	0.0	0.0	0.0
Šilalė d. mun.	14445.0	14386.0	14735.6
Tauragė d. mun.	12737.0	16458.0	10603.5

The municipalities analysed are very different: in terms of the population, area, and other characteristics, three – rural, with a very small share of the urban population, one (that of Tauragė district municipality) – mixed (a major share of the residents live in urban, quite a number – in rural areas). In summary, it may be stated that Tauragė county is characterised by a rather well-developed cultural infrastructure; however, there is a shortage of educational, especially preschool education, institutions. A shortage of services offered by the private sector is observed almost across the entire county; however, a rather high mobility of the population and good communication possibilities allow making effective use of even smaller local resources: in most of the county's municipalities, there is a rather well functioning and further developed public transport system. Even so, it may be noticed that quite a number of the analysed indicators, although distributed rather evenly, often testify to living conditions being poorer than in better developed areas of the country; as regards some components of the living environment and the quality of life, namely those related to the activities of the private service sector and housing, the municipalities of Tauragė county lag far behind the national average.