

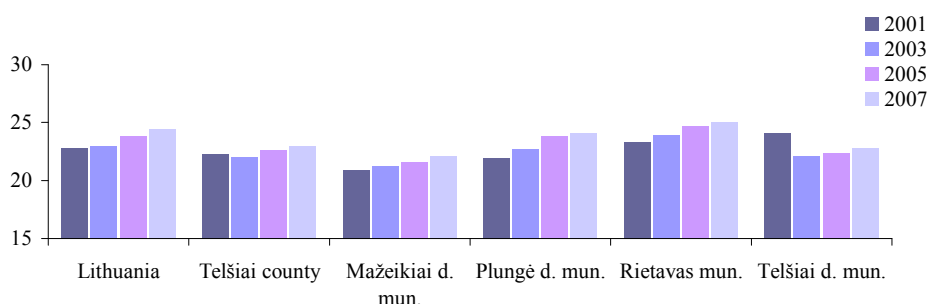
ENVIRONMENT OF TELŠIAI COUNTY

Housing

The provision of the residents of Telšiai county with living space is poorer than the national average; only in Rietavas municipality in 2007 the useful floor area per capita was higher than the national average. The smallest useful floor area per capita was in Mažeikiai and Telšiai district municipalities. Due to the fact that a higher supply of the living space is only in one of the county's municipalities – that of Rietavas – the supply of housing is not an important factor stimulating social and economic development only in a larger part of the county.

Useful floor area per capita, 2001–2007

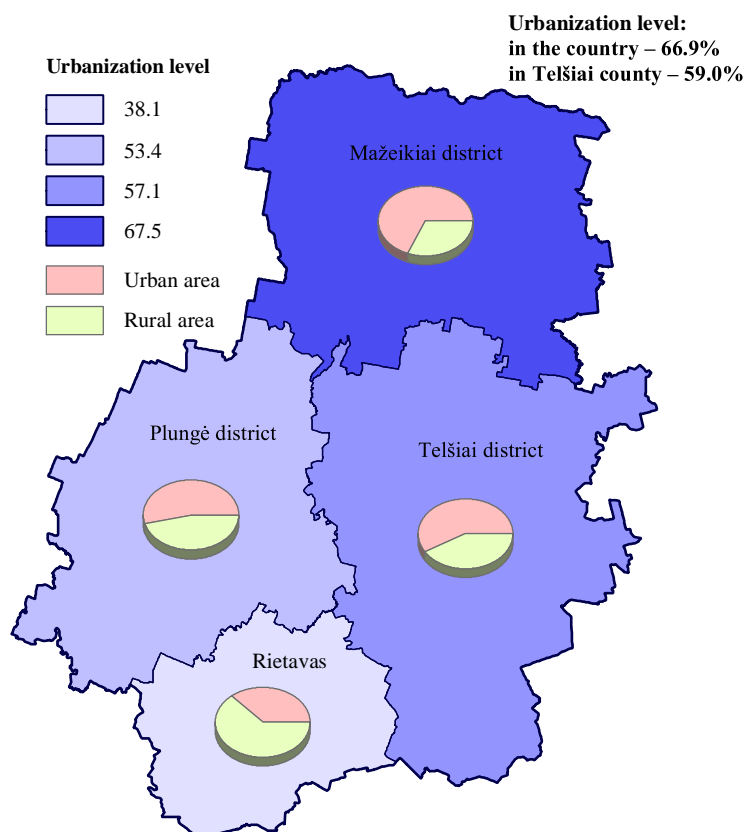
m²



Social infrastructure

Urbanization level in municipalities, beginning of 2008

Per cent



In Telšiai county, the urban population dominated (59 % of the total population), although this share was lower than the national average. The most urbanised was Mažeikiai district municipality, where the share of the urban population exceeded the national average; the said municipality included Mažeikiai town, having 40.5 thousand residents. The county centre – Telšiai – was inhabited by 30 thousand, Plungė – 23.1 thousand persons. In Telšiai and Plungė district municipalities, persons inhabiting urban areas made up more than half of their population. The only rural municipality – that of Rietavas, where inhabitants of urban areas made up just 38 %.

Geographic distribution of the

social infrastructure in the municipalities of Telšiai county often conditions the attractiveness of its territories for living. A larger share of the county population is concentrated in urban areas; mixed – including both rural areas and medium-sized towns – municipalities dominate. Therefore, the accessibility of the social infrastructure to the population depends both on the public infrastructure of the towns, servicing residents of these towns and their surroundings, and on the number of objects of infrastructure in larger rural areas. Residents of urbanised municipalities can easier access most of the important objects of the social infrastructure; nevertheless, certain problems related to the provision of public services occur there as well.

Preschool education institutions

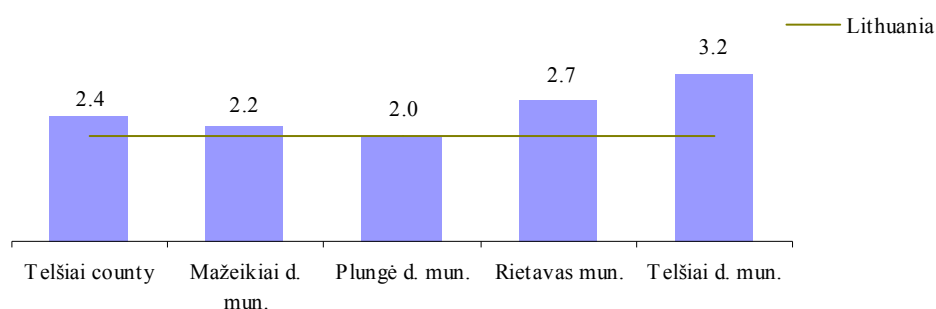
13 out of 31 preschool education institutions of Telšiai county were concentrated in Mažeikiai, 8 – in Telšiai, 9 – in Plungė district municipalities, whereas in that of Rietavas there was just one institution of such kind in 2007.

Number of preschool education institutions, 2001–2007

	2001	2003	2005	2007
Telšiai county	33	33	31	31
Mažeikiai d. mun.	13	13	13	13
Plungė d. mun.	11	11	10	9
Rietavas mun.	1
Telšiai d. mun.	9	9	8	8

At the end of 2007, there were, on average, 2 children of preschool age per place in the country's preschool education institutions. The Telšiai county indicator was somewhat lower than the national average. The lack of places in kindergartens has been observed in all county's municipalities; the situation was more favourable in Plungė (the ratio of the number of children to that of places in preschool education institutions equalled the national average) and Mažeikiai (the said ratio – slightly lower than the national average) district municipalities. The difference between the number of children and that of places in preschool education institutions was considerable in Rietavas municipality. Both in more urbanised and rural areas, where the distance to the nearest preschool education institution is usually longer, the number of places in such institutions is much lower than the demand; nevertheless, in at least two municipalities, the situation was not much worse than in the country, on average.

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 Telšiai county is close to the national average; however, in some areas (e.g. in Telšiai district (namely its rural parts) and Rietavas municipalities), 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 Telšiai 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 decreased by almost 29.7 %. In Telšiai county, this process was slower than in the country, on average (national average decrease – 35 %).

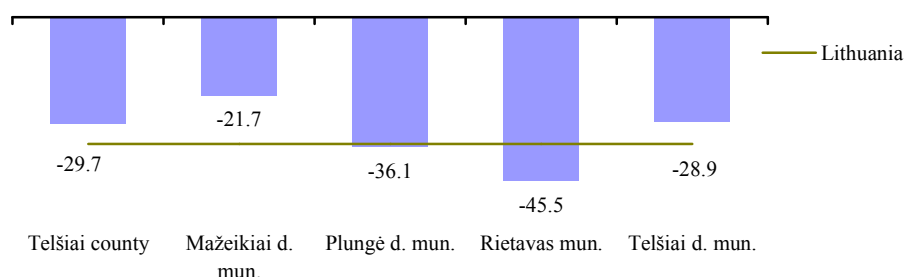
In 2001–2007, the most considerable decrease (almost twice) in the number of general schools was observed in Rietavas municipality. In Plungė district municipality, the rate of decrease in the number of general schools was close to the national average, in the rest of municipalities – slower (e.g. in Mažeikiai district municipality, the number of schools over 2005–2007 remained stable, while the number of pupils was decreasing).

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
Telšiai county	138	129	107	97	255.1	267.6	299.4	298.8
Mažeikiai d. mun.	46	40	36	36	287.5	324.5	337.6	306.7
Plungė d. mun.	36	34	23	23	252.4	260.6	356.6	323.9
Rietavas mun.	11	10	10	6	187.3	200.9	188.3	278.2
Telšiai d. mun.	45	45	38	32	240.7	237.0	257.8	275.7

Changes in the number of general schools, 2001–2008

Per cent



The decrease in the number of pupils in Rietavas municipality was conditioned by the fact that the number of pupils enrolled in one school in the said municipality grew by 49 % and approximated the county and national averages. Schools were amalgamated in other municipalities as well; the number of pupils enrolled in them was, although slowly, approaching the national average. Only in Mažeikiai district municipality an opposite process was observed in 2005–2007; from 2005, the number of general schools in the said municipality was not increased, while that of pupils was further decreasing, which resulted in the decrease in the number of pupils per school (it receded from the national average). The network of schools thinned out in all county's municipalities; nevertheless, it remained denser than, on average, in the country (which was due to a relatively high number of small schools). However, a trend common both to Lithuania and Telšiai 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; more pupils should, consequently, go to schools located in towns.

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 Mažeikiai, Telšiai, Plungė towns, as well as enlarged educational institutions of Rietavas 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

Telšiai county is characterised by a relatively well-developed 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 85 libraries in Telšiai county, whose distribution both in more urbanised and rural parts of the county was relatively even. By the number of libraries per 1000 population, not a single municipality lagged behind the national average, whereas in the smallest municipality – that of Rietavas – the national average was exceeded as much as twice. The indicator in question equalled the national average only in Mažeikiai district municipality.

Libraries, end of 2001–2007

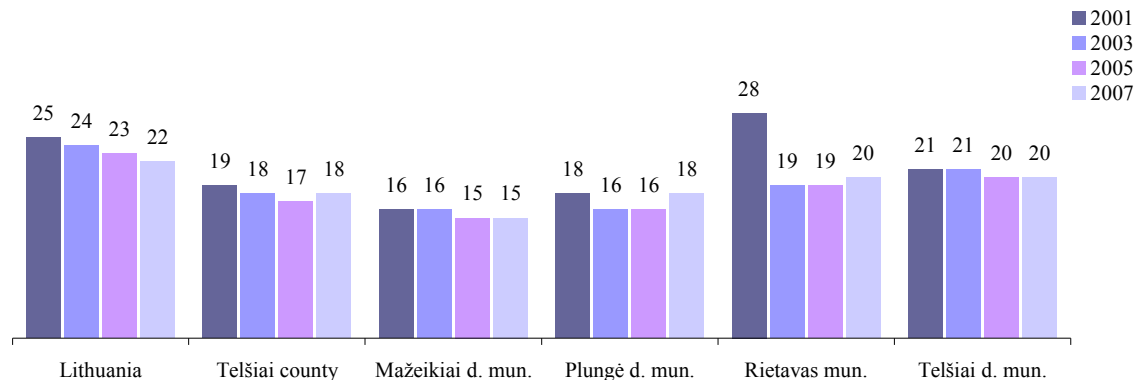
	Number of libraries				Number of libraries per 1000 population			
	2001	2003	2005	2007	2001	2003	2005	2007
Lithuania	1449	1418	1396	1395	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Telšiai county	89	86	85	85	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Mažeikiai d. mun.	29	26	26	26	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Plungė d. mun.	20	20	20	20	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Rietavas mun.	8	8	8	8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Telšiai d. mun.	32	32	31	31	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6

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

Densely situated and easily accessible libraries do not attract much attention of the locals. In 2007, the share of library users, against the total population, was lower than the national average (18 and 22 % respectively); the national average was not exceeded in a single county's municipality (the respective indicators of all municipalities were, although, inconsiderable, lower than the national average). The highest number of library users was received by the libraries of Rietavas and Telšiai district municipalities (one-fifth of the population by each), the lowest – by those of Mažeikiai district municipality (15 %). The low county average was conditioned by a lower number of library users in the largest – Mažeikiai district – municipality; the low indicator of the said municipality was not compensated by the indicators of peripheral areas, where libraries usually attract much more attention of the locals.

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. Although the share of the urban population in Telšiai county was relatively large and, presumably, libraries are not as important to urban residents as they are to the rural ones, the share of library users was relatively low even in the rural Rietavas municipality. If potential of libraries in the territories where the supply of other social services is rather poor is underused, their residents may be faced with a problem of increasing "information exclusion".

The distribution of cultural centres in Telšiai county is relatively uneven – the highest number of cultural centres was in Telšiai district municipality (21 out of 46 county's cultural centres), whereas Mažeikiai district municipality was characterised by a relatively low number of cultural centres – just 8. The relatively low number of cultural centres in this largest county's municipality impacted on the average number of cultural centres per 1000 population in the county.

The number of cultural centres per 1000 population in Telšiai county equalled the national average. It was conditioned by the indicator of Mažeikiai district municipality, which was three times as low as the national average, as well as by a mediocre indicator of Plungė district municipality. In Rietavas municipality, the national average was exceeded twice, in Telšiai district municipality – by one-third. The high number of cultural centres per 1000 population in the latter municipalities allows making a conclusion that main cultural services are provided even in small settlements of these municipalities. The considerable decrease in the number of cultural centres in Mažeikiai district municipality may condition a shortage of local cultural services in the largest county's municipalities.

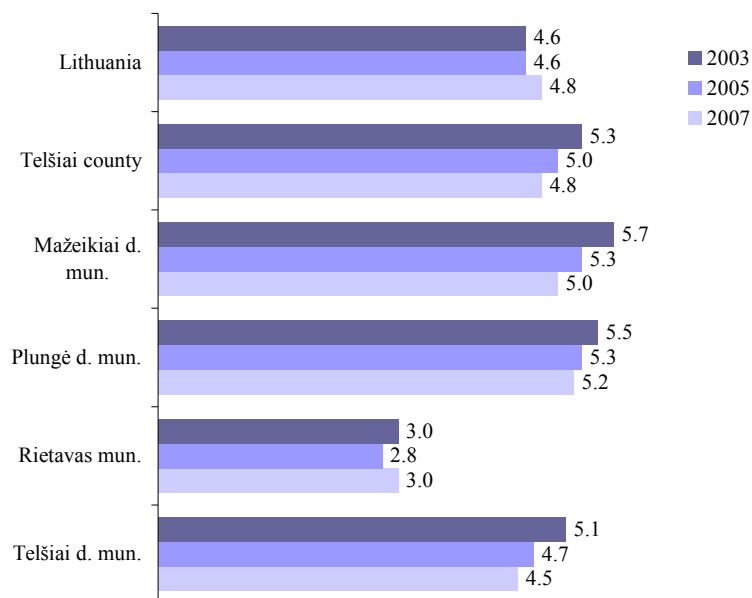
Number of cultural centres, 2001–2007

	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
Telšiai county	61	62	51	46	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Mažeikiai d. mun.	20	20	19	8	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.1
Plungė d. mun.	13	15	5	11	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.3
Rietavas mun.	6	6	6	6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Telšiai d. mun.	22	21	21	21	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4

The current network of libraries and cultural centres, which is of average density, allows most of the residents of the county to satisfy their essential cultural needs, provides conditions for the provision of cultural services in less populated municipalities and forms centres of attraction to the population. The available infrastructure provides preconditions for the provision of cultural services; nevertheless, more active participation of society could contribute to even higher quality of services. The issues of qualitative development of cultural establishments situated in bigger towns are also relevant.

Trade and service enterprises

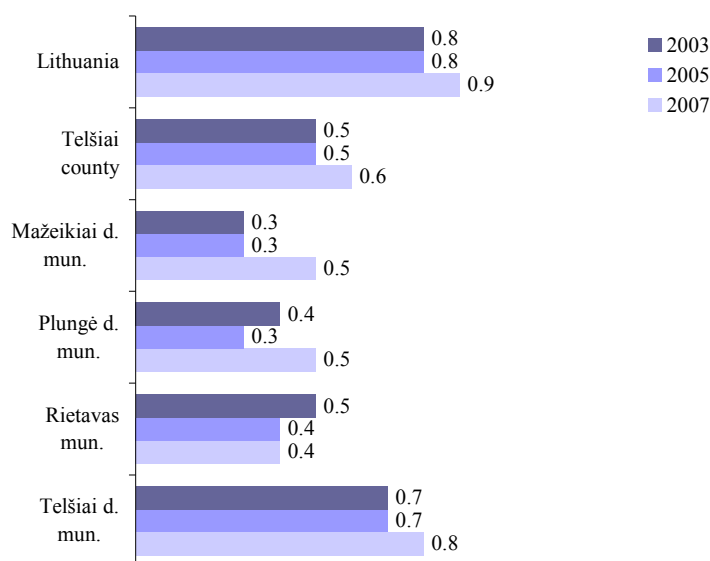
Number of shops per 1000 population, 2003–2007



It was observed that at the end of 2007 the number of shops per 1000 Telšiai county population equalled the national average; however, this indicator, which in 2003 notably exceeded the national average, has been decreasing. In 2003–2005, the number of shops was decreasing in all county's municipalities, except for Rietavas municipality, where it remained stable (however, the indicator of the latter municipality was by more than one-third lower than the

national and county averages). Despite the decrease in the number of shops in the county, the number of shops per 1000 population in Mažeikiai and Plungė district municipalities still exceeded the national average.

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



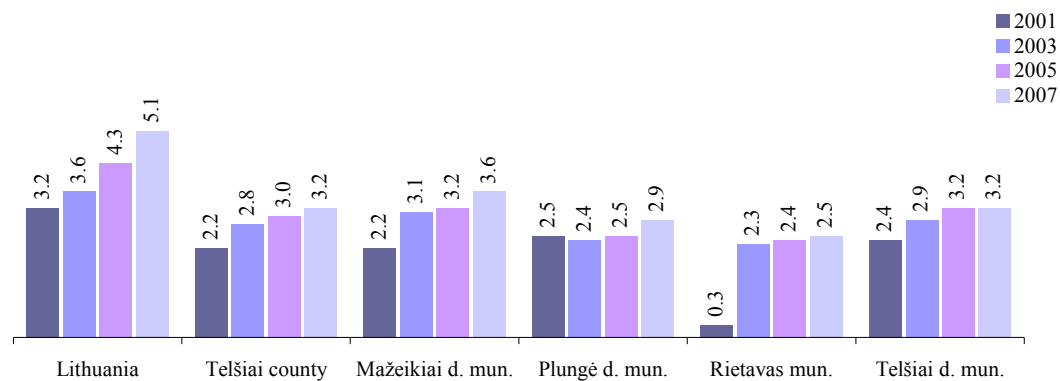
The number of restaurants, bars and canteens in Telšiai county was relative low (by one-third lower than the national average). Only in the regional centre – Telšiai district municipality – the number of restaurants, bars and canteens at the end of 2007 was lagging behind the national average just inconsiderably, while in the rest of municipalities it was about 2 times lower than the national average. Regardless

of the above-mentioned fact, the distribution of public catering enterprises in Telšiai county

was rather even – there were no broad differences, as compared to the national or county averages, whereas in some of the country’s municipalities such differences reached as much as 10 times. Positive changes have been observed – the indicators of the county and all its municipalities, except for that of Rietavas, have been increasing faster than the national average.

In 2007, the number of service enterprises in Telšiai county (3.2 service enterprises per 1000 population) was by more than 39 % lower than the national average (5.3). The indicators of Mažeikiai district municipality were better; however, even they were by one-third lower than the national average. The number of service enterprises has been, although slowly, increasing in all county’s municipalities (in Rietavas municipality – more than 8 times); however, the indicators of the county did not approach the national average. A relatively slow growth was observed in Telšiai and Plungė district municipalities, a relatively fast – in Rietavas (although in 2003–2007 it slowed down, and the indicator was still the lowest in the county) and Mažeikiai district municipalities.

Number of service enterprises per 1000 population, 2001–2007



Negative development trends in the service sector observed in Telšiai county may mean a notable deterioration in the living environment and the quality of living in future. The relatively low number of service enterprises may be an indicator of insufficiently exploited tourism development potential in the region, as well as insufficient income of its residents. 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. As for the present, the poorest supply of main services offered by the private sectors was observed in the rural Rietavas municipality; the supply of public catering services lagged behind the national average just inconsiderably only in Telšiai district municipality. As regards services, only the network of shops was developed sufficiently in the county.

Communication

The density of the road network in Telšiai county was somewhat higher than the national average, which was mostly due to the dense network of roads in Mažeikiai district municipality. The sparsest road network was in Rietavas municipality. However, as regards the share of roads with an improved roadway surface, a contrary situation may be observed: it was only in Rietavas municipality that the share of roads with an improved roadway surface was higher than the national average and much higher, as compared with the rest of the county’s municipalities, while in Mažeikiai district municipality, on the contrary, this share was relatively low. When assessing the road infrastructure of the county’s municipalities in terms of the density of roads with an improved roadway surface, it may be observed that the indicators of all municipalities are identical – 0.3 km/km², i.e. by a quarter lower than the national average. Thus, after the respective qualitative and quantitative indicators are

summarised, a conclusion may be drawn that the road network in the region is even, but sparser than in the country, on 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
Telšiai county	1.3	1.1	0.3	25
Mažeikiai d. mun.	1.6	1.6	0.3	20
Plungė d. mun.	1.2	1.1	0.3	27
Rietavas mun.	0.8	0.8	0.3	32
Telšiai d. mun.	1.2	1.0	0.3	26

In 2007, there were 411 private cars per 1000 population of Telšiai county (national average – 429). From 2001, this figure grew by 48 % (the county was approaching the national average; however, did not reach it yet). It was only in Telšiai district municipality that the number personal cars per 1000 population in 2007 almost equalled (was by just 1 car lower than) the national average; however, it was the only municipality where the growth in the number of cars was slower than the county average. The indicators of the rest of municipalities lagged behind the national average, but were rapidly growing. In Plungė district municipality, the number of private cars from 2001 increased by as much as 59 %.

Private cars per 1000 population, 2001–2007

	2001	2003	2005	2007
Lithuania	304	336	395	429
Telšiai county	277	314	374	411
Mažeikiai d. mun.	250	291	346	398
Plungė d. mun.	265	337	388	417
Rietavas mun.	240	146	318	370
Telšiai d. mun.	326	355	406	428

Most of the areas of Telšiai county municipalities are rather easily accessible by private cars (due to a sufficient quality of roads and an increasing number of private cars); however, certain deficiencies in private transport are compensated by a well-developed public transport system. The territory per bus route in the county was by 12.5 % smaller than the national average; in 3 out of 4 county's municipalities, the territory per bus route was smaller than both the national average and the median – in most of the country's municipalities, the density of bus routes was lower. It was only in Rietavas municipality that the territory per bus route (in total – 12 bus routes) was twice as large as the national average. As the number of bus routes has been decreasing countrywide, their number decreased in part of the county's territory (in Telšiai, Mažeikiai district municipalities) as well; however, the number of routes remained higher than the national average. It was only in the rural Rietavas municipality that the ratio of the number of bus routes to territory was poorer.

Number of bus routes, 2001–2007

	2001	2003	2005	2007
Lithuania	3859	4001	3807	3155
Telšiai county	352	426	635	240
Mažeikiai d. mun.	146	70	477	73
Plungė d. mun.	38	51	54	61
Rietavas mun.	10	10	10	12
Telšiai d. mun.	158	295	94	94
Territory per route, km²				
Lithuania (average)	16.9	16.3	17.2	20.7
Lithuania (median)*	30.8	29.9	28.1	29.3
Telšiai county	12.4	10.2	6.9	18.1
Mažeikiai d. mun.	8.4	17.4	2.6	16.7
Plungė d. mun.	29.1	21.7	20.5	18.1
Rietavas mun.	58.6	58.6	58.6	48.8
Telšiai d. mun.	9.1	4.9	15.3	15.3

*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 number of bus trips per capita shows that the public transport system in all county's municipalities is used sufficiently enough – although the number of bus trips per capita was lower than the national average, there were no big towns, whose residents could be in need of using public transport services daily. The indicators of all county's municipalities exceeded the national median value. Rietavas municipality, although having somewhat less bus routes, in regard of the indicator of bus trips per capita outpaced not only the county average, but also the national median value. An increase in the number of bus trips has been observed in all municipalities, except for that of Telšiai district (in Rietavas municipality, since 2001, more than 3 times). The increasing mobility of the population allowed them make more use of services and labour market, as well as contributed to the effective integration of the county's rural and urban areas.

Public safety

Telšiai county is attributable to safer regions of Lithuania. In 2007, the number of criminal offences registered in Telšiai county made 1296, which is by as much as 40 % less than the national average. The number of criminal offences and crimes registered in Mažeikiai district municipality was twice as low as the national average, while Rietavas municipality was one of the safest in Lithuania (with the number of crimes per 100 000 population being the lowest, that of criminal offences – the third lowest in the country). The highest number of criminal offences was registered in Plungė district municipality; even so, public safety statistics there were more favourable than, on average, in the country.

Registered criminal offences per 100 000 population, 2007

	Criminal offences	Crimes
Lithuania	2185	2014
Telšiai county	1296	1189
Mažeikiai d. mun.	1067	1010
Plungė d. mun.	1675	1560
Rietavas mun.	946	848
Telšiai d. mun.	1331	1169

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. In Telšiai county, about 6 % (11 732 thous. m³) of the total amount of waste water requiring treatment in Lithuania was discharged.

In recent years, the amount of waste water generated in Telšiai county was changing relatively inconsiderably – in 2007, this amount was by 22 % higher than in 2005 and by 27.9 % higher than in 2001. The discharge of waste water in Telšiai county has been increasing with the growth in the total water consumption, while the share of waste water treated was lower than the national average (just 27.9 % of waste water requiring treatment). The largest share of waste water requiring treatment – 56.6 % – was generated in Mažeikiai district municipality; the share of waste water treated in this municipality made up just 39.6 %. In 2007, in Rietavas municipality, 99.2 % of the total amount of waste water was treated, while in the rest of municipalities this share was still insufficient.

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
Telšiai county	9176.0	9608.0	9619.3	11732.0	36.8	34.6	37.3	27.9
Mažeikiai d. mun.	6175.0	5751.0	5650.0	6642.0	48.3	51.2	56.1	39.6
Plungė d. mun.	1497.0	1066.0	1205.3	1441.0	14.4	7.5	7.9	11.2
Rietavas mun.	...	131.0	200.0	264.0	...	96.2	96.0	99.2
Telšiai d. mun.	1504.0	2660.0	2564.0	3385.0	11.8	6.5	5.1	6.5

In 2006, against 2005, the amount of municipal waste generated in Telšiai county grew by 20 %, while against 2004 – by as much as 44 %. 92.7 % of collected waste was managed.

Municipal waste generated, 2004–2006

Tonnes

	2004	2005	2006
Telšiai county	37617.8	45298.8	54306.7
Mažeikiai d. mun.	14840.0	19927.5	17266.5
Plungė d. mun.	9193.1	11887.5	15571.2
Rietavas mun.	1794.3	1296.6	1390.2
Telšiai d. mun.	11790.4	12187.1	20078.8

In recent years, 3 regional landfill sites functioned in Telšiai county. On one of them – the Jėrubaičiai landfill site – modernisation and expansion works are currently in progress. After the reconstruction, it will function as a landfill site for non-hazardous waste of Telšiai region. The amount of municipal waste taken to landfill sites has been decreasing, whereas as the system of sorting waste is introduced, an increasing amount of secondary raw materials is segregated from the common flow of municipal waste and recycled. Nevertheless, in 2006, the amount of waste disposed of on landfill sites (86 %), which had been generated in Telšiai county, was by 9.8 % larger than the national average (76.2 %).

Municipal waste managed, 2004–2006

Tonnes

	2004	2005	2006
Telšiai county	37560.2	43620.8	50322.7
Mažeikiai d. mun.	14873.4	18819.1	16624.6
Plungė d. mun.	9725.3	13054.9	14169.1
Rietavas mun.	1246.5	0.0	0.0
Telšiai d. mun.	11715.0	11746.9	19529.1

The municipalities analysed are very different: in terms of the population, area, and other characteristics; three of them are more urbanised, yet having a relatively large share of rural residents, one – a relatively small rural municipality. In summary, it may be stated that Telšiai county is characterised by a rather well-developed social infrastructure, and although in some areas there is a need of more active participation of residents, a higher demand for cultural services, the municipalities of Telšiai county did not lag considerably behind the national averages. A shortage of services offered by the private sector is observed in part of the territory of the 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; the crime rate is not high. Even so, it may be noticed that quite a number of the analysed indicators, although distributed rather evenly, often testify to poorer living conditions; in regard of 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 Telšiai county lag behind the national average.