

## LITHUANIAN NATIONAL ATLASES

P. Gaučas, A. Gaigalas, V. Dvareckas, G. Beconytė  
 Vilnius University

After the World War II cartography was restored to life in the faculty of Natural Sciences of Vilnius University thanks to the efforts of the dean of the Faculty at that time, professor of the Department of General Geography and Cartography V. Chomskis. Professor inspired training specialists of cartography in this Department (first graduate in 1964). The laboratory of Cartography was established in 1966 at the Department of General Geography and Cartography. Professor V. Chomskis managed preparing authorised originals of maps in the natural conditions and production forces for the Atlas of Lithuania. The great trouble developing cartography in Lithuania was different restrictions and limits that were set in USSR at that time, especially for public cartography production.

The atlas was published with a mark "not for public use" (only institutions were allowed to buy and use it), but there was more information in it than in atlases marked "secret". Anyway, most of historical maps were prohibited to publish except of the ones about the Soviet period.

The Atlas comprises 18 Chapters. One of chapters is an introduction one. Ten chapters show nature conditions and their evaluation: Geological Structure and resources of Earth's Entrails; Topography and Its Development; Climate and Its Resources; Bioclimatic Conditions; Surface Waters and Resources; Soils and Land Resources; Vegetation and Its Resources'; Animal Kingdom and Resources; Natural Conditions of the SE Part of the Baltic Sea and the Kuršių Marios Lagoon; and landscapes and Economic Evaluation of Natural conditions.

Seven chapters are developed to the socio-economic analysis: Population and Labour Resources; Industry; Agriculture; Transport; Living Conditions; Education, Science and Culture; and Lithuania's History (first half of 20th century).

The Atlas was published at the Minsk cartography Factory in 1981, circulation 10,000(in Lithuanian and Russian).

The Atlas of Lithuania is a comprehensive cartographic work comprising studies of Lithuania's nature, population and economics. Several institutions of Lithuania and independent experts (187 in all) have taken part in compiling this Atlas.

However, during the Soviet times, this Atlas being of a complex nature and containing some real data was prohibited to be issued publicly. Only those dealing with science, culture, economics, planning and administration could use it. Only institutions were allowed to purchase it. general public and individuals could not buy it. Therefore, in 1983-1988, the Laboratory of cartography has prepared another atlas that was allowed to be read by everybody. In compilation of this atlas, 175 experts from various Lithuanian institutions took part. There are 245 maps presented in 176 pages. It contains 11 chapters: one introductory chapter, 5 chapters about natural conditions and their evaluation and 5 chapters about presenting analysis of socio-economic life. This atlas is now in a production process at the Minsk Cartography Factory.

Now the laboratory is preparing small-scaled thematic maps for schools and general public. The authorised originals of maps are ready for the Atlas of Lithuania's History (76 pages and 58 maps), and the geographic atlas for schools, tourists maps etc. are being prepared now.

This year the laboratory of Cartography merged with the Laboratory of Photogrammetry of the same faculty to the Centre of Cartography. The main trends in cartography remained the same, i.e. small-scale thematic mapping.

In future, the Centre of cartography will prepare thematic and general maps on different scales using Geographic Information System, prepare and provide digital data, including demographic and other speciality databases.