

Country Name: **LITHUANIA**

<b>Looted Judaica and Judaica with Provenance Gaps in Country</b>		Yes
<b>Existing Projects</b>	<p>Yes</p> <p><i>U.S. Library of Congress Project</i> The National Library in cooperation with the U.S. Library of Congress is currently working on a project to microfilm the Judaic periodicals published in Vilnius and Kaunas (Lithuania) from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, YIVO and the State Archives of Lithuania have been cooperating on preserving and microfilming those YIVO records that remained in Lithuania.</p> <p><i>Project Judaica</i> Professor David Fishman is in the process of compiling information on various Jewish collections in Lithuania, particularly those held by TsDAVI in Kyiev which were made online available in part due to the Claims Conference.</p>	
<b>Overview</b>	<b>Looted Cultural Property Databases</b>	
	<b>Publications</b>	<p><i>Judaica holdings at National Library</i></p> <p>Sources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) <a href="http://www.ushmm.org/information/exhibitions/online-features/special-focus/holocaust-era-assets/lithuania">http://www.ushmm.org/information/exhibitions/online-features/special-focus/holocaust-era-assets/lithuania</a>, last accessed June 2014.</li> <li>(2) Baker, Zachary M. "Judaica Librarians Visit Vilnius. Background". <a href="http://spoils.libfl.ru/spoils/eng/spoil4_4.html#12">http://spoils.libfl.ru/spoils/eng/spoil4_4.html#12</a>, last accessed June 2014.</li> <li>(3) Cieślińska-Lobkowicz, Nawojka. "The History of Judaica Collections in Poland Before, During and After the Second World War". <i>Neglected Witnesses. The Fate of Ceremonial Objects During the Second World War and After</i>. Heimann-Jelinek, Felicitas. Cohen, Julie-Marthe (ed.) Builth Wells: Institute of Art And Law, 2011.</li> <li>(4) Berger, Joseph., "Split Up by Holocaust, Top Collection of Yiddish Works Will Reunite Digitally," <i>New York Times</i>, October 3, 2014. <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/03/nyregion/split-up-by-holocaust-top-collection-of-yiddish-works-will-reunite-digitally.html?module=Search&amp;mabReward=relbias%3Ar%2C%7B%221%22%3A%22RI%3A11%22%7D&amp;r=1">http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/03/nyregion/split-up-by-holocaust-top-collection-of-yiddish-works-will-reunite-digitally.html?module=Search&amp;mabReward=relbias%3Ar%2C%7B%221%22%3A%22RI%3A11%22%7D&amp;r=1</a></li> </ol> <p>On 30 January 2002, the Lithuanian government returned more than 309 Torah scrolls and megillot that had been hidden during World War II to world Jewry at a ceremony in Vilnius. The Torah scrolls were subsequently brought to the Hechal Schlomo Center in Jerusalem to be analyzed and restored. A year later, in 2003, the Government returned 46 Torah scrolls to an Israeli spiritual and heritage group for distribution among Jewish congregations worldwide.</p> <p>The government has not yet returned the few remaining Torah scrolls at the National Museum.</p> <p>The National Library of Lithuania has a Judaica Catalogue that provides over 1,500 bibliographic records of prints in Hebrew and Yiddish published in Lithuania (from the beginning of Jewish book printing in 1789 to 1940) stored in the National Library. (<a href="http://www.lnb.lt">www.lnb.lt</a>) The largest single bloc of books now part of the Library belonged to the <i>Hevrah Mefitse Haskalah</i>, the biggest Jewish library</p>

		<p>that operated under the Jewish community in Vilnius. During the war, this library was part of the ghetto. In addition, the National Library still holds an unknown number of Torah scrolls. [The Library originally held a collection of 371 scrolls described in a twenty-five page document entitled <i>Toru Kolekcija</i>. This collection included Torah scrolls, Prophets, and Megillot. Some of these Torah scrolls were heavily damaged, some were even partially burned. Most were partial texts and fragments. Most scrolls seemed to have been from the nineteenth century or later and have little or no research value.] Moreover, the National Library is still in possession of library records that originally belonged to the Yeshiva Telsiai as well as to YIVO.</p> <p>YIVO: YIVO had its own art museum, which included hundreds of artefacts, including religious art and liturgical objects as well as works by contemporary Jewish artists. (Lobkowitz, p. 134)</p> <p>In 2014 YIVO, the Lithuanian Central State Archives, and the National Library of Lithuania announced a project to scan and make accessible over the internet not only all YIVO documents and books - both those in Lithuania and those in New York - but also the remaining books of the Strashun Library and other pre-war Lithuanian Jewish collections.</p>
	<b>Information from Other Sources</b>	<p><i>Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum</i></p> <p><u>Source:</u> (1) Email exchange with Kamile Rupeikaite, Deputy Director of Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum, April 2015.</p> <p>Ms. Rupeikaite noted in an email exchange that the Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum does not have the ability to conduct any provenance research on its collection.</p>
	<b>Historical Commission</b>	<p><u>Source:</u> (1) <a href="http://www.komisija.lt/en/">http://www.komisija.lt/en/</a>, last accessed June 2014.</p> <p>In 1998, President Adamkus established the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania. Soon after launching the Commission's work the decision was made to create two subcommissions to research crimes committed by the two occupying powers during and after the Holocaust. The Subcommission for the Evaluation of Nazi Crimes was chaired by Liudas Truska. Saulius Suziedelis, Julius Smulkstys, Joachim Tauber, Dan Mariaschin, Martin Gilbert, Rabbi Andrew Baker and Toma Biromontiene served as members.</p> <p>The Historical Commission has not finished its work: ongoing research activities include research into the field of the "Destruction of Jewish community as a spiritual and religious community, confiscation of property, and suppression of cultural life." Professor Gershon Greenberg was charged with responsibility for this research and launched a research project entitled "<i>Cultural, Religious and Spiritual Losses of Lithuanian Jewry under Soviet and Nazi Regimes.</i>"</p> <p>On June 17, 2002, the Government of Lithuania formed the Commission on Restitution of Jewish Communal Property in Lithuania. The commission was mandated to coordinate activities of the working group formed by the Government of Lithuania in January 2002, in preparation of the legislative projects to deal with restitution of Jewish communal property in Lithuania. The Commission's task</p>

		was to identify communal property eligible for restitution and to propose amendments to the law, enabling the secular Jewish community to benefit from the restitution process.
<b>Selected Bibliography</b>	→ Please note that the general literature may also contain information on the specific country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baker, Zachary. Berger, Pearl. Zafren, Herbert C. <i>Vilnius Judaica. Still Portrait – Dynamic Reality</i>. Report of the CARLJSDelegation on its Survey of “Judaica” in Vilnius. 19-26 March 1997.</li> <li>▪ Baker, Zachary M. “Judaica Librarians Visit Vilnius”. <i>Spoils of War</i> No. 4, August 1997.</li> <li>▪ Bruzzese, Pamela. “Distributing the Past: Jewish Cultural Property in Lithuania”. <i>31 N.Y.U. J. Int’l L. &amp; Pol.</i> 145, 1998.</li> <li>▪ Eidintas, Alfonsas. “Lithuania Will Share Jewish Books, but How?” <i>New York Times</i> 28 November 1996 (letter to the editor).</li> <li>▪ Fishman, David E. “Embers Plucked From the Fire: The Rescue of Jewish Cultural Treasures in Vilna”. <i>The Holocaust and the Book. Destruction and Preservation</i>. Rose, Jonathan. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.</li> <li>▪ Garfinkel L. “Nazi Looting of Jewish Books in Kovno Ghetto”. <i>Yad La-Kore</i> 5, n. 4 (1958-59), pp. 179-180 (Hebrew).</li> <li>▪ “Lithuania Moves to Return Torah Scrolls to Jews”. <i>New York Times</i> 4 October 2000.</li> <li>▪ Specter, Michael. “Piles of Storied Jewish Books are Languishing in Lithuania”. <i>New York Times</i> 24 November 1996.</li> <li>▪ Spritzer, Dinah A. “Lithuanian Jews Disappointed by Delays on Property Restitution Bill”. <i>JTA</i> 29 November 2006.</li> </ul>
<b>Notes</b>	David E. Fishman of the Jewish Theological Seminary and head of Project Judaica is currently working on a history of the fate of the holdings of YIVO and of other Judaica in Lithuania.	