Vilnius University (Lithuanian: Vilniaus universitetas) is a public research university, which is the first and largest university in Lithuania, as well as one of the oldest and most prominent higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe. Today, it is Lithuania's leading research institution, ranked among the Top 29% Higher Education Institutions in the world.

The university was founded in 1579 as the Jesuit Academy (College) of Vilnius by Stephen Báthory. It was the third oldest university (after the Cracow Academy and the Albertina) in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Due to the failure of the November Uprising (1830–1831), the university was closed down and suspended its operation until 1919. In the aftermath of World War I, the university saw failed attempts to restart it by the local Poles, Lithuanians, and by invading Soviet forces. It finally resumed operations as Polish Stefan Batory University in August 1919.

Following the Soviet invasion of Poland in September 1939, the university was briefly administered by the

Lithuanian authorities (from October 1939), and then after Soviet annexation of Lithuania (June 1940), punctuated by a period of German occupation after Operation Barbarossa, from 1941 to 1944, when it was administrated as the Vilnius State University. In 1945, the Polish community of students and scholars of Stefan Batory University was transferred to Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń.[5] After Lithuania regained its independence in 1990, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, it resumed its status as one of the prominent universities in Lithuania.

The university has facilities in Kaunas and Šiauliai. It is composed of fifteen academic faculties that offer more than 200 study programmes in a wide range of academic disciplines for over 24 000 students.

Vilnius University is known for its strong community ties, interaction and participation in additional activities offered by the non-academic departments of the University, such as the Cultural Centre, Health and Sports Centre, Library, Museum, Botanical Gardens, and other institutions.

Since 2016, Vilnius University has been a member of a network of prestigious universities – the Coimbra Group – and since 2019, it has belonged to the European University Alliance ARQUS. The alliance aims to create joint, long-term, sustainable structures and mechanisms for close inter-institutional cooperation in the fields of studies, science and social partnerships.

The Vilnius University Foundation was established on 6 April 2016, thus becoming the first university endowment in Lithuania. The Foundation supports scientific research of the highest quality and the creation of study programmes that correspond to global demands, while encouraging other high added-value projects.

In undergrounds of old University's building is located the cenotaph of eleven Old Prussians tribes along with the small temple of four gods and four goddesses from baltic mythology..