PRAGUE PROCESS
ПРАЖСКИЙ ПРОЦЕСС



Lithuania

General Information

Population

2 888 774 (World Bank 2025)

2 888 277 (STAT LT 2024)

Immigration

175 194 (UN Immigration Stock 2024)

51 845 (STAT LT 2024)

Emigration

459 268 (UN Emigration Stock 2024)

21 986 (STAT LT 2024)

Working-age population

1 871 141 (World Bank 2025)

1 815 565 (STAT LT 2024)

Unemployment rate

6.9 % (World Bank 2025)

8.7 % (STAT LT 2024)

GDP

95 210 150 818.4 current prices USD (World Bank 2025)

76 568 900 000 current prices EUR (STAT LT 2024)

Refugees, Asylum seekers, IDPs

Refugees

54 381 (UNHCR 2025)

178 (IRV LT 2024)

Asylum Seekers

156 (UNHCR 2025)

362 (IRV LT 2024)

IDPs

0 (UNHCR 2025)

Citizenship

By Birth

No (GLOBALCIT 2024)

By Descent

Yes (GLOBALCIT 2024)

Years of Residency

10 years of residence required (GLOBALCIT 2024)

Territory

65 300 km^2 (CIA World Factbook)

Data from international sources is updated automatically as it becomes available.

Migration Authorities

Responsible Body

Ministry of the Interior

Line Ministries

Ministry of Social Security and Labour

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Agencies

Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior

The State Border Guard Service

Lithuanian Employment Service

Reception and Integration Agency

State Data Agency (Official Statistics Portal of Lithuania)

Key Policy Documents

Law on the Legal Status of Aliens

Law on Employment

Action Plan for 2024-2026 to Combat Human Trafficking (LT)

Relevant Publications

From Belarus to the EU: Migration Trends and Strategic Responses

Exploring the Potential of Digitalisation in Migration Management in the Prague Process Region

Digitalisation and labour migration: the use of modern technology, challenges and opportunities

How will migration to Europe look in the Future?

Intra-corporate Transferees (ICTs): The benefits for the EU and the opportunity cost

ICMPD - Diaspora Engagement Report: Case Studies and Best Practices for Ukraine 2025

ICMPD working paper 2025 - Advances in Border Management: Digitalisation trends and emerging technologies

Lithuania, long characterised by high emigration, has undergone a gradual but notable shift in recent years, with immigration exceeding emigration every year since 2019. This turning point has helped ease the country's long-term demographic decline. Since 1990, Lithuania's population has contracted by about one-fifth (803,000) due to sustained outward migration and negative natural change. In 2024, its resident population stood at 2,890,664. Population ageing remains pronounced, yet 2022-2025 registered a small increase in the working-age population, suggesting that recent immigration and return migration are slightly offsetting demographic pressures.

According to UN DESA, over 459,268 Lithuanians were living abroad in 2024, with the majority residing in the United Kingdom (45%). From 2004 until 2024, more than 846,000 people left Lithuania. In 2024, the emigration flow reached 28,705, the highest figure since 2020. However, the number of Lithuanian citizens emigrating reached its historical low of 9,457 since 2001. Belarus and Ukraine comprised the two key destinations among all 2024 emigrants. Meanwhile, the UK, Norway and Germany were the most popular destinations among Lithuanian nationals the same year.

In early 2025, over 217,000 foreigners resided in Lithuania, accounting for around 7.5% of the country's resident population, with Ukrainians (77,080), Belarusians (57,511) and Russians (14,978) forming the largest communities. Net migration remained positive in 2024, adding roughly 23,000 more residents. The exceptional inflows of 2022 – reaching 87,367 arrivals and driven largely by the war in Ukraine – have stabilised, but immigration levels remain higher than before, with over 51,000 immigrants registered in 2024. Of these, 32,823 were foreigners, with the largest groups coming from Ukraine (6,877), Belarus (5,229) and Uzbekistan (3,223), and the remainder were returning Lithuanians.

Since 2015, the number of first-time residence permits issued to non-EU nationals in Lithuania increased ten-fold, from 5,178 in 2015 to over 54,000 in 2024, with the majority issued for work reasons. In 2024, close to 165,000 non-EU nationals, of which over 35% were Belarus nationals, had valid residence permits in Lithuania. In 2024, Lithuania received 5,700 new immigrants on a long-term or permanent basis (including changes of status and free mobility). This figure comprises 11% immigrants benefitting from free mobility, 32% labour migrants, 51% family members (including accompanying family) and 3% humanitarian migrants.

Despite labour shortages in key sectors (especially in construction, services, and transport) the labour market remained strong in early 2024: the labour force reached a two-decade high, growing by 2.4% year-on-year in 2024. More than 150,000 foreign workers were employed in Lithuania, representing one-tenth of all employment. Most foreigners worked in medium-skilled jobs, primarily as drivers (73,000) and construction workers (21,000). While workers from India, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan are increasingly represented, EU nationals, especially from Romania, Latvia, and Poland, also contribute to recent growth, suggesting that Lithuania's labour market is becoming attractive within the EU itself. Policy has oscillated between expansion and restriction: after steadily increasing quotas for non-EU nationals permitted to work in shortage occupations in Lithuania through 2024 (from 32,200 in 2021 to 40,250 in 2024), Lithuania sharply reduced the quota for 2025 to 24,830.

International student mobility continues to rise. By 2024/2025 academic year, more than 11,500 foreign students were enrolled in Lithuanian higher education institutions, 67% higher than in 2020/2021. Half of foreign students came from Europe (5,802), followed by Asia (4,543), whereby the number of students from Asia has risen by 80% between 2020/2021 and 2024/2025 academic years.

Border control pressures have eased in comparison with the previous years, following the implementation of the comprehensive state border protection measures. Refusals to entry for non-EU nationals declined from 5,240 in 2022 to 4,255 in 2023 and further down to 2,880 in 2024, with nationals of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine receiving most refusals in 2024. In 2023, Lithuania's construction of a physical barrier and enhanced border surveillance shifted irregular entry attempts from Belarus toward Latvia. This led to increased secondary movements from Latvia into Lithuania, prompting the State Border Guard Service to step up random internal checks. The number of non-EU nationals found to be illegally present in Lithuania exceeded 4,000 both in 2023 and 2024. From 2022 to 2024, the number of non-EU nationals ordered to leave increased by 30% (3,190 to 4,160). Meanwhile, the return rates have slightly declined from 76% in 2022 to 67% in 2024.

Asylum pressures have also normalised: from the exceptional peak of 4,259 asylum applications in 2021, applications fell to just over 360 in 2024, with most applications submitted by nationals of Belarus (39%), Russia (13%), Ukraine (6%), Tajikistan (6%), and Uzbekistan (6%), and Iraq (5%). Of the 572 decisions taken in 2024, 52% were positive. In 2024, refugee status was granted to 178 persons while 12 individuals received alternative status. Meanwhile, Lithuania remains an important host country for people displaced from Ukraine. Since February 2022, some 97,127 individuals were registered for Temporary Protection in Lithuania. As of mid-2025, around 47,000 persons under temporary protection who were displaced from Ukraine remain in the country, and Lithuania has committed to extending their protection until March 2027. In 2025, UNHCR have launched a Response Plan for Ukrainian Refugees, aiming to mobilize USD 10.9 million to support 55,000 refugees in Lithuania. A recent UNHCR survey shows that 53% of working-age displaced Ukrainians in Lithuania are officially employed, 83% of children attend school, and 78% reside in private housing.

In recent years, Lithuania has continued to face challenges in combating human trafficking, with forced labour emerging as the dominant form of exploitation. The number of trafficking victims decreased slightly from 16 in 2023 to 12 in 2024. The vast majority of identified victims were foreign nationals, underscoring Lithuania's role as a destination country for labour exploitation. In July 2024, a new Action Plan for 2024-2026 to Combat Human Trafficking was adopted, focusing on prevention, protection of victims, prosecution of traffickers, and strengthening cooperation at both national and international levels.

Several institutional and legislative reforms have reshaped Lithuania's migration governance. A new Reception and Integration Agency under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour became operational from 1 January 2025 and adopted a new strategic plan that includes 2 new programmes aimed at creating equal and high-quality integration support across all municipalities in Lithuania. The Agency manages centralised migrant accommodation and social and other essential services, while the new programmes offer

sociocultural training and mental health programmes.

From 1 July 2023 the Migration Department became the sole authority for national visa processing. Amendments to the Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners and the Law on Employment adopted on 20 June 2024 aimed to better align migration with national priorities by managing lower-skilled entries and expanding access for highly qualified professionals.

In October 2024, the State Border Guard Service of Lithuania and the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine signed the 2024-2025 bilateral cooperation action plan that foresees the exchange of experience in border protection, control, transnational crime investigations, anti-corruption, and information analysis.

On 3 May 2023, Lithuania enacted Law on the Imposition of Restrictive Measures limiting access to visas, e-residency, and temporary residence permits for Russian and Belarusian citizens. The Law was later expanded, including 25 April 2024 amendments introducing second-line checks for Belarusian citizens, and, on 17 April 2025 amendments allowing the revocation of temporary residence permits for Russian nationals who repeatedly travel to Russia or Belarus without valid justification.

On 14 May 2024, following the adoption of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum by the Council of the European Union, the Ministry of the Interior of Lithuania set up an inter-institutional working group to assess the migration and asylum management system and align it with the Pact. On 11 December 2024, the National Implementation Plan was approved.

Lithuania actively engages in migration dialogues, being the party to the Prague Process, the Budapest Process, and the Khartoum Process.

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