

MIGRATION POLICY IN LITHUANIA

2019

Migration trends
Emigration and return migration
Immigration and integration of foreigners
Asylum
Combating irregular migration
International cooperation
Institutional framework

MIGRATION TRENDS

For the first time in 30 years of Lithuania's independence, positive net migration was recorded, with about **10 000** more persons entering the country than leaving.

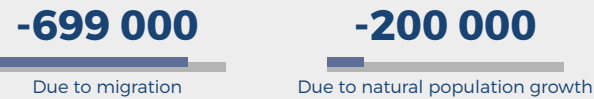
51% of immigrants were returning Lithuanian citizens (20 400). In 2018, the number of returning Lithuanians amounted to 16 500.

LITHUANIA DURING THE PERIOD OF 1990-2020:

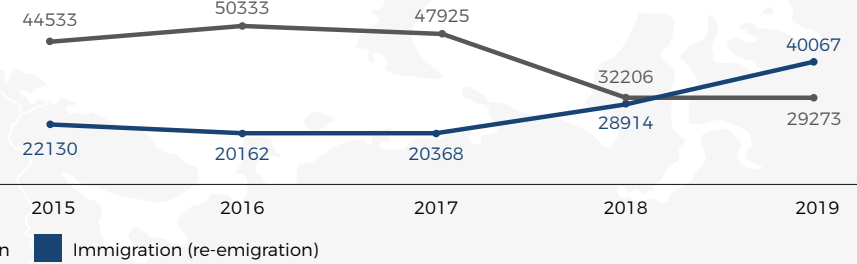
Population of Lithuania:

3,693 mln. → 2,794 mln.
1990 2020

Since 1990, the population of Lithuania has decreased by 899 000 inhabitants.

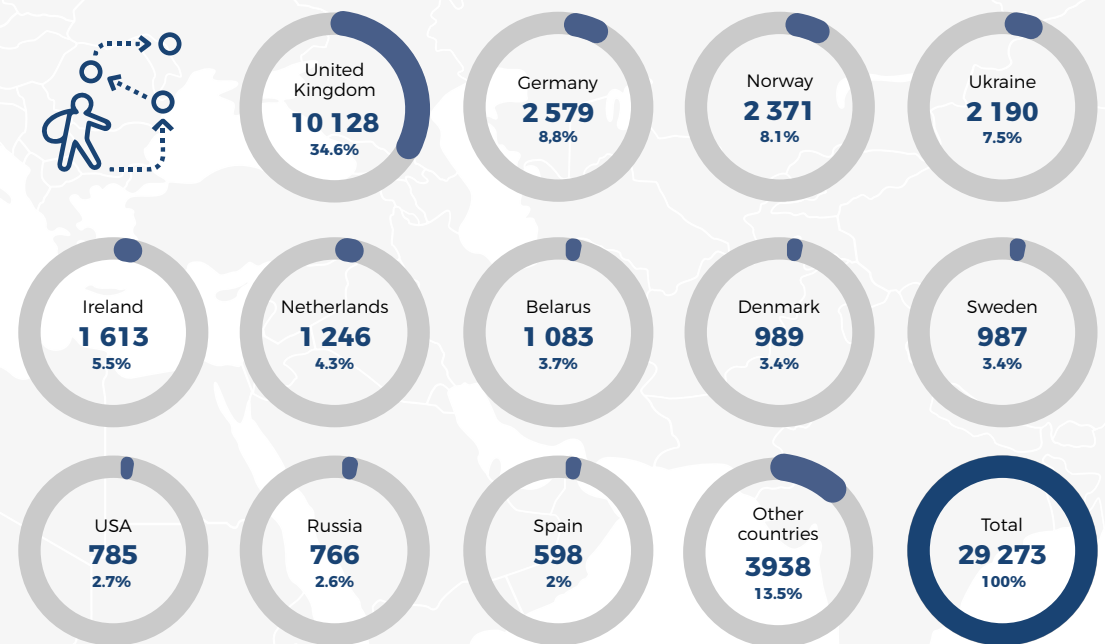


MIGRATION: 5-YEAR OVERVIEW

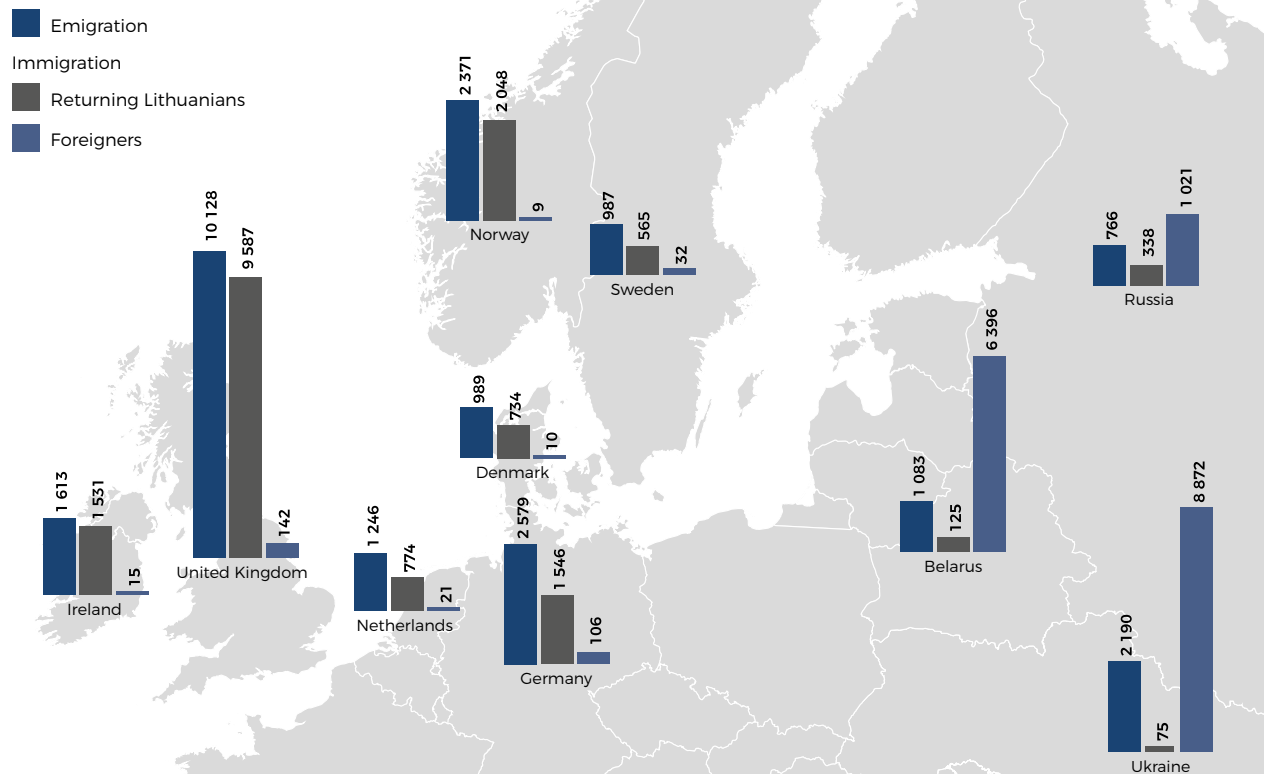


EMIGRATION AND RETURN MIGRATION

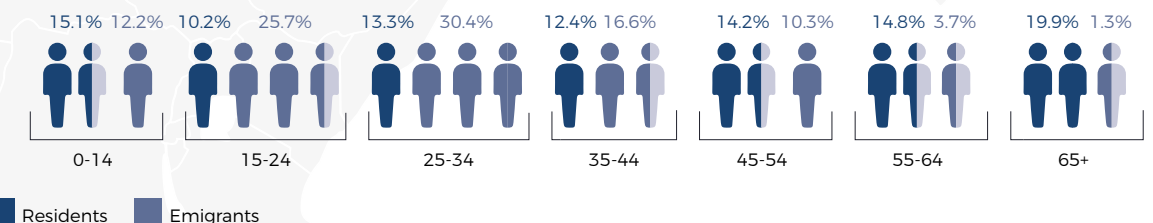
EMIGRANTS BY COUNTRY OF DESTINATION IN 2019



MAIN EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION COUNTRIES IN 2019



EMIGRANTS BY AGE IN 2019



REMITTANCES TO LITHUANIA



1164,85 mln. EUR
2.4% of the GDP

IN CAMPARISON

it was allocated from the state budget for:



DEFENCE
1031 mln. EUR



HEALTH CARE
799 mln. EUR

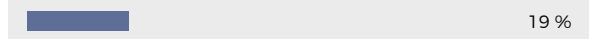
A survey of Lithuanians abroad (N=1874),

commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

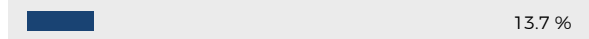
Thinking about a return to Lithuania



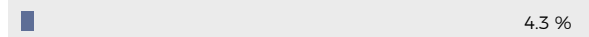
Planning to return



Planning to return this year or in the next 5 years



Planning to return this year or the next year



3 main reasons encouraging to return:

- Family and friends left in Lithuania (65.6%),
- Prospects of finding a well-paid job (29%),
- Willingness to work and create for Lithuania (26.2%)

3 main obstacles and risks:

- Low wages (65.7 %),
- Lack of tolerance in society, xenophobia (45.6%),
- Employers' attitude towards employees (39.4%).



MAIN AREAS OF WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2019, the implementation of measures under the Global Lithuania programme which is aimed at maintaining ties with the diaspora and supporting returns and the Strategy for Demography, Migration and Integration which is focused on the prevention of emigration and returning Lithuanians was continued.

The Migration Information Centre (MIC) "I Choose Lithuania" provided 8 790 consultations to returning Lithuanians (four times more as compared to 2018). The website www.renkuosilietuva.lt was visited by almost 600 000 visitors. The most popular query topics in 2019 were the following: social guarantees, foreigners in Lithuania, return process to Lithuania.

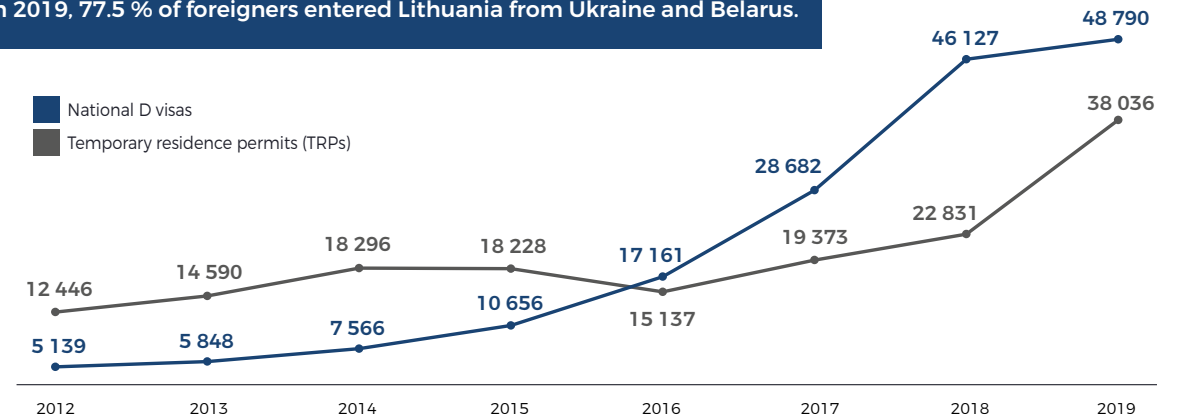
A legislative framework was prepared for the resettlement of foreigners of Lithuanian descent and their family members to the Republic of Lithuania from humanitarian crisis-hit countries.

Assistance to citizens and foreigners in providing information and consultations on Brexit was coordinated at the Government level.

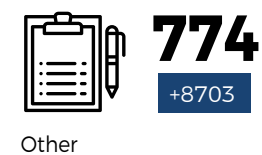
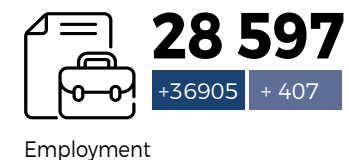
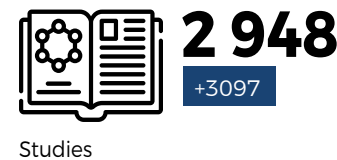
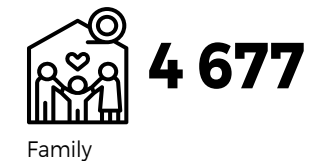
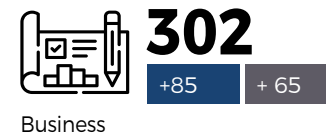
IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION OF FOREIGNERS

ARRIVAL OF FOREIGNERS TO LITHUANIA IN 2012-2019

In 2019, 77.5 % of foreigners entered Lithuania from Ukraine and Belarus.



FOREIGNERS IN LITHUANIA BY GROUNDS OF ENTRY (TRPs) IN 2019



70 days

the average length of time for issuing a TRP (65 days in 2018)

- Entered under a national D visa
- Employment: highly qualified workers
- Business: persons under the start-up scheme

LISTS OF SHORTAGE OCCUPATIONS IN LITHUANIA IN 2019

HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKERS

55 occupations

- IT professionals
- Aircraft operation professionals
- Ship operation professionals
- Other

Workers in these occupations enter under the facilitated procedure.

QUALIFIED WORKERS

13 occupations first half-year **16 occupations** second half-year

- International cargo transportation vehicle drivers
- Welders
- Concrete placers
- Other

2 376

foreigners participated in integration programmes.

MAIN AREAS OF WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Immigration procedures were simplified and accelerated:

- nationals of Australia, Japan, the USA, Canada, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand will be eligible for a TRP valid for a period of 3 years when entering on grounds of business or other lawful activities;
- foreigners entering on the ground of employment and being in possession of a TRP will be able to change their employer, job position or work for several employers and they will no longer have to apply for the issue of a new TRP;
- for start-ups, a TRP can be issued for one year and renewed twice more;
- the ground of the establishment of the List of Approved Enterprises was introduced, and a simplified procedure for issuing both a national visa and a TRP to foreigners entering to take up employment in such enterprises was established.

In order to limit possibilities to abuse immigration procedures:

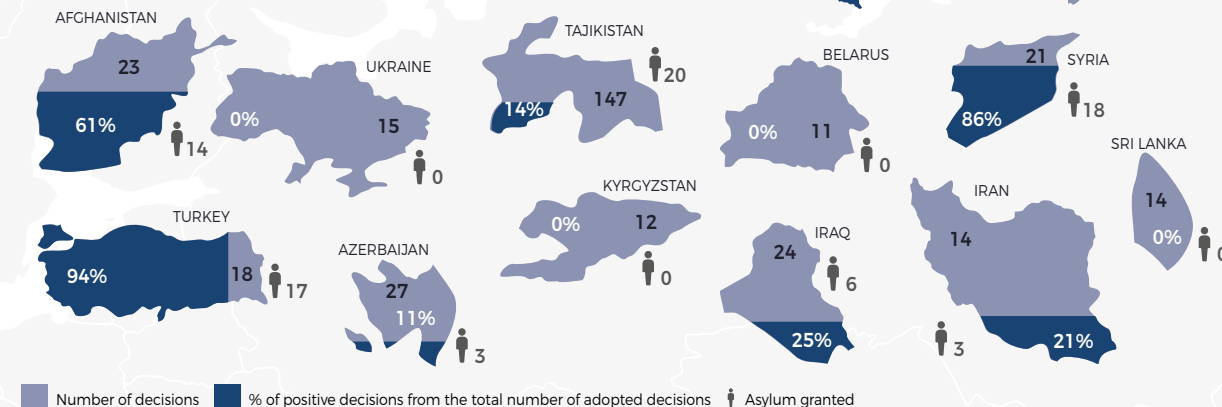
- employers provide information about employed foreigners to the Employment Service and the State Labour Inspectorate;
- posted foreigners are required to obtain a work permit;
- the issue or renewal of a TRP may be refused to foreigners studying in Lithuania who have earned less than 40 academic credits, where no justified reasons have been presented;
- the employment of foreigners in temporary employment enterprises was prohibited;
- clear regulation and criteria were laid down for activities of enterprises intermediating in the employment of third-country nationals in Lithuania.

In 2019, the establishment and use of quotas for foreigners were regulated. The quotas will apply from 2021 for foreigners entering to take up employment in an occupation which is included in the List of Shortage Occupations.

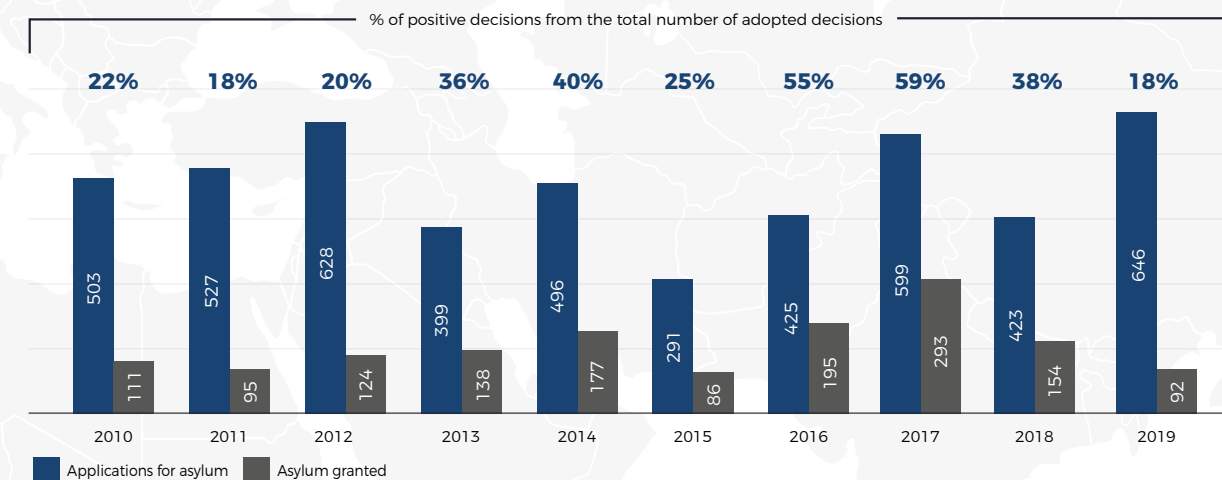
The Ministry of the Economy and Innovation together with the public institution Invest Lithuania developed an International House model, which will be a one-stop-shop body for the provision of migration and integration services to foreigners. It is planned that the International House could be opened in 2021, and the services would be provided to foreigners by the staff of involved public institutions.

ASYLUM

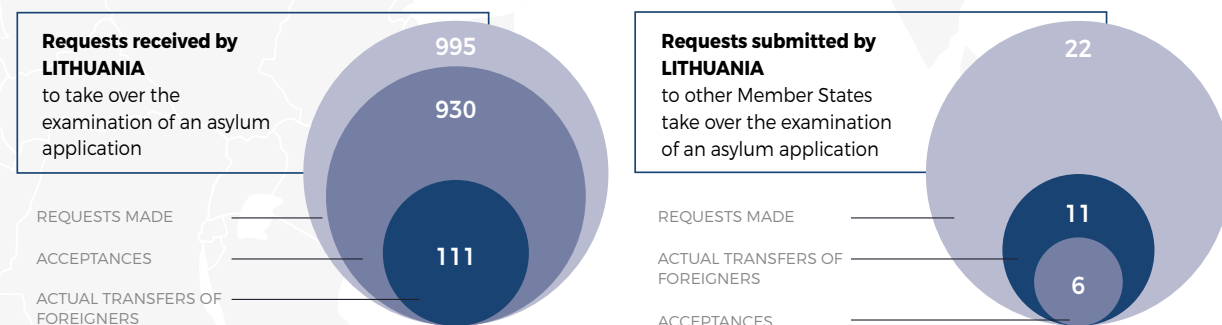
ASYLUM DECISIONS: MAIN CITIZENSHIPS IN 2019



ASYLUM: 10-YEAR OVERVIEW



TRANSFERS UNDER THE DUBLIN REGULATION IN 2019





MAIN AREAS OF WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- In accordance with the principle of solidarity, 7 asylum applicants were relocated from Italy and Malta to the Republic of Lithuania in 2019.
- Asylum applicants were provided with the possibility to take up employment when the Migration Department does not take a decision on the granting of asylum through no fault of an asylum applicant within 6 months from the lodging of an application for asylum.
- A building for vulnerable asylum applicants was opened at the Foreigners' Registration Centre with an accommodation capacity of 15 vulnerable persons.
- At alternative accommodation facilities, accommodation services were provided to 238 asylum applicants (180 persons were accommodated at the Refugee Reception Centre and 58 persons – in municipalities).

COMBATING IRREGULAR MIGRATION

REFUSALS OF ENTRY:

5 MAIN CITIZENSHIPS IN 2019



0,17%

The number of foreigners refused admission made of all entries.

REASONS FOR REFUSAL OF ENTRY IN 2019



26%

Has no valid document / had a counterfeit document



42%

Were considered to be a threat to security or public policy



18%

Had no documentation justifying the purpose and conditions of stay

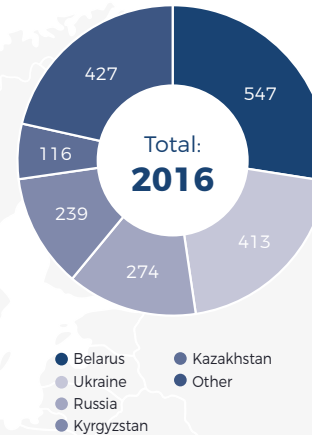


14%

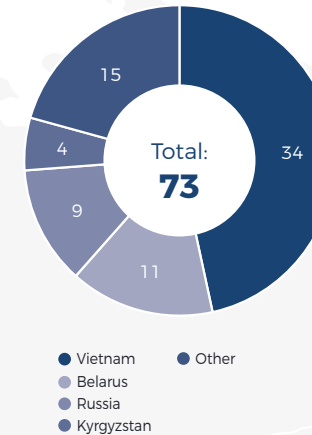
Other

RETURN AND EXPULSION OF FOREIGNERS IN 2019

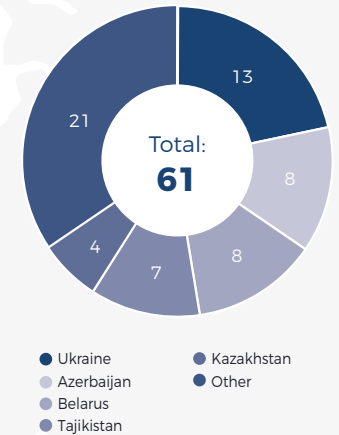
Number of **returned** foreigners by citizenship



Number of **expelled** foreigners by citizenship



Number of foreigners **returned** voluntarily with the assistance of IOM Vilnius



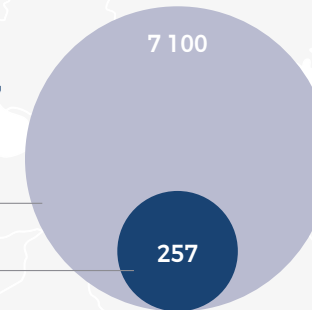
ILLEGAL EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGNERS IN 2019



229 → **257**
2018 2019

CHECKS FOR ILLEGAL WORK

ILLEGALLY EMPLOYED FOREIGNERS IDENTIFIED



62%

of all illegally employed foreigners were **Ukrainian** nationals, who mostly worked in the construction sector.



MAIN AREAS OF WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- The number of detained third-country nationals entering Lithuania by illegally crossing the EU's external borders decreased. The overwhelming majority of the persons were detained at the border with Belarus.
- Lithuania continued to ensure a high return rate: 87 % of voluntary returns and 71 % of expulsions were implemented in 2019.
- The scope of alternatives to detention was broadened. From now on, the measure of entrusting the guardianship of a foreigner to a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania or to a foreigner lawfully residing in Lithuania may also be provided in the cases when the person has no family ties with the foreigner.
- Lithuania expanded the groups of foreigners eligible for voluntary return. Foreigners who unlawfully entered and stayed illegally in Lithuania might be issued a return decision with a voluntary return period if they expressed their willingness for voluntary return and cooperate with the competent authorities. Until then, such foreigners did not have a possibility to return voluntary.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



MAIN AREAS OF WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- In 2019, Lithuania chaired the Prague Process (a regional cooperation platform on migration, encompassing 50 countries).
- The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on the readmission of citizens was signed and ratified.
- The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on Employment and Cooperation in the Field of Labour Migration was ratified.

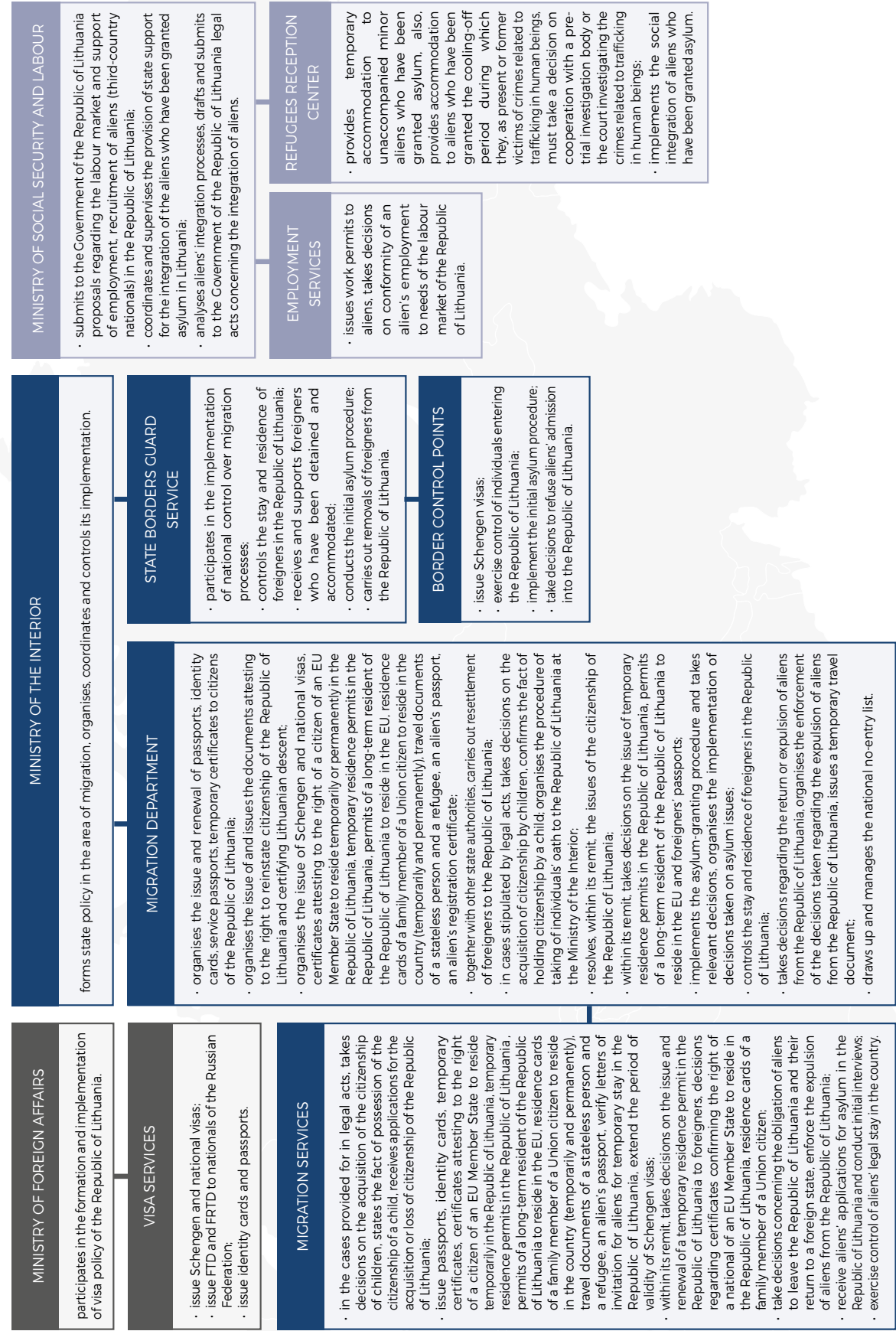
INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK



MAIN AREAS OF WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- In 2019, Lithuania implemented a reform of migration management:
 - The Migration Department with its territorial units became the main institution providing migration services in Lithuania.
 - The State Border Guard Service became the main institution responsible for the control of irregular migration of foreigners across Lithuania and prevention of irregular migration.
 - The police, following the withdrawal of the functions external to it, remained responsible for control of public order, provision of conclusions on the threats to public order represented by foreigners, and control of the transit of Russian nationals.
- The Migration Information System MIGRIS was launched: starting from October 2019, clients can use the system to lodge electronic applications for the issue or renewal of residence permits and, starting from November 2019, to register for an appointment with a representative of the Migration Department.

MAIN INSTITUTIONS IN THE AREA OF MIGRATION



This publication was prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Vilnius office, and the European Migration Network (EMN) in Lithuania. The publication was prepared according to the 2019 Report on the Implementation of the Lithuanian Migration Policy Guidelines and Monitoring of Migration Processes. The Migration Policy Guidelines are the main strategic document establishing the goals, principles and directions of the migration and asylum policy in Lithuania.

EMN – is a network of EU Member States, Norway and the European Commission aimed at gathering, analyzing and sharing up-to-date, objective, comparable information on emerging issues relating to asylum and migration in Europe. According to the resolution of the Lithuanian Government, Lithuania is represented in the network by IOM Vilnius office which works in close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania and its institutions under the Ministry.

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