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Impact of Visa Liberalisation on Countries of Destination: National Report of Lithuania

2018/2

EMN STUDY



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EMN is a network composed of the European Commission and National Contact Points (EMN NCPs) in each Member State, and in Norway, which aims to collect, analyse and provide up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum. By the decree of the Government of Republic of Lithuania International organization for Migration Vilnius Office acts as the national coordinator for the EMN activities in Lithuania.

More information about EMN activities in Lithuania: www.emn.lt.

Contact:

European Migration Network National Contact Point

A. Jakšto str. 12, 4 floor

LT-01105, Vilnius

Tel.: +370 5 2624897

Fax: +370 5 2611326

Email: emn@iom.lt

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Report of Lithuania**

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VILNIUS, 2018

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Summary

The current European Migration Network (EMN) study 2018 examines the impact of visa liberalisation in Lithuania. The study analyses and reviews various migration indicators and developments in migration processes over the period of 2007-2017 as related to the introduction of the visa-free regime with the European Union (EU) countries, which entered into force in respect of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Georgia (Sakartveli) and Ukraine.

The visa-free regime between the EU and the Western Balkan countries – FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia – entered into force on 19 December 2009. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the visa-free regime on 15 December 2010. The visa-free regime for the Eastern Partnership countries came into force on the following dates: for Moldova – on 28 April 2014, for Georgia – on 28 March 2017, and for Ukraine – on 11 June 2017.

The visual material reflects trends in the countries under study in the areas of irregular migration and returns, applications for asylum and decisions on the applications for asylum, the number of and grounds for refusals of entry of the persons who have been exceeded the period of legal stay (overstayers). A list of measures and examples of how Lithuania has implemented the actions directed against overstayers and the measures combating illegal employment is provided.

The study also gives an overview of positive developments in the tourism sector of the countries analysed, economic benefits of direct foreign investment in Lithuania, trends in exports and imports of goods.

Western Balkans. The introduction of the visa-free regime for the Western Balkan countries did not have a significant impact in Lithuania. The number of cases of illegal border crossing, illegal stay or overstay in the country, illegal employment, applications for asylum, applications for a short-stay visa, positive asylum decisions and committed crimes throughout the period covered by the study is very low or equal to zero. However, it can be noted that the number of citizens of these countries entering Lithuania

increased. This had a positive impact on the Lithuanian tourism sector as more persons stayed in hotels or other accommodation establishments. The volume of direct investments from the Western Balkan countries has increased, though slightly, since 2012. The imports and exports of goods have been steadily increasing year by year.

Eastern Partnership countries. Lithuania was more attractive to citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries than to those of the Western Balkans. As 'pull factors', one could list family ties, employment possibilities (the satisfying amount of wages), easier communication with Lithuania, closer cultural and linguistic experience. During the period under consideration, the total number of persons entering from these countries increased. This led to an increase in the number of citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries who were refused entry into Lithuania as well as the number of lodged applications for asylum, the number of overstayers in Lithuania and the number of illegally employed persons. The number of applications for the issue of a short-stay visa, national D visa and a temporary residence permit also increased.

Moldova. In the case of Moldova, the largest number of issued temporary residence permits in Lithuania was recorded in 2008, i.e. well before visa liberalisation, but since 2016 onwards, a slight increase has again been observed. Data on the return decisions taken in respect of citizens of Moldova show that the introduction of the visa-free regime has not increased the number of returns of citizens of that country. In general, the number of cases of illegal stay, applications for asylum, applications for a short-stay visa or a temporary residence permit for Moldovan citizens throughout the period under study was low or equal to zero. These trends are stable throughout the period of 2007-2017.

Georgia. The largest number of permits issued to citizens of Georgia was recorded in 2014, though later this number decreased. Citizens of Georgia were involved in the majority of cases of illegal border crossings detected during 2007-2017 (886), i.e. 33% of the total number of persons illegally crossing the external border. It should be pointed out that the number of illegal border crossings by Georgian citizens was the highest in 2012, when it increased twofold compared to 2011. Upon the subsequent adoption of amendments to the Law permitting the detention of asylum applicants in certain cases, these trends have steadily decreased, and in 2017, only 2 cases of illegal crossing of the border were recorded.

Ukraine. The majority of applications for a short-term visa from among the Eastern Partnership countries have been submitted by citizens of Ukraine. It should be noted that Lithuania has a special programme intended for the resettlement and integration of the citizens of Ukraine who are of Lithuanian descent and their family members who reside in a war zone. Citizens of Ukraine also lodge the majority of applications for the issue of a national D-type visa. For example, in 2017, Ukrainians were issued approximately 15 000 such visas, of which approximately 12 000 visas were issued on the ground of employment.

Citizens of this country remained, both in 2016 and 2017, among the TOP 3 offenders as regards rules for the entry, stay and transit of aliens, though taking account of the significant increase in the total number of citizens of this country entering Lithuania, the growth of irregular migration was insignificant and disproportionate to the overall increase in the number of entries.

During the period covered by the study, the largest share of direct investments consisted of direct investments from Ukraine and Georgia. Comparing the imports and exports of goods, the largest trading partner among the countries under study was Ukraine. The value of Lithuanian exports of goods to Ukraine in 2017 increased by 20% – to EUR 736 million, while the value of imports grew by 18.1% to EUR 237.8 million.

It should be noted that in the case of Georgia and Ukraine, post-visa liberalisation trends are still taking shape, as the visa-free regime for citizens of these countries is only applicable from 2017.

1.

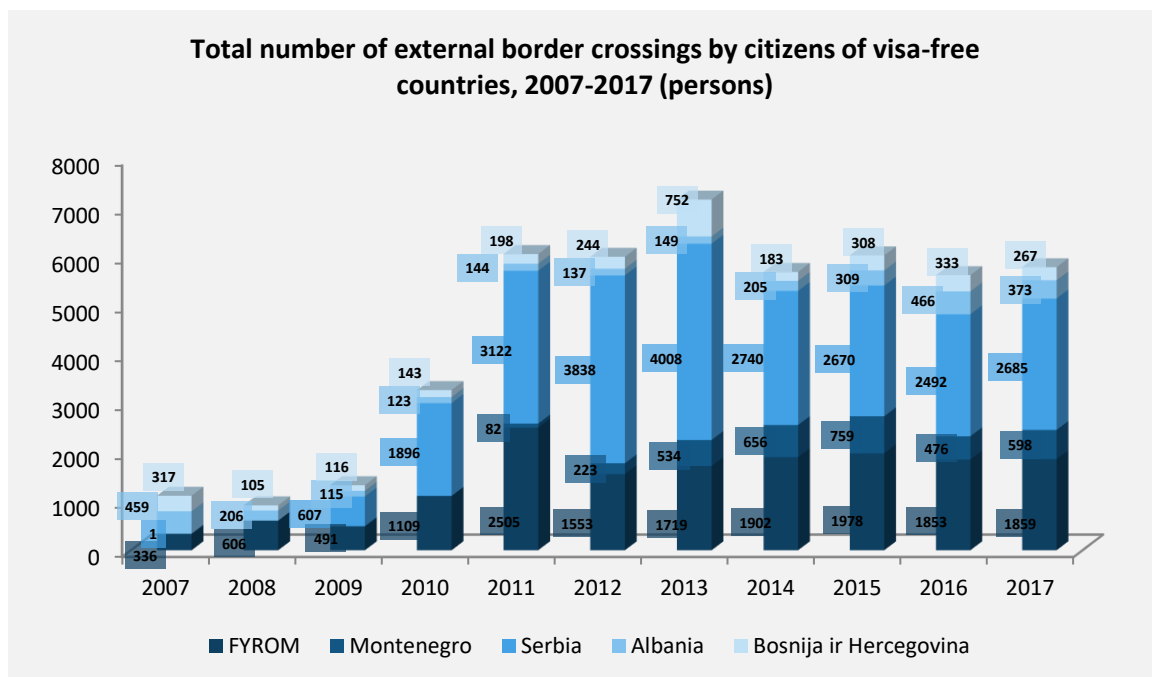
The National Framework

1.1. DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

Question (further – Q) 1.1. Please provide an analysis of the short term (within two years) and long-term (beyond two years) trends which appeared in Lithuania after the commencement of visa-free regimes disaggregated by region and third countries of interest.

Western Balkan countries - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The total number of external border crossings by citizens of the Western Balkan countries grew during 2007-2014, while since 2014, the number of crossings remained stable. In 2016 and 2017, the number of entries remained almost unchanged. The number of external border crossings by the citizens of these countries is very small and makes up less than 1% of the total number of external border crossings.



Source: State Border Guard Service

Refusals of entry. The number of persons from the Western Balkan countries whose entry was refused at the border is not large. In most cases, the persons were refused entry before the date of visa liberalisation.

Illegal external border crossing. The number of illegal border crossings by citizens of the Western Balkan countries is very small. Throughout 2007-2017, there were no recorded cases of illegal border crossing as regards FYROM, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1 case of a Serbian citizen and 4 cases of illegal crossing by Albanian citizens.

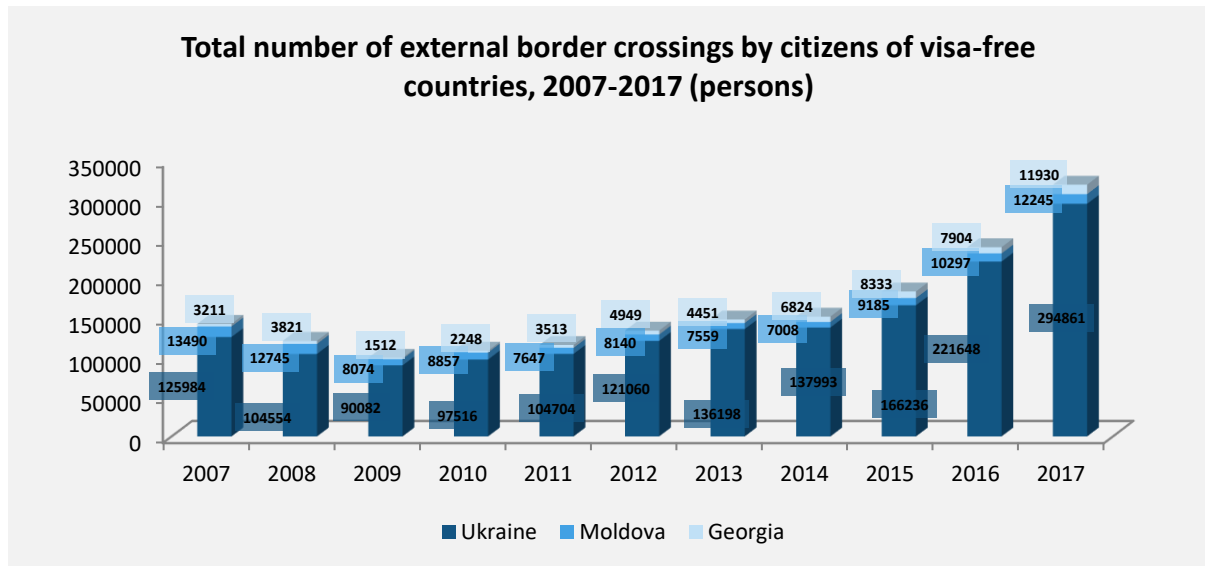
Short-stay visa applications. It should be noted that citizens of the Western Balkan countries under study lodged short-stay visa applications also after the date of visa liberalisation, but the number of such applications dropped significantly. Visas are not required for persons who hold passports with biometric data, but if the person does not hold such a travel document, the standard visa procedure will apply.

Applications for asylum. Throughout the period under consideration (2007-2017), only 3 applications for asylum by citizens of the Western Balkan countries (2 citizens of Serbia, 1 citizen of Albania) were lodged.

Return decisions. As regards citizens of FYROM, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, no return decision was issued throughout the period under study. Meanwhile, 10 return decisions were issued in respect of citizens of Serbia and Albania.

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine

The total number of external border crossings by citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries increased significantly during the period 2007-2017. In 2017, the largest number of external border crossings was recorded, with the majority being citizens of Ukraine. The total number of external border crossings by citizens of Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine increased over the last two years¹.



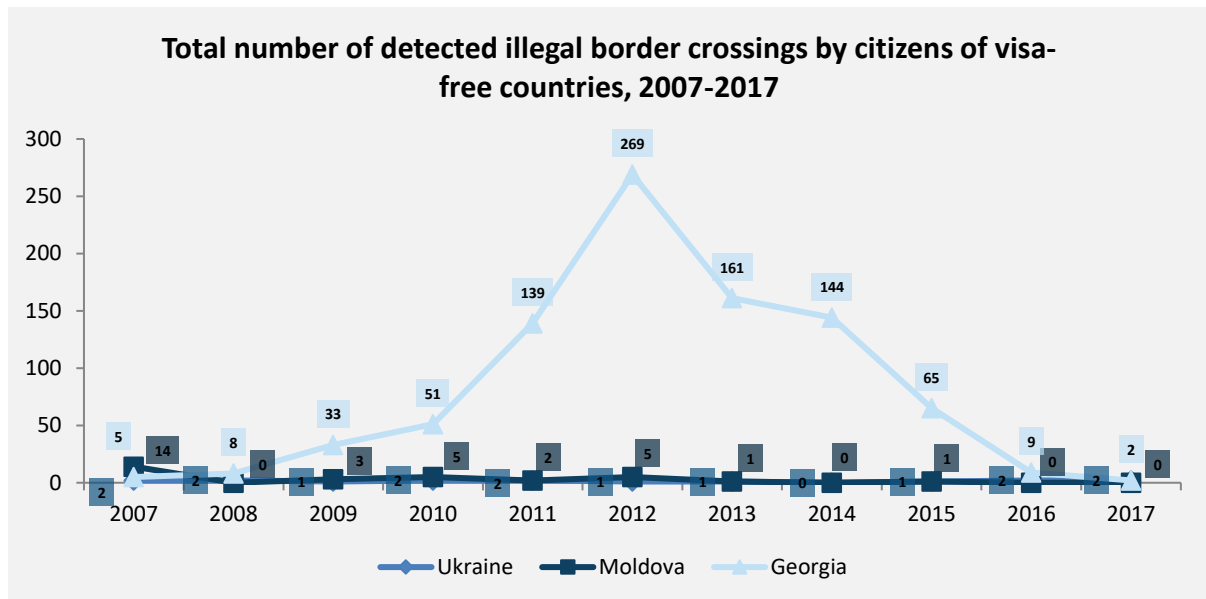
Source: State Border Guard Service

Illegal border crossing. As regards the Eastern Partnership countries, during 2007-2017, the majority of cases of illegal border crossing were detected in respect of citizens of Georgia (886), i.e. 33% of the total number of persons illegally crossing the external borders. It should be noted that the number of illegal border crossings by citizens of Georgia increased twofold in 2012 compared to 2011. Subsequently, the trends steadily declined, and in 2017, there occurred only 2 cases of illegal border crossing. This should be explained by the fact that in 2012 and subsequent years, amendments were made to the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens stipulating the possibility of detaining asylum applicants. This has significantly reduced the number of illegal entries by Georgian citizens.

The total number of illegal border crossings by citizens of Moldova was 31, i.e. 1.1% of the total number of persons illegally crossing external borders. It should be noted that after visa liberalisation, there was only one case of illegal crossing of the external borders by a citizen of Moldova.

The number of illegal border crossings by citizens of Ukraine did not change throughout the period and accounted for as few as 16 cases, i.e. 0.5% of the total number of illegal crossings of the external borders.

¹ During 2016-2017, citizens of Moldova crossed the external borders 22 542 times, i.e. approximately 0.3% of the total number of external border crossings; citizens of Georgia – 19 834 times, i.e. approximately 0.3% of the total number of external border crossings; citizens of Ukraine – 516 509 times, i.e. 8.9% of the total number of external border crossings.



Source: State Border Guard Service

Short-stay visa applications. It should be noted that citizens of the countries concerned lodged visa applications also after the date of visa liberalisation. Visas are not required for persons who hold passports with biometric data. If a person does not hold such a travel document, the standard visa procedure will apply.

Citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries lodged more short-stay visa applications than citizens of the Western Balkan countries. In the case of Moldova, the citizens of this country lodged before 2014 (the date of visa liberalisation) 11 532 short-stay visa applications, after which date 69 more such applications were lodged. From 2007 to 2014, the number of rejected applications amounted to 1 260, and after the date of visa liberalisation, no such applications were rejected.

The number of short-stay visa applications lodged by citizens of Georgia in 2008 grew by as much as 6.5 times (1 823 applications) compared to 2007 (279 applications). The number of applications lodged in subsequent years increased steadily, with the largest number of applications lodged in 2013 (4 223 applications). The increase in the number of short-stay visa applications was followed by an increase in the number of rejected applications, and in 2013, the number of rejected applications was the largest and amounted to 1 197 (28.3% of all applications). Since 2015, the number of rejected applications has decreased, and in 2017, 199 applications were rejected (16.6% of all applications lodged), which was 2.6 times less than in 2016, when 532 applications were rejected.

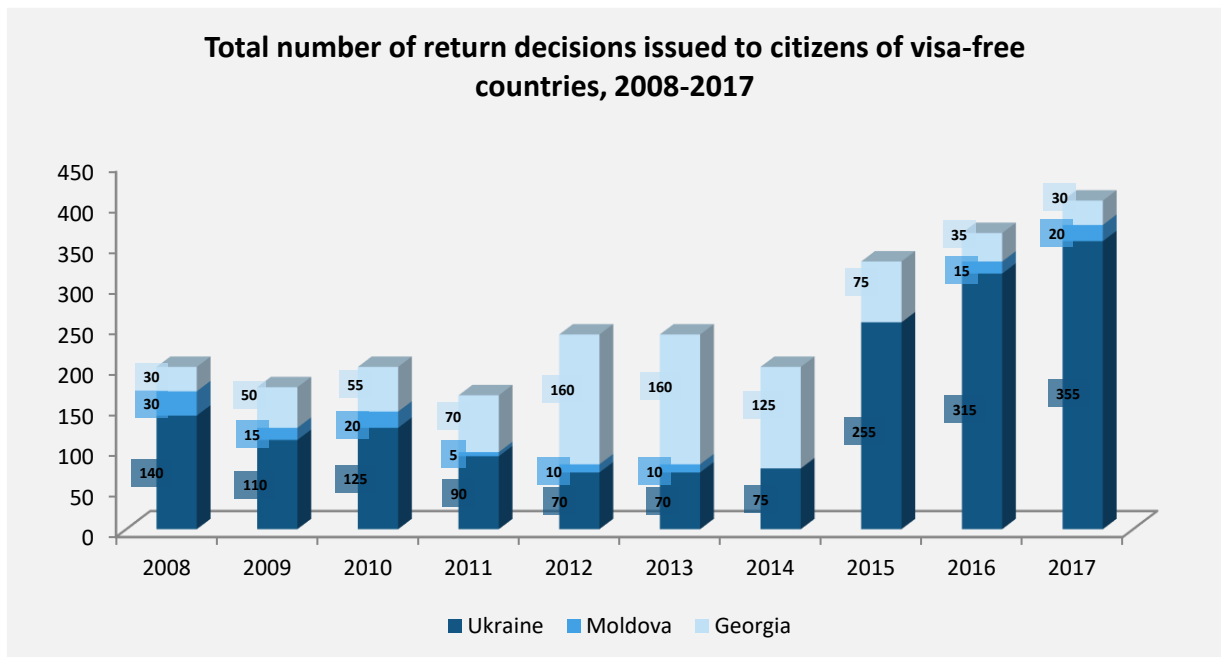
Throughout the period covered by the study, the majority of short-stay visa applications were lodged by citizens of Ukraine. 16 times more short-stay visa applications (15 720 applications) were lodged in 2008 than in 2007 (967), and since 2010 the number of applications has grown year-on-year. The largest number of such applications was recorded in 2016 (91 420 applications). The number of rejected applications remained fairly consistent over the entire period, despite growth trends as regards short-stay visa applications.

Asylum applications. During 2007-2017, the largest number of asylum applications (1 184 applications) from among the Eastern Partnership countries was lodged by citizens of Georgia. Meanwhile, in the case of Moldova, there was only one asylum application lodged throughout the period of interest. During the period, Ukrainian citizens lodged 210 applications for asylum in Lithuania. It should be pointed out that the 2012 and 2015 amendments to the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens extended grounds for the detention of asylum applicants, which has led to a decrease in the number of applications for asylum lodged by citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries.

Return decisions. From 2008 to 2014, 90 decisions on the return of citizens of Moldova were issued, and from 2014 to 2017, there were 35 such decisions in total.

As regards Georgia, the number of issued return decisions steadily increased until 2013, and from 2014 onwards, declined annually (see the table below).

As regards Ukraine, from 2007 to 2014, the number of return decisions remained similar, but since 2015 the number increased (255 cases) and was already 4.6 times higher than in 2014 (75 cases). Such a growth may be attributed to the conflict in eastern Ukraine and the increase in the number of persons entering the country in general. In 2016 (315 cases) and 2017 (355 cases), the number of return decisions issued in respect of Ukrainian citizens did not change significantly.



Source: Eurostat

Q1.2. What are the main links between the countries of origin and Lithuania or the applicable 'pull factors' disaggregated by region and third countries of interest?

Western Balkans - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Lithuania has no specific 'pull factors' for the Western Balkan countries, except tourism. It can be noted that the number of tourists from these countries has grown since 2012. It can also be claimed that visa liberalisation has contributed to the increase in this flow of tourists.

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine

Lithuania is more attractive to the Eastern Partnership countries than to the Western Balkan countries. As 'pull factors', the following could be distinguished: family ties, more favourable employment opportunities, easier communication, social integration, which is easier due to the knowledge of the Russian language. A large proportion of Lithuanians speak Russian, making it easier for citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries to adapt and socialise.

It should also be noted that the Government of the Republic of Lithuania adopted on 29 July 2015 Resolution No 773 on the resettlement to the Republic of Lithuania of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania, persons of Lithuanian descent and their family members residing in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the city of Sevastopol, Donetsk and Luhansk regions and provision of state support for their integration. In 2016, the Refugee Reception Centre provided integration support to 52 persons from Ukraine. For 106 Ukrainians, integration support was launched in municipalities of the Republic of Lithuania. This programme is ongoing.

Q1.3. Which national institutions and/or authorities are involved in implementing the visa liberalisation process and what is their respective role in this process?²

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- participates in the formation and implementation of the visa policy of the Republic of Lithuania.

Ministry of the Interior

- forms state policy in the area of migration, organises, coordinates and controls its implementation.

Ministry of Social Security and Labour

- coordinates and supervises the provision of Lithuania's state support for the integration of aliens who have been granted asylum in the Republic of Lithuania;
- analyses the processes of integration of aliens; prepares and submits to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania draft legal acts on the integration of aliens; coordinates and supervises the provision of Lithuania's state support for the integration of aliens who have been granted asylum in the Republic of Lithuania.

Migration Department

- organises the issue of Schengen and national visas, certificates confirming the right of a citizen of an EU Member State to reside in the Republic of Lithuania temporarily or permanently, temporary residence permits in the Republic of Lithuania, permits of a long-term resident of the Republic of Lithuania to reside in the EU, residence cards of a family member of a Union citizen (temporary and permanent), travel documents of stateless persons and refugees, an alien's passports, an alien's registration certificates;
- takes decisions on the issue of temporary residence permits in the Republic of Lithuania, permits of a long-term resident of the Republic of Lithuania to reside in the EU, aliens' passports;
- conducts the asylum procedure and takes decisions on these issues, organises the enforcement of decisions taken on asylum issues;
- takes decisions on the return or expulsion of aliens from the Republic of Lithuania, organises the enforcement of decisions taken on the expulsion of aliens from the Republic of Lithuania, issues emergency travel documents;
- compiles and administers the national no-entry list;
- submits proposals to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania regarding the labour market and employment support, employment of aliens (from third countries) in the Republic of Lithuania.

Diplomatic missions and consular posts

- issue Schengen and national visas.

Police Department

- controls and coordinates the activities of migration divisions and issues to them recommendations and instructions.

Migration divisions

- issue decisions on the obligation of aliens to leave the Republic of Lithuania, return to a foreign state, enforce the expulsion of aliens from the Republic of Lithuania;
- receive aliens' applications for asylum in the Republic of Lithuania and conduct initial interviews;
- exercise the state control of the legal stay of aliens;
- in implementing the principle of the free movement of persons in the European Union, issue documents attesting to the right of citizens of an EU Member State to reside in the Republic of Lithuania, issue temporary residence permits in the Republic of Lithuania, permits of a long-term resident of the Republic of Lithuania to reside in the EU, residence cards of a family member of a Union citizen (temporary and permanent), travel documents of stateless persons and

² For example: changes in instructions for border patrol agents and in equipment.

refugees, an alien's passports, verify letters of invitation for an alien to temporarily enter the Republic of Lithuania, extend the validity of Schengen visas.

Refugee Reception Centre

- implements the social integration of aliens who have been granted asylum;
- accommodates the aliens who have been granted the cooling-off period during which they, as present or former victims of crimes related to trafficking in human beings, must decide whether to cooperate with a pre-trial investigation body or a court investigating the crimes related to trafficking in human beings.

Lithuanian Labour Exchange

- issues work permits to aliens;
- takes decisions on conformity of an alien's employment to needs of the labour market of the Republic of Lithuania.

State Border Guard Service

- participates in implementing the state control of migration processes;
- receives and maintains detained aliens who have been provided with accommodation;
- conducts initial asylum procedures;
- enforces the expulsion of aliens from the Republic of Lithuania;
- issues Schengen visas;
- exercises control over persons entering the Republic of Lithuania;
- issues decisions refusing admission of aliens into the Republic of Lithuania.

Q1.4. Were there changes in your national legislation in connection with the introduction of the visa-free regimes? If yes, please explain their scope and impact on nationals coming from the third countries analysed in this study?

It should be noted that no separate legal acts have been adopted in respect of the countries analysed in the study.

Q1.5. Where there any public/policy debates related to the visa liberalisation process in Lithuania? If yes, what were the main issues discussed and how did this impact national policy?

Good neighbourly relations with the Eastern Partnership countries are a continuous priority of Lithuania's foreign policy. Lithuania is an active supporter of the Eastern Partnership policy in the EU, demonstrating political support and additionally supporting the Eastern Partnership countries in bilateral projects. Lithuania has always been positive about visa liberalisation for both the Eastern Partnership countries and the countries of the Western Balkans. It should be noted that Lithuania provided expert support to Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova in implementing commitments under their Association Agreements. In compliance with the requirements of national law, positions of the Republic of Lithuania regarding requirements for the amendment of the Visa Code in respect of the countries analysed in the study were prepared and considered at the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. The Members of the Seimas and the President of the Republic of Lithuania urged an accelerated lifting of the visa requirement for Ukraine and Georgia, just as for the Western Balkan countries.

Q1.6. Do you have any other remarks relevant to this section that were not covered above? If yes, please highlight them below.

The scale of irregular migration in Lithuania is decreasing, both in respect of detained persons who enter Lithuania by illegally crossing the state border and those who are detained within the country. Such a decrease can be attributed to the strengthening of controls at external borders and the formalisation/extension of grounds for the detention of asylum applicants. This has led to reduction of irregular migration of citizens of Georgia. It is also worth noting that for the majority of irregular migrants, Lithuania is a transit state on the way to Western European or Scandinavian countries.

1.2. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

N.B. *Visa waiver agreement dates: FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia (19/12/2009), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (15/12/2010), Moldova (28/4/2014), Georgia (28/3/2017) and Ukraine (11/6/2017).

Table 1.2.1. Total number of external border-crossings (persons) by nationals of visa-free countries³

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of external border-crossings (persons) by nationals of visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	336	606	491	1109	2505	1553	1719	1902	1978	1853	1859	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	82	223	534	656	759	476	598	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Serbia	1	0	607	1896	3122	3838	4008	2740	2670	2492	2685	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Albania	459	206	115	123	144	137	149	205	309	466	373	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Bosnia and Herzegovina	317	105	116	143	198	244	752	183	308	333	267	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Moldova	13490	12745	8074	8857	7647	8140	7559	7008	9185	10297	12245	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Georgia	3211	3821	1512	2248	3513	4949	4451	6824	8333	7904	11930	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Ukraine	125984	104554	90082	97516	104704	121060	136198	137993	166236	221648	294861	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Total	143798 3.6%	122037 3.1%	100997 3%	111892 2.8%	121915 2.7%	140144 2.4%	155370 2.6%	157511 2.8%	189778 3.7%	245469 4.4%	324818 5.6%	
Total number of external border crossings (persons)⁴	3981	3916	3341	3905	4514	5617	5913	5607	5153	5506	5777	Data of the State Border Guard Service
	856	444	271	138	402	233	722	908	236	542	176	

³ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. The indicator refers to border-crossings at the external borders of the EU plus NO.

⁴ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of border crossings (persons)

Table 1.2.2. Total number of detections of irregular border-crossings from nationals of visa-free countries⁵

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of detections of irregular border-crossings from nationals of visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Serbia	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Bosnia and Herzegovina	14	0	3	5	2	5	1	0	1	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Moldova	5	8	33	51	139	269	161	144	65	9	2	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Georgia	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	0	1	2	2	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Ukraine	21 16.6%	10 9.3%	37 24.6%	58 33.1%	143 51.8%	279 54.9%	163 46.4%	144 30.5%	67 24.8%	11 7%	5 5.8%	
Total	126	107	150	175	276	508	351	472	270	156	86	Data of the State Border Guard Service

⁵ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Frontex: Number of detections of illegal border-crossings by sea and land; Available at: <http://frontex.europa.eu/trends-and-routes/migratory-routes-map/>

Table 1.2.3. Total number of short-stay visa applications by third country⁶

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of short-stay visa applications by third country	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	3	16	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Montenegro	0	6	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Serbia	5	43	28	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Albania	11	166	171	104	18	1	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	3	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Moldova	104	2055	1653	1914	1918	1559	1839	490	25	33	11	Data of the Visa Information System
Georgia	279	1823	1999	1688	2816	3567	4223	3863	2608	3749	1197	Data of the Visa Information System
Ukraine	967	15720	13829	15397	22154	26427	30040	37891	74127	91420	48949	Data of the Visa Information System
Total	1371	19832	17690	19107 6,9%	26908 7,8%	31554 7,6%	36102 7,7%	42244 9,1%	76761 18,1%	95202 22,6%	50157 12,1%	
Total number of short-stay visa applications – all third countries⁷	NI	NI	NI	276880	345765	416851	471838	463709	423189	421143	413966	Eurostat data

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is below:

Visas are not required for persons who hold passports with biometric data. If a person does not such a travel document, the standard visa procedure will apply. Data of the national Visa Information System are used.

⁶ See DG HOME Schengen Visa statistics, Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy_en#stats. For MS that still apply visa requirements, please remove the N/A and complete the table in full.

⁷ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of short-stay visa applications.

Table 1.2.4. Total number of short-stay visa application refusals by third country⁸

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of short-stay visa application <u>refusals</u> by third country	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Serbia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Albania	0	5	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Moldova	18	238	310	367	217	51	51	8	0	0	0	Data of the Visa Information System
Georgia	7	419	410	671	718	1071	1197	951	593	532	199	Data of the Visa Information System
Ukraine	17	328	278	172	359	197	304	119	747	177	358	Data of the Visa Information System
Total	42	990	1000	1213	1295	1319	1552	1078	1340	709	557	
Total number of short-stay visa application <u>refusals</u> – all third countries⁹	NI	NI	NI	3 501	3 641	3 830	4 262	4 253	5 757	4 472	4 932	Eurostat data

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is below:

Visas are not required for persons who hold passports with biometric data. If a person does not such a travel document, the standard visa procedure will apply. Data of the national Visa Information System are used.

⁸ See DG HOME Schengen Visa statistics, Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy_en#stats. For MS that still apply visa requirements, please remove the N/A and complete the table in full.

⁹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of short-stay visa application refusals.

Table 1.2.5. Total number of asylum applications received from visa-free countries¹⁰

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of asylum applications received from visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Serbia	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Albania	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Moldova	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Georgia	13	9	76	249	229	305	121	117	48	7	10	Data of the Migration Department
Ukraine	1	3	1	1	0	5	5	70	65	26	33	Data of the Migration Department
Total	15 3.1%	13 2.4%	77 17.1%	252 50%	229 43.4%	310 49.4%	126 31.5%	187 37.7%	113 38.8%	33 7.7%	43 7.1%	
Total number of asylum applications – all third countries¹¹	480	540	449	503	527	627	399	496	291	425	599	Data of the Migration Department

¹⁰ See Eurostat: Asylum and first-time asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded) [migr_asyappctza]. For Georgia and Ukraine, monthly date may be considered.

¹¹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of asylum applications.

Table 1.2.6. Total number of positive decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries¹²

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of <u>positive</u> decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Serbia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Moldova	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Georgia	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Ukraine	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	31	26	0	2	Data of the Migration Department
Total¹³	3	0	0	0	0	4	5	32	26	0	2	

¹² See Eurostat: First instance decisions on applications by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded) [migr_asydcfsta]; Total positive decisions, including only refugee status and subsidiary protection, rounded up to the unit of 5.

¹³ 8 countries under study.

Table 1.2.7. Total number of negative decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries¹⁴

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of <u>negative</u> decisions on asylum applicants from visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Serbia	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Moldova	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Georgia	3	4	19	114	213	232	69	33	33	9	2	Data of the Migration Department
Ukraine	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	7	26	22	1	Data of the Migration Department
Total¹⁵	3	7	19	116	215	233	69	40	59	31	3	

¹⁴ See Eurostat: First instance decisions on applications by citizenship, age and sex, Annual aggregated data (rounded) [migr_asydcfsta]

¹⁵ 8 countries under study.

Table 1.2.8. Total number of positive and negative decisions on asylum applicants (top five nationalities, not limited to visa-free countries)¹⁶

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017) (insert all available data)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)	
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017		
Total number of <u>positive</u> decisions on asylum applicants (top five nationalities, not limited to visa-free countries)													
Nationality 1	Russia	Russia	Russia	Russia	Russia	Russia	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Ukraine	Syria	Syria		Data of the Migration Department
Nationality 2	Uzbekistan	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Russia	Russia	Iraq	Stateless	Eritrea		Data of the Migration Department
Nationality 3	Ethiopia	Uzbekistan	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka	Belarus	Belarus	Belarus	Ukraine	Russia	Russia	Stateless		Data of the Migration Department
Nationality 4	Iraq	Iraq	Uzbekistan	Belarus	Iraq	Eritrea	Syria	Syria	Afghanistan	Azerbaijan	Tajikistan		Data of the Migration Department
Nationality 5	Cameroon	Cameroon	Iraq	Iraq	Nepal	Ukraine	Ukraine	Belarus	Tajikistan	Tajikistan	Turkey		Data of the Migration Department
Total¹⁷	3	0	0	0	0	4	5	32	26	0	2		Out of 8 countries under study
Total number of <u>negative</u> decisions on asylum applicants (top five nationalities, not limited to visa-free countries)													
Nationality 1	Russia	Russia	Russia	Georgia	Georgia	Georgia	Georgia	Georgia	Georgia	Ukraine	Russia		Data of the Migration Department
Nationality 2	Vietnam	Belarus	Georgia	Russia	Russia	Vietnam	Vietnam	Vietnam	Ukraine	Russia	Armenia		Data of the Migration Department
Nationality 3	Georgia	Georgia	Cuba	Vietnam	Kyrgyzstan	Russia	Russia	Russia	Russia	Georgia	Belarus		Data of the Migration Department
Nationality 4	Kazakhstan	India	Pakistan	Armenia	Sri Lanka	Kyrgyzstan	Belarus	India	Belarus	Iraq	Iraq		Data of the Migration Department
Nationality 5	Nepal	DR Congo	Stateless	Afghanistan	Uzbekistan	Afghanistan	Pakistan	Ukraine	Vietnam	Afghanistan	Cuba		Data of the Migration Department
Total¹⁸	3	7	19	116	215	233	69	40	59	31	3		

¹⁶ This is to provide a broader context; any nationality may be included in the top five. See Eurostat: First instance decisions on applications by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded) [migr_asydcfstal]; Total positive decisions, including only refugee status and subsidiary protection, rounded up to the unit of 5.

¹⁷ Out of 8 countries under study. TOP 5 is calculated for the whole period, not for each year separately

¹⁸ Out of 8 countries under study. TOP 5 is calculated for the whole period, not for each year separately

Table 1.2.9. Total number of residence permits applications (all residence permits) by visa-free country¹⁹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of residence permits applications (all residence permits) by visa-free country	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	3	1	3	1	2	2	3	1	4	2	Eurostat data
Montenegro	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Serbia	NI	6	4	4	6	4	9	6	6	4	5	Eurostat data
Albania	NI	6	5	2	2	5	10	10	13	6	18	Eurostat data
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	0	1	0	1	2	2	1	1	3	0	Eurostat data
Moldova	NI	252	62	26	34	31	34	30	44	137	157	Eurostat data
Georgia	NI	94	72	34	45	122	95	159	142	116	58	Eurostat data
Ukraine	NI	987	366	222	409	773	879	2053	1908	2828	4725	Eurostat data
Total	NI	1348 25.4%	511 19.2%	291 15.6%	498 20.5%	939 25.4%	1031 22.4%	2262 31.2%	2115 40.8%	3098 45.9%	4965 48.6%	
Total number of residence permits applications (all residence permits)²⁰	NI	5 298	2 659	1 861	2 429	3 696	4 601	7 252	5 178	6 750	10 207	Eurostat data

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is below:

Eurostat data used in the study are available from 2008.

¹⁹ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat - Number of first residence permits issued by reason, EU-28, 2008-2016 [migr_resfirst]

²⁰ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of residence permit applications.

Table 1.2.10. Total number of identity document fraud instances by visa-free country²¹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>	
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>												
Total number of identity document fraud instances by visa-free country	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017		
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	For the purposes of these statistics, the following are regarded as identity documents: passport, ID card, residence permit.
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Serbia	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	1	1	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Moldova	10	6	17	7	5	14	2	0	2	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Georgia	1	2	5	1	6	3	5	7	0	1	9	9	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Ukraine	0	1	3	0	2	0	1	1	2	5	5	5	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Total	11 28.9%	9 15.5%	25 39.6%	8 13.7%	13 29.5%	21 38.8%	8 23.5%	8 22.8%	4 10.2%	8 18.6%	15 37.5%		
Total number of identity document fraud instances²²	38	58	63	58	44	54	34	35	39	43	40		Data of the State Border Guard Service

²¹ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

²² All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of identity document fraud instances.

2.

Positive Impact of Visa
Liberalisation in Lithuania

2.1. DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

Q2.1. What impact did the visa liberalisation have in Lithuania? Please provide a short description of your national situation.

Tourism. Since 2012, when Lithuania started collecting information on the country of origin of incoming tourists, the number of tourists from the countries considered in the study has increased almost threefold and in 2017 amounted to 3% of the total number of tourists in Lithuania. The largest growth in the flow of tourists is observed from the Eastern Partnership countries (especially Ukraine). According to experts, visa liberalisation has contributed positively to growth in the tourism sector.

Investments, imports and exports. Foreign direct investments from the Western Balkan and the Eastern Partnership countries also increased, though less markedly. It should be noted that the major share of direct investments consisted of investments from Ukraine and Georgia.

Comparing imports and exports of goods, the largest trading partner among the countries under study was Ukraine. The value of Lithuanian exports of goods to Ukraine in 2017, compared with 2016, increased by 20% - to EUR 736 million, while the value of imports grew by 18.1% to EUR 237.8 million.

Students. Citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries entered Lithuania on the grounds of higher education or research more often than the citizens of the Western Balkan countries. The number of permits issued Moldovan citizens remained fairly stable throughout the period²³, and the number of temporary residence permits issued to Georgian and Ukrainian citizens on the grounds of higher education or research steadily increased during the period under consideration²⁴.

Nevertheless, it cannot be concluded that the growth of the number of students is directly related to the liberalisation of the visa regime, because a temporary residence permit or national D visa is required for residence in Lithuania on the grounds of higher education and research. It is necessary for all aliens irrespective of the visa regime. Moreover, the visa-free regime for Georgia and Ukraine came into force as late as in 2017, while more accurate conclusions require a longer time span.

Lawful activity (business). The number of first permits issued to citizens of the Western Balkan countries to engage in lawful activities (business) was fairly stable and small (1-3 permits issued per year), in the case of Moldova, trends in issued permits were similar throughout the period (1-16 permits per year), while the number of permits issued to citizens of Georgia and Ukraine²⁵ grew until 2014. However, starting from 2015, the number of permits issued to citizens of these countries engaged in lawful activities began to decrease significantly. This can be explained by the fact that requirements have been changed and stricter controls have been put in place for those who enter or wish to extend a temporary residence permit on the ground of lawful activities.

Q2.2. Did Lithuania assess the impact of visa liberalisation as positive? If yes, please explain the reasons for your positive assessment and how this was reached (i.e. who was involved in the assessment and how they reached this conclusion). If no, explain why this is the case.

In Lithuania, no assessment of the impact of visa liberalisation on the countries under study has been performed. According to currently available information, Lithuania could have been affected the most by visa liberalisation for Georgia and Ukraine, but it did not come into force for these countries until 2017, making it complicated to draw any conclusions due to the short time span.

Nevertheless, it is worth pointing out that good interstate relations with the Eastern Partnership countries are a continuous priority of Lithuania's foreign policy. Lithuania is an active supporter of the EU's Eastern Partnership policy, demonstrating

²³ The number of residence permits issued to citizens of Moldova on the grounds of research or higher education ranged from 2 to 15 permits per year during the period under consideration.

²⁴ For example, the number of residence permits issued to citizens of Georgia on the grounds of research or higher education amounted in 2008 to 3, in 2017 – 30, to citizens of Ukraine: in 2008 – 39, in 2017 – 122.

²⁵ To citizens of Georgia: in 2008 – 13, in 2014 – 122, to citizens of Ukraine: in 2008 – 30, in 2014 – 790 issued residence permits on the ground of lawful activity.

political support and additionally supporting individual Eastern Partnership countries in bilateral projects. Lithuania has always been in favour of visa liberalisation in the countries under study.

Q2.2.1. Did your collaboration with relevant third countries improve within the field of migration since the introduction of visa liberalisation?²⁶ If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Lithuania is not a popular country of destination among irregular migrants, therefore, there are not many of them.

It should be mentioned that in 2017, an agreement was signed between the State Labour Inspectorate of Lithuania and the State Labour Service of Ukraine providing for the exchange of information on contract workers in the territories of both countries, as well as negotiations are underway regarding cooperation with **Serbia** on readmission issues.

To sum up, the experience of cooperation with the third countries considered in the study is negligible and is still being shaped.

Q2.2.2. Did Lithuania identify specific economic benefits?²⁷ If yes, please list them and provide a short description for each.

According to data of the Bank of Lithuania, direct investments of the **Western Balkan** countries until 2012 amounted to approximately EUR 0.01 million per quarter²⁸. Although since 2013 certain growth has been observed, the sum of direct investments in these countries is negligible and amounts to a maximum of EUR 0.18 million per quarter.

Meanwhile, in the case of the **Eastern Partnership** countries, investments were somewhat more significant. The largest share of direct investments from these countries consists of investments from **Ukraine**. From 2010 until the end of 2016, the value of Ukraine's foreign direct investments accumulated in Lithuania increased by 37.4% and in 2017 amounted to approximately EUR 20 million per quarter.

In the case of **Moldova**, direct investments amounted to approximately EUR 0.1 million per quarter starting from 2014 and grew to EUR 0.2 million per quarter in 2017.

Direct investments from **Georgia** amounted to about 1.7 million starting from 2007 and increased up to EUR 4 million in 2010 and already in 2017 accounted for almost EUR 7 million per quarter.

To sum up, **the growth of direct investments from visa-free countries was observed**. The main countries of economic cooperation are Ukraine and Georgia. Nevertheless, the visa-free regime for these countries came into effect as late as in 2017, therefore it is difficult to draw conclusions on the impact of visa liberalisation on this growth due to the short time span.

Q2.2.3. Did Lithuania experience a growth in tourism²⁹ from third-country nationals under the visa liberalisation regime? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples. Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 2.2.1.

Yes.

In 2012, the number of tourists from the countries considered in the study in Lithuania accounted for as little as 1.2% of the total number of tourists. **Since then, steady growth has been observed, and the number of tourists from the countries under study currently amounts to approximately 3% of the total number of tourists in Lithuania.**

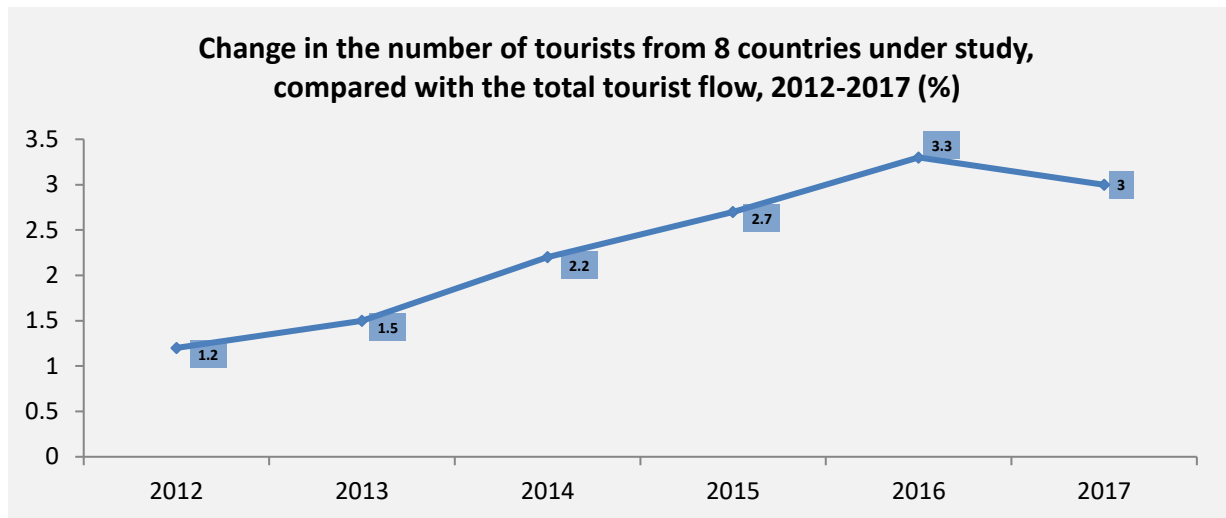
It is worth noting that statistics of accommodation establishments disaggregated by country of origin began to be collected in Lithuania only starting from 2012. Until 2012, statistical data were collected by country and continent groups.

²⁶ For example: in cases of return and readmission.

²⁷ For example: an increase in direct investments from the respective third countries to Lithuania.

²⁸ The Bank of Lithuania publishes foreign investment statistics on a quarterly basis.

²⁹ For example: third-country national visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments increased.



Source: Department of Statistics

Q2.2.4. Did Lithuania experience an impact on its labour market since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples, including background information on the link between visa free travel and access to the labour market in the national context. Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 2.2.3.

Visa liberalisation for the countries of the **Western Balkans**³⁰, **Moldova** and **Georgia**³¹ did not have a significant impact on the labour market in Lithuania.

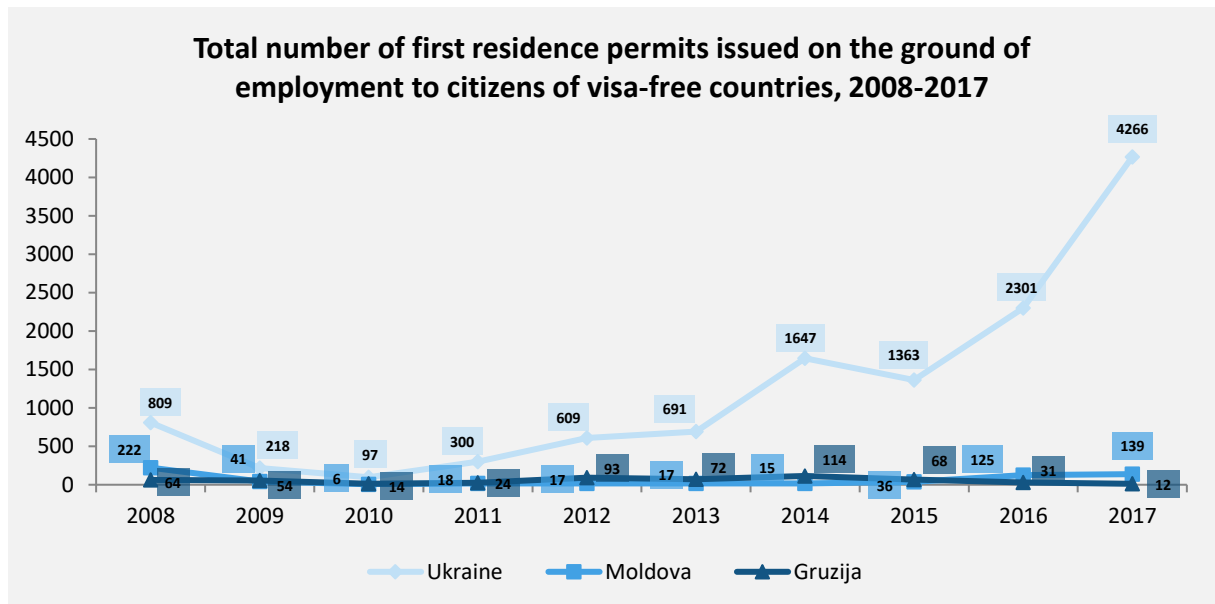
Meanwhile, the number of permits issued to citizens of **Ukraine** on the ground of employment during the period of interest was the highest among all the countries considered in the study. In 2017, Lithuania issued to Ukrainian citizens 4 266 permits³², which is almost 2 times more than in 2016, when 2 301 permits were issued on the ground of employment. It should be noted that the number of national D-type visas issued to Ukrainian citizens on the basis of employment also increased. In 2017, Ukrainians were issued approximately 12 000 such visas.

However, it is difficult to assess whether the liberalisation of the visa regime was a key factor for such an increase, as this could have been determined by the growing need for workers and favourable economic climate in Lithuania. It is worth noting that the visa-free regime for Ukraine came into force as late as in the summer of 2017, therefore it is difficult to draw conclusions due to the short time span considered.

³⁰ As regards FYROM and Serbia, the number of first permits issued on the ground of lawful activity remained stable and negligible. As regards Montenegro, no permit was issued. As regards Albania, before visa liberalisation no permit was issued, while after that date, the number of applications amounted to 7.

³¹ In the case of Moldova, the largest number of issued permits was recorded in 2008, i.e. even before visa liberalisation, but from 2016 onwards, a slight increase was again observed. The largest number of issued permits to citizens of Georgia was observed in 2014, but later this number decreased.

³² Based on Eurostat data



Q2.2.5. Did Lithuania experience a growth in the number of students arriving from third countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples. Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 2.2.4.

No.

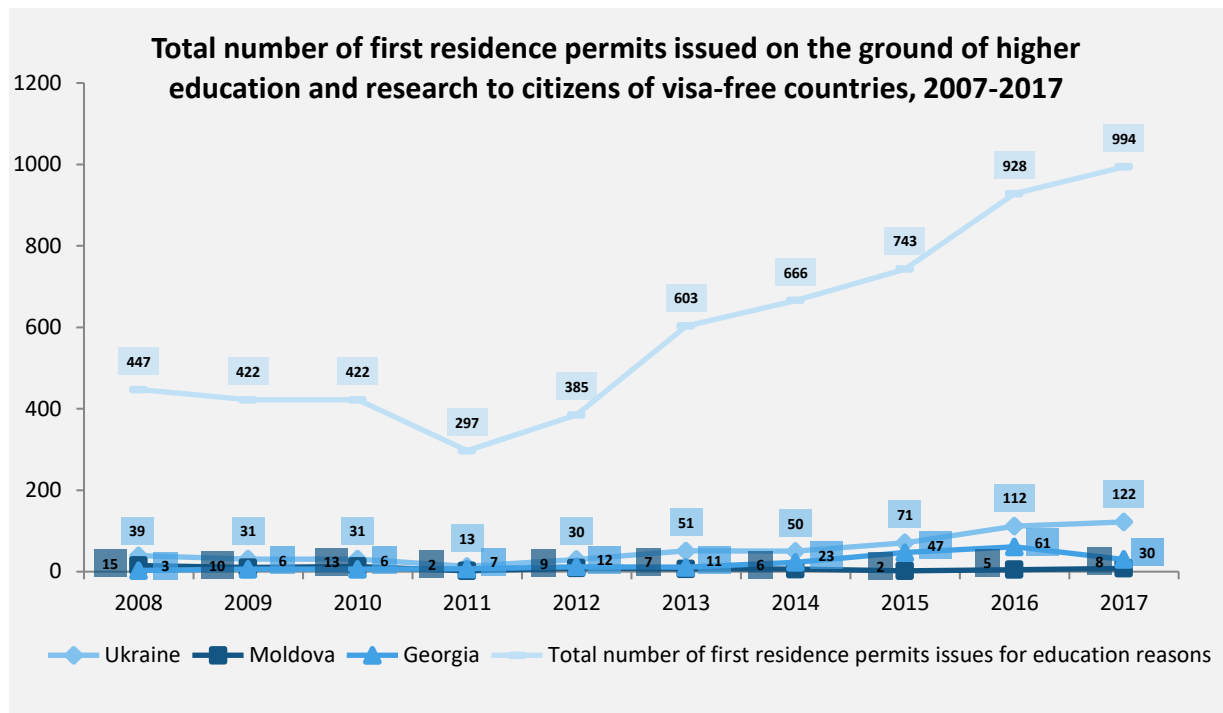
Citizens of the **Eastern Partnership** countries entered Lithuania on the ground of higher education or research more often than citizens of the **Western Balkans**³³. The number of permits issued to citizens of **Moldova** was fairly stable throughout the period, while the number of permits issued to citizens of **Georgia** and **Ukraine** on the ground of higher education or research increased steadily over the period under consideration (see the table below).

Nevertheless, it cannot be concluded that the growth of the number of students is directly related to the liberalisation of the visa regime, as students or pupils wishing to reside in Lithuania on the ground of higher education or research require temporary residence permits in Lithuania³⁴.

The growing number of students from third countries may also be explained by the increase in the total number of visitors and the continuous promotion of Lithuanian higher education abroad. Moreover, the visa-free regime for Georgia and Ukraine, the most popular countries of origin of students, came into force as late as in 2017, and more accurate conclusions require a longer time span.

³³ FYROM: Throughout the period under examination (2007-2017), 8 temporary residence permits in the Republic of Lithuania were issued on the ground of higher education or research, but no citizens of Montenegro were issued any residence permit on the ground of higher education or research; citizens of Serbia were issued 9 permits, Albania – 35, Bosnia and Herzegovina – 1.

³⁴ A temporary residence permit in the Republic of Lithuania on the ground of higher education or research may be issued to an alien in the cases when he intends to acquire education, study at an educational establishment, undergo traineeship, up-skilling, participate in vocational training (Article 40(6) of the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens).

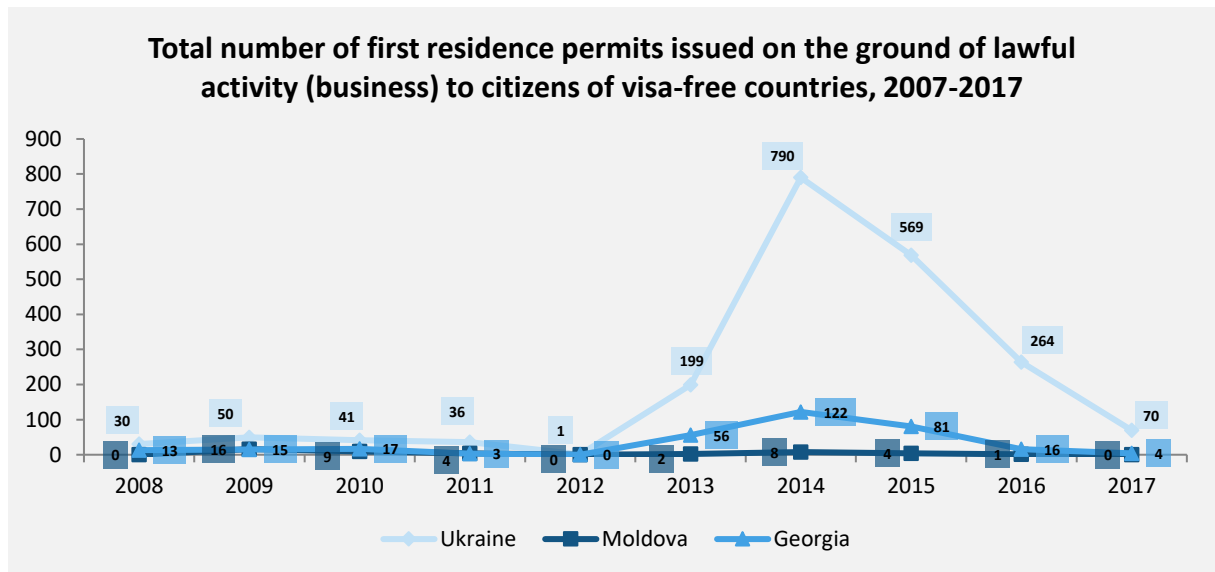


Source: Eurostat

Q2.2.6. Did Lithuania experience a growth of entrepreneurship, including of self-employed persons from third countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples, including background information on the access to self-employment from visa free regimes in the national context. Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 2.2.5.

No.

The number of permits issued for the first time to citizens of the **Western Balkan** countries on the ground of lawful activity (business) was fairly stable and small, trends in issued permits as regards citizens of **Moldova** remained similar throughout the period, while the number of permits issued to citizens of **Georgia** and **Ukraine** increased until 2014. However, since 2015, the number of permits issued to the citizens of these countries who are engaged in business activities has started to decline significantly. This can be explained by the tightening of the procedure for issuing temporary residence permits to engage in business activities as well as more active inspections of business activities undertaken by Lithuania. In 2017, the number of permits issued on this ground was the smallest since 2013, but the number of revoked permits was the largest. In 2017, 607 temporary residence permits were revoked upon establishing that an enterprise is fictitious or does not comply with requirements of the Law.



Source: Migration Department

Q2.2.7. Did Lithuania experience a growth in trade with third countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples (i.e. in which sectors / what type of goods or services).

According to data of the Department of Statistics, Lithuania's exports to Albania increased during the period under review. The main export products were forestry and logging products and related services, products of agriculture and hunting, food products, textile products. Meanwhile, the scale of imports from Albania is not equally significant. The largest share of imports consisted of edible vegetables, nuts, textile products.

Exports to Bosnia and Herzegovina increased steadily. The main export products making up the largest share of exports were food products, rubber and plastic products, electronic and optical products. The largest share of imports consisted of inorganic chemicals, organic or inorganic compounds of precious metals, of rare-earth metals, electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof, sound recording and reproducing apparatus, articles made of iron or steel.

The bulk of exports to FYROM consisted of food products, refined petroleum products, metal products, furniture; imports – edible vegetables, iron and steel and articles made of these materials, sugar and sugar-based confectionery, pharmaceutical products.

Montenegro has the lowest export turnover among all the countries of interest. The main export products were products of agriculture, food products, chemicals and furniture. The largest share in the structure of imports consisted of ships, boats and floating structures, pharmaceutical products.

The main export and import products to Moldova and Serbia were very similar: food products, refined petroleum products, furniture. Import structure: sunflower seeds, sanitary towels, wine, nuts.

In the case of Georgia, the main products with the largest share of exports were refined petroleum products, machinery and equipment, chemical products. Non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages, fruit and nuts accounted for the largest share of imports.

The largest trading partner among the countries covered by the study was Ukraine. In 2017, commodity turnover between Ukraine and Lithuania amounted to EUR 974 million. The value of Lithuanian exports of goods to Ukraine in 2017, compared with 2016, increased by 20% - up to EUR 736 million, while import value grew by 18.1% up to EUR 237.8 million.

The dynamics of Lithuanian exports of goods to Ukraine was significantly affected by the export of mineral oils, which accounts for approximately 60-70% of total exports of goods annually. In 2017, as much as 88% of all exports of goods of

Lithuanian origin to Ukraine was made up of three groups of goods: mineral oils, plastics in primary forms and fertilizers. In 2017, Ukraine was the 12th largest export market for Lithuanian goods. From Ukraine, Lithuania imported wood and wood products, animal or vegetable fats and oils and their cleavage products, iron and steel.

It is difficult to conclude whether the visa-free regime had an impact on trade growth, since, the visa-free regime for the main trading partner, namely, Ukraine, came into force as late as in the summer of 2017, and more accurate conclusions require a longer time span.

Q2.2.8. What other benefit (or positive impact) was identified by Lithuania in relation to visa liberalisation that was not already captured in the previous questions, if applicable?³⁵

Not applicable.

³⁵ For example: agreements with third countries for exchange of students, scholars; social benefits (social assistance, social trust and cooperation).

2.2. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Table 2.2.1. Total number of visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments from the visa-free countries³⁶

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments from the visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	112	194	75	164	253	213	Data of the Department of Statistics
Montenegro	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	28	69	68	172	80	78	Data of the Department of Statistics
Serbia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	246	588	436	600	2083	1810	Data of the Department of Statistics
Albania	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	115	134	375	343	225	235	Data of the Department of Statistics
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	74	772	110	204	196	253	Data of the Department of Statistics
Moldova	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	2690	2063	2545	2890	2545	2313	Data of the Department of Statistics
Georgia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	1706	2730	2370	4076	2165	2595	Data of the Department of Statistics
Ukraine	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	19366	28331	46789	59453	84017	83193	Data of the Department of Statistics
Total	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	24337 1.2%	34881 1.5%	52768 2.2%	67902 2.7%	91564 3.3%	90690 3%	
Total number of visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments³⁷	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	1977526	2184456	2363140	2502479	2746554	2928530	Data of the Department of Statistics

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why below:

Statistics of accommodation establishments disaggregated by country of origin began to be collected in Lithuania starting from 2012. Until that date, statistical data were collected by country and continent groups.

³⁶ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

³⁷ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of tourism visitors staying in hotels and other accommodation establishments.

Table 2.2.2. Total number of first-time residence permit applications received from visa-free country nationals³⁸

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of first-time residence applications received from the respective visa-free country	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	3	1	3	1	2	2	3	1	4	2	Eurostat data
Montenegro	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Serbia	NI	6	4	4	6	4	9	6	6	4	5	Eurostat data
Albania	NI	6	5	2	2	5	10	10	13	6	18	Eurostat data
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	0	1	0	1	2	2	1	1	3	0	Eurostat data
Moldova	NI	252	62	26	34	31	34	30	44	137	157	Eurostat data
Georgia	NI	94	72	34	45	122	95	159	142	116	58	Eurostat data
Ukraine	NI	987	366	222	409	773	879	2053	1908	2828	4725	Eurostat data
Total	NI	1348 25.4%	511 19.2%	291 15.6%	498 20.5%	939 25.4%	1031 22.4%	2262 31.2%	2115 40.8%	3098 45.9%	4965 48.6%	
Total number of first-time residence applications³⁹	NI	5298	2659	1861	2429	3696	4601	7252	5178	6750	10 207	Eurostat data ⁴⁰

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why below:

Eurostat data used in the study are available from 2008.

³⁸ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

³⁹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of first-time temporary residence applications.

⁴⁰ Migr_resfirst

Table 2.2.3. Total number of first residence permits issued for remunerated activities reasons to visa-free country nationals⁴¹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or <u>at least</u> 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of permits issued for remunerated activities reasons to visa-free country nationals	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	2	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	Eurostat data
Montenegro	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Serbia	NI	5	3	1	3	0	4	6	3	2	3	Eurostat data
Albania	NI	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	1	0	Eurostat data
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	0	Eurostat data
Moldova	NI	222	41	6	18	17	17	15	36	125	139	Eurostat data
Georgia	NI	64	54	14	24	93	72	114	68	31	12	Eurostat data
Ukraine	NI	809	218	97	300	609	691	1647	1363	2301	4266	Eurostat data
Total	NI	1102 26.6%	317 23.3%	118 20.0%	346 29.1%	720 33.3%	787 27.9%	1788 37.3%	1471 52.7%	2464 60.4%	4420 58.4%	
Total number of permits issued for remunerated activities reasons⁴²	NI	4140	1358	589	1189	2163	2822	4800	2789	4082	7572	Eurostat data

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why below:

Eurostat data used in the study are available from 2008.

⁴¹ See Eurostat: Number of first residence permits issued by reason, EU-28, 2008-2016 [migr_resfirst]

⁴² All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of permits issued for remunerated activities reasons.

Table 2.2.4. Total number of first residence permits issued for education reasons to visa-free country nationals⁴³

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of permits issued for education reasons to visa-free country nationals	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	Eurostat data
Montenegro	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Serbia	NI	0	0	1	0	3	1	0	2	0	2	Eurostat data
Albania	NI	2	2	1	0	2	3	4	9	3	9	Eurostat data
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Moldova	NI	15	10	13	2	9	7	6	2	5	8	Eurostat data
Georgia	NI	3	6	6	7	12	11	23	47	61	30	Eurostat data
Ukraine	NI	39	31	31	13	30	51	50	71	112	122	Eurostat data
Total	NI	59 13.2%	49 11.6%	55 13.0%	22 7.4%	57 14.8%	75 12.4%	83 12.5%	132 17.8%	182 19.6%	172 17.3%	
Total number of permits issued for education reasons⁴⁴	NI	447	422	422	297	385	603	666	743	928	994	Eurostat data

⁴³ See Eurostat: Number of first residence permits issued by reason, EU-28, 2008-2016 [migr_resfirst]⁴⁴ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of permits issued for education reasons.

Table 2.2.5. Total number of first residence permits issued to entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons) from visa-free countries⁴⁵

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of first residence permits issued for entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons) from visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Montenegro	NI	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Serbia	NI	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	2	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Albania	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Migration Department
Moldova	NI	0	16	9	4	0	2	8	4	1	0	Data of the Migration Department
Georgia	NI	13	15	17	3	0	56	122	81	16	4	Data of the Migration Department
Ukraine	NI	30	50	41	36	1	199	790	569	264	70	Data of the Migration Department
Total	NI	44 17.5%	83 19.4%	67 17.9%	43 4.3%	1 0.1%	258 9.6%	924 20.6%	657 24.7%	281 23.6%	74 28.0%	
Total number of first residence permits issued for entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons)⁴⁶	NI	252	429	373	993	1743	2681	4481	2660	1193	264	Data of the Migration Department

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why below:

The total number of residence permits by citizenship issued for the first time to citizens of visa-free countries on the ground of lawful activity (business) is not available. Only general statistics are provided.

⁴⁵ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

⁴⁶ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of first residence permits issued for entrepreneurs (including self-employed persons).

3.

Challenges of Visa
Liberalisation in Lithuania

3.1. DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

Q3.1. Did Lithuania face certain challenges (if any) since the introduction of visa liberalisation? Please provide a short description of your national situation.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Section 3.2., while specific challenges can be detailed in sub-questions Q3.1.2. to Q3.1.7.

Illegal employment. Lithuania is facing an increase in the illegal employment of citizens of Ukraine. In 2016, Ukrainian citizens accounted for as much as 78.3% (47 detected cases) of all detected illegally employed aliens. In 2017, they accounted for 68% (89 detected cases) of all detected illegally employed aliens (130).

Overstay. Citizens of the Western Balkans overstayed in Lithuania just 2 times throughout the period under study. Citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries overstayed in Lithuania more often. As regards Georgia, 66 cases of overstay were detected during the period under study, as regards Moldova – 96 cases and Ukraine – 1 035 cases. During 2015-2017, the number of Ukrainian overstayers grew (in 2015 - 119, in 2016 – 168, in 2017 – 182) and amounted to approximately 15% of the total number of overstayers.

Refusals of entry. When comparing the flow of incoming citizens of Georgia before and after visa liberalisation, it is clear that the number of entries by citizens of this country increased twofold. As the number of entries by Georgians grew, the number of refusals of entry increased as well. Ukraine remained, both in 2016 and 2017, among the TOP 3 countries whose citizens violated entry, stay and transit rules. Nevertheless, the number of refusals of entry is not proportional to the growth in the number of entries and remained fairly low. The number of citizens of the Western Balkan countries and Moldova whose entry into Lithuania was refused during the period under consideration is negligible.

Crimes. Citizens of Georgia, in comparison with other countries considered in the study, committed the largest number of crimes resulting in court rulings. In respect of citizens of Georgia, 619 rulings were passed for crimes committed by these citizens in the period from 2007 until 2017 and 239 rulings – for crimes committed by citizens of all other countries under study. Illegal border crossings accounted for the majority of crimes.

Q3.1.1. If applicable, please categorise your answer to Q3.1. by third country:

Western Balkans - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina

There are no challenges related to citizens of the Western Balkan countries.

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine

See Q3.1.

Q3.1.2. Did Lithuania encounter a rise in illegal employment since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.5.

In 2016, the State Labour Inspectorate detected 58 illegally employed foreign citizens, of whom 47 were citizens of **Ukraine** (78.3% of all detected illegally employed aliens). In 2017, out of 130 illegally employed aliens, 89 were Ukrainian citizens (68%). Attention should be drawn to the fact that the illegally employed Ukrainian citizens mostly worked in the construction sector.

Nevertheless, general trends are still not well-established and it is difficult to compare indicators, as visa liberalisation for Ukrainian citizens entered into force as late as in the middle of 2017.

Q3.1.3. Did Lithuania encounter a rise in smuggled and/or trafficked persons from the visa-free countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Tables 3.2.6. and 3.2.7.

No.

It should be noted that statistics on smuggled and/or trafficked persons disaggregated by country of origin/citizenship are not available.

Q3.1.4. Did Lithuania encounter a rise in the number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.8.

No.

During 2007-2008, there was not a single case from the countries considered in the study which resulted in a court ruling on the smuggling of persons. In 2009, there was 1 person from Moldova in respect of whom a decision was taken regarding the abovementioned activity.

In 2010, the largest number of court rulings on the smuggling of persons was passed. Such rulings were passed against 5 citizens of Ukraine, which made up 20% of the total number of persons against whom rulings were passed regarding this activity. This is the highest percentage throughout the period under study.

From 2011 to 2016, the number of court rulings on the smuggling of persons remained small, with 1 or 2 persons convicted of this criminal act per year. In 2017, no court ruling was passed in respect of the countries of interest.

During the period under consideration, there was no citizen of FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania or Bosnia and Herzegovina against whom a ruling was passed regarding this criminal act.

Q3.1.5. Did Lithuania encounter a rise in the number of nationals found to be illegally present from the visa-free countries since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.9.

No.

In respect of the Western Balkan countries, the number of persons illegally staying in the territory of Lithuania remained negligible throughout the period considered. Over the 10-year period under study, there were found 210 illegally staying citizens of Georgia and 177 citizens of Ukraine. Meanwhile, 23 citizens of Moldova were found in the territory of the country before the date of visa liberalisation and as few as 2 – after that date.

It should be noted that the number of citizens of both the Western Balkan countries and the Eastern Partnership countries illegally staying in the Republic of Lithuania decreased after the date of visa liberalisation.



Q3.1.6. Did Lithuania encounter a rise in the number of overstayers since the introduction of visa liberalisation? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.10.

No.

In respect of the Western Balkan countries, the number of overstayers remained negligible throughout the period considered. Citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries overstayed in Lithuania more often, but general trends have not yet fully taken shape and it is difficult to compare indicators, as visa liberalisation Georgia and Ukraine only applies from 2017.

Q3.1.7. Did Lithuania encounter any signs of possible misuse of the visa liberalisation?⁴⁷ If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

Some of the aliens who enter under the visa-free regime intend to take up employment, although the visa-free regime does not in its own entitle them to work. This could potentially lead to an increase in the risk of illegal employment, but the general trends are not well-established yet and are still taking shape.

Q3.2. Did Lithuania as a country of destination face any administrative burden⁴⁸ since the introduction of the visa-free regime? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

No.

Q3.2.1. If applicable, please list the institutions that faced administrative burdens.

Not applicable.

Q3.3. Did Lithuania as a country of destination face any security risks since the introduction of the visa-free regime? If yes, please provide a short description and specific examples.

No.

⁴⁷ For example, dealing with cases when persons enter the country legally but later become illegally employed, are staying in the country legally, but are working without a work permit or apply for asylum without reasonable grounds.

⁴⁸ For example: significant increase of residence permit applications, increased demand for work permits, more time-consuming border control procedure due to the lack of visas. etc.

Q3.3.1. Did the visa liberalisation regime increase the security risks in Lithuania? If yes, please provide a short description explaining why and provide examples.⁴⁹

No.

Q3.3.2. If applicable, what types of offences⁵⁰ were committed by third-country nationals in Lithuania after the commencement of the visa-free regime?⁵¹ Where there any significant differences compared to the time before the visa-free regime started?

Throughout the period, the same criminal acts prevailed: illegal border crossing, forgery of documents or possession of a forged document.

Q3.3.3. If applicable, what was the rate of offences (final court rulings) committed by third-country nationals⁵² in Lithuania after the commencement of the visa-free regime? Where there any significant differences compared to the time before the visa-free regime started?

The number of rulings passed against citizens of the Western Balkan countries throughout the period under review remained small. 74 court rulings were passed against citizens of Moldova before the date of visa liberalisation, another 10 persons were convicted following visa liberalisation. The persons were convicted of crimes in the following areas: illegal border crossing, forgery of documents, etc .

From 2007 by 2017, 239 court rulings were passed against citizens of Ukraine for the commission of crimes. The persons were convicted in the following areas: forgery of a document or possession of a forged document, unlawful pursuit of economic, commercial, financial or professional activities, smuggling of persons across the state border, etc.

From 2007 to 2017, 619 court rulings were passed against citizens of Georgia for committed crimes. The majority of them are the crimes of illegal border crossing, forgery of documents, etc.

Q3.4. What is the role and impact of irregular migration facilitators that provide their services to third-country nationals with an entry ban? Please provide a short description with specific examples about Lithuania situation and make a clear distinction between people who assist migrants and people who are profiting from facilitation.

Please answer this question by making a link with the data presented in Table 3.2.6, 3.2.7 and 3.2.8.

Information is available only concerning the persons convicted of smuggling of persons.

The chart below presents data on the total number of persons against whom court rulings were passed for the smuggling of persons throughout the period of 2007-2017. The data are summarised based on the statistics presented in Table 3.2.8. The percentage has been obtained based on the citizenship of the smugglers during the period in question taking into consideration the most frequently recurring countries.

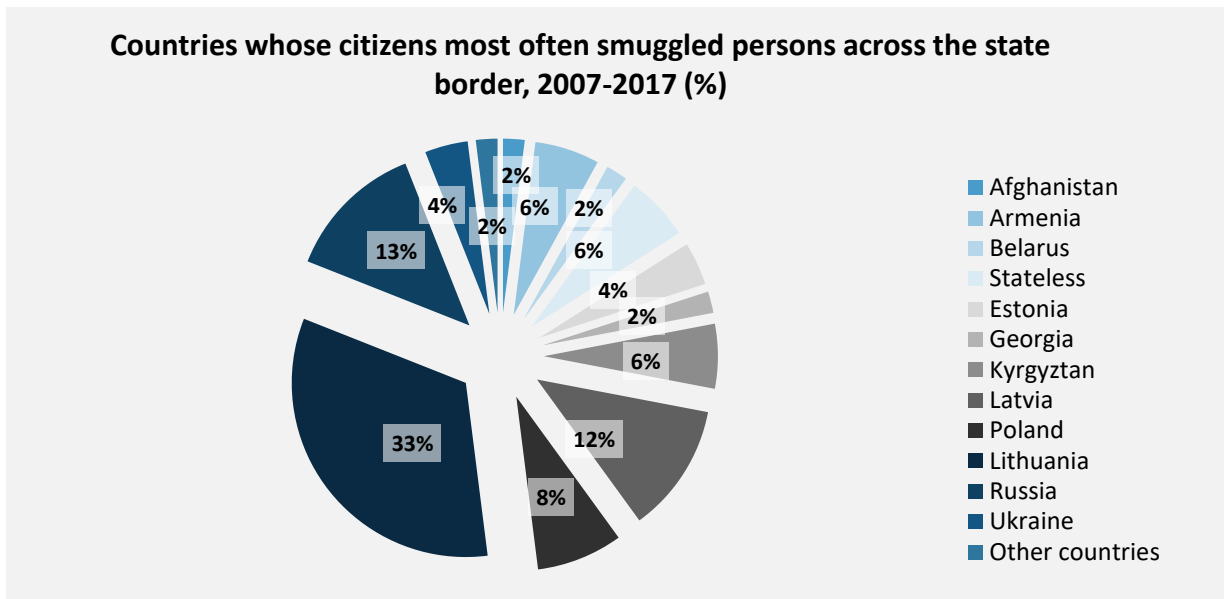
Persons were most often smuggled across the state border by citizens of Lithuania, Russia, Poland, Latvia and Kyrgyzstan.

⁴⁹ For example: did Lithuania identify any increased terrorism risks arising from the entry or residence of respective TCNs.

⁵⁰ Please use this pre-defined list of categories: cybercrime; drugs offences; economic and financial offences; illicit immigration; illicit trafficking (not drug related); offences against property; offences against public order and safety; offences against public trust (e.g. fraud, forgery, counterfeiting); offences against the person; sexual exploitation of children (including child pornography); sexual offences against adults; terrorism-related activity; trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants.

⁵¹ This applies to third-country nationals who do not live in Lithuania, but visited (short stay of up to 90 days).

⁵² See above.



Source: Information Technology and Communications Department

Q3.4.1. How did the activities of irregular migration facilitators impact Lithuania?⁵³ Please provide a short description with specific examples about Lithuania situation.

Activities of irregular migration facilitators from the countries concerned are not significant in Lithuania.

Q3.4.2. If applicable, please list and explain any challenges and risks identified by your country related to the activities of irregular migration facilitators, while making a clear distinction between people who assist migrants and people who are profiting from facilitation.

Not applicable.

According to data of the State Border Guard Service, aliens, instead of seeking to make use of the services of smugglers or irregular migration facilitators, tended to rely on their own capabilities. The absolute majority of those who illegally crossed the border of the Republic of Lithuania did so in small groups (consisting of two persons) or alone when crossing the Belarusian-Lithuanian border.

Q3.5. What other challenge (or negative impact) was identified by Lithuania in relation to visa liberalisation that was not already captured in the previous questions, if applicable?

After liberalisation of the visa regime, both the growth of the flow of incoming Georgians and the increase in the number of Georgians who were refused entry began to be identified in Lithuania.

When comparing the flow of incoming citizens of Georgia before visa liberalisation and one year later, it is clear that the number of entries by citizens of this country increased twofold.

As the number of incoming Georgians grew, the number of Georgian citizens who were refused entry into Lithuania also increased significantly.

It is also worth noting that after visa liberalisation, the prevailing grounds for refusal of entry into Lithuania in respect of Georgian citizens have changed. Prior to visa liberalisation, Georgians were most often refused entry on grounds of the absence of a valid visa or residence permit (ground C of the Schengen Borders Code (SSC)). After visa liberalisation, the absence of appropriate documentation justifying the purpose and conditions of stay (ground E) became the most common ground for refusal of entry.

⁵³ Did their activities lead to increases in irregular border-crossings, enhanced border controls or document fraud?

Ukraine remained, both in 2016 and 2017, among the TOP 3 countries whose citizens violated entry, stay and transit rules. Nevertheless, the number of Ukrainian citizens who were refused entry into Lithuania increased very slightly (from 60 in the 1st quarter of 2016 to 99 in the 1st quarter of 2018), while the number of incoming Ukrainians increased twofold (from 23 900 in the 1st quarter of 2016 to 47 800 in the 1st quarter of 2018).

In most cases, Ukrainians were refused entry on grounds of the absence of appropriate documentation justifying the purpose and conditions of stay (according to the SBC, ground E) and the absence of a valid visa or residence permit (according to the SBC, ground C).

3.2. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Table 3.2.1. Total number of nationals from the visa-free countries refused entry at the external borders⁵⁴

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of nationals from the visa-free countries refused entry at the external borders	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Montenegro	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Serbia	6	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	15	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Albania	10	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Bosnia and Herzegovina	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Moldova	59	30	41	30	15	31	11	20	24	42	41	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Georgia	7	16	74	145	116	113	109	144	67	42	182	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Ukraine	352	120	104	100	60	55	61	70	331	344	366	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Total	452 14.8%	178 8%	221 12.6%	276 14%	191 8.6%	199 8.9%	181 6.3%	235 6.8%	427 12.2%	430 9.3%	604 11.6%	
Total number third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders⁵⁵	3052	2211	1751	1968	2215	2215	2865	3448	3479	4577	5182	Data of the State Border Guard Service

⁵⁴ See Eurostat: Third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders - annual data (rounded) [migr_eirfs]

⁵⁵ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number third-country nationals refused entry at the external borders.

Table 3.2.2. Total number of return decisions issued to nationals from the visa-free countries⁵⁶

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of return decisions issued to nationals from the visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Montenegro	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Serbia	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	Eurostat data
Albania	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	Eurostat data
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Moldova	NI	30	15	20	5	10	10	0	0	15	20	Eurostat data
Georgia	NI	30	50	55	70	160	160	125	75	35	30	Eurostat data
Ukraine	NI	140	110	125	90	70	70	75	255	315	355	Eurostat data
Total	NI	200 22.0%	175 14.5%	200 14.9%	165 9.3%	240 12.6%	240 13.6%	200 8.9%	335 17.9%	370 21.3%	405 19.5%	
Total number of return decisions issued to third-country nationals⁵⁷	NI	910	1210	1345	1765	1910	1770	2245	1870	1740	2080	Eurostat data

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why below:

In 2007, data were not provided.

⁵⁶ See Eurostat: Third-country nationals ordered to leave - annual data (rounded) [migr_eiord]

⁵⁷ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of nationals ordered to leave.

Table 3.2.3. Total number of voluntary returns (all types) by nationals of visa-free countries⁵⁸

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of voluntary returns (all types) by nationals of visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Montenegro	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Serbia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Albania	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Moldova	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Georgia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Ukraine	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Total	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Total number of voluntary returns (all types) – all third-country nationals ⁵⁹	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

In Lithuania, data on voluntary returns of citizens of visa-free countries were not collected.

⁵⁸ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Number of voluntary and forced returns [migr_eirt_vol];

⁵⁹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of voluntary returns.

Table 3.2.4. Total number of forced returns by visa-free country⁶⁰

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of forced returns by visa-free country	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Montenegro	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Serbia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Albania	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Moldova	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Georgia	1	4	18	29	46	136	173	95	65	16	8	Data of the Migration Department
Ukraine	12	10	10	7	7	2	3	1	4	7	1	Data of the Migration Department
Total	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Total number of forced returns - all third-country nationals⁶¹	147	123	144	137	125	236	279	362	444	177	103	Data of the Migration Department

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

The yearbook of the Migration Department presents the total number of expulsions from all third countries and TOP 5 countries; thus, information is provided only regarding citizens of the countries with the highest number of expulsions.

⁶⁰ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Number of voluntary and forced returns [migr_eirt_vol];

⁶¹ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of forced returns.

Table 3.2.5. Total number of nationals from the visa - free countries found in illegal employment⁶²

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of nationals from the visa-free countries found in illegal employment	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	<i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
FYROM	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	<i>Please name the top 5 labour sectors where TCNs were illegally employed (see footnote list for pre-defined sectors).⁶³</i>
Montenegro	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Serbia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Albania	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Moldova	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Georgia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Ukraine	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	47	89	Data of the State Labour Inspectorate
Total	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Total number third-country nationals found in illegal employment⁶⁴	18	161	15	21	7	13	4	66	170	58	130	2007 – manufacturing, construction; 2008 – agriculture, construction; 2009- wholesale and retail trade 2010- transportation, wholesale and retail trade; 2011 – construction 2012-2013 – accommodation and food service activities 2014-2015 – fishing, 2016-2017 – construction

⁶² Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Third-country nationals found to be illegally present - annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]

⁶³ Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Mining and quarrying; Manufacturing; Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities; Construction; Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; Transportation and storage; Accommodation and food service activities; Information and communication; Financial and insurance activities; Real estate activities; Professional, scientific and technical activities; Administrative and support service activities; Public administration and defence; compulsory social security; Education; Human health and social work activities; Arts, entertainment and recreation; Other service activities; Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use; Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies.

⁶⁴ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number third-country nationals found in illegal employment.

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why below:

It should be noted that in the Republic of Lithuania, no systemic information is collected about identified illegally employed persons by the countries considered in the study. In implementing, since 2013, the provisions of Directive 2009/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 providing for minimum standards on sanctions and measures against employers of illegally staying third-country nationals (OJ 2009 L 168, p. 24) and Article 6(27) of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the State Labour Inspectorate, the State Labour Inspectorate provides data on conducted inspections of illegal employment and their results. Data are also provided on conducted inspections by each inspected sector of the economy in absolute terms, indicating the percentage of identified illegally employed third-country nationals and the results of inspections concerning workers from third countries.

Table 3.2.6. Total number of smuggled persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)⁶⁵

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of <u>smuggled</u> persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Montenegro	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Serbia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Albania	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Moldova	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Georgia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Ukraine	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Total	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Total number of <u>smuggled</u> persons from third countries (final court rulings)⁶⁶	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

In Lithuania, data on the number of smuggled persons by citizenship are not accumulated.

⁶⁵ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

⁶⁶ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of smuggled persons from third countries.

Table 3.2.7. Total number of trafficked persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)⁶⁷

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of <u>trafficked</u> persons from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Montenegro	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Serbia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Albania	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Moldova	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Georgia	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Ukraine	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Total	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	
Total number of <u>trafficked</u> persons from third countries (final court rulings)⁶⁸	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	

If you do not have data as requested in the above table (e.g. for year 2007), please explain why this is the case below:

In Lithuania, statistics on the number of trafficked persons by citizenship are not collected.

⁶⁷ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

⁶⁸ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of trafficked persons from third countries.

Table 3.2.8. Total number of identified facilitators⁶⁹ of unauthorised entry, transit and residence⁷⁰ from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)⁷¹

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information (e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence from the visa-free countries (final court rulings)	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Information Technology and Communications Department
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Information Technology and Communications Department
Serbia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Information Technology and Communications Department
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Information Technology and Communications Department
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Information Technology and Communications Department
Moldova	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the Information Technology and Communications Department
Georgia	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	Data of the Information Technology and Communications Department
Ukraine	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	Data of the Information Technology and Communications Department
Total	0	0	1	5	2	0	1	1	2	1	0	
Total number of identified facilitators of unauthorised	13	3	33	24	20	24	27	28	83	55	40	
	0%	0%	3%	20%	10%	0%	3.7%	3.5%	2.4%	1.8%	0%	

⁶⁹ This refer to the nationality of the facilitators. EU nationalities can be provided in the second part of the table.

⁷⁰ Facilitators of the unauthorised entry, transit and residence - intentionally assisting a person who is not a national of an EU Member State either to enter or transit across the territory of a Member State in breach of laws on the entry or transit of aliens, or, for financial gain, intentionally assisting them to reside within the territory of a Member State in breach of the laws of the State concerned on the residence of aliens (see Article 1(1)(a) and (b) of Council Directive 2002/90/EC).

⁷¹ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities.

entry, transit and residence (final court rulings) ⁷²												
EU nationality 1	Lithuania	Lithuania	Lithuania	Lithuania	Lithuania	Lithuania	Lithuania	Lithuania	Russia	Russia	Lithuania	<i>Please add the number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence from EU MS (top 5 EU nationalities).</i>
EU nationality 2			Latvia	Ukraine	Georgia	Russia	Afghanistan	Russia	Poland	Lithuania	Russia	<i>Please see above.</i>
EU nationality 3			Stateless	Latvia	Kyrgyzstan	Poland	Stateless	Poland	Latvia	Latvia	Latvia	<i>Please see above.</i>
EU nationality 4			Russia	Estonia		Estonia	Poland	Latvia	Lithuania	Stateless	Armenia	<i>Please see above.</i>
EU nationality 5			Armenia	Armenia		Belarus	Russia	Ukraine	Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyzstan	Vietnam	<i>Please see above.</i>

⁷² All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of identified facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence.

Table 3.2.9. Total number of nationals found to be illegally present from the visa-free countries⁷³

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of nationals found to be illegally present from the visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Montenegro	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Serbia	NI	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	Eurostat data
Albania	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	Eurostat data
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Eurostat data
Moldova	NI	30	15	20	5	10	10	0	0	15	25	Eurostat data
Georgia	NI	30	80	55	130	265	220	175	100	35	30	Eurostat data
Ukraine	NI	140	130	125	90	70	75	75	255	315	355	Eurostat data
Total	NI	200 22.0%	230 15.4%	200 14.9%	225 11.9%	345 16.6%	305 16.0%	250 10.1%	360 17.6%	370 19.3%	410 18.6%	
Total number of third-country nationals found to be illegally present⁷⁴	NI	910	1495	1345	1895	2080	1910	2465	2040	1920	2210	Eurostat data

⁷³ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Third-country nationals found to be illegally present - annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]

⁷⁴ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of third-country national found to be illegally present.

Table 3.2.10. Total number of overstayers from the visa-free countries⁷⁵

Indicator	Period of interest (2007-2017)											Additional Information <i>(e.g. data source(s), explanation of trends and numbers for this indicator)</i>
	<i>(insert all available data or at least 2 years prior and after the visa waiver agreement date)</i>											
Total number of overstayers from the visa-free countries	2007	2008	*2009	*2010	2011	2012	2013	*2014	2015	2016	*2017	
FYROM	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Serbia	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Albania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Moldova	31	12	6	5	3	5	6	1	1	13	13	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Georgia	3	11	5	2	6	3	2	7	7	12	8	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Ukraine	100	98	77	73	62	56	46	54	119	168	182	Data of the State Border Guard Service
Total	135 15.2%	121 23%	89 15.9%	80 10.8%	71 5.5%	64 4.7%	54 4.4%	62 4.2%	127 13.2%	193 20.1%	203 17.4%	
Total number of third-country nationals overstayers⁷⁶	884	524	557	737	1290	1357	1202	1458	962	958	1162	Data of the State Border Guard Service

⁷⁵ Information to be provided by inserting national data as gathered by competent authorities. Also see Eurostat: Third-country nationals found to be illegally present - annual data (rounded) [migr_eipre]

⁷⁶ All nationalities apply, to calculate the proportion out of the total number of third-country national overstayers.

4.

Measures Put in Place to
Deal with Possible Misuse of
Visa-Free Regimes by
Lithuania

4.1. DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL SITUATION

Q4.1. Did Lithuania implement certain measures (if any) to deal with the challenges that appeared after the commencement of the visa-free regime? Please provide a short description of your national situation.

Specific measures can be detailed in sub-questions Q4.1.2. to Q4.1.7.

No.

In Lithuania, no apparent challenges appearing after the commencement of the visa-free regime were identified. According to currently available data, it can be claimed that visa liberalisation did not impact the trends of irregular migration in Lithuania, therefore no special measures were implemented. Only general measures aimed at reducing irregular migration and exercising control over aliens were implemented.

After the liberalisation of the visa regime, the number of Ukrainian and Georgian citizens visiting Lithuania increased the most. The visa-free regime for these countries came into force as late as in 2017, therefore the services of the Republic of Lithuania responsible for migration continue monitoring and analysing the situation.

Q4.1.1. If applicable, please categorise your answer to Q4.1. by third country:

Western Balkans - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina

See Q4.1.

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

See Q4.1.

Q4.1.2. If applicable, did Lithuania implement measures to increase the efforts to promote voluntary return? If yes, for which nationalities and explain their impact.

No.

No special measures were implemented, only general ones. Promotion of voluntary return is stipulated in the Lithuanian Migration Policy Guidelines . Point 22.3.4 of these Guidelines states: to ensure the effective implementation of the policy of return of aliens to the countries of origin or to foreign states to which they have the right to depart and readmission of illegally staying third-country nationals, while fully respecting fundamental human rights and enabling them to depart with dignity, promote voluntary return and thus save state resources. Funds of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) in Lithuania are used to finance a project of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) which promotes and provides voluntary return assistance to third-country nationals in Lithuania.

During 2011-2017, IOM assisted the voluntary return of 105 third-country nationals, including 1 citizen of Albania, 48 citizens of Georgia and 56 citizens of Ukraine.

Q4.1.3. If applicable, did Lithuania implement measures to expand the legal possibilities of stay? If yes, for which nationalities and explain their impact.

No.

Lithuania did not implement any such measures.

Q4.1.4. If applicable, did Lithuania implement measures to fight illegal employment? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples.

No.

No special measures were implemented to prevent possible abuse of the non-visa regime. Only general measures were implemented.

The Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Employment came into force on 1 July 2017. The provisions of this Law extend the concept of illegal employment and provide for liability for illegal and undeclared work, undeclared voluntary activities, violations of the procedure for hiring aliens.

In the Law on Employment, the institution which exercises the control of illegal work has the right not only to impose an administrative penalty – a fine, but also to impose an obligation, i.e. to obligate the employer:

- to conclude a written employment contract with the worker and notify the conclusion of the employment contract and the hiring of the worker to a territorial office of the State Social Insurance Fund Board, as well as to pay the agreed remuneration for work to the illegal worker if it is found that the employer has not discharged this duty in accordance with the established procedure;

- to terminate labour relations with the illegal worker within 3 working days from the date of the decision, to pay to him the agreed remuneration for work if it is found that the worker is a third-country national hired in violation of the hiring procedure established by legal acts. Information on a person who is or was illegally employed is provided to the Migration Department.

In 2017, new function for the State Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Lithuania was assigned, namely, to supervise whether an alien is provided with appropriate living conditions during the period of validity of a seasonal work permit.

The SLI also introduced a confidential phone line which allows individuals to report illegal employment (of both aliens and citizens of Lithuania). Such information can also be provided through social networks. Information campaigns were also conducted to combat illegal employment.

Q4.1.5. If applicable, did Lithuania implement measures to fight the smuggling and/or trafficking of persons from the visa-free countries? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples.

No.

No special measures were implemented to combat the smuggling and trafficking of persons from visa-free countries. General legal acts providing for penalties for aliens apply.

Q4.1.6. If applicable, did Lithuania implement measures to fight the activities of facilitators of unauthorised entry, transit and residence? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples.

Inter-institutional cooperation is carried out among Lithuanian law enforcement institutions (the police, customs, migration services, as well as the State Labour Inspectorate). Cooperation involves also border authorities of neighbouring countries. Other targeted criminal intelligence measures are implemented as well. It should be noted that these measures apply to citizens of all countries of origin

Q4.1.7. If applicable, did Lithuania implement measures to reduce the incidence of nationals found to be illegally present in your country? If yes, please explain their impact and add specific examples. Please also see Q4.4. (on overstayers) before answering to avoid overlap.

The stay and residence of aliens in the Republic of Lithuania are controlled by the police, the Migration Department, the State Border Guard Service in association with state and municipal institutions and agencies of the Republic of Lithuania.

The list of persons who have exceeded the period of legal stay in Lithuania and are in possession of a visa is compiled based on the statistics of border crossing available in national databases. Accordingly, such persons are searched for according to the location indicated in their visa applications. Joint measures are organised in cooperation with competent authorities, for example, checking the hotels or other accommodation declared by aliens when applying for a visa. The persons who do not need visas are detected during random inspections, for example, when checking car or other marketplaces, construction sites or similar objects or on the basis of prior information received.

Q4.1.8. If applicable, what was the effectiveness of the measures listed above and which of them were most successful in reaching their intended goals? Please provide any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

As a good practice, it is possible to point out the joint measures undertaken by the competent authorities of the Republic of Lithuania. For example, SBGS units periodically carry out inspections of aliens working at the Klaipėda State Seaport. During the inspections, data on persons accessing the territory of the port are checked.

When implementing control of irregular migration processes and on the basis of information concerning visas issued to aliens, 10 cases were identified in 2017 when citizens of the Republic of Ukraine submitted forged documents to the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania to Ukraine in order to obtain national D-type visas of the Republic of Lithuania. It is suspected that letters of mediation and employment contracts with aliens could have been forged in the name of the managers of 13 private limited liability companies operating in the Republic of Lithuania.

A tendency was observed that enterprises were established indicating that they would employ aliens, but the aliens did not actually work there. Moreover, according to the information available to the State Tax Inspectorate, such enterprises did not carry out any real activities.

During 2017-2018, 389 citizens of the Republic of Ukraine and 2 citizens of the Republic of Moldova were issued at the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania to Ukraine multiple-entry national D-type visas for work in a private limited liability company. An inspection conducted by the competent authorities established that only 6 out of 391 aliens who had applied for a national D-type visa were actually hired. Upon assessing the collected information, decisions were taken to annul the valid national visas issued to the aliens.

Q4.2. Did Lithuania implement measures to deal with administrative burdens since the introduction of the visa-free regime?⁷⁷ If yes, please list and explain these measures, their impact / effectiveness and add any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

Not applicable.

Q4.3. Did Lithuania implement measures to deal with the possible misuse of visa liberalisation?⁷⁸ If yes, please list and explain these measures, their impact / effectiveness and add any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

Not applicable.

Q4.4. How did Lithuania deal with cases when third-country nationals entered the country legally, but did not legalize their stay after 90 days (overstayers)? Please provide a short description of such instances while highlighting any measures implemented by your country to deal with this. If applicable, what was the impact / effectiveness of these measures and are there any good practices / lessons learned you have identified?

In Lithuania, such cases are regulated by the Description of the Procedure for Taking and Enforcing Decisions Regarding an Alien's Obligation to Leave, Expulsion, Return and Passing in Transit through the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania approved by an order of the Minister of the Interior. A return decision is issued to the person concerned, and if he fails to depart, a decision on expulsion is taken.

Q4.4.1. In the case of overstayers from the visa-free countries, does Lithuania apply a different return procedure compared to the usual procedure? If yes, please provide a short description of such instances while highlighting any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

⁷⁷ For example: significant increase of residence permit applications, increased demand for work permits, more time-consuming border control procedure due to the lack of visas. etc.

⁷⁸ For example, dealing with cases when persons enter the country legally but later become illegally employed, are staying in the country legally, but are working without a work permit or apply for asylum without reasonable grounds.

No. The usual procedure applies.

Q4.4.2. Does Lithuania apply any special procedures in cases where overstayers have lost their identification documents or in instances where there are problems with their identification? If yes, please provide a short description of such instances while highlighting any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

No special procedures apply in Lithuania. The first step is to determine the legal status of a person. For example, both in asylum and return procedures, interviews of aliens are conducted, one of the purposes of which being to identify the probable country or region of origin.

Return procedures are subject to holding of a valid travel document or a return certificate issued by the country of origin, which confirms the identity of a person. Based on the collected information, a query is formed under a readmission agreement or a referral is made to a foreign diplomatic mission or consular post regarding identification of the person and issue of a document for return to a foreign state.

Q4.4.3. If applicable, what was the effectiveness of these procedures (see Q4.4.1 and Q4.4.2) and were they successful in reaching their intended goals? Please provide any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

Not applicable.

Q4.5. How did your cooperation with the visa-free countries evolve over time in terms of assistance and information exchange, before and after the visa-free regime commencement?⁷⁹ Please provide a short description and specific examples of your national situation disaggregated by region and third countries of interest.

Western Balkans - FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Not applicable.

Eastern Partnership - Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine:

Not applicable.

Q4.5.1. If applicable, how effective was the cooperation with third countries to reach your desired goals? Where there any particular differences in your interactions with different third countries and did you identify any good practices / lessons learned?

Not applicable.

Q4.6. If applicable, how did Lithuania respond to the influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries? Please provide a short description of the measures taken and any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.⁸⁰

There was no influx of asylum applicants from the visa-free countries in Lithuania.

Q4.6.1. If applicable, were the measures of Lithuania effective to manage the influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries? Please provide a short description of your national situation highlighting any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

There was no significant burden on Lithuania as regards asylum applicants from the countries considered in the study.

⁷⁹ For example, in terms of information campaigns in the third countries working on the elimination of 'push factors' – unemployment, poverty, poor conditions in the national health system, assistance to visa-free countries from Member States and reintegration assistance to returnees.

⁸⁰ For example, using the concept of safe country of origin

Q4.6.2. If applicable, how did Lithuania cooperate with other (Member) States found in a similar situation (i.e. influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries)? Please provide a short description of your national situation and any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

Not applicable.

Q4.6.3. Did you receive assistance from the EU to deal with the influx of asylum seekers from the visa-free countries? If yes, how effective was the assistance in supporting Lithuania? Please provide a short description of your national situation and any good practices / lessons learned you have identified.

The Ministry of Social Security and Labour administers the national programme 2014-2020 for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) designed to contribute to the management of migration flows. The implementation of projects under the national program for AMIF was launched in 2015.

In implementing these projects, asylum applicants' reception conditions and asylum procedures are improved, various services are provided to asylum applicants, third-country nationals legally residing in the Republic of Lithuania (including the persons who have been granted asylum) and third-country nationals to be returned to their countries of origin, return procedures are carried out and voluntary return and reintegration in the country of origin are promoted. In order to promote the integration of third-country nationals residing legally in the Republic of Lithuania, including asylum applicants and persons resettled/relocated to the territory of the Republic of Lithuania, three integration centres have been in existence in Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipeda since the middle of 2016 and provide aliens with various services: provision of information, counselling, intermediation, representation, social, legal and psychological assistance, vocational guidance, teaching of the Lithuanian language, civic orientation training, organisation of personal competence development seminars (introduction to the employer, communication skills, motivation, etc.).

The persons who have refugee status or subsidiary protection status are provided with additional healthcare services, material support with clothing, footwear, food, etc. The integration centres, together with the local community, organise joint events promoting mutual knowledge and understanding.

Q4.7. What other measure (or good practice / lesson learned) was adopted by Lithuania in relation to visa liberalisation that was not already captured in the previous questions, if applicable?

At the same time, are there any planned measures that will be adopted in the nearby future?⁸¹

Not applicable.

⁸¹ For example, in relation to Ukraine or Georgia for which the visa waiver agreement entered into force in 2017.

Conclusions

Q5.1. With regard to the aims of this Study, what conclusions would you draw from the findings reached in elaborating your National Contribution?

Crossing of the external borders of the Republic of Lithuania. During the period covered by the study (from 2007 to 2017), the total number of crossings of Lithuania's external borders increased. In 2007, the external borders of Lithuania were crossed by approximately 4 million persons, while in 2017, this figure grew to almost 5.8 million persons. The number of citizens of the countries of the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership who crossed the external border of Lithuania also grew. Citizens of the countries of interest accounted for approximately 3.6% of all cases of external border crossing in 2007 and 5.6% – in 2017. The majority of persons who crossed the external border of Lithuania were citizens of Ukraine.

Impact of visa liberalisation on irregular migration. The number of citizens of the Western Balkan countries entering Lithuania increased, but remained small. Based on the data reviewed in the study, it is possible to claim that the liberalisation of the visa regime did not impact the trends of irregular migration from the Balkan countries. As regards the Eastern Partnership countries, the available data suggest that in the short term, visa liberalisation did not have any impact on the growth of irregular migration, however it is not possible to assess the impact of visa liberalisation on the Eastern Partnership countries in the long term, since it entered into force for Ukraine and Georgia as late as in 2017.

Refusals of entry. Comparing the flow of incoming Georgian citizens before visa liberalisation and a year after it, it is clear that the number of incoming citizens of this country increased twofold. As the number of incoming Georgians grew, the number of Georgian citizens who were refused entry into Lithuania also increased significantly (more than fourfold). It is also worth noting that after visa liberalisation, the prevailing ground for refusal of entry into Lithuania in respect of citizens of Georgia have changed. Prior to visa liberalisation, Georgians were most often refused entry on grounds of the absence of a valid visa or residence permit (ground C). After visa liberalisation, the absence of appropriate documentation justifying the purpose and conditions of stay (ground E) has become the most common ground for refusal of entry. Visa liberalisation for Georgia came into force as late as in 2017, therefore the trends of the entry and stay of Georgian citizens in the country are still being shaped.

Meanwhile, the number of Ukrainian citizens who were refused entry into Lithuania increased slightly, having in mind a twofold increase in the number of citizens of this country entering Lithuania. The number of refusals of entry in respect of citizens of the Western Balkan countries and Moldova remained small throughout the period under consideration. Available data suggest that the vast majority of persons entering the country did not violate the regulations of legal stay in the country.

Irregular external border crossings. The scale of irregular migration in Lithuania is decreasing, both as regards the number of detained persons who enter Lithuania by illegally crossing the state border and those detained within the country. Such a decrease can be attributed to reinforced control at external borders and extended grounds for detention of asylum applicants. This had an effect on the decrease of irregular migration as regards citizens of Georgia. In 2012, 279 cases of illegal border crossing were detected in respect of the citizens of the countries under study, while in 2017, only 5 such cases were detected. The largest number of violations were detected when citizens of the countries considered in the study exceeded the period of legal stay, but voluntarily left the country.

Asylum applications. Throughout the period under study (2007-2017), only 3 asylum applications were lodged by citizens of the Western Balkan countries (2 Serbian citizens, 1 Albanian citizen). As regards Moldova, only 1 asylum application was lodged throughout the period of interest, as regards Ukraine – 210 asylum applications. From among the countries under study, the largest number of asylum applications was lodged by citizens of Georgia (1 184 applications).

It is worth noting that in 2012 and 2015, amendments to the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens extended grounds for the detention of asylum applicants, which had an effect on the decrease in the number of applications for asylum lodged by citizens of the Eastern Partnership countries. After the entry into force of the visa-free regime, there was no increase in the number of asylum applications from the countries of interest.

Tourism. Since 2012, when Lithuania started collecting information on the country of origin of incoming tourists, the number of tourists from the countries analysed in the study in Lithuania has increased almost threefold and in 2017 reached 3% of

the total number of tourists in Lithuania. The largest growth in the flow of tourists is observed from the countries of the Eastern Partnership (especially Ukraine). According to experts, visa liberalisation has contributed positively to such growth in the tourism sector.

Investments, imports and exports. Foreign direct investments from the Western Balkan and the Eastern Partnership countries increased, though only slightly. It should be noted that the major share of direct investments consisted of investments from Ukraine and Georgia. Comparing imports and exports of goods, the largest trading partner among the countries under study was Ukraine. The value of Lithuanian exports of goods to Ukraine in 2017, compared with 2016, increased by 20% - to EUR 736 million, while the value of imports grew by 18.1% to EUR 237.8 million.

Lawful activity (business). The number of permits issued for the first time to citizens of the Western Balkan countries to engage in lawful activities (business) was relatively stable and small; in the case of Moldova, the trends in issued permits remained the same throughout the period, while the number of permits issued to citizens of Georgia and Ukraine before 2014 increased (in 2014, 924 issues were issued). From 2015, the number of permits issued to the citizens of these countries engaged in lawful activities started to decline significantly (in 2015, 657 permits were issued to citizens of the countries considered in the study, in 2016 – 281, in 2017 – 74). This can be explained by the changes in the procedure for issuing temporary residence permits on the ground of lawful activities (business) implemented in Lithuania and by more active inspections of activities of enterprises.

Challenges. Lithuania did not face any apparent challenges after the introduction of the visa-free regime. According to currently available data, it can be argued that the liberalisation of the visa regime did not impact the trends of irregular migration, therefore special measures were not implemented. Lithuania implemented only general measures aimed at reducing irregular migration and exercising control over aliens.

After the liberalisation of the visa regime, the number of citizens of Ukraine and Georgia arriving Lithuania grew the most. In 2017, Lithuania issued almost 2 times more permits on the ground of employment than in 2016. The number of national D-type visas issued to Ukrainian citizens on the basis of employment also increased. However, it is difficult to assess whether the liberalisation of the visa regime was a key factor for such an increase, as this could have been determined by the growing need for workers and favourable economic climate in Lithuania. The visa-free regime for the citizens of these countries came into force as late as in 2017, therefore the services of the Republic of Lithuania responsible for migration are monitoring and analysing the situation.

Q5.2. What do you consider to be the relevance of your findings to (national and/or EU level) policymakers?

The assessment of the impact of visa liberalisation in Lithuania presented in the study is based on factual and statistical information, which helps to monitor the main trends and developments in relation to the regular and irregular migration of citizens of the Western Balkan countries and the Eastern Partnership countries considered in the study during the period of 2007-2017. In light of the data presented in the study, no abuse related to visa liberalisation is observed yet.

For example, the amendments to the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens have led to a decrease in rates of abuse of the asylum system and on the ground of lawful activity. Identification of existing shortcomings could help in shaping policy in these areas. The findings of the study can also be useful in forecasting, increasing or redistributing EU financial instruments to certain areas, which would help the Member States to achieve more accurately identified and significant results.

European Migration Network (EMN) is a network composed of migration and asylum experts from EU Member States, Norway and the European Commission. Its main objective is to collect, analyse and provide up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum to policy makers at EU and Member State level and the general public.

The EMN National Contact Point (NCP) in Lithuania is composed of representatives from the Ministry of the Interior, the Migration Department, the State border guard service as well as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Vilnius office which acts the national co-ordinator for the EMN activities in Lithuania. EMN NCP in Lithuania also collaborates with other entities from governmental as well as non-governmental institutions working in the area of migration.
