



# MIGRATION & SECURITY

*SITUATION IN LITHUANIA*

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By TAVOEUROPA



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# SOME CONTEXT



Lithuania was never a popular country for immigration.

Because of historical, political and financial reasons (open borders from the 90s and Schengen area from 2004) there is a very high rate of **E**migration.



Thus, for most Lithuanians, it is unusual that there might be foreigners willing to live in Lithuania.

# BEFORE 2020...



## OVER THE LAST ELEVEN YEARS (2009–2019)



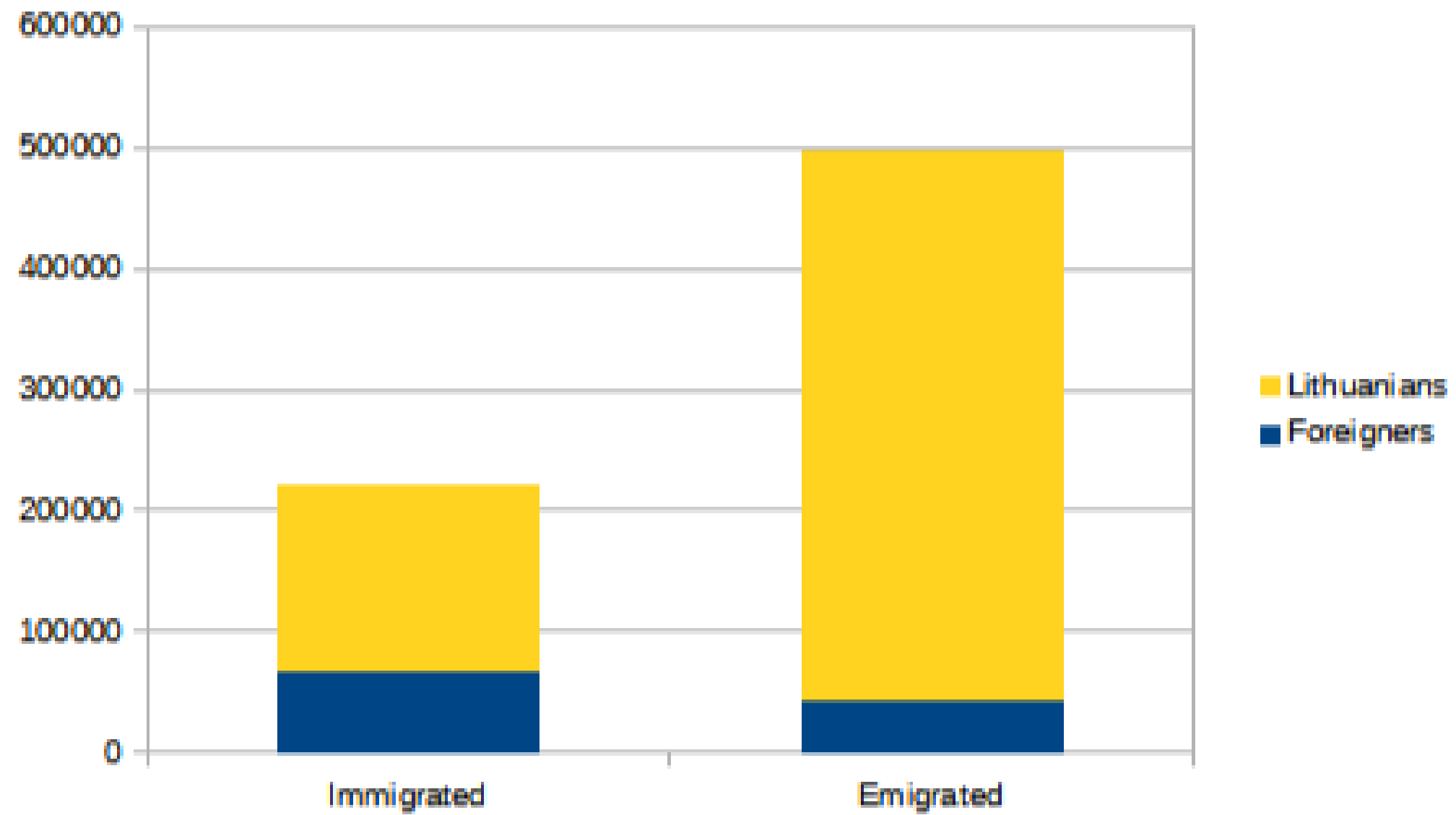
225.2 thousand persons immigrated to Lithuania, of whom: 158.6 thousand (70.4 per cent) were Lithuanian nationals who returned to Lithuania and 66.6 thousand (29.6 per cent) – foreigners.



496.3 thousand residents emigrated from Lithuania, of whom 453.3 thousand (91.3 per cent) were Lithuanian nationals and 43 thousand (8.7 per cent) – foreigners.

During the same period, in 2009–2019, more Lithuanians emigrated than immigrated, However, the foreigners immigration is positive (more people came).

# IN COLOURS:





# AND WHAT ABOUT NOW?







## IN 2022

145 118 foreigners lived in Lithuania (5,13 %)

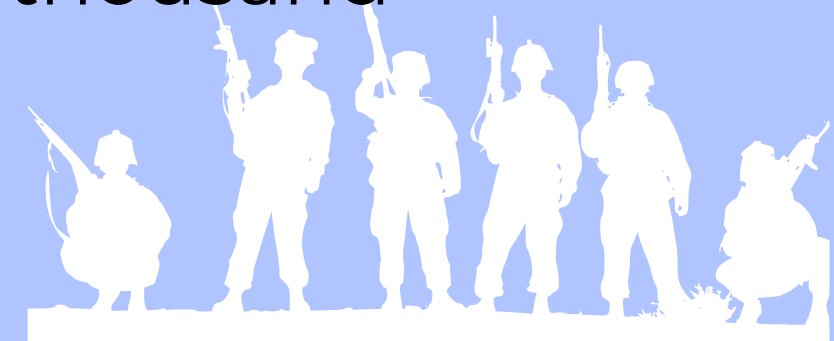
Compared with the same time in 2021 the number had grown by over 60 % (war in Ukraine).

EU temporary protection for displaced persons

The immigration is still growing.

More than 76 thousand Ukrainians fled to Lithuania.

Latest data shows around 44 thousand (18 thousand underaged) that have a permit to live.



# 2015 MIGRATION CRISIS



Lithuania remained on the sidelines of these migrant flows.

It is true that the country undertook to accept new arrivals in accordance with the EU migration quota policy.

The numbers were extremely low compared to other countries: 489 of them arrived, then almost all left.



# AND THEN 2021...



## **BELARUS BORDERS**

-Publicly stating that he would not stop migration to the EU, A. Lukashenko encouraged illegal migration through Belarus.

THE OFFICIAL OPINION IS STATING:

-In the organization of illegal immigration participated:

- Belarusian state institutions,
- the tourism sector interested in financial benefits,
- people smugglers
- or even individual citizens of Belarus, who provided car transport services to the border.

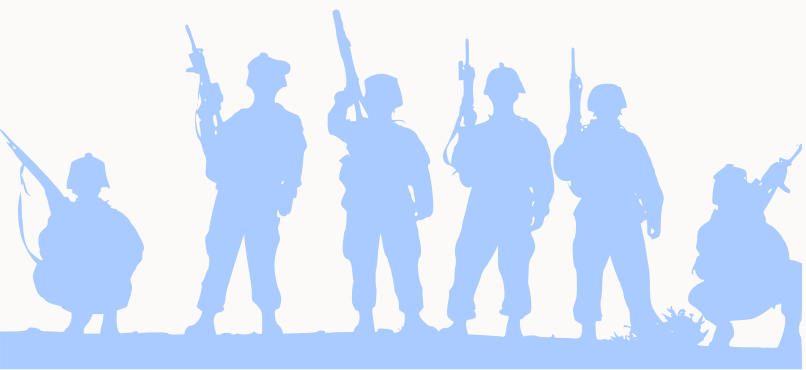


-The involvement of tourism agencies and the good accessibility of Minsk by air meant that it became easy and simple for citizens of Iraq and other Middle Eastern countries to travel to Belarus. Belarusian border guards became the direct implementers of the regime's decisions.

#### STATISTICS:

This year, Lithuania turned back around 7 thousand people to Belarus.

Deceived people, as well as migrants are being pushed back also by Polish border guards - Warsaw has deployed thousands of soldiers on the border and is even planning to build a security fence.





-More than 4 thousand people crossed the border from Belarus to Lithuania, tens of times more than last year.

-Lithuania has declared a state of emergency due to increased illegal migration.

-The handling of the crisis is criticized by human rights activists for ignoring the people stuck and even dying on the borders, as international law foresees that everyone seeking protection must be given the opportunity to participate in the asylum process.

*There were only a few cases where a possible threat to the state of Lithuania was discovered and people were sent back to their countries and banned from entering Lithuania.*



# UKRAINIAN REFUGEES



-on the first days of war Lithuanian people have registered close to 5,700 dwellings that could house up to 23,000 Ukrainian refugees

-Most of Lithuanians would say "I am Lithuanian. Ukrainians are fighting for my future too"

-Lithuanians highly motivated to show support (housing, giving jobs, providing information, including in schools)



# UKRAINIAN REFUGEES



On the latest data (18th of April 2023) more than 24 thousand Ukrainians are legally working in Lithuania and brought more than 58 mln euros of taxes to the Lithuanian budget.

8% work in highly qualified jobs (IT, medical staff, law, educational system), 68% in medium qualified (mechanics, builders, retail sector ecc) and 24% in low qualification jobs.

*Unfortunately, there is a big difference in how the refugees from Ukraine and from other countries are treated and looked upon.*







# ...WHAT ABOUT THE RE- IMMIGRATION?

Interestingly, Lithuanians are not too positive about other Lithuanians coming back.

Almost half of the population is worried that the re-immigration will do more harm than good.

One third is worried about the criminal past of the re-immigrants, the same number feels like they are looked down upon by the emigrants and so on.



# TO SUM UP



-It is obvious that Lithuania is not ready to integrate the refugees, immigrants and even its own people coming back.



-There are few success stories, however most of the integration measures are often temporary and there is no clear policy or guidance of how to handle and get the most of the multicultural community and immigration.



-The main threat caused by the migration crisis seems to remain the division of the society that gives the opportunity for the rise of the radical groups.

**THANK YOU FOR THE  
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