Labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees

Lithuania
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Lithuania

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
European Employment Policy Observatory

April, 2016
## Summary table on support available to (a) asylum seekers; (b) refugees; and (c) third country nationals (TCN) in Lithuania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Refugees</th>
<th>Asylum Seekers</th>
<th>Third Country Nationals</th>
<th>Recipients of Subsidiary Protection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the PES involved in the</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>labour market integration of (a)</td>
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<td>asylum seekers (b) refugees (c)</td>
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<td>third country nationals (TCN)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do (a) asylum seekers, (b)</td>
<td>Yes, in</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes, in compliance with</td>
<td>Yes, in compliance with LSE and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refugees and (c) TCN have access</td>
<td>compliance with the Law on Support for Employment (LSE) and Specifications of terms and procedures for implementation of active labour market policy measures No. A1-499</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LSE and Specifications No. A1-499</td>
<td>Specifications No. A1-499</td>
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<tr>
<td>to:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Hiring subsidies</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Start-up (self-employment)</td>
<td>Yes, in</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes, in compliance with</td>
<td>Yes, in compliance with LSE and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• On-the-job training</td>
<td>Yes, in</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes, in compliance with</td>
<td>Yes, in compliance with LSE and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Other labour market integration</td>
<td>Yes, in</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes, in compliance with</td>
<td>Yes, in compliance with LSE and</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a systematic mentorship</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>scheme in place</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>(a) Asylum Seekers</td>
<td>(b) Refugees</td>
<td>(c) TCN</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are (a) refugees, (b) asylum seekers and (c) TCN eligible to receive unemployment benefits or unemployment assistance?</td>
<td>Only if prior to registration at the labour exchange, they have acquired an unemployment insurance record of at least 18 months during the last 36 months in Lithuania, otherwise – no.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Only if prior to registration at the labour exchange, they have acquired an unemployment insurance record of at least 18 months during the last 36 months in Lithuania, otherwise – no.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are benefits that are generally received by (a) refugees, (b) asylum seekers (if applicable) and (c) TCN, conditional on job search requirements/activation?</td>
<td>Unemployment benefits – yes – recipients of unemployment benefits must actively search for a job. Other support (e.g. allowance for food and minor expenses) – no.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Unemployment benefits – yes – recipients of unemployment benefits must actively search for a job. Other support (e.g. allowance for food and minor expenses) – no.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the support provided to (a) asylum seekers, (b) refugees (c) TCN end as soon as they get a job?</td>
<td>Unemployment benefits – yes. Other support (e.g. allowance for food and minor expenses) – no.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Unemployment benefits – yes.</td>
<td>Unemployment benefits – yes. Other support (e.g. allowance for food and minor expenses) – no.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please specify which services asylum seekers or refugees have access to</td>
<td>Have the right to participate in the Programme</td>
<td>Have access to services provided for</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Have the right to participate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees - Lithuania

| That other TCN do not have access to. | of Social Integration in Lithuania. The programme includes the following areas of support: teaching of the state language, education, employment, provision of residential premises, social security, health care, provision of the public with information concerning integration of foreigners. In addition to that they are provided with financial support. Other third country nationals (TCN) are not eligible to participate in the Programme of Social Integration or in the financial support schemes in Lithuania. | in the Description of the conditions and procedure for temporary accommodation of foreigners in the Foreigners’ Registration Centre. Have no access to Program of Social Integration in Lithuania. | in the Programme of Social Integration in Lithuania. The programme includes the following areas of support: teaching of the state language, education, employment, provision of residential premises, social security, health care, provision of the public with information concerning integration of foreigners. In addition to that they are provided with financial support. Other third country nationals (TCN) are not eligible to participate in the Programme of Social Integration or in the financial support schemes in Lithuania. |

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1 What is the role of PES in integrating (a) (some\(^1\)) asylum seekers\(^2\) and (b) refugees\(^3\)?

If the PES is not involved, is there another agency dealing with the labour market integration of migrants?

Does the support offered differ according to different factors (e.g. socio-demographic characteristics, family circumstances, host country language skills etc.)?

Does the support differ according to the skill level of the target group?

Are there specific programmes for these target groups?

To what extent do these target groups benefit from measures for broader target groups?

In compliance with Law No IX-2206\(^4\) of the Republic of Lithuania on the Legal Status of Foreigners, asylum seekers have no access to labour market services in Lithuania during the examination of their applications for asylum. According to this law, applications for asylum shall be examined within three months; in exceptional cases the period can be extended to six months. Asylum seekers are not entitled to work or leave the country during the period of examination of their application for asylum. Decisions on the granting or non-granting of the status of a refugee are taken by the Migration Department (MD) under the Ministry of the Interior (MI) of the Republic of Lithuania. Thus, we can say that PES do not play any role in integrating asylum seekers in Lithuania.

With regard to persons to whom asylum in Lithuania has been granted, the first thing to note is that pursuant to Law No IX-2206, a foreigner may be issued a permanent residence permit if he has been granted refugee status in the Republic of Lithuania (Article 53), whereas a temporary residence permit may be issued to a foreigner to whom temporary or subsidiary protection has been granted (Article 40). Although persons who have been granted refugee status and subsidiary protection are issued different residence permits in Lithuania, both groups of persons are exempt from the obligation to obtain a work permit and have equal access to the labour market.

The basic principles of the organisation, implementation and administration of the integration of foreigners who have been granted asylum in Lithuania are laid down in the Description of the Procedure for Providing Lithuanian State Support for Integration of Aliens who Have Been Granted Asylum in the Republic of Lithuania (the Description) approved by Order No A1-238\(^5\) of the Minister for Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania. In compliance with the Description, the following agencies are involved in the integration of foreigners to whom asylum has been granted:

- Ministry of Social Security and Labour (MSSL);
- Social Services Monitoring Department under the MSSL;
- Refugees Reception Centre (RRC).

Although the PES are not directly responsible for the integration of foreigners who have been granted asylum in Lithuania, they are actively engaged in the integration process. In accordance with the Description above, assessment of suitable jobs, evaluation of

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\(^1\) The reasoning for including (some) is that there is no requirement by the EU that asylum seekers are included in integration policies.

\(^2\) Persons who have applied for international humanitarian protection but have not been granted it yet.

\(^3\) Covers all beneficiaries of international humanitarian protection – both refugees and subsidiary protection.

\(^4\) http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=486481

\(^5\) https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.58C0619E380E/UKraeRKnaK
personal capacities, vocational training and reskilling courses, and job search courses for persons who have been granted asylum shall be organised by the RRC together with local PES. The Description provides for the following measures to be taken by the integration implementing authorities to facilitate labour market integration of the foreigners who have been granted asylum and to ensure state employment and social guarantees foreseen in Law No X-694⁶ of the Republic of Lithuania on Support for Employment: the foreigners are familiarised with the Lithuanian labour market, their potential is identified, upskilling is conducted through changing the current profession or acquiring a new profession, information and, if necessary, assistance are made available in starting up one’s own business, assistance is provided in taking up employment under employment contracts.

An Action Plan for Labour Market Integration of Refugees was developed on 1 October 2015 by Order No V-583 of the Director of the Lithuanian Labour Exchange (LLE). The Plan lays down the main measures and actions to be taken to ensure the labour exchange is sufficiently prepared to implement the labour market integration of refugees in Lithuania. In accordance with the Action Plan, a mini labour exchange office should be established at the RRC by the second quarter of 2016 to provide counselling and other PES services to the foreigners who have been granted asylum. In addition, it is planned to adapt the LLE’s information system and develop a data bank for information about job-seeking refugees and employers offering jobs to refugees. The Lithuanian Labour Exchange plans to monitor labour market services available to refugees and to assess service effectiveness, including in terms of employment sustainability.

According to the Description, a foreigner who has been granted asylum and who requires state support in taking up employment shall be registered with a local PES. After LLE registration, the needs and skills of the foreigner and his/her readiness for the labour market are identified and an individual employment action plan (IEAP) is drawn up within 2-4 weeks.

In compliance with Order No V-651 of the director of the LLE on the Approval of the Procedure for Drawing up and Assessment of an IEAP, a LLE officer shall draw up an IEAP on the basis of the preliminary assessment of the following aspects: individual potential of the job-seeker, readiness and motivation to compete in the labour market, relevance of job-seeker’s profession to the labour market needs and other aspects. IEAPs are made for 3 to 6 months. In case of failure to achieve the goals set, the individual employment action plan shall be revised and new measures shall be provided for. In addition, personal and/or group counselling and mentoring services are designed and available subject to the refugee’s needs.

To receive labour market support, migrants are grouped into skilled and unskilled jobseekers according to their skills level. These groups receive different counselling services and are offered different individual employment action plan measures. Counselling services include:

- To skilled jobseekers: Building job search skills; Job Club (‘Getting ready and undertaking a job interview’, ‘My career’, ‘Promoting self-employment’).
- To unskilled jobseekers: Vocational counselling and guidance; Job Club (‘Self-awareness and occupational self-determination’), group counselling (‘My achievements file’).

In individual employment action plans, priority is given to the following measures:

- In the case of skilled jobseekers, to employment mediation, participation in job rotation or supporting self-employment.

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⁶ https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.4C18D17F9BA5/WMvJZfjqF
In the case of unskilled jobseekers, to the acquisition of qualifications and labour market integration through sending jobseekers to vocational training programmes relating to professions in demand.

2 How does the support provided to (a) (some) asylum seekers and (b) refugees compare to other categories of migrants (third country nationals)?

As already mentioned, in Lithuania asylum seekers are not provided with support for labour market integration. With regard to other support, asylum seekers are first of all provided accommodation services. Pending the examination of applications for asylum by the Migration Department, the asylum applicants are usually accommodated at the Foreigners’ Registration Centre (FRC) or, in the case of non-accompanied minor asylum seekers, at the RRC. In Lithuania, the rights and duties of foreigners accommodated in the FRC, their healthcare, material and household provisions, as well as other support are regulated by the Description of the conditions and procedure for temporary accommodation of foreigners in the Foreigners’ Registration Centre, approved by Order No. 1V-340 of 4 October 2007 of the Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania. In compliance with this Description, adult foreigners accommodated in the FRC shall receive three free meals a day (minors receive four meals a day) in accordance with the physiological nutritional standards approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. Foreigners are also entitled to other basic support for survival free of charge (e.g. free support with clothing and footwear when necessary).

Pursuant to Article 71 of Law No IX-2206, asylum applicants shall have the following rights in the Republic of Lithuania: to receive basic medical aid, psychological assistance and social services free of charge at the FRC or RRC; to receive a monthly allowance amounting to 10 % of State Supported Income (SSI) in accordance with the established procedure (in January 2016, SSI was EUR 102); vulnerable persons shall have the right to use admission conditions that meet their special needs; to receive other services linked to the examination of the application for asylum in Lithuania (e.g. translation/interpretation services).

On average, the Foreigners’ Registration Centre accommodates 500-600 asylum-seekers per year; the average period of stay at the FRC is two months.

Foreigners granted refugee status or subsidiary or temporary protection according to the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania and other legal acts, have the right to participate in the Programme of Social Integration according to the Description of the Integration Procedure. This document provides for the following areas of support for social integration: teaching of the state language, education, employment, provision of residential premises, social security, health care and provision of the public with information concerning the integration of foreigners.

In addition to the social integration measures above, persons who have been granted asylum in Lithuania are also provided with financial support. In accordance with the new version of Order No 20 of the Minister for Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania on the Approval of the procedure for the implementation of the conditions and procedure for the accommodation of foreigners in the RRC, organisation of foreigners’ employment and application of disciplinary measures, the foreigner's right to receive a monthly allowance for miscellaneous expenses, and the foreigner’s rights to receive a compensation for the use of public transport (effective as of 22 December 2015), refugees shall be paid a monthly allowance (EUR 71) for food and minor expenses.

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7 State language (Lithuania) tuition for immigrants or foreigners who have been granted the status of a refugee or subsidiary/temporary protection in Lithuania is offered by NGO “Centre of social-educational initiatives PLUS”. The level to which language tuition is offered is: A 1.1; A 1.2; A 2.1; A 2.2; B 1.1; B 1.2) http://www.emn.lv/wp-content/uploads/EXPERIENCES-OF-IMMIGRANTS%E2%80%99-TEACHING-AND-LEARNING.pdf

during three months of stay at the RRC. Once re-accommodated within a territory of a municipality, the refugees shall receive a one-off accommodation allowance and monthly allowance for basic needs (housing rent, utility services, food, transport, etc.) for a period of 12 months.

Only foreigners who have been granted the status of a refugee or subsidiary/temporary protection in Lithuania are eligible for the Programme of Social Integration. Other third country nationals (TCN) are not eligible for the Programme of Social Integration and financial support schemes. It is worth noting here that no important legal acts have been adopted regulating the integration of other TCN in Lithuania, especially their integration into the labour market. For example, a research conducted by Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) in 2013 showed that there actually is no integration implemented in Lithuania in respect of TCN arriving in Lithuania to work, engage in other legal activities, study or for family reunification purposes (except for measures of the European Fund for integration of TCN). However, on 31 December 2014 the Minister for SSL issued Order No A1-683 approving the Action Plan for the Implementation of Aliens’ Integration Policy 2015–2017. Measures within this Action Plan are expected to facilitate, at least to a certain extent, the integration of foreigners in Lithuania’s social life, to promote public tolerance towards foreigners and to improve interdepartmental collaboration in the area of foreigners’ integration.

As regards employment of persons who have been granted asylum and other third country nationals, we can reiterate that foreigners who have been granted the status of a refugee and subsidiary protection shall be exempt from the obligation to obtain a work permit in Lithuania, whereas other TCN wishing to work in Lithuania must obtain, among other things, a work permit or a decision on conformity to the needs of the labour market of the Republic of Lithuania. The latter requirement is not applicable to the foreigners residing under the residence permits which exempt them from the obligation to obtain a work permit (such as a residence permit by virtue of family reunification).

3 Do (a) asylum seekers, (b) refugees and (c) other third-country migrants have access to other ALMPs such as:

- Hiring subsidies,
- Start-up (self-employment) support
- On-the-job training
- Other labour market integration support?

As already mentioned, asylum seekers in Lithuania have no access to any kind of labour market services (including ALMPM).

Foreigners who have been granted the status of a refugee in Lithuania have access to labour market support, including ALMPM (vocational training, supported employment, start-up (self-employment) support and territorial mobility of the unemployed) and supported employment measures (subsidised employment, support for the acquisition of working skills, agreement for the acquisition of working skills, job rotation, public (community) works) in compliance with Law No X-694 on Support for Employment (LSE). The same measures are also available to other third country nationals who have been issued residence permits in Lithuania and are exempt from the obligation to obtain a work permit in accordance with Article 58 of Law No IX-2206.

In compliance with Article 1(3) of the aforementioned law, a foreigner who enters the Republic of Lithuania to take up seasonal employment shall have access to the following

10 https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/b002bb90913911e48028e9b85331c55d?jfwid=je7i1szj2
11 https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.4C18D17F9BA5/WMvJZfjqF
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counselling services: 1) general counselling; 2) vocational counselling; 3) psychological counselling.

With regard to other third country nationals employed in Lithuania with work permits, it should be noted that after expiration of their work permits or employment contracts, the foreigners must leave the country and are not eligible to participate in ALMP measures.

4 What are the concrete obstacles/challenges faced by (a) asylum seekers and (b) refugees in successfully integrating into the labour market?

Although persons who have been granted asylum are not required to obtain a work permit, only a small portion of them find employment in Lithuania. Based on data of the RRC, out of all beneficiaries of international protection recorded during the period of 2010-2014, that is, 645 persons who were granted asylum, 94 persons were employed, which accounts for approximately 15%. According to the European Migration Network Focussed Study\(^\text{12}\), the main reasons for non-employment of persons who have been granted asylum include the language barrier, lack of demand for the profession acquired, non-recognition of foreign diplomas and qualifications in Lithuania, as well as unwillingness or inability to work. Practice shows that refugees are offered only low-paid jobs on the labour market and not very attractive working conditions, which undermine their motivation to work. Persons who have been granted asylum in Lithuania are usually recruited for low-skilled jobs in wood processing, construction, catering, etc.

The integration of persons (unskilled persons in particular) who have been granted asylum is extremely hindered by the language barrier\(^\text{13}\). Vocational training courses are usually delivered in Lithuanian. Refugees are not able to develop good language skills within a short integration period and consequently face difficulties in learning a profession. In addition, they face other challenges, such as social exclusion, financial constraints, difficulties in renting accommodation, etc.

A report on the project\(^\text{14}\) NGO institutional capacity building: case of refugees, implemented in December 2013 to September 2014, notes that lack of language skills, non-recognition of diploma and work experience in Lithuania, and xenophobia severely undermine job search opportunities for refugees. Without regular sources of income, refugees actually have no chance to support themselves, especially after the end of the integration programme support.

Similar obstacles faced by refugees were identified by a research\(^\text{15}\) carried out by Mykolas Romeris University (MRU) in 2011 and a 2007 survey\(^\text{16}\) of the Lithuanian Adult Education and Information Centre. According to the researchers, foreigners who have been granted asylum face the following problems in the area of labour market integration: too high expectations and inadequate realisation of their situation in terms of job opportunities, insufficient motivation and education, lack of profession, lack of Lithuanian language skills, institutional differences, absence of an adequate system for

\(^{12}\) Integration of aliens who have been granted asylum in Lithuania: legal regulation and situation. Focussed Study. International Organization for Migration, European Migration Network 2015.

\(^{13}\) In most cases, they have no good knowledge of any EU language. Young people know some English or some phrases in English.


\(^{16}\) Research into refugee integration processes. Assessment of the effectiveness of providing state support for integration of aliens who have been granted asylum in the Republic of Lithuania. Research. Lithuanian Adult Education and Information Centre, 2007.
the recognition of educational attainments in Lithuania and negative attitudes from Lithuanian society.

5 Is there a systematic mentorship scheme in place for (a) asylum seekers and (b) refugees integrating into the labour market (and/or society more generally)?

Asylum seekers in Lithuania are not entitled to participate in social or labour market integration support schemes. Thus, there is no a systematic mentorship scheme in Lithuania for asylum seekers to integrate them into the labour market.

There is a scheme for providing support to refugees’ integration in place in Lithuania. The scheme distinguishes between two phases of integration of foreigners who have been granted asylum in Lithuania. The first integration phase takes three months, during which support to refugees is provided at the RRC. Support during this phase includes assessment of the skills and qualifications of the refugees by social workers of the RRC in cooperation with the Lithuanian Labour Exchange (LLE), a medical examination, intensive Lithuanian language and Lithuanian culture courses to facilitate adequate integration of the refugees in the Lithuanian society and labour market. In accordance with the new version of Order No 20\(^17\) of the Minister for Social Security and Labour (effective as of 22 December 2015), refugees are to be paid a monthly allowance for food and minor expenses during this period of their stay at the RRC.

After expiration of the integration period at the RRC, refugees are transferred to municipalities and the second phase of their integration starts. It lasts for up to 12 months. During the second stage of integration, the main role is played by NGOs providing mentorship services. Mentors help foreigners acquire basic commodities, rent a place to live, pay allowances, organise Lithuanian language courses, consult foreigners on all issues, ensure their visits to the LLE, etc.

It is important to note that foreigners who have been granted asylum but failed to participate in the Integration Support Programme at the RRC have no access to state support in municipalities. This regulation is aimed at encouraging the foreigners who have been granted asylum to use the above-mentioned services and ensuring continuity of the integration process under control of the state. The implementation of foreigners’ integration is coordinated by the commission of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved by Resolution No 1007\(^18\) of 21 September 2015.

According to the findings of the EMN Focussed Study\(^19\), the trends in 2010-2014 show that asylum (the status of a refugee and subsidiary/temporary protection) in Lithuania is granted to about 130 persons on average per year. The majority of asylum applicants (90 %) are granted subsidiary/temporary protection and the remaining 10 % are granted the status of a refugee. RRC’s data show that a total of 175 foreigners took part in the Programme of Social Integration at the RRC and 92 foreigners took part in municipalities in 2014 (94 and 76, respectively, in 2013).


\(^{18}\) https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/456819d061c511e589fccd6fa118e11c

\(^{19}\) Integration of aliens who have been granted asylum in Lithuania: legal regulation and situation. Focussed Study. International Organization for Migration, European Migration Network 2015
6 Are (a) refugees and (b) (if applicable) asylum seekers eligible to receive unemployment benefits or unemployment assistance?\(^\text{20}\)

Foreigners who have been granted asylum in Lithuania are allowed to register with the LLE during the period of their integration (15 months in total: three months at the RRC and 12 months in municipalities), however they are not eligible to receive unemployment benefit. In compliance with Law No IX-1904\(^\text{21}\) on Unemployment Social Insurance, persons are entitled to unemployment benefit in Lithuania only if they, prior to registration at the LLE, have acquired an unemployment insurance record of at least 18 months during the last 36 months.

However, upon expiration of the integration period, foreigners who have registered with the LLE and have been granted asylum in Lithuania are eligible to apply to the local Social Assistance Division according to their place of residence, for social benefit. Payment of social benefits is regulated by Law No IX-1675\(^\text{22}\) on Social Assistance. In January 2016, the maximum social assistance was EUR 102. In accordance with this law, social assistance shall be granted to foreigners holding a permit of a long-term resident of the Republic of Lithuania to reside in the European Community; and foreigners who have been granted subsidiary or temporary protection in the Republic of Lithuania, except for those receiving support from dedicated integration funds during the period of integration.

7 In what ways are benefits that are generally received by (a) refugees and (b) by asylum seekers (if applicable), conditional on job search requirements/activation?

In Lithuania, recipients of unemployment benefits (including persons to whom asylum has been granted) must actively search for a job. In accordance with Order No V-651 of the director of the LLE, unemployed persons registered with the LLE (including persons to whom asylum has been granted) shall be issued an individual employment action plan to facilitate their integration into the labour market. The individual employment action plan defines employment as the objective and stipulates obligations of the job-seeker to search for a job independently in pursuit of this objective, to use labour market services and/or participate in ALMPM. Implementation of the IEAP is supervised by LLE officers. In addition, the Law on Unemployment Social Insurance stipulates that unemployment benefit shall not be granted or suspended if the unemployed person refused a suitable job offer or refused for no good reason to participate in the ALMPM provided for in his or her individual employment action plan.

Other allowances paid to foreigners who have been granted asylum during their integration (e.g. allowance for food and minor expenses) are not conditional on job search requirements and can be reduced/suspended only for disciplinary offences.

Likewise, it should be noted that Order No A1-668\(^\text{23}\) of 18 November 2015 of the Minister for Social Security and Labour amended the legislation regulating the integration of persons who have been granted asylum in Lithuania. This Order shortened the period of support for integration at the RRC (to three months) and reduced a one-off allowance for refugees (from EUR 456 to EUR 204). Furthermore, the Order set out that the monthly allowance of EUR 204 will be paid for six months only and reduced by 50 % from the seventh month on. This is expected to encourage refugees to find a job quicker and support themselves.

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\(^{20}\) As regards unemployment benefits Dir 2011/98 Art 12 (1) e – obliges MSs to provide equal treatment to all TCNs except asylum seekers and as regards refugees there is also the legal obligation to provide equal treatment under Qualifications Directive 2011/95

\(^{21}\) https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.FDF42614DE52/VDZbHxiCCi

\(^{22}\) https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.3EEE59417F13/DUEoDkjWHH

\(^{23}\) https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/a94de1c08dec11e5a6f4e928c954d72b
8 Does the support provided to the (a) asylum seekers, (b) refugees and (c) other migrants end as soon as they get a job or does it continue for a while during the first phase of their employment? If yes, what support continues?

In Lithuania, the support (monthly allowance, one-off allowance, etc.) provided to foreigners who have been granted the status of a refugee or subsidiary/temporary protection does not end as soon as they find a job. It continues for the whole period of their integration.

As mentioned above, integration-related support is not provided to other third country migrants in Lithuania.

9 To what extent are social partners systematically involved in (a) labour market integration service provision and/or (b) labour market integration service/policy definition and design?

In general we can say that so far, involvement of employer organisations and trade unions in (a) labour market integration service provision and/or (b) labour market integration service/policy definition and design is modest. In the aforementioned Action Plan for Labour Market Integration of Refugees the involvement of employers in the refugee integration process is foreseen by ‘organising meetings and signing target agreements with employers’.

A rather important role in the labour market integration of refugees is played by NGOs and municipal bodies. NGOs or municipal bodies participate in the implementation of integration in municipalities under agreements concluded with them. The Description of the Integration Procedure provides that the NGOs or municipal bodies:

1) are entitled to participate in the process of integration of a foreigner who has been granted asylum from the beginning of his integration at the Refugees Reception Centre

2) conclude an agreement with a foreigner who has been granted asylum or with his family in the format approved by the director of the Refugees Reception Centre and indicating the rights and duties of the parties to the agreement, their liability and the term of validity of the agreement;

3) submit reports to the Refugees Reception Centre, record data on the implementation of integration and the use of funds in the database of the Refugees Administration Information System;

4) upon assessing the progress of integration, submit proposals and conclusions to the RRC regarding the prolongation, reduction, suspension, resumption or termination of integration support.

Currently, two NGOs have been awarded public tender contracts to provide support for refugees during their integration in municipal territories, namely, Caritas Lithuania and the Lithuanian Red Cross Society. These NGOs are regularly developing projects financed from the European Fund for refugees aimed at improving both the admission conditions for asylum-seekers and the social integration of refugees.

In addition, the Commission for relocation of foreigners who need asylum in the Republic of Lithuania and coordination of the implementation of integration of foreigners was approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania Resolution No 1007 of 21 September 2015. The Commission is composed of representatives from the Government, different ministries and NGOs. The Commission is delegated to deal with the issues arising in the process of organising and implementing the relocation of foreigners who need asylum in the Republic of Lithuania, as well as in the process of implementing the integration of foreigners.
10 To what extent is the labour market integration of refugees well-coordinated within the country? Do employment agencies and asylum authorities coordinate?

The analysis of Lithuanian legislation and research/survey information suggests that in Lithuania the labour market integration of refugees is not yet well-coordinated. According to the EMN Focussed Study\(^{24}\), an effective employment scheme, which would allow for an adequate and personalised assessment of the capacities of the persons who have been granted asylum to integrate into the Lithuanian labour market from the very moment of their arrival at the RRC, has not been developed. The measures undertaken presently are of a temporary nature and do not focus on the achievement of specific objectives. Many integration measures are implemented in Lithuania with EU funds and are therefore temporary, as it is difficult to ensure the sustainability of refugee integration due to the lack of financial resources. Furthermore, regardless of the fact that the Description of the Integration Procedure provides for a sufficient number of employment-related support measures, they are either not applied in practice or apply to a very limited extent, therefore the objectives of integration into the labour market are rarely achieved\(^ {25}\). Finally, it should be noted that a significant number of legal acts are currently undergoing improvement in response to the fact that Lithuania plans to transfer 1 105 refugees from Italy and Greece (including 70 persons to be transferred from third countries), and therefore it is not always possible to ensure appropriate coordination between employment agencies and asylum authorities.

**Bibliography**


Integration of aliens who have been granted asylum in Lithuania: legal regulation and situation. Focussed Study. International Organization for Migration, European Migration Network 2015. Available at: http://emn.lt/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Prieglobst%C4%AF-Lietuvoje-gavusi%C5%B3-u%C5%BEesienie%C4%8D%C5%B3-integracija_National-Report.pdf


\(^{24}\) Integration of aliens who have been granted asylum in Lithuania: legal regulation and situation. Focussed Study. International Organization for Migration, European Migration Network 2015

\(^ {25}\) ibid
Labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees - Lithuania

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