

**European Migration Network
National Contact Point for Lithuania**

**ANNUAL STATISTICS REPORT:
MIGRATION AND ASYLUM IN LITHUANIA
2009**

Vilnius, 2011

Annual Report on Migration and Asylum Statistics for Lithuania

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This report has been drawn up by the European Migration Network National Contact Point for Lithuania with the aim of providing an overview of changes in migration processes in Lithuania and contributing to the report as drawn up by the European Migration Network (EMN) on the key developments and trends in the migration statistics of the European Union Member States for 2009.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The present report presents Lithuania's statistics on migration and asylum for 2009, identifies the main tendencies in the field of legal immigration, control of aliens and asylum. The report aims not only at presenting statistical information, but also at clarifying and pointing out the possible causes of certain developments in the area of migration.

The report is intended for the specialists and policy makers developing and implementing Lithuania's migration policy. We hope that it will be useful for everyone who takes interest in migration.

2. METHODOLOGY

The structure of the report conforms to the structure (Articles) of Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection¹ (hereinafter referred to as the "Regulation"). The terms used in the report correspond to the terms of the Regulation. It should be noted that this report focuses on the aliens who are not citizens of the European Union Member States.

The main source relied upon when drawing up the report is Eurostat data. For the purposes of comparison, other sources were relied upon too: migration yearbooks, which are published by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior, and annual reports of the Division on Asylum Affairs of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.² In such cases, it is pointed out in the footnotes that data from other sources are relied upon.

In drawing up the report, consultations were held with the experts working in the field of migration and statistics, account was also taken of the information provided in the publications issued by state institutions and in the media.

The report presents the main data and charts in order to highlight the principal tendencies. Detailed statistical data are given in tables of the annex to the report. The report does not repeat the information which was presented in the 2007 and 2008 reports, hence in order to obtain more information for the purposes of comparison or clarification of developments, account should be taken of the statistics reports of 2007³ and 2008⁴.

¹ OJ 2007 L 199, p. 23.

² They can be accessed from <http://www.migracija.lt/>.

³ [http://emn.intrasoft-](http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/Downloads/prepareShowFiles.do;jsessionid=80E0CC0F37FBAD9EC80EEC9290789116?entryTitle=02_Annual%20Report%20on%20Asylum%20and%20Migration%20Statistics%202007)

[intl.com/Downloads/prepareShowFiles.do;jsessionid=80E0CC0F37FBAD9EC80EEC9290789116?entryTitle=02_Annual%20Report%20on%20Asylum%20and%20Migration%20Statistics%202007](http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/Downloads/prepareShowFiles.do;jsessionid=80E0CC0F37FBAD9EC80EEC9290789116?entryTitle=02_Annual%20Report%20on%20Asylum%20and%20Migration%20Statistics%202007)

3. LEGAL IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION

In 2009, Lithuania continued to struggle with the economic downturn, which affected migration flows: immigration was decreasing and emigration increasing.

3.1. International migration, resident population and acquisition of citizenship (Article 3 of the Regulation)

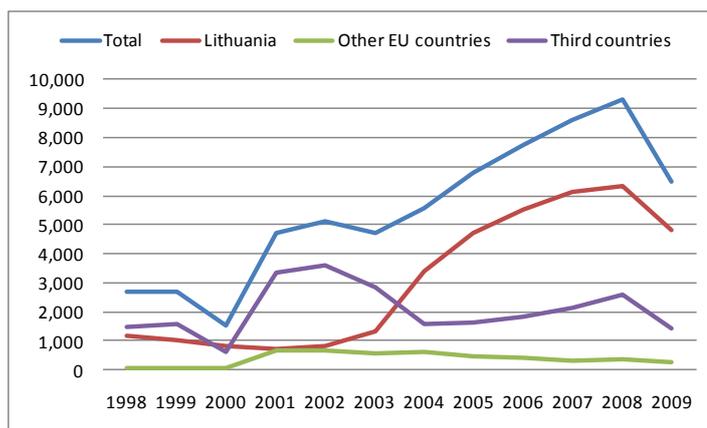
The net migration, which was slowly increasing in the period of economic growth, started to decrease again in 2009. Thus, as compared with 2008, the number of emigrants in 2009 was threefold larger than that of immigrants.

3.1.1. International migration flows⁵

In 2009, 6 487 persons **immigrated** to Lithuania, which is by 2 810 (30%) less than in 2008. The majority of the immigrants were citizens of the Republic of Lithuania (4 821, or 74.3%). Persons in the age group of 20-39 years constituted over a half of the immigrants (56%). Among the immigrants, 51.7% were males, and 48.3% – females. Out of all immigrants, 1 751 (27%) were born outside the European Union, mainly in Russia (505), Belarus (470) and Ukraine (230).

In 2009, 1 405 third-country nationals entered Lithuania, i.e., almost twofold less than in 2008. The majority of these nationals were citizens of Belarus (438), Russia (312) and Ukraine (209).

Chart 1. Immigration to Lithuania during the period 1998- 2009, disaggregated by citizenship group



⁴ http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/Downloads/prepareShowFiles.do;jsessionid=80E0CC0F37FBAD9EC80EEC9290789116?entryTitle=01_Annual%20Report%20on%20Asylum%20and%20Migration%20Statistics%202008

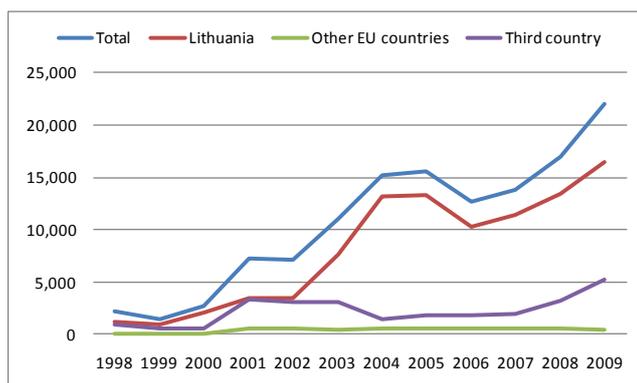
⁵ This section presents data from the publication “International Migration of Lithuanian Population (2009)” issued by the Department of Statistics under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

A half of the total number of immigrants arrived to Lithuania from other Member States of the European Union, and 2 642 persons – from third countries. The countries of origin are most often Russia (579), Belarus (569) and Ukraine (273).

In 2009, 21 970 persons emigrated from Lithuania. 20% of all emigrants were young people from 25 to 29 years old, other large groups comprised other persons of working age. Males accounted for 60% of all emigrants, whereas females – for 40%.

Lithuania’s citizens (16 421, 74.74%) made up the majority of all the emigrants. In 2009, 5 172 third-country nationals emigrated from Lithuania, i.e., by 188 persons more than in 2008. Most of them were citizens of Belarus (1 939), Ukraine (895), Russia (675), Turkey (376), and China (256). The increasing volume of emigration of third-country nationals is due to the fact that the economic crisis has particularly severely affected third-country who lost their jobs and eventually had to leave Lithuania.

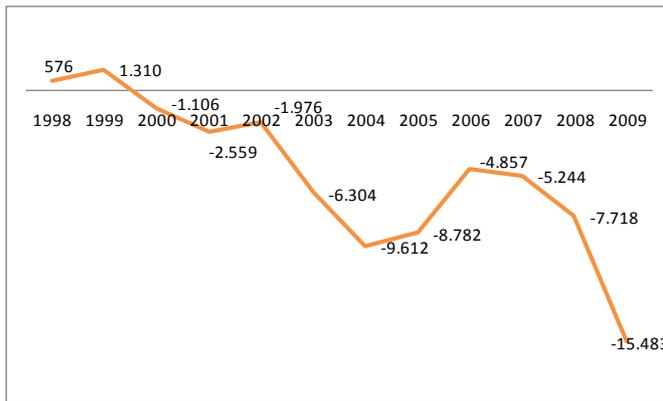
Chart 2. Emigration from Lithuania during the period 1998-2009, disaggregated by citizenship group



Slightly more than a half of the emigrants (13 514 persons) left for residence to other Member States of the European Union. The remaining part of the emigrants (8 456 persons) left to third countries: Belarus (2 063), USA (1 700), Russia (1 145), Ukraine (1 004), Norway (536), Turkey (392), China (267).

A comparison of the volumes of immigration and emigration allows for the conclusion that in 2009, the already negative net migration began to decrease against emigration.

Chart 3. Net migration during the period 1998-2009



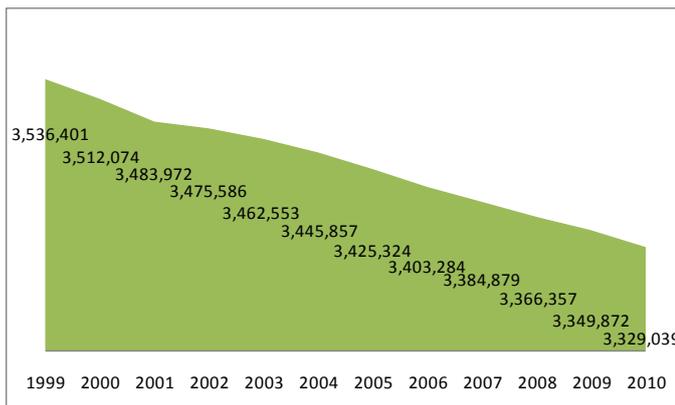
According to the Department of Statistics under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the actual emigration rate in 2009 was much higher, because another 12 700 residents could have left without declaring their emigration⁶.

3.1.2. Place of permanent residence

In 2009, the tendency of decrease in the number of the Lithuanian population continued. At the end of 2009, 3 329 039 persons resided in Lithuania (by 20 833 less than at the end of 2008), including 3 292 038 (98.89%) citizens of the Republic of Lithuania, 34 577 (1.04%) third-country nationals and 2 424 (0.07%) citizens of other Member States of the European Union.

Just as the previous year, the aliens were mostly citizens of Russia (12 406), Belarus (5 125) and Ukraine (2 631).⁷

Chart 4. Permanent residents of Lithuania during the period 1999- 2010⁸



Distribution of the Lithuanian population by sex was roughly equal, although among citizens of the Republic of Lithuania there were slightly more females (53.6% of females, 46.6% of males), and among the aliens males made up the larger share (among citizens of the Member States of the

⁶ Data of a survey of undeclared emigration.

⁷ Data of the Migration Yearbook published by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

⁸ Data of 1 January of each year are presented, hence the report makes use of the data of 1 January 2010 when referring to the persons residing in Lithuania at the end of 2009.

European Union, there were 69% of males, 31% of females, and among third-country nationals – 52% of males, 48% of females). This tendency is not accidental, because the aliens residing in Lithuania usually do ‘male’ jobs.

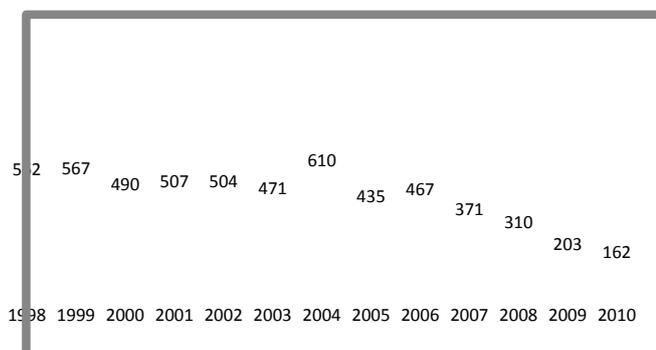
At the end of 2009, the largest part of the Lithuanian population consisted of persons of working age from 35 to 64 years old (among citizens of the Republic of Lithuania, they made up 40%, among citizens of other Member States of the European Union – 54%, among third-country nationals – 33%). Residents of retirement age made up the smallest group of the population (16% of the total number of inhabitants).

The majority of the Lithuanian population were born in Lithuania (93.5%), 0.95% of the population were born in other Member States of the European Union, and 5.52% – in third countries.

3.1.3. Acquisition of citizenship

In 2009, there occurred no major changes in the field of citizenship. The earlier tendency continued, namely, Lithuania’s citizenship was granted to a smaller number of aliens than the previous year. In 2009, Lithuania’s citizenship was granted to 203 aliens, by 107 less than in 2008.

Chart 5. Granting of Lithuania’s citizenship to aliens during the period 1998-2010⁹



Just as the previous year, citizenship was most often granted to stateless persons (106 cases, 52%). Other 3 largest groups were, as usual, the citizens of Russia (58), Ukraine (24) and Belarus (11).

Out of all the persons who were granted Lithuania’s citizenship, 97 were males (48%), and 106 – females (52%). The majority of them were persons of working age; the largest age groups – 20-24 years and 35-39 years (35 persons each).

⁹ Data for 2010 have been obtained from the Migration Yearbook published by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

3.2. Residence permits and third-country nationals (Article 6 of the Regulation)

The economic crisis particularly severely affected labour immigration to Lithuania: along with the falling demand for products in international and local markets, the volume of production and provision of services shrank, jobs were eliminated, which resulted in the growth of the number of the unemployed and decrease of the need for immigrants.

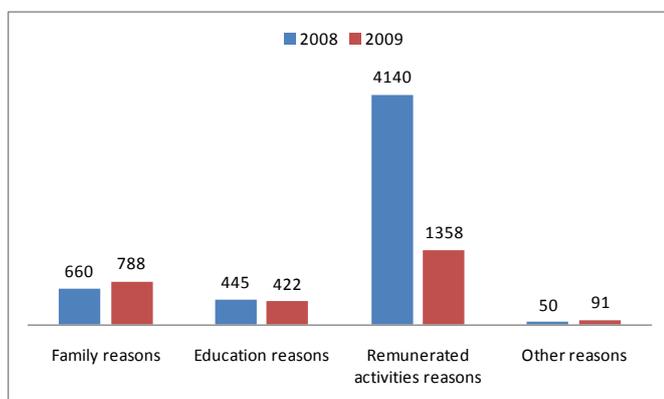
a) Residence permits issued to aliens

i) Residence permits issued for the first time

In 2009, residence permits in Lithuania were issued for the first time to 2 659 aliens, which is twice less than in 2008.¹⁰ It is a regular occurrence that the number of aliens entering Lithuania for paid employment or to engage in other remunerated activities decreased the most – from 4 140 in 2008 to 1 358 in 2009 (a decrease of 67%). Interestingly, the number of issued national long-term visas (D) also decreased twofold – from 6 649 in 2008 to 3 327 in 2009.¹¹ These visas are often issued to aliens entering the country for work, hence the fall in the number of such visas and residence permits issued for employment purposes attests to the fact that during the economic crisis, the need for foreign workers considerably decreased.¹²

The number of aliens who were issued residence permits for the first time on other grounds, though being a smaller one, remained stable (see Chart 6).

Chart 6. Residence permits issued for the first time in 2008 and 2009, disaggregated by the reason for stay



On 4 August 2009, amendments to the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens¹³ entered into force. The amendments, among other goals, pursued the aim of facilitating family reunification for certain

¹⁰ In 2008, 5 295 aliens were issued residence permits for the first time.

¹¹ Data of the Migration Yearbook published by the Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

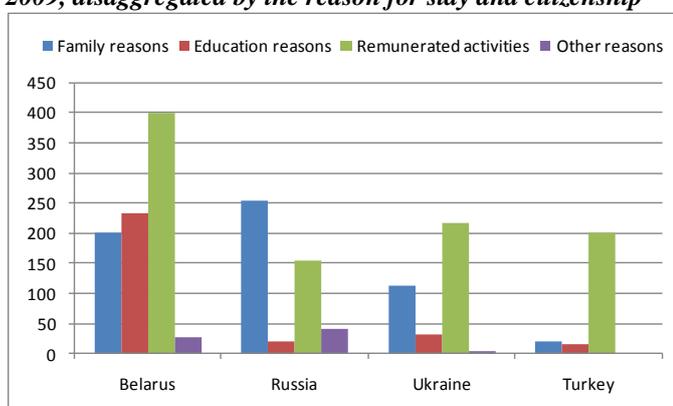
¹² However, it must be noted that in order to gain speedier entry to Lithuania for work, some aliens obtain first national long-term visas (D) and subsequently temporary residence permits. Therefore, some temporary residence permits and D-type visas become duplicated, i.e., they are issued to the same aliens.

¹³ Law Amending and Supplementing Articles 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 21, 26, 34, 35, 43, 45, 51, 53, 62, 63, 64, 80, 81, 93, 101, 102, 106, 125 and 140(1) of the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens and Supplementing the Law with Article 141(1) (Official Gazette, No 93-3984, 2009).

groups of aliens.¹⁴ However, such facilitation did not have any considerable effect: the number of aliens who in 2009 were issued residence permits on grounds of family reunification, as compared against 2008, grew merely by 128 permits (from 660 to 788), and in 2010 again decreased to 639 residence permits.¹⁵

Just as the previous year, the majority of residence permits issued for the first time were issued to citizens of Belarus (859), Russia (469), Ukraine (366) and Turkey (235), followed by citizens of the USA (84), China (80), India (72) and Georgia (72). Compared with 2008, the number of Moldova's citizens issued residence permits for the first time significantly declined (from 250 in 2008 down to 62 in 2009).

Chart 7. Four largest groups of aliens issued residence permits for the first time in 2009, disaggregated by the reason for stay and citizenship



The majority of residence permits issued for the first time (1 678, or 63%) were valid for 12 months, and sometimes for a period exceeding one year.¹⁶ 668 (25%) residence permits were issued for a period from 6 to 12 months, and 313 (12%) residence permits – from 3 to 6 months.

ii) Residence permits issued upon aliens changing their reason for stay in Lithuania

Under the Regulation, EU Member States collect statistics also on the aliens who, upon entering the country for one reason and after the validity of their residence permit expires, at the latest within six months, obtain a new residence permit for another reason, that is, change the ground for staying in the country (immigration).¹⁷ Lithuania started collecting such statistics since 2009.

¹⁴ For detailed information about amendments to the Law, see the Policy Report on Migration and Asylum in 2009 prepared by the European Migration Network (EMN) National Contact Point for Lithuania (http://www.emn.lt/uploads/documents/emn_2009_ataskaitagalutine_lt_1.pdf).

¹⁵ Data of the Migration Yearbook published by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

¹⁶ For instance, the length of validity of residence permits issued to aliens who are of Lithuanian origin or who have retained the right to the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania is 5 years.

¹⁷ In such cases in Lithuania, new residence permits are usually issued immediately upon expiry of the validity of the earlier residence permit, i.e., aliens apply for the issuance of a new permit already during the validity of the previous residence permit.

In total, 197 aliens changed their reason for stay in Lithuania in 2009. Of them, 95 previously were employees, but later remained in Lithuania on other grounds, usually family reunification. Most often, as many as in 116 cases (59%), a new residence permit was issued for family reasons (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number of residence permits issued in 2009 upon aliens changing their reason for stay in Lithuania, disaggregated by the reason for issuance of the residence permits

Previous reason for the issuance of the residence permit (from)	New reason for the issuance of the residence permit (to)
Family reunification (40)	Studies (8)
	Remunerated activities (29)
	Other reasons (3)
Studies (52)	Family reunification (25)
	Remunerated activities (27)
Remunerated activities (95)	Family reunification (85)
	Studies (7)
	Other reasons (3)
Other reasons (10)	Family reunification (6)
	Studies (2)
	Remunerated activities (2)

The reason for stay in Lithuania was most often changed by citizens of Ukraine (56), Belarus (33) and Russia (32).

Nowadays, the public is voicing the opinion that the number of marriages of convenience concluded with aliens is growing – this is allegedly the way for aliens to remain in Lithuania or to enter it. However, this opinion is so far not supported by statistical data: in 2009, issuance of temporary residence permits to spouses or registered partners of aliens was refused only on 18 occasions; due to a marriage of convenience or a partnership of convenience, as few as 2 temporary residence permits were withdrawn in 2009, and in 2010 – 1.¹⁸

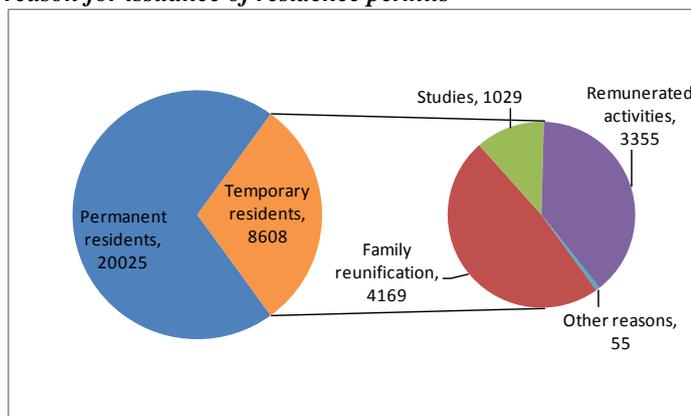
iii) Residence permits valid at the end of 2009

¹⁸ Data of the Migration Yearbooks published by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

At the end of 2009, 28 633 aliens holding temporary or permanent residence permits resided in Lithuania, which is merely by 397 aliens less than at the end of 2008.¹⁹ A presumption may be made that the majority of aliens who arrived to Lithuania for work in 2008 departed from Lithuania at the very outbreak of the economic crisis, i.e., before the end of 2008.

The majority of aliens residing in Lithuania at the end of 2009 as usual consisted of permanent residents of Lithuania – their number amounted to 19 648 (69%). As compared with 2008, their share among all aliens residing in Lithuania increased by 6%. The number of aliens residing in Lithuania on the ground of employment decreased by the same amount, that is, by 6%.

Chart 8. All aliens residing in Lithuania at the end of 2009, disaggregated by the reason for issuance of residence permits



Among aliens in Lithuania, the number of Russian citizens is the largest (12 467, 44% of all the aliens). Other large groups of aliens consist of citizens of Belarus (5 051) and Ukraine (2 664). Nationals of other countries account for less than 500.

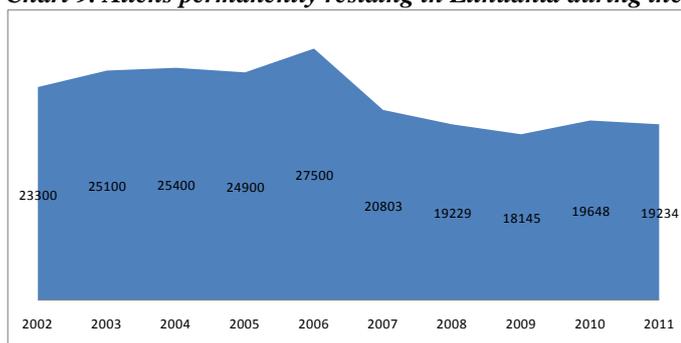
The length of validity of most of the permits valid at the end of 2009 was equal to or more than 12 months. There were 27 218 such permits, i.e., 95% of the total number of the permits.

b) Long-term residents in Lithuania at the end of 2009

At the end of 2009, there were 19 648 aliens residing in Lithuania and holding valid permanent residence permits. The majority of them were citizens of Russia (10 323), Belarus (2 016), and Ukraine (1 320). Stateless persons also made up a large group (4 513).

¹⁹ At the end of 2008, 29 030 aliens resided in Lithuania.

Chart 9. Aliens permanently residing in Lithuania during the period 2002-2010



4. ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION AND RETURN²⁰

In 2009, the procedures for apprehending and expelling aliens did not undergo any changes, neither were there any institutional developments in this field. As compared with the previous year, the number of aliens found to be illegally present or residing in Lithuania increased, although the main countries of origin remained unchanged. The number of Georgian citizens refused entry to Lithuania or apprehended upon illegally entering the country increased too, which could have been caused by ongoing political turmoil in Georgia.

4.1. Prevention of illegal entry and stay – apprehensions (Article 5(1)(b) of the Regulation)

In 2009, 1 495 aliens were apprehended for illegal stay or residence in Lithuania, which is by 585 aliens or by 64% more than in 2008.²¹ The majority of them were full-aged males.²² The main countries of origin of the apprehended aliens remained unchanged: Russia (515 apprehended aliens), Belarus (330) and Ukraine (130), Kazakhstan (80). The number of Georgian citizens increased from 30 in 2008 to 80 in 2009.

The increase in the number of illegal immigrants could be explained by the fact that the economic crisis severely affected not only Lithuania, in which a large number of aliens lost their jobs, hence also the reason for stay in Lithuania,²³ but also the countries of origin of the aliens. Therefore, more aliens decided to illegally stay in Lithuania or to illegally enter it, possibly hoping to proceed further to Western European countries.

²⁰ The statistics presented in this section have been rounded to the nearest 5 or 0.

²¹ In 2008, 910 aliens were apprehended.

²² 1 110 males and 385 females were apprehended, including 60 minors.

²³ In 2009, 1 141 temporary residence permits in Lithuania were withdrawn due to termination of an employment contract with an alien, withdrawal of his work permit in Lithuania or in the case of termination of other economic activities in Lithuania by the alien (data of the Migration Yearbook published by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior).

4.2. Returns (Article 7 of the Regulation)

a) Aliens illegally staying or residing in Lithuania in respect of whom decisions were adopted imposing an obligation to leave or to expel them from Lithuania or to return them to a foreign state

In 2009, 1 120 decisions were adopted with regards to the aliens illegally present in Lithuania, i.e. 1 120 third country nationals were obligated to leave, were expelled or returned from Lithuania. The number in 2009 increased by 210 decisions if compared to 2008.²⁴ Traditionally, the majority of such decisions were adopted with respect to citizens of Russia (390), Belarus (310) and Ukraine (110).

b) Aliens who have in fact left the territory of Lithuania, following the decisions adopted in their respect

In fact, 925 aliens departed from Lithuania in 2009, which is by 70 more than in 2008.²⁵ Just as the previous year, the most conscientious in complying with decisions (mostly being the obligations to depart voluntarily) were citizens of Belarus (240 departures), followed by citizens of Russia (230) and Ukraine (110).

In 2009, voluntary return programmes were not implemented in Lithuania.

5. BORDER PROTECTION²⁶

In 2009, there were no major developments in the field of border protection, the external border protection infrastructure and the qualification of border protection officers were being improved. The number of aliens refused entry to Lithuania continued to decrease.

5.1. Prevention of illegal entry and stay – refusals (Article 5(1)(a) of the Regulation)

In 2009, 1 750 aliens were refused entry to Lithuania, which is by 460 aliens less than in 2008.²⁷ Thus, the tendency of decrease in the number of aliens who were refused entry continued.²⁸ The majority of them, 1 655 (94.6%), were refused entry at the land border (most of them, 1 179, from the Republic of Belarus, other 478 – from the Russian Federation²⁹). 45 aliens were refused entry to Lithuania at airports, and 50 – at the sea port.

The majority of those who were refused entry were citizens of Russia (47.7% or 835), which shows that some Russian citizens attempt illegal entry to Lithuania from the territory of Belarus, rather than from the Kaliningrad Oblast belonging to Russia – they choose to act so as citizens of

²⁴ In 2008, 910 decisions were adopted.

²⁵ In 2008, 855 aliens departed complying with the decision adopted in their respect.

²⁶ The statistics presented in this section have been rounded to the nearest 5 or 0.

²⁷ In 2008, 2 210 aliens were refused entry.

²⁸ For possible causes, see the 2007 statistics report.

²⁹ Data of the State Border Guard Service at the Ministry of the Interior.

Russia have no problem in entering the territory of Belarus. Other large groups of aliens who were refused entry consist of citizens of Belarus (30.4% or 530), Ukraine (5.9 % or 105), Georgia (4.2% or 75). As compared with 2008, the total number of aliens of all nationalities who were refused entry decreased, though the number of Georgian nationals increased – from 15 in 2008 to 75 in 2009.

Similarly to the previous year, aliens most often attempted to enter Lithuania without a valid visa or a residence permit (see Table 2).

Table 2. Aliens refused entry to Lithuania in 2009, disaggregated by the reason for refusal to enter and the border

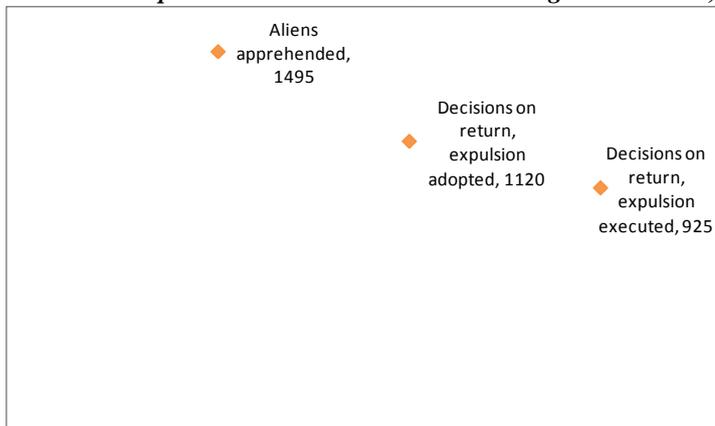
	Refused entry at the land border	Refused entry at airports	Refused entry at the sea port	Total
Not in possession of a valid travel document	20	-	-	20
In possession of a false travel document	10	-	-	10
Not in possession of a valid visa or residence permit	1265	15	35	1320
In possession of a false visa or residence permit	20	-	-	20
Unjustified travel purpose	165	20	5	190
Exceeding the length of stay (3 months per period of 6 months)	20	-	-	20
Not in possession sufficient means of subsistence	45	-	-	45
Warning to refuse entry issued	55	-	10	65
Posing a threat to public order	55	-	-	55
Total	1655	45	50	1750

5.2. Refusals, apprehensions and returns

In 2009, the number of aliens refused entry to Lithuania (1 750) almost equalled that of the aliens apprehended for illegal stay in the territory of Lithuania (1 495). However, this does not necessarily mean that it is necessary to strengthen controls at the border with Belarus and Kaliningrad, because the aliens apprehended in the territory of Lithuania could have illegally entered Lithuania from Latvia or Poland or they could have entered legally, but could have remained in Lithuania illegally, upon the expiry of the validity of their visa or residence permit or exceeding the allowed visa-free stay.

Upon apprehending 1 495 aliens in Lithuania in 2009, 1 120 decisions were taken the same year on obligation to leave, expulsion and return of third country nationals. In fact, 925 illegally present aliens left Lithuania in 2009.

Chart 10. Adopted and executed decisions on obligation to leave, expulsion and return in 2009



With respect to indicators of illegal immigration, there was an increase in the number of citizens of Georgia, which was most probably determined by political turmoil in Georgia.

6. ASYLUM: INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION³⁰ (Article 4 of the Regulation)

In 2009, the legal acts regulating the issues of asylum were not subject to any amendments, neither were there any changes in the functions of the authorities participating in asylum procedures, the quantitative or qualitative structure.

This year saw some policy developments in respect of persons of the Chechen nationality: they were previously subject to the principle of non-refoulement due to violations of human rights perpetrated in Russia and the absence of the alternative of internal resettlement, but in 2009 examination of the asylum applications lodged by Chechens taking into account individual circumstances was initiated, hence the number of refusals over the Chechens seeking international protection increased 8 times.³¹

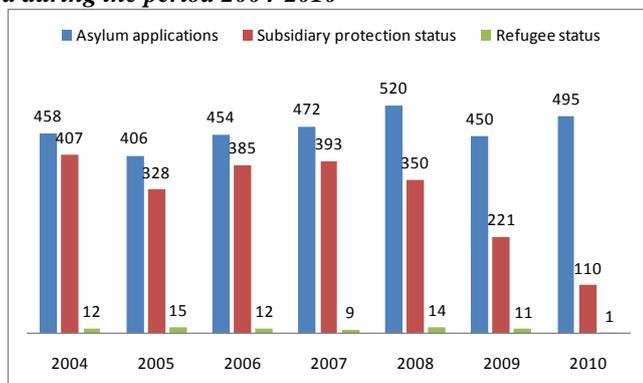
For the first time since 2005, the total number of applications for international protection was smaller than the previous year. The year 2009 witnessed a considerable increase in the number of Georgia's citizens applying for international protection in Lithuania, however international protection was not granted to any of them. The reason could have been the fact that by lodging applications for international protection, the citizens of Georgia merely sought to legitimise their illegal entry to Lithuania.

³⁰ This section presents statistics rounded to the nearest 0 and 5.

³¹ The 2009 report of the Division on Asylum Affairs of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

The total number of decisions – both first-time and repeat (adopted in respect of the same persons) shows that in 2009, both subsidiary protection status and refugee status were granted to a smaller number of aliens than in 2008.

Chart 11. All asylum applications and all decisions granting subsidiary protection status or refugee status adopted during the period 2004-2010³²

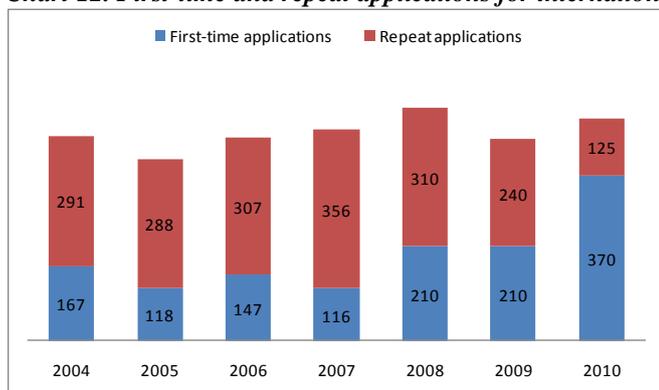


6.1. Applications for international protection

a) Applications for international protection lodged in 2009

In 2009, 450 applications for international protection were lodged, representing an decrease by 70 applications as compared with 2008.³³ For the first time since 2005, the number of lodged asylum applications was smaller than the previous year. Such a decrease was due to a decline in the number of subsequently lodged applications (in 2009, 240 such applications were lodged, while in 2008 – 310), because the number of first-time applications for international protection remained stable (in 2009 and 2008, 210 first-time applications for international protection were lodged each year).

Chart 12. First-time and repeat applications for international protection during the period 2004-2010³⁴



³² Data of the Migration Yearbooks published by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior and Eurostat.

³³ In 2008, 520 applications were lodged.

³⁴ Data for the period 2004-2007 have been obtained from the 2009 report prepared by the Division on Asylum Affairs of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

In 2009, asylum applications were lodged by 320 males (71%) and 130 females (29%). The majority of them were young people aged 18-34 years (240 applications or 53%). A substantial number of applications were lodged by children under the age of 14 years – 85 (18%). Aliens over the age of 65 lodged as few as 5 applications for international protection.

The majority of applications for international protection, just as the previous year, were submitted by citizens of Russia (245 applications, 54%), mostly Chechens (213 applications, 88% of all the applications lodged by Russian citizens³⁵). Actually, the number of applications by citizens of Russia decreased against the previous year.³⁶ However, there was a significant rise in the number of applications lodged by citizens of Georgia – from 10 in 2008 to 75 in 2009, which could be most probably accounted for by political turmoil in their country of origin. Aliens of another citizenship did not often apply for international protection. For instance, citizens of Sri Lanka lodged 20 applications, those of Belarus, Afghanistan and Iraq – 15 applications from each country, Pakistan and Uzbekistan – 10 applications from each country.

b) Applications for international protection remaining unexamined at the end of 2009

At the end of 2009, 140 applications for international protection remained unexamined, mainly due to the fact that they were lodged at the end of the year.³⁷ This figure accounts for 22% of the total number of applications under examination in 2009.³⁸ Of them, 110 (79%) applications were lodged by males, 30 (21%) – by females. In proportion to the total number of asylum applications lodged, the majority of the applications remaining unexamined were applications of citizens of Russia (55), Georgia (35) and Sri Lanka (15).³⁹ Compared by age, the applications were lodged mostly by young persons aged from 18 to 34 (90), against the smallest number of the applications (15) lodged by children under the age of 14 years.

c) Withdrawn applications in 2009

In 2009, 85 applications for international protection were withdrawn, which is by 55 more than in 2008.⁴⁰ The applications were those lodged by citizens of Georgia (30), Russia (20), Iraq (10), Belarus (5), India (5) and Syria (5). Asylum applications are most often withdrawn due to the fact that asylum seekers leave the place of their accommodation, fail to turn up for an interview and it is not possible to establish contact with them within one month.

³⁵ Data of the Division on Asylum Affairs of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

³⁶ According to data of the Division on Asylum Affairs of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior, in 2008 citizens of Russia lodged 415 applications, in 2007 – 366, and in 2006 – 369.

³⁷ Lithuania usually examines an asylum application within 3 months.

³⁸ In 2009, 615 applications were under examination: 450 applications lodged in 2009, and 165 applications remaining unexamined in 2008.

³⁹ This group of Sri Lanka's citizens was returned to Lithuania from Belgium under the Dublin procedure at the end of 2009.

⁴⁰ In 2008, 30 applications were withdrawn.

6.2. Decisions taken on international protection

This section reviews only the decisions taken on the asylum applications lodged for the first time.⁴¹ Eurostat collects data on first instance decisions and on final decisions. In Lithuania, first instance decisions are the decisions taken by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior. Final decisions are those which are final and may not be appealed against to court (effective court judgments or decisions of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior implementing an effective court judgement).

In 2009, 145 first instance decisions and 55 final decisions on granting of international protection were taken, of them 46 decisions were positive. Thus, the approximate percentage of satisfaction of first-time asylum applications in 2009 was 23%.

a) Decisions rejecting applications for international protection

In 2009, 100 first instance and 50 final decisions were taken rejecting applications for international protection, i.e., not granting aliens asylum in Lithuania. Compared against 2008, the amount of negative decisions significantly increased. Thus, in 2008 as few as 35 negative first instance and the same number of negative final decisions were taken.

The majority of the rejected applications had been lodged by males – 75 first instance and 35 final decisions (females lodged respectively 25 and 15 applications which were subsequently rejected). If disaggregated by age group, the majority of rejected applications were those of 18-34 year old aliens – 55 first instance and 30 final decisions.

Just as the previous year, the majority of the rejected applications had been lodged by citizens of Russia (60 applications rejected by first instance and 30 by final decisions), followed by those of Georgia's citizens (20 applications rejected by first instance decisions), citizens of Cuba and Pakistan (in each case, 5 applications were rejected by first instance decisions and 5 applications – by final decisions).

b) Decisions granting or withdrawing refugee status⁴²

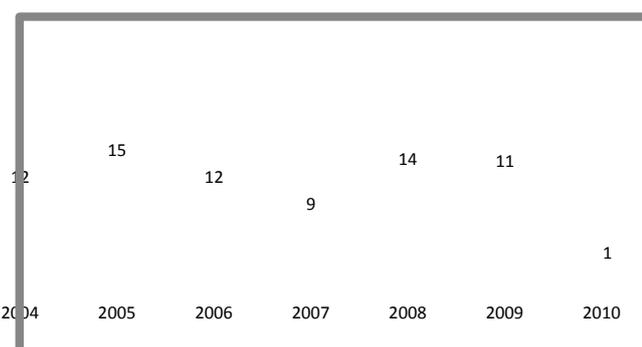
In 2009, refugee status was granted to 11 aliens: 6 citizens of Russia, 2 citizens of Armenia, 1 citizen respectively of Uzbekistan, Iraq and Belarus.

Chart 12. Decisions granting refugee status during the period 2004-2010⁴³

⁴¹ Information on all decisions – in respect of both first-time and repeat applications for international protection – can be found in the Migration Yearbooks published by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior or the annual reports prepared by the Division on Asylum Affairs of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

⁴² Refugee status is granted in Lithuania in rare cases, hence this section will present data of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior, rather than Eurostat statistics (Eurostat rounds data to the nearest 0 or 5).

⁴³ Data of the Migration Yearbook published by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.



In 2009, just as in 2008, no alien had his refugee status withdrawn.

c) Decisions granting or withdrawing subsidiary protection status

In 2009, subsidiary protection status was granted by first instance decisions to 30 aliens, and by final decisions – to 5 aliens.⁴⁴ By comparison, in 2008 subsidiary protection status was granted only by first instance decisions to 50 aliens.

Subsidiary protection status was granted by first instance decisions to 25 males and 10 females (mostly aged 18-34), by final decisions – to 5 females.⁴⁵ As usual, the majority of them were citizens of Russia (20 first instance and 5 final decisions).

Table 3. Decisions granting subsidiary protection status in 2009

Citizenship	Total number decisions granting subsidiary protection status ⁴⁶	Including decisions in respect of first-time asylum applications
Afghanistan	13	5 first instance decisions
Belarus	3	-
Iraq	6	-
Cameroon	5	-
Nepal	2	-
Russia	172	20 first instance decisions and 5 final decisions
Syria	2	-
Somali	1	-
Sri Lanka	8	5 first instance decisions
Uzbekistan	6	-
Zimbabwe	1	-
Stateless persons	2	-
Total	221	30 first instance decisions and 5 final decisions

In 2009, the subsidiary protection status of 10 citizens of Russia was withdrawn by a first instance decision (in 2008, this status was withdrawn in respect of 5 aliens).

⁴⁴ In 2009, subsidiary protection status was granted in total to 221 aliens, which represents a decrease by 129 decisions compared with 2008 (data of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior).

⁴⁵ In these cases, courts usually ruled that the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior had failed to fully consider new evidence or had failed to properly assess the threat to which an asylum seeker would be exposed upon return to the country of origin (the 2009 report prepared by the Division on Asylum Affairs of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior).

⁴⁶ Data of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

6.3. Dublin transfers

The year 2009 witnessed further intensification of Lithuania's consultations with other EU Member States under the Dublin procedure.⁴⁷

a) Requests for taking charge of or taking back asylum seekers

Lithuania received 280 requests to take charge of or take back asylum seekers, which is twice as many as in 2008.⁴⁸ On its own initiative, Lithuania sent to other EU Member States 44 requests, which is by 9 requests more than in 2008.⁴⁹ Most of the requests were received from Sweden (66), Belgium (55), Austria (41), France (38), Germany (26). These are economically strong states not having the EU external land border, hence it is not accidental that some asylum seekers transit to these countries via Lithuania. Lithuania submitted the majority of requests to undertake responsibility for examination of asylum applications to Latvia (10), which also has the EU external land border, Austria (8), France (7), Germany (6).

Other EU Member States most often requested Lithuania to take charge of or take back asylum seekers, on the grounds that the asylum seekers had entered the territory of the EU from Lithuania (Lithuania had issued visas to them or they had entered the territory of Lithuania legally or illegally – 135 cases) or on the grounds that the asylum seekers had already lodged asylum applications to Lithuania and it was examining them (120 cases).

Other EU Member States most often requested Lithuania to take charge of or take back asylum seekers on the grounds that in other EU Member States, the asylum seekers had already lodged asylum applications under examination by those EU Member States (25 cases) or on the grounds that the asylum seekers had entered Lithuania from the territory of those EU Member States (15 cases, including all the 10 requests sent to Latvia).

b) Decisions on the transfer or taking back of asylum seekers

Lithuania agreed to take back or take charge of 222 asylum seekers, i.e., it complied with 79% of the received requests. Meanwhile, other EU Member States complied with as few as 17 Lithuania's requests (39%). Compared with 2008, the percentage of all requests complied with decreased (in 2008, Lithuania complied with 87% of the requests received from other EU Member States, whereas other EU Member States complied with 94% of Lithuania's requests).

c) Asylum seekers actually transferred

Just as the previous year, only a small part of the asylum seekers in respect of which consultations were held under the Dublin procedure was actually transferred. In 2009, 28 asylum

⁴⁷ For more information on the Dublin procedure, refer to the 2008 statistics report of the European Migration Network (EMN) National Contact Point (NCP) for Lithuania.

⁴⁸ In 2008, Lithuania received 137 requests.

⁴⁹ In 2008, Lithuania sent 35 requests.

seekers were transferred to Lithuania (12% of the requests complied with or 10% of all the requests received by Lithuania), whereas Lithuania transferred to other EU Member States 7 asylum seekers (41% of the requests complied with or 16% of all the requests sent by Lithuania).

Dublin requests complied with and asylum seekers actually transferred⁵⁰

Chart 13. To Lithuania

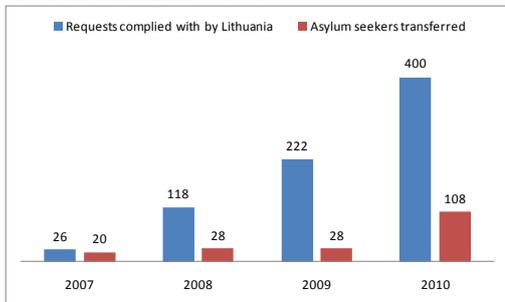


Chart 14. From Lithuania

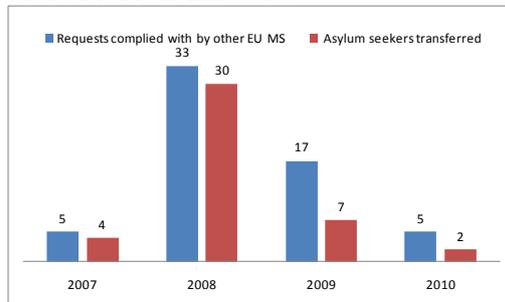
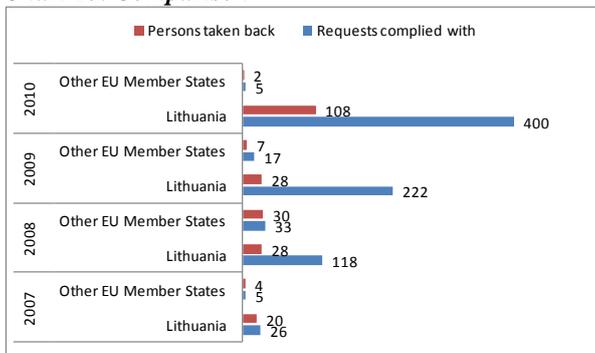


Chart 15. Comparison



d) Requests for information

The number of requests for information under the Dublin procedure was also on a slight rise. In 2009, Lithuania received 130 requests for information, and submitted at its own initiative 18 requests. As compared with 2007⁵¹ and 2008, Lithuania received respectively 8 and 94 requests and submitted 9 and 5 requests for information.

6.4. Unaccompanied minors

In 2009, 3 unaccompanied male minors applied for asylum in Lithuania, of them 2 citizens of Afghanistan (one – 14-15 years old, the other – 16-18 years old) and 1 citizen of Russia (16-18 years old).⁵² Therefore, the number of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum remains small (in 2006, there were 3 such aliens, in 2007 – 5, in 2008 – 1, and in 2010 – 9).

⁵⁰ The 2007 data obtained from the 2009 report of the Division on Asylum Affairs of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

⁵¹ The 2007 data obtained from the 2009 report of the Division on Asylum Affairs of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

⁵² Data of the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior.

In Lithuania, no centralised data of unaccompanied minors who do not seek asylum are kept.

7. ANNEXES