

# LITHUANIA

## EMN COUNTRY FACTSHEET

2018

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS IN MIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION, INCLUDING LATEST STATISTICS



### LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

#### PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

In 2018, the Students and Researchers Directive (2016/801/EU)<sup>1</sup> was transposed and several amendments to the Law were introduced:

- Applications for a temporary residence permit are examined faster, within three months;
- Aliens may enter Lithuania to participate in a traineeship (unremunerated training) at higher education and research institutions;
- After completing studies, aliens will be able to stay for another 12 months in order to seek employment or commence self-employed activities;
- Aliens in possession of a temporary residence permit issued by another EU Member State will be able to continue their studies for up to 360 days without applying for a temporary residence permit in Lithuania;
- When applying for a permanent residence permit, the entire period of studies will be counted rather than half of the period of studies as previously.

As of 1 July 2019, the migration management system in Lithuania will be modernised. After the reorganisation, two institutions will be responsible for the management of the migration processes in

<sup>1</sup> Directive 2016/801/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country

### KEY POINTS



Conditions for the arrival and employment of aliens were further simplified in order to meet the growing labour demand.



The control of aliens was strengthened, especially the monitoring of fictitious companies and the employment of posted workers.



Return and readmission of third-country nationals was mainstreamed by preparing and signing the Cooperation agreement on readmission between Lithuania and Vietnam.

Lithuania, namely, the Migration Department and the State Border Guard Service:

- The Migration Department will take over the coordination of 10 territorial migration units and will be given the power to enforce administrative justice for violations of the provisions of migration law.
- The State Border Guard Service will be responsible for the control and prevention of irregular migration across country.
- A Governmental Migration Commission will be established consisting of the Minister of Internal affairs, Minister of Foreign affairs, Minister of Social Security and Labour and

nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing.

Minister of Economy and Innovation. The Commission will assist with the decision-making on migration procedures as well as coordinate inter-institutional cooperation.

## ECONOMIC MIGRATION

Lithuania continued to experience labour shortages and arrival of alien workers was increasing in 2018. Several new developments in the field of economic migration include:

- An agreement on employment and cooperation in the field of labor migration was signed between Lithuania and Ukraine. This agreement aims to improve the protection of workers, tackle illegal employment and exploitation.
- An agreement on youth work during holidays was signed between Lithuania and Japan.
- Requirements for the entry of aliens were reduced: it is no longer compulsory to register employment contracts in the Employment Service for the employer and an alien can change the employer during the validity period of the residence permit.
- 49 professions were included in the list of professions that require higher professional qualification and are in short supply (in 2017, it included 27 professions). These workers can entry via a facilitated procedure.

## FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Conditions for foreign scientists / scholars were improved in 2018. They can now be joined by their family members upon arrival.



## INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

In 2018, the majority of all asylum seekers came from Tajikistan and amounted to 30 % of all asylum applications. In comparison, in 2016 and 2017, most applications were lodged by Syrian citizens. Staff working with asylum applications participated in trainings to improve qualification, as well as, methodological guidelines for staff examining asylum applications were drafted.



## UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

In 2018, the government issued an order amending the procedure of age assessment, accommodation and other related matters of non-asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors identified in Lithuania. Also, a dedicated building for persons with special needs was opened in the foreigners' registration centre.



## INTEGRATION

The Ministry of Social Security and Labour introduced an Action Plan for Integration of Foreigners into Society 2018-2020. The plan contains 34 measures that facilitate the integration of all foreigners.

All educational institutions that have returning Lithuanians or foreign pupils among their students were appointed teaching assistants to support the integration process.



## CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

The law amendments adopted in 2018 foresee that citizens of Lithuania may acquire another citizenship in cases of:

- A foreign national under 18 is adopted by Lithuanian citizens;
- a Lithuanian citizen under 18 is adopted by citizens of foreign states.



## BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISA

In 2018, further installation and siting works of stationary border surveillance systems were carried out at the external EU borders with Belarus and the Russian Federation. On 17-28 May, a meeting of Ministers of Interior of Schengen countries with external land borders was held in Vilnius. The aim of the meeting was to establish standards of common external border observation. The reached position was later officially announced and presented to the other Member States and EU institutions.



## IRREGULAR MIGRATION INCLUDING MIGRANT SMUGGLING

In 2018, the geographical distribution of detained irregular migrants changed, as the majority of them were coming from Iraq, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan (compared to Vietnam which dominated in previous years). Another new trend observed in 2018 was irregular migrants coming from Iran, Turkey, Syria and other countries who reached Lithuania from Greece by plane under falsified travel documents of EU citizens or using authentic travel documents of EU citizens. Many of these persons had an intention of moving further to Western European countries through Poland.

To ensure a better control of aliens coming for employment, from 2018 applications for work visas can be submitted only via diplomatic missions or consular posts of Lithuania while in the past aliens could submit applications within the country. The control of fictitious companies was intensified in 2018. 1 617 checks were carried out and 171 decisions to withdraw temporary residence permit on this ground was adopted.

Furthermore, the State Labour Inspectorate carried out 7 374 inspections of illegal work. 2 125 illegally working persons were found, among them 229 foreigners. approximately 70 % of all illegally working foreigners were Ukrainian citizens.



## TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

An information campaign on trafficking in human beings was carried out targeting citizens of Lithuania and other states entering Lithuania for employment. Information material was disseminated in Lithuanian, Russian, English and Ukrainian.

Training was also provided to police and border control officers, prosecutors, labour inspectors, municipality employees and NGOs who were trained to identify victims of trafficking in human beings (both adults and children) and coordinate their actions.



## RETURN AND READMISSION

At the end of 2018, the amendments of the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens were adopted. The amendments foresee the following:

- More possibilities to encourage an irregularly staying third-country national to voluntarily leave the country within a specific time limit if she/he requests a voluntary return and cooperates with authorities;
- A decision on expulsion of a third-country national will be issued not only by the Migration Department, but also by the State Border Guard Service, i.e. the authority which has provided the ground for the expulsion;
- The police will no longer be involved in making the decision on a third-country national's obligation to leave the country or return to a foreign state as this duty will be fulfilled by the Migration Department and the State Border Guard Service.

Also, a coordination of the readmission agreement with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was completed and the protocol on readmission of persons with Ukraine was signed in 2018.

## STATISTICAL ANNEX

The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Lithuania on aspects of migration and international protection (2015-2018), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "N/A".

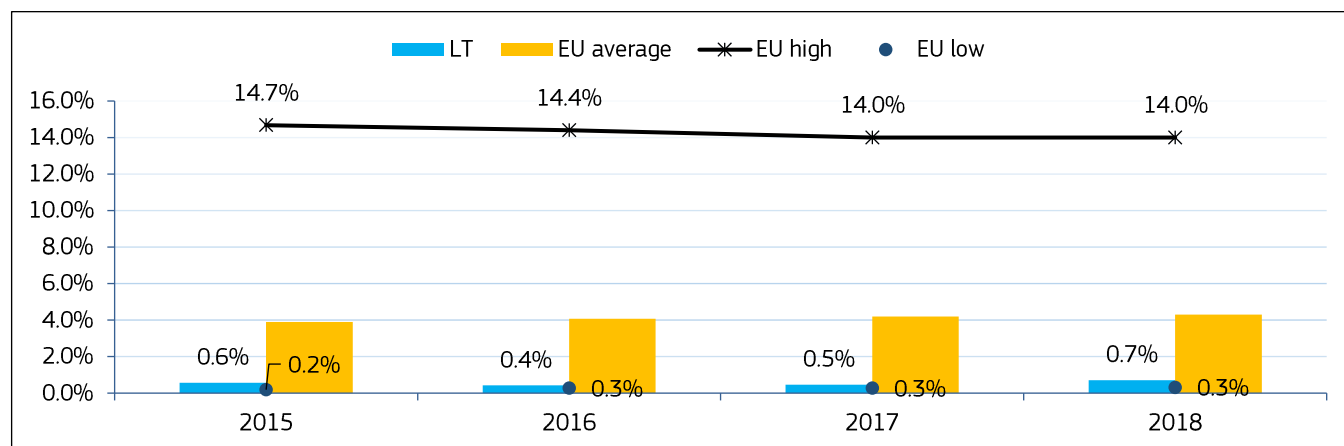
## STATISTICAL ANNEX: MIGRATION AND ASYLUM IN LITHUANIA (2015-2018)



### LEGAL MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

Eurostat data on first residence permits for 2018 was not available at the time of writing. Please consult the 2018 ARM Statistical Annex for statistics on the number of first residence permits by reason (to be published in July 2019).

**Figure 1: Resident population of third-country nationals as a share of total population in Lithuania, EU average, EU high and low (2015-2018)**

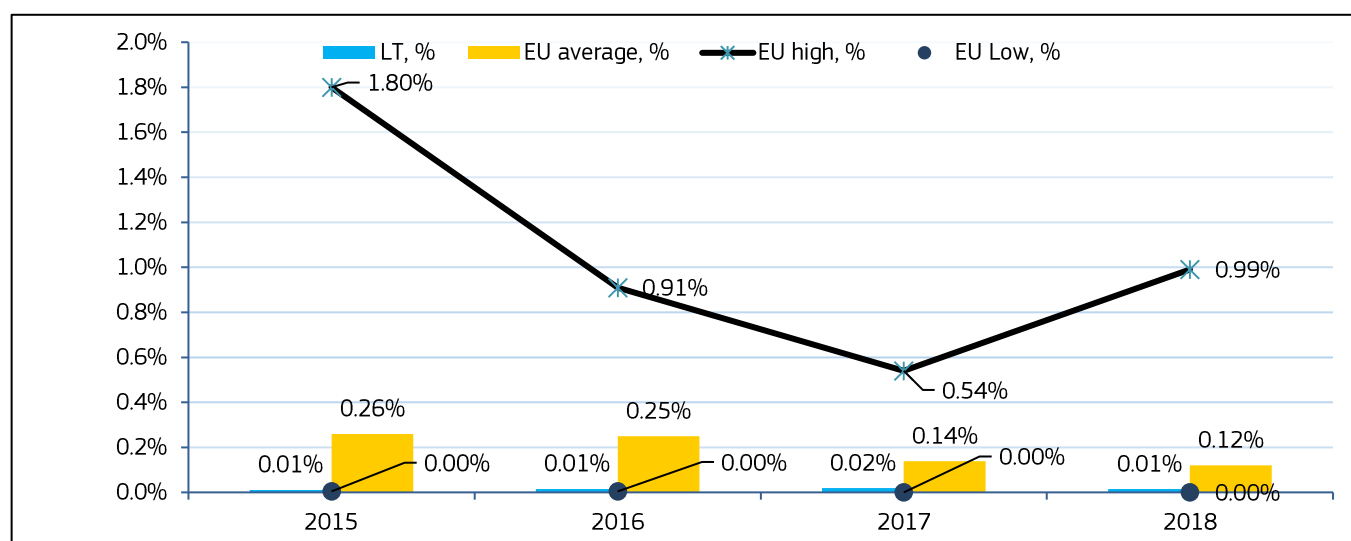


Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_pop1ctz](#)), data extracted 02.05.19



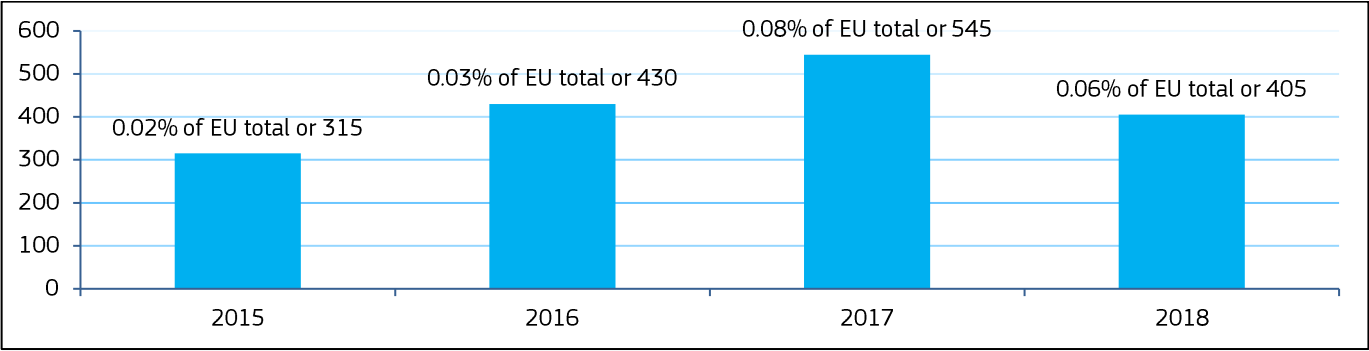
### INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION INCLUDING ASYLUM

**Figure 2: Asylum applications as a share of the total population in Lithuania, EU average and EU high and low (2015-2018)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 30.04.19

**Figure 3: Number of asylum applications and as a share of the total number of applications in the EU (2015-2018)**



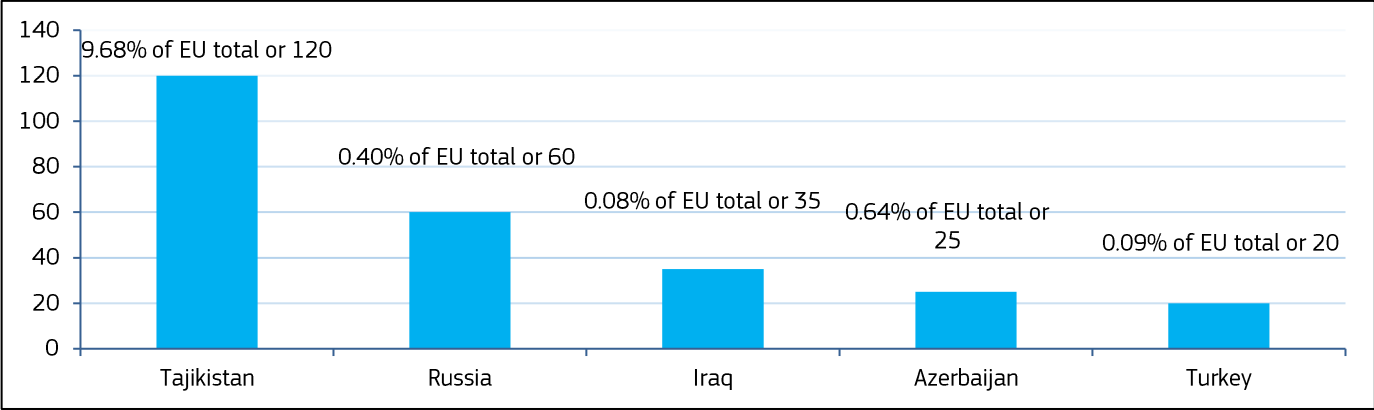
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 30.04.19

**Table 1: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities (2015-2018)**

2015			2016			2017			2018		
Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total	Nationality	No.	% of total
Ukraine	65	21%	Syria	165	38%	Syria	175	32%	Tajikistan	120	30%
Georgia	50	16%	Russia	60	14%	Russia	90	17%	Russia	60	15%
Russia	40	13%	Iraq	40	9%	Tajikistan	50	9%	Iraq	35	9%
Afghanistan	35	11%	Ukraine	30	7%	Ukraine	35	6%	Azerbaijan	25	6%
Iraq	25	8%	Afghanistan	30	7%	Belarus	30	6%	Turkey	20	5%

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 29.04.2019

**Figure 4: Asylum applications: Top five third-country nationalities as a share of EU total per given nationality (2018)**



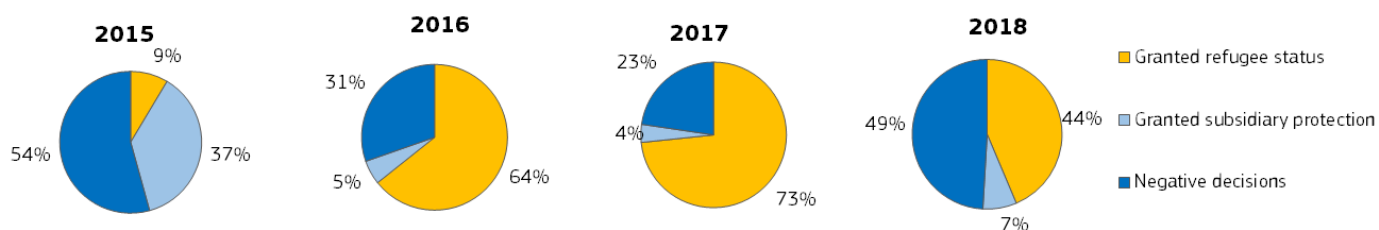
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyappctza](#)), data extracted 26.04.2019  
Note: the figure reads as: Lithuania received 120 asylum applications from Tajikistan or 9.68 % of all asylum applications launched by Tajikistan in EU in 2018.

**Table 2: Asylum applications – First instance decisions by outcome (2015-2018)**

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:		Humanitarian reasons	Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection		
<b>2015</b>	180	85	15	65	:	95
<b>2016</b>	280	195	180	15	:	85
<b>2017</b>	370	285	275	15	:	85
<b>2018</b>	270	135	120	20	:	135

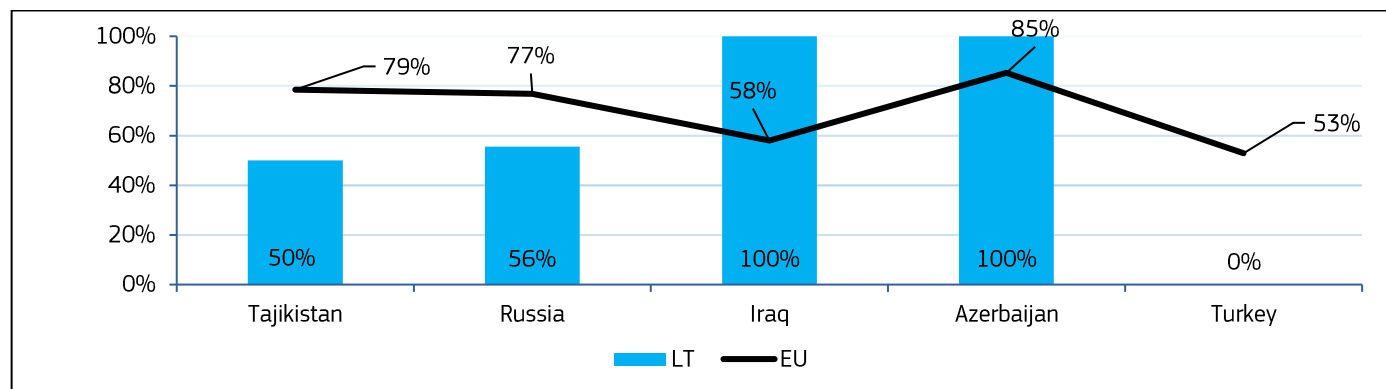
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asydcfst](#)), data extracted 29.04.2019

**Figure 5: Asylum applications – First instance decisions by outcome (2015-2018)**



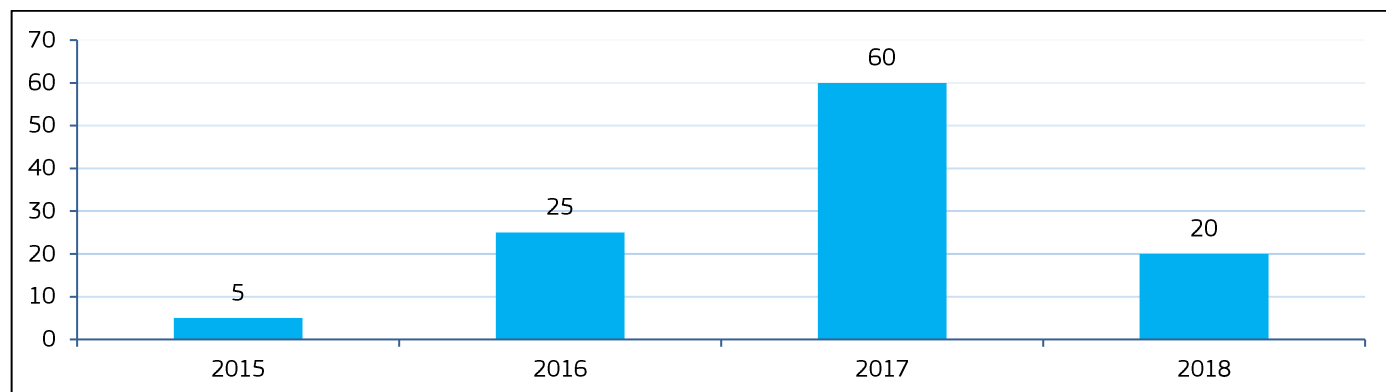
Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asydcfst](#)), data extracted 30.04.19

**Figure 6: Negative decision rate for the top five nationalities of applicants at the first instance in comparison with EU for the same given nationality (2018)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asydcfst](#)), data extracted 30.04.19

**Figure 7: Third-country nationals resettled (2015-2018)**

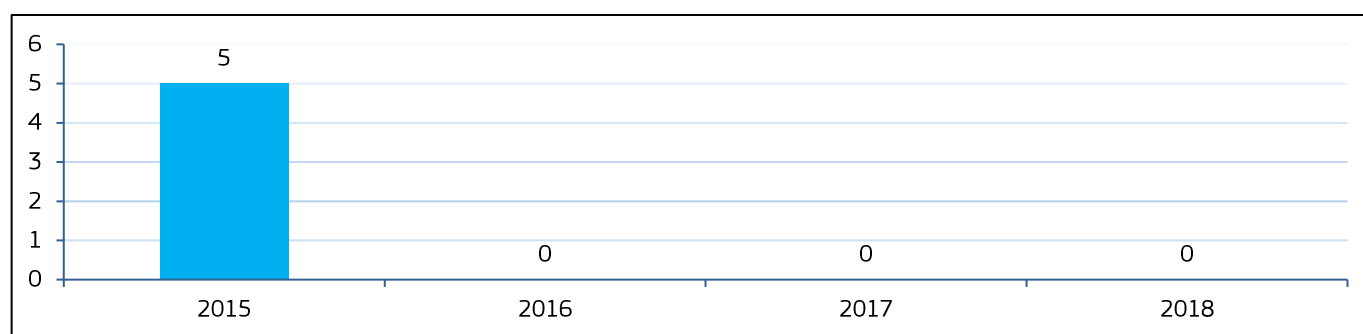


Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_asyresa](#)), data extracted 02.05.19



## UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

**Figure 8: Unaccompanied minors applying for asylum (2015–2018)**



Source: Eurostat Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors by citizenship, age and sex Annual data (rounded) ([migr\\_asylum](#)), data extracted 02.05.19.



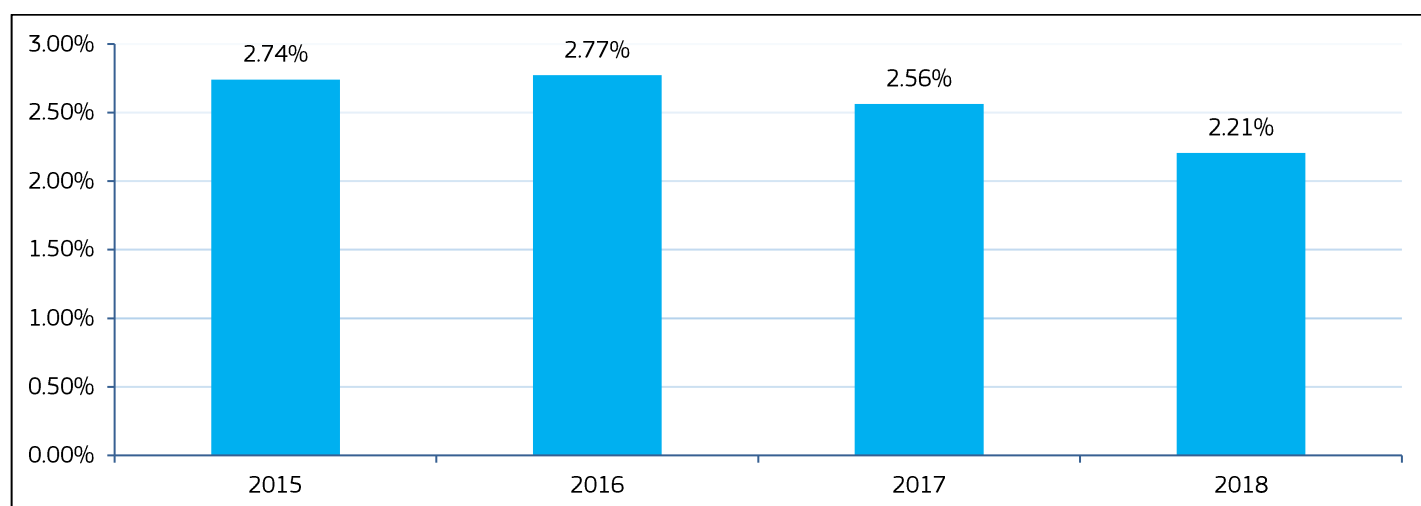
## BORDERS, SCHENGEN AND VISA

**Table 3: Number of Schengen visas applications (2015–2018)**

	2015	2016	2017	2018
Uniform visas (short-stay visas)	423 189	421 143	413 966	353 059

Source: DG Migration and Home – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

**Figure 9: Uniform visa applications received in Lithuania as a share of the total number of uniform visa applications in all Schengen states consulates (2015–2018)**



Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States

**Table 4: Top five countries in which the highest number of visa applications for Lithuania was lodged (2015-2018)**

2015		2016		2017		2018	
Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number
Belarus	200 585	Belarus	208 867	Belarus	235 149	Belarus	236 442
Russian Federation	114 089	Ukraine	90 271	Russian Federation	93 792	Russian Federation	113 885
Ukraine	74 678	Russian Federation	88 952	Ukraine	48 575	Kazakhstan	12 573
Armenia	11 176	Kazakhstan	13 028	Kazakhstan	16 850	Armenia	7 712
Kazakhstan	11 161	Armenia	8 821	Armenia	10 152	Ukraine <sup>2</sup>	5 380

Source: DG Migration and Home Affairs – Complete statistics on short-stay visas issued by the Schengen States



## IRREGULAR MIGRATION

**Table 5: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders, found to be illegally present, ordered to leave and returned following an order to leave (2015–2018)**

Third-country nationals:	2015	2016	2017	2018
Refused entry at external borders	3 480	4 575	5 180	5 200
Found to be illegally present	2 040	1 920	2 210	2 660
Ordered to leave	1 870	1 740	2 080	2 475
Returned following an order to leave	1 720	1 550	1 860	2 110

Source: Eurostat migration statistics ([migr\\_eirfs](#))([migr\\_eipre](#))([migr\\_eiord](#))([migr\\_eirtn](#)) data extracted 03.05.2019



## RETURN

**Table 6: Third-country nationals returned (2015-2018)**

Year	Returned as part of forced return measure	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
2015	444	1 449	44
2016	177	1 570	69
2017	103	2 001	154
2018	135	1 971	117

Source: EMN Lithuania

<sup>2</sup> The decrease of visa applications from Ukrainian citizens is due to visa free regime that came into force in 2017.