**25-04-2022**

**Information provided by the Republic of Lithuania to the Special Rapporteur’s on the human rights of migrants report on the impact of climate change and the protection of the human rights of migrants**

1. The National legislation of Lithuania does not determine internal displacement in the context of climate change. There were no special measures taken in Lithuania to provide durable solutions to migration due to the climate change.
2. No significant cross-border migration due to climate change is currently observed in Lithuania. However, the country is not immune to global climate change, nor its consequences. We are taking climate change into account as a driver that may have much more influence in the near future. Extreme events might cause increasing losses in various sectors of the economy, directly and indirectly threatening human rights such as the right to life, safe drinking water and sanitation, food, health, housing, culture, work, and development, therefore leading to increased cross-border and internal migration flows.
3. Lithuania implements EU asylum legislation with its forms of protection of migrants. A climate change factor is not among the reasons/criteria which allow to immigrate to Lithuania or receive any form of protection. However, migrants cannot be returned from Lithuania to their countries of origin or third countries if their lives are in danger there. In the event of any ecological disaster or environmental degradation, including significant negative impact of climate change, which endanger the health or life of a migrant, an individual assessment shall be carried out before a return decision is taken. Human rights are guaranteed for all migrants in Lithuania. State guaranteed legal aid shall be provided to all detained migrants or asylum seekers with negative decisions. Higher reception standards are provided for vulnerable migrants accommodated in reception centers. Those subject to the principle of *non-refoulement* receive a temporary residence permit for one year.
4. There are no specific regulations for regular migration related to climate change in Lithuania. Nevertheless, Lithuania does participate in resettlement, humanitarian admission and relocation initiatives in EU and from third countries. Lithuania is also promoting regular migration routes based on work, study, family reunion and other grounds.
5. In July 2021, Belarus has begun an unprecedented hybrid attack against Lithuania and EU by using migration as one of the weapons. Lithuania has received more than 4000 irregular migrants what is 4 percent of total foreigners living in Lithuania. The number of irregular arrivals in 2021 increased 56 times compared to 2020 and 112 times compared to 2019. The accommodation capacity in Lithuania had to be increased 10 times in four months (from July to October). Accommodation, including separate accommodation for families and other vulnerable groups, warm food and/or means to cook were ensured. Minors were involved in formal and informal education. Medical and mental health services as well as medications were made accessible in all of the sites (including vaccination from COVID-19). A working group was established which examined the practices used in Greece, Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium and Germany, prepared four alternatives and presented them to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania. Currently, Lithuania is expanding on an option to centralize all of the accommodation sites under one umbrella so that the same standard for living could be ensured. Lithuania has a medium-term goal to expand its capacity and create a more flexible accommodation and reception system to be able to adapt quickly to the increased pressure at the border and to ensure safe reception conditions to all irregular migrants and asylum seekers.
6. As mentioned before, there are no specific steps taken related to climate change, but Lithuania has recently received an influx of people running from the war in Ukraine. In a month, Lithuania registered more than 30 thousand people, what is 1 percent of total Lithuanian population and 30 percent of total foreigners living in the country. This is creating a challenge for Lithuania. Nevertheless, Lithuanian society actively and willingly contributes to the successful integration of Ukrainian refugees by hosting Ukrainian refugees, helping them to find permanent housing or work. Moreover, necessary reforms, including increasing the competence of municipalities and increasing their role in the integration process, communication campaigns and trainings for public service providers, have already been launched. The new strategic document focusing on integration of foreigners is being drawn up. It will focus on increasing the capabilities of Lithuanian integration system in the future. Recent geopolitical events and migration crisis in Lithuania has expedited this process as well.
7. Lithuania has been including stakeholders in the process of developing national strategies and specific policies focusing on integration areas. For example, within the Asylum, Migration and Integration Programme for 2021-2027, there were regular meetings organized with institutions, social and economic partners, as well as current applicants. The meetings comprised of discussions on Lithuania’s progress in the fields of asylum, migration and return as well as specific issues such asylum system, labour market, integration services, return system, issues of illegal labour, etc. Most of the programme’s content was developed with the view of the challenges presented by the partners. The scope of discussions included strengthening the leadership of municipalities, increasing flexibility of asylum system especially in the accommodation area, expanding services provided to the detainees and developing alternative accommodation for vulnerable groups to be returned, for example, families with children. The project of the programme was submitted to appropriate institutions, non-governmental and international organisations, operating in Lithuania, academic community, also the AMIF monitoring committee for 2014-2020, which includes partnering institutions and partners. Since July 2021, the Lithuanian authorities have periodical meetings every second Thursday with NGOs, national human rights institutions, IOM, UNHCR and other stakeholders to discuss issues and challenges in the current migration and integration situation.
8. Lithuania’s National Energy and Climate Action Plan was adopted before the COVID-19 pandemic, but the final version of this Plan will take the full account of the context of recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. The Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) provides a solid basis for Lithuania to plan the climate and energy aspects of the national plans and to meet the wider challenges of the European Green Deal.
9. No additional data.