

## **MEMBERSHIP POSITION: Lithuania**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Official Name:** Republic of Lithuania

**Capital:** Vilnius

**Population:** 3,505,738

**Major Languages:** Lithuanian, Russian, Polish

**Major Religions:** Roman Catholic, Russian Orthodox

**Regional/Economic Organizational Membership:** Australia Group, BA, BIS, CBSS, CD, CE, EAPC, EBRD, EIB, EU, FAO, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (national committees), ICRM, IDA, IFC, IFRCs, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), MIGA, NATO, NIB, NSG, OAS (observer), OIF (observer), OPCW, OSCE, PCA, Schengen Convention, UN, UN Security Council (temporary), UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

### **GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM**

The government is set up in a parliamentary democracy. The president is elected by popular vote and has a five year term, with the option to have a second term. The prime minister is appointed by the president and must be approved by the parliament. Legislative branch is made up of a unicameral Parliament and members serve four year terms. Judicial branch consists of a Supreme Court and a Constitutional Court. The Supreme Court consists of thirty seven judges that serve five year terms. These judges are appointed by the president and approved by the Parliament. Constitutional Court members are selected by the Parliament after nominations are made by the President, the chairperson of the Parliament and the chairperson of the Supreme Court. These judges serve nine year terms.

### **FOREIGN POLICY**

Lithuanian foreign policy for the last ten years have centered on becoming part of the Eurozone. Lithuania has been a member of the EU for ten years and the financial support received from the EU has experienced economic growth and are now ready to formally join the Eurozone on January 1, 2015. Since joining the EU Lithuania has lead the way for EU relations for Eastern European countries attempting to join the EU.

### **ISSUES SUMMARY**

Lithuania is considered a transit country for illicit drugs. Lithuania has been a part of joint drug seizures mainly between Lithuanian and Russian officials. Lithuanian Parliament has created Drug, Tobacco, and Alcohol Department in 2011 to coordinate forming public policy toward these substances. Lithuania is now moving away from natural gas from Russia and turning toward nuclear energy. The plan is to set up a nuclear reactor in collaboration with Latvia, Estonia and Poland so as to become energy independent.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UN**

Lithuania became a member state in 1991, a year after becoming independent from the Soviet Union. The biggest part of Lithuania's involvement in United Nations affairs is just beginning since being picked to become part of the temporary member states on the Security Council.

## **RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER UNSC MEMBERS**

Lithuania keeps a strong relationship with Russia because of Lithuania being between Russia and Kaliningrad Oblast (Russian Exclave). Lithuania keeps a transit agreement with Russia for transporting Russian nationals from Russia to Kaliningrad Oblast. Russia and Lithuania both committed to demarcating their borders in 2006 because of Lithuania joining the EU. Lithuania also recently opened talks of a free trade agreement with the United States.