

THE IMPACT OF HIGH IMMIGRATION IN LITHUANIA: ADDRESSING CHALLENGES AND UNDERSTANDING CONSEQUENCES

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Abstract. *The maxim "too much of a good thing can turn sour" holds significant relevance across diverse aspects of life, indicating that exceeding optimal thresholds may result in negative outcomes if not carefully regulated. This principle can be observed in the context of immigration rates in Lithuania, an Eastern European country experiencing significant influxes of foreign nationals. Immigration, defined as the movement of individuals into a country for specific purposes, can lead to adverse consequences when unregulated, such as overcrowding, strained social amenities, increased costs due to heightened demand, and potential rises in crime rates.*

Lithuania has welcomed foreigners for work, business, research, studies, and other purposes. Additionally, the unstable situation in Ukraine has prompted the Lithuanian government to extend support to Ukrainian citizens, offering incentives such as subsidized education and various forms of assistance. However, the generous immigration policies have faced challenges. The Migration Department, under the Ministry of Interior, recently announced impending stricter immigration laws due to identified irregularities, including instances of fraudulent marriages with Lithuanian citizens. Moreover, the increased cost of amenities, food prices, and housing has raised concerns about the sustainability of current immigration levels.

This research focuses on examining the immigration and emigration rates in Lithuania and their economic impact over a decade (2013-2022). The study will involve sourcing data from official websites, conducting statistical analyses, and drawing insights from the analyzed data. The goal is to postulate findings, offer recommendations, and draw conclusions on the relationship between immigration rates and economic outcomes in Lithuania..

Keywords: *immigration, emigration, migration, cost of living.*

Introduction

Tataru (2020) defined migration as the crossing of an administrative unit's border for a certain minimum period of time. This category includes: refugee migration, economic migration, as well as the migration of people who move for other purposes or under the influence of other factors, such as family reunification. This movement can be perceived from two angles; crossing into and out of a particular nation. The process of entering into a nation from another can be described as immigration while that of leaving a nation to another is described as emigration. The entire world today is heightened by an intense rate of migration, with people quitting their respective countries and running to others for various purposes. Some of these reasons include studies and research, safety from war and political persecution, search for greener pastures and better life, business purposes and so forth. These reasons could be grouped under various categories such as economic, social, environmental, political etc. According to Population Education (2024), there were 244 million migrants internationally in 2018, accounting for 3.3% of global population. Since the year 2000, the total number of international migrants has increased by 85 million (49%). Among the aforementioned reasons for migration, the three most purported of them all are social, economic and political. Numerous cases have been identified of people fleeing war-torn zones in the Middle East to seek refuge in some safer countries in Europe and Africa; African youths have also been spotted

undertaking journeys across dangerous tropical forests, crossing deep water bodies on their way to either Europe or America all in the quest for greener pastures to better the lives of themselves and families.

With the European Union being one of the destinations for migrants, Lithuania, an Eastern European nation automatically falls under one of the destinating zones of the migrating population. According to Lithuanian Bishops Conference (2024), the statehood of Lithuania has undergone series of challenges and battles to get to where it is today. Among these hurdles experienced by the Baltic nation is that perpetrated by the then Soviet Union. It was known as the longest most brutal, monstrous and disastrous act of deprivation of liberty and freedom meted on the Lithuanian people. Beside the Soviet occupation, Lithuania also faced invasive attacks from Russia in 1654 and Germany in 1915 and 1941 (Baltic Bike Travel, 2024). These adversities really placed the economy of the country in a bad shape, slowing down the pace of development and growth. However, due to the brave and strong willed nature of Lithuanians, they were able to revolt and resist these invasions, though with huge casualties. Their resistance paid off, leading to their imminent declaration of independence on February 1918, recognized by some of the largest empires of the world at the time. In spite of their independent achievement, they still had a lot of reparations to execute as a result of the massive destruction encountered in battle. As a result, the level of development and growth was retarded. This was also due to the fact that majority of attention was geared towards reviving the once booming country, thus requiring longer periods of recovery which could not be succumbed by many of its people. This eventually led to a massive exodus of Lithuanians into other countries in Europe, Asia and the United States. Majority of those who left were children accompanied by their parents, young and old adults, while leaving mostly the greying population back in the country. It is thus safe to say the youthful and active population massively exited the nation, leaving mostly the elderly, who are in general economically and biologically inactive. With a high percentage of such age group, there could be a shortage in terms of manpower in industries and other economic related sectors. This prompted the government to look into the situation to find quick solutions to unravel the negative consequences of shortage in labour force. One measure undertaken to unravel the situation was the acceptance of foreigners into the Lithuania, either for work, studies and other legit and lucrative purposes. The entry process of foreigners is facilitated by the migration department, who process and issue documents, granting legal entry into the territory. This has been ongoing for sometime until it is becoming a problem. Some issues in relation to immigration have been identified by the relevant authorities, pertaining to abuse of the process and use of false strategies to gain entry. As a result, the authorities have taken stringent measures to regulate the flow of people into the country and curb the demerits which may be associated with it.

This research paper is therefore focused on examining the rate of immigration into Lithuania for the past 10 years (2013-2022), examine the impact it has had on the economic, social and environmental landscape of the country. It will delve deeper by reviewing documents issued by competent authorities like the Migration department, Ministry of Foreign affairs, as well as articles related to migration in Lithuania. These information will be thoroughly analyzed to determine if the decision to accept foreigners has had a dampened or expansive effect, examine why the government is suddenly becoming strict on the admission of foreigners into the country and draw relevant conclusions from there.

The research object is the effects of high immigration in Lithuania

Research aim was centered on analyzing the socioeconomic impact of high immigration rates in Lithuania, identifying the primary challenges and consequences associated with

increased immigration. This study sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of how high immigration influences economic stability, social infrastructure, and public services.

From the aim, the following objectives could be derived:

1. Analyze the Socioeconomic Effects of High Immigration Rates in Lithuania

This objective aims to assess how increased immigration influences various socioeconomic factors in Lithuania, such as employment rates, housing markets, public services, and overall economic growth. The analysis will utilize quantitative data to identify trends and correlations.

2. Identify and Evaluate the Challenges Posed by High Immigration Levels

This objective focuses on identifying the specific challenges that high immigration rates present to Lithuanian society. These challenges may include strain on social amenities, infrastructure, public health systems, and potential increases in crime rates. The evaluation will involve both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of these issues.

3. Develop Policy Recommendations for Managing Immigration and Mitigating Negative Consequences

Based on the findings from the first two objectives, this objective aims to formulate evidence-based policy recommendations. These recommendations will be designed to help Lithuanian authorities manage immigration more effectively, mitigate adverse effects, and maximize the benefits of immigration for the country's socio-economic development.

Literature review

The decision to leave a particular area and move to another can be influenced by a range of factors. Some of these factors can be attractive, thus warranting immigration into the area where the immigrants will benefit from the attractiveness. Others can be repulsive such as war and political unrest, necessitating people to leave the such areas, thus emigration. The case of Lithuania is widely known, based on the series of invasions back then, which pushed a lot of the citizens to relocate to other areas. According to Audra and Vlada Stankūnienė (2013), Lithuanian population has always been characterised by high emigration rates, especially during the Soviet and pre-Soviet era. According to data from the Statistics Lithuania (based on the 2011 census), over the past 22 years (1990-2011) 728 700 people emigrated from Lithuania, the equivalent of approximately 20% of the Lithuanian population of 1990s. In addition, population losses due to migration are accelerating: from 7.5% of the resident population (at the beginning of period) in 1990-2000 to 12.9% in 2001-2011. Immigration remains low, and has only a symbolic compensatory effect. For the past decade Lithuania has had the highest negative net migration in the European Union. By net migration, it means the difference between immigration and emigration. When such a value is positive, it means that more people entered the country than those who left but if it is negative, it means more people left the country than those who entered. This situation, sometimes referred to by politicians as “evacuation”, has unfortunately not been effectively contrasted. The last decade of the 20th century (1989/90-1993) witnessed an essential turn in migration trends: due to the opening of borders and other political developments, emigration replaced immigration. The emigration of that period can be divided into two main categories: return migration/repatriation (Russians, Belarussians, the Ukrainians) and the realisation of emigration potential accumulated during the Soviet period, involving, for example, Jews leaving Lithuania and the first tentative signs of Lithuanian emigration to the be long-term/permanent, legal, and declared.

It also worth recalling that this massive exodus of people from the Lithuanian territory were mostly the active population, made up of young and old adults who constituted majority of the labour force in the country. Such moves could be attributed to economic challenges encountered during that time. Lithuanian Economic Review (2012) conceded to the idea by stating that a vast majority of emigrants were persons of working age and leaving the country to work. Thus, the main reasons behind emigration from Lithuania are economic – to depart to more attractive states in terms of employment and wages. With the start of the recent economic downturn, unfavourable economic development prospects, poor wage rise possibilities and an increasing rate of unemployment in Lithuania might have influenced the decision to emigrate. Besides economic reasons to emigrate, institutional factors, cultural compatibility and a favourable geographical situation are also important. Among the most important institutional factors allowing the citizens of the Republic of

Lithuania to emigrate from the country is the right of free movement of labour force in the EU states. After Lithuania joined the EU in 2004, three EU old member states – the United Kingdom, Ireland and Sweden – did not apply temporary labour market protection measures restricting this right. Other EU old member states were concerned that the flow of relatively cheap labour force from the Central and Eastern Europe would worsen possibilities of local inhabitants to be employed. Thus, in order to protect their labour markets, these countries set temporary restrictions for new EU countries that joined the EU in 2004. Finland, Portugal, Italy, Spain, Greece, Netherlands and Luxembourg abandoned these restrictions in 2006–2007, France, Belgium and Denmark – in 2008–2009, while Austria and Germany applied the

longest transitional period until May 2011. These economic and institutional factors determined the fact that the largest number of Lithuania's citizens live and work in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Declared emigration data announced by Statistics Lithuania at the end of 2011 suggest that from 2004 92.1 thousand Lithuania's citizens departed to the United Kingdom and 29.4 thousand – to Ireland. Among the other EU member states where the number of immigrants from Lithuania is the largest, are Germany and Spain – the countries which opened their labour markets later. In the period 2004–2011, 15.8 thousand and 10.9 thousand respectively of Lithuania's citizens emigrated to these states. As concerns other Western Europe countries, the largest flow of emigrating Lithuania's citizens was to Norway – in the period 2004–2011, 10.5 thousand persons from Lithuania departed to this country. Persons who departed to these five countries in 2004–2011 made up more than two-thirds from the total number of persons who declared emigration. In the period 2004–2011, the total of 233.2 thousand Lithuania's citizens emigrated to foreign states, the majority of them emigrated in 2009–2011. A part of persons who declared emigration in 2010–2011 had emigrated from Lithuania in earlier years but declared their departure after announcing the information that persons who did not declare their departure would be required to pay mandatory health insurance contributions on their own. Kasnauskiene and Vebraite (2014) were more concerned about the demographic consequences of high emigration. On the volume 2 of their publication, they emphasized on the rapid ageing population and how it constitutes a shortage in shortage of labour force in the future, which will have a negative impact on the country's economy. They further narrated their arguments on the basis of biological reproduction, stating that low fertility level, huge flows of emigration and population ageing are the kedemographic forces having negative impact on country's economic development in the long run. This is especially relevant for Lithuania, the country with one of the most rapidly ageing populations in European Union. Analysis of Lithuania's demographic data shows a progressive process of population ageing and the necessity of overcoming its consequences. Since the restoration of independence total fertility rate has dropped from 2.03 in 1990 to below-replacement fertility level of 1.23 in 2002.

There has been a recovery of fertility over the past decade and total fertility rate reached 1.6 in 2012 (Statistics Lithuania, 2014). Also, with increasing quality of life the average life expectancy has raised from 71.46 to 73.98 years, respectively. During the 23 year period of time the median age of population - with half the population older and half younger - has increased by ten years, that is from 32 to 42 (OECD Survey, 2016). The share of people over 65 years old in Lithuania is currently 18%, it is expected to be 31.2% by 2060 (European Commission, 2012). It is also widely recognized, that because of continuing ageing process and current extent of emigration, a shortage of skilled workers can be expected in the future, slowing down the development of country's economy and further social development of the society.

Thus existing literatures have proven the series of massive exodus of Lithuanians to other countries, caused by various factors such as economic, political and social, leaving the economy of the country drained with mostly the elderly population. This situation led to the government opening its borders for foreigners to infiltrate the economy and revive the dormancy created by the those who left. Immigrants have since been coming for various purposes such as to further their education, work, research etc. However, the government, through the migration department has recently imposed strict measures on aliens planning to and already in Lithuania, constricting certain measures associated with granting of permits to live in the country. This will thus require an examination of data from various Lithuanian government portals to ascertain the impact the inflow immigrants has had between 2014 to 2024, and to examine the reason behind the strictness towards them. This will be examine in the methodological section of this research work, as will be seen.

Research methodology

The coming of people into a country could be accompanied with either positive or negative consequences or a combination of both. The ability to regulate such consequences for a greater good lies in the capacity of regulatory authorities to determine who is fit and qualified to stay in their country or not. This part of the research will highlight data and their sources, relating to the frequency of immigrants within the dedicated time range.

Data Collection Method: The main source of data on the immigration situation will be from official government portals responsible for such data. In Lithuania, data was extracted from Migracija, Oficialiosios Statistikos Portalas and from relevant authors. According to European Migration Network (2016), the number of residents in Lithuania around 1990 dropped by 808 thousands people, constituting about 22% drop in the entire population. About 275 thousands of this figure was attributed to natural causes like death while the rest was due to emigration. It should also be noted that as time went on, this number rose consistently, thus creating a need for an urgent action to address the population imbalance.

When Lithuania eventually became part of the European Union, one of the first working steps was to open its borders for foreign nationals to come in. According to data from official statistics portal (2023), the following table displays more:

Table 1. Display of immigrants and returned migrants to Lithuania within 2013 and 2022 (Compiled by author according to data from Official Statistics Portal)

YEARS	NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS	NUMBER OF RETURNED MIGRANTS
2013	22011	19000
2014	24294	19500
2015	22130	18400
2016	20162	14200
2017	20368	10200
2018	28914	16600
2019	40067	20400
2020	43096	20800
2021	44858	23700
2022	87367	20700
TOTAL	353267	183500

As displayed on the table, it shows the rate of in flow of people into Lithuania gained momentum as the nation's invite went out. The data reveals a positive trend between the growing years and number of immigrants, implying as the years went by, more people entered the country. Another important aspect to note here is that part of this immigration numbers were actually Lithuanians returning home. According to Renkuosi Lietuva (2024), this is termed returned migration and it constituted the largest share of immigrants returning to Lithuania. One look at the data, one can spot how it reflects a U-shaped form, indicating that the number of returning Lithuanians was high at the beginning, dropped at some point and rose again.

Ethical Considerations

The data extracted from the above government portals are publicly available for anyone to use for legit purposes like research, or understanding the migration situation of the economy of Lithuania. The data collected will solely be used for analytical purposes to best understand the impact immigration has on Lithuania.

Limitations

The data collected are slightly old and may not actually reflect the exact and current migration status of Lithuania. This is also due to the fact updated data on the migration for up to the current year of 2024 were not available at the time of writing this article. However, general view demonstrates increase in the immigration rate.

Analysis of results

The integration of the Republic of Lithuania into the European Union in 2004 paved the way for the nation to be exposed to various cultures through the opening of its portals for immigrants. As already displayed on table 1, the nation received a total of 353 thousand immigrants and 183 thousand returned migrants between 2013 and 2022. The table equally displays a direct relationship between the growing years and number of immigrants per year, indicating that as the years went by, more people entered the country. This relationship can also be well represented on the chart below:

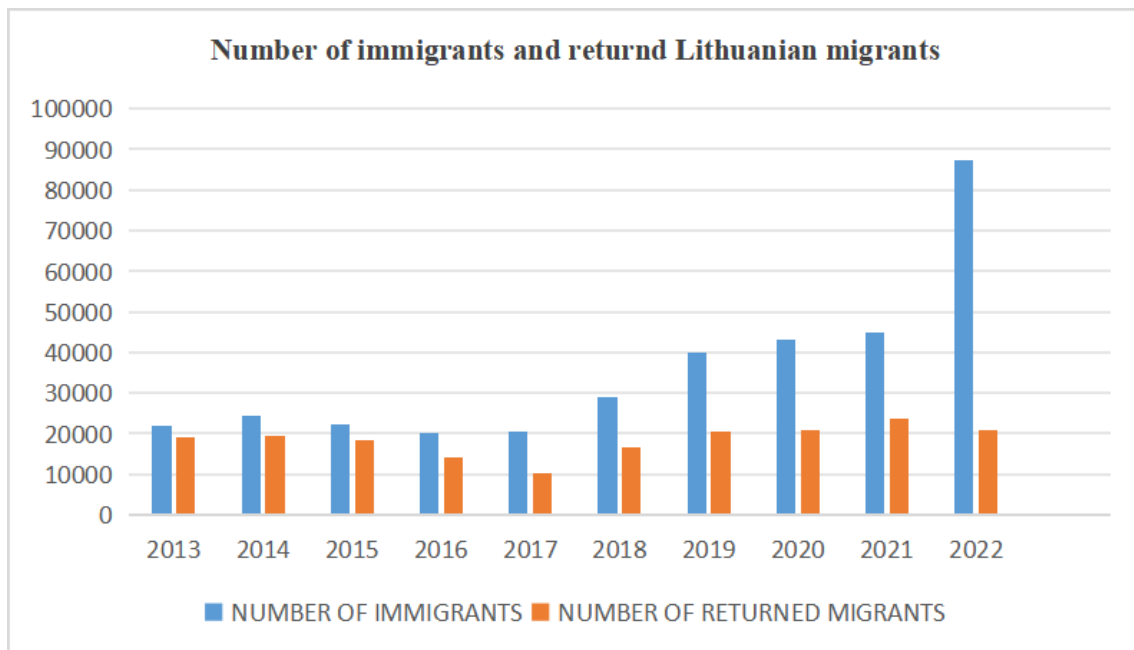


Fig. 1. Graphical representation of immigration and returned migration to Lithuania between 2013 and 2022

From the chart above, the horizontal axis depicts the years while the vertical axis shows the immigrant values. As time went on, more persons have been entering the nation of Lithuania for one reason or another. This positive trend may equally suggest the level of attractiveness of the nation that pulled a lot of people just within this limited period of time. The chart equally reveals that 2022 was the year with the most number of immigrants within this range, and information from grapevine reveals that this it has risen far above this figure since then. Also mentioned was the fact that a huge number of the immigrants were made of Lithuanians whom had fled the country sometime ago to settle in other countries. The number was highest in 2021 and lowest in 2017. Thus within this span of four years, the returning migrants was more than doubled, indicating positive signalling turnouts which must have pulled them from different part of the world to go back home. Here are three prime reasons of their return back to Lithuania: Cultural and Social Factors:

- **Family and Community Ties:** Strong family connections and a sense of community often draw Lithuanians back home. This is something which they missed all the while living abroad. Also, a desire to reconnect with their cultural heritage and national identity can be a strong motivator.

Negative Experiences Abroad:

- This could be associated with economic challenges such economic difficulties, job insecurity, and high living costs in host countries which prompted most to think of home as an optimal option. Discrimination and Integration Issues were also a part of the setbacks, including discrimination and social isolation, thus prompting the return.

Political Stability and EU Membership:

- **Political Environment:** The era of political instability and rivalry had long ended, offering a peaceful and serene atmosphere, coupled with Lithuania's membership in the European Union, offered a sense of security and numerous benefits. Also, the Freedom of Movement in the EU membership facilitated easier mobility for Lithuanians, allowing them to return home without facing significant bureaucratic hurdles.

Aside the returning Lithuanians, there was also the inflow of people from other EU and non EU countries. The chart below presents more

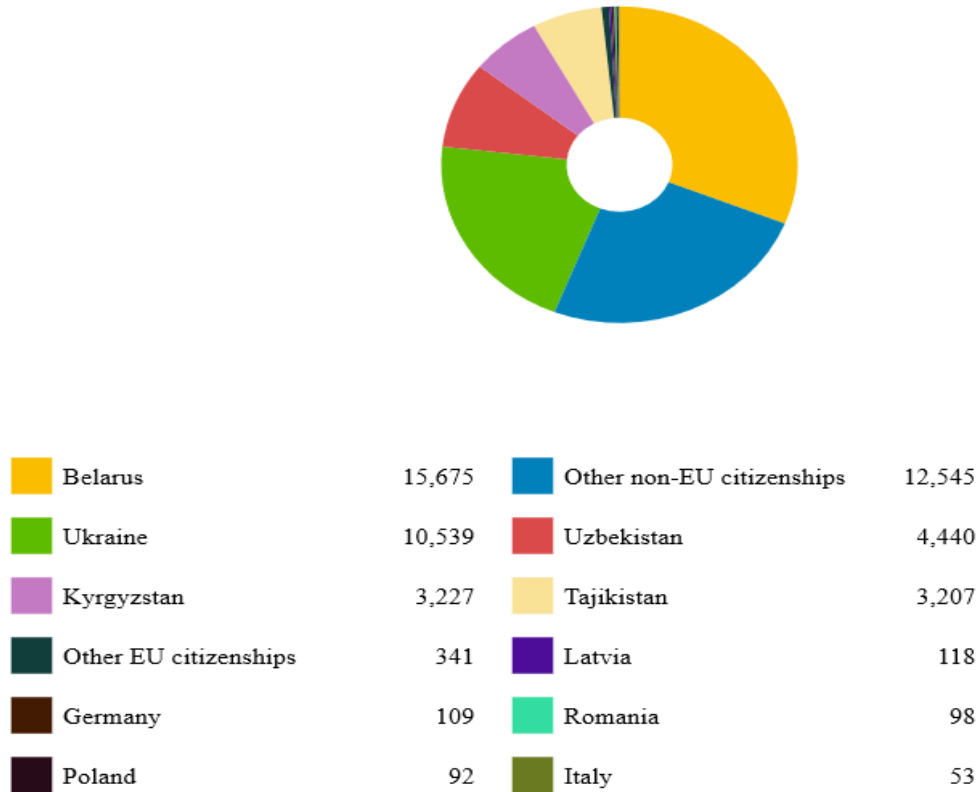


Fig. 2. Display of immigrants by nationality
 (Extracted from European Migration Network, 2024.)

The pie chart and accompanying data table provide a comprehensive overview of the distribution of immigrants to a particular region from various countries. Below is a summarized analysis and presentation of this information:

Belarus: Represents the largest segment of the immigrant population according to the figures.

Other Non-EU Citizenships: Collectively, they constitute a significant portion of the immigrant population, indicating a diverse influx from non-EU countries.

Ukraine: Due to the unrest occurring in their country, most of the citizens relocated into different parts of Europe and America. In Lithuania, they constitute a substantial contributor to the immigrant population, reflecting regional geopolitical influences.

Uzbekistan: Moderate contribution to the immigrant population.

Kyrgyzstan: Notable presence in the immigrant demographic.

Tajikistan: Similar to Kyrgyzstan in terms of immigrant numbers.

Other EU Citizenships: Smaller segment, indicating less movement from within the EU.

Latvia: Minor portion of the immigrant population.

Germany: Slightly less than Latvia, showing limited immigration from this major EU country.

Romania: Marginally smaller than Germany's contribution.

Poland: Comparable to Romania, indicating minimal migration.

Italy: The smallest segment of the immigrant population.

From this analysis, the largest segment is from Belarus, followed by other non-EU countries and Ukraine. Smaller segments include immigrants from various EU countries and other specific non-EU countries like Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. The entry of people from different economies will obviously be met with mixed outcomes, leading to deciphering the consequences of the immigration:

Positive Effects of Immigration on Lithuania's Economy

Labor Market Contribution:

1. Filling Labor Shortages: Immigrants often fill critical labor gaps, especially in sectors such as agriculture, construction, and healthcare. This can be applicable in scenarios where there were shortage of active population to engage into these professions, thus necessitating the in flow of foreign nationals to occupy the positions. For example, companies like Majorel UAB, Dexcom UAB are huge employers of foreign nationals in Lithuania

2. Diverse Skill Sets: Immigrants bring diverse skills and expertise, enhancing productivity and innovation in various industries.

Economic Growth:

1. Increased Consumption: Immigrants contribute to higher demand for goods and services, stimulating economic growth. Consumers generally constitute the market for goods and services. The market situation becomes even more intensified when the purchasing power of the consumers, determined by their income levels and propensity to spend.

2. Entrepreneurship: Many immigrants start their own businesses, creating jobs and contributing to the economy. There have been establishment of shops owned by African nationals such as Afronan Shop in Kaunas, African food market in Vilnius, MB Garam Masala, an Indian shop in Kaunas etc.

Demographic Balance:

1. Counteracting Population Decline: Immigration helps mitigate the effects of Lithuania's declining birth rate and aging population.

2. Workforce Sustainability: A steady influx of working-age immigrants supports the sustainability of the workforce and social security systems.

Cultural Enrichment:

1. Innovation and Creativity: Cultural diversity can lead to greater innovation and creativity in business practices and product development.

2. Tourism Boost: A diverse population can make Lithuania more attractive to tourists, further boosting the economy.

Negative Effects of Immigration on Lithuania's Economy

Strain on Public Services:

1. Healthcare and Education: Increased demand for healthcare and educational services can strain public resources.

2. Social Services: A higher number of immigrants may require additional social services, increasing public expenditure. The case might be worst if majority of the immigrants do not fall within the working age group, implying that they may not be liable to contribute to the economy through taxes from jobs or other economic activities. This may render the budget of the government to a deficit.

Infrastructure Challenges:

1. Housing Shortages: High immigration rates can lead to housing shortages and increased rental prices. This could be possible if adequate regulation is not enforced on the rate of entry of foreign nationals into the Lithuanian territory.

2. Transportation: Increased population density can strain transportation systems and other infrastructure. Effects could be congestion, pollution and their accompanying diminishing effects on welfare of the society.

Labor Market Pressures:

1. Wage Suppression: In some sectors, an oversupply of labor can lead to wage suppression, potentially affecting local workers. Generally, when the supply of labour towards a specific profession is higher than its demand, the pressure on wage rate drops. Human Resource department of companies often take advantage of such situations to bargain the lowest pay due to an overflow of labour, leading to low quality of life.

2. Job Competition: Native workers may face increased competition for jobs, particularly in low-skilled sectors.

Social Integration:

1. Cultural Tensions: Rapid demographic changes can lead to cultural tensions and challenges in social integration. A good example could be an outright unwillingness and refusal for foreigners to integrate into the society by taking part of in cultural events like language learning, something which will be hasten the integration process.

2. Xenophobia: Negative perceptions and xenophobia can rise, potentially leading to social unrest and decreased social cohesion.

Economic Dependency:

1. Remittances: A significant portion of immigrant earnings may be sent back to their home countries as remittances, reducing the economic benefits retained within Lithuania.

2. Dependency on Low-Skilled Labor: Over-reliance on low-skilled immigrant labor can hinder investment in automation and upskilling of the native workforce.

Conclusion

The influx of foreign nationals into Lithuania has resulted in a range of social and economic outcomes. One significant economic challenge previously faced by the nation was a labor shortage caused by the mass emigration of Lithuanians. The arrival of foreign workers has partially mitigated this issue by filling gaps in the labor force, as these individuals have been hired and trained to assume various roles, thereby maintaining economic activity levels. However, this in flow has also generated mixed feelings among the native population, who may perceive that foreigners are being favored over them. This perception could potentially lead to social tensions and xenophobia if not properly managed. It is crucial to address these concerns through inclusive policies and community engagement to foster a harmonious and productive economy.

While immigration has introduced numerous benefits, it has also presented certain challenges. One significant issue is the support provided to economically inactive migrants, whom the Lithuanian government assists with monthly stipends for food, clothing, and other needs. If these support measures are not carefully reviewed and addressed, they could lead to an increase in government expenditure without a corresponding rise in revenue, given the economic inactivity of this demographic. Additionally, there is a potential for increased anti-immigration sentiments among local citizens who may feel neglected, perceiving that substantial resources and attention are being directed toward immigrants at the expense of their own development needs.

The Migration Department in Lithuania has demonstrated a proactive approach in ensuring strict adherence to legal entry and residency regulations in the Republic of Lithuania. This involves clearly outlining the necessary procedures for foreigners, specifying required

documents, and providing information on the processing times for applications. Furthermore, the department regularly updates its website with changes to immigration laws, including their effective dates and the affected parties. These updates help keep both current and prospective immigrants well-informed about their obligations and the legal framework. The analysis conducted in this research has led to the development of several recommendations aimed at mitigating the negative externalities associated with immigration. These recommendations are detailed in the concluding section of this study.

Recommendations

Implement Balanced Immigration Policies:

One way to ensure equilibrium is attained in the economy is to develop and enforce balanced immigration policies that regulate the flow of immigrants while addressing labor market needs and demographic challenges. This includes setting quotas based on economic requirements and ensuring legal pathways for immigrants. Balanced immigration policies can help manage the number of immigrants entering the country, aligning it with Lithuania's economic and social capacities. Such policies can prevent labor market oversaturation and ensure that immigration contributes positively to economic growth and demographic sustainability. By tailoring immigration levels to the country's needs, Lithuania can maximize the benefits of immigration while minimizing potential negative impacts.

Enhance Integration Programs

Another measure may involve developing comprehensive integration programs that provide language courses, cultural orientation, and job placement services to help immigrants assimilate more smoothly into Lithuanian society. Such programs can mitigate social tensions and improve the economic contributions of immigrants by ensuring they are well-prepared to participate fully in the workforce and community life. Considering that a huge chunk of the immigrants enter the country as students, it will be imperative to implement Lithuanian language course a University requirement, thus enabling all students to actively participate and learn how to speak, read and understand Lithuanian language. It will also facilitate the process of getting jobs or internships, most of which will emphasize on Lithuanian language as a prerequisite for employment. This can lead to increased productivity and social cohesion, benefiting both immigrants and native Lithuanians.

Invest in Infrastructure and Public Services:

The authorities could also allocate funds to expand and upgrade infrastructure and public services, including healthcare, education, housing, and transportation, to accommodate the growing population due to high immigration rates. Enhanced infrastructure and services can prevent the strain caused by an increasing population, ensuring that all residents, including immigrants, have access to necessary resources. This proactive approach can improve overall living standards and prevent potential issues such as overcrowding and resource shortages. Likewise, incomes will also be raised through rental fees paid by the occupants, thus helping to restore the huge deficit incurred in establishing the houses and other facilities

Summary

This research investigates the multifaceted impact of high immigration rates in Lithuania, focusing on both the challenges and the opportunities that arise. The study highlights significant positive contributions, such as addressing labor shortages, enhancing cultural diversity, and stimulating economic growth through increased consumer demand and workforce diversity.

However, it also identifies critical challenges, including strain on public services, housing shortages, and social integration issues. To address these challenges, the research recommends implementing comprehensive integration programs, investing in infrastructure and public services, and developing balanced immigration policies. These measures aim to optimize the benefits of immigration while mitigating its adverse effects. By understanding and addressing these dynamics, Lithuania can leverage immigration to support sustainable economic development and social cohesion.

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