

Lithuanian Civilian Participation in Peace Operations

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Introduction

By joining the European Union and the Euro-Atlantic community of NATO on 2004, Lithuania officially declared the aim „to continue to be an active member of the international community, effectively contributing to the response to crises, crisis management and peace keeping operations“¹ as one of the priority goals of its foreign policy. Although Lithuania has been participating in peace operations (PO) since 1994, mostly due to its integration into the EU and NATO, Lithuania has had the opportunity to be involved in various peace operations and missions, and to set up legal and institutional framework related to the deployment of both military and civilian personnel. Before focusing on the current state of deployments of Lithuanian civilians in PO, existing policies as well as the legal basis, it is important to begin with a description of the history of Lithuania’s involvement in PO, primarily related to military participation.

Lithuania has been participating in international peace building operations for 21 years, since the first peacekeeping platoon of the Lithuanian Army was deployed in UN mission UNPROFOR in Croatia in 1994. Since then, Lithuania has taken part in various peace missions and operations led by UN, NATO, EU, OSCE and international coalitions in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti, Chad, Liberia, Kosovo, Albania, Cyprus, Macedonia, Georgia, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, Mali, Central African Republic, and Palestine.

As a member of the UN, Lithuania has contributed to 12 UN peacekeeping missions and operations 1994 – 2015². The most significant assistance was devoted to the above mentioned UN mission UNPROFOR in Croatia where 90 Lithuanian peace-keepers were deployed³. It should be noted that Lithuania’s involvement in the subsequent UN missions was considerably lower with engagement of only several military or police representatives. Reductions in contributing to UN peace missions may have been affected by the fact that Lithuania joined NATO and EU. Since the re-establishment of Lithuania’s independence, one of the main goals of its foreign policy has been full membership of

¹ Resolution of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania on Directions in Foreign Policy, May 1 2004, <https://www.urm.lt/default/en/foreign-policy/key-foreign-policy-documents/resolution-of-the-seimas-of-the-republic-of-lithuania-on-directions-in-foreign-policy-may-1-2004>

² Report on priorities of Lithuania in UN, June 19 2014, available in Lithuanian at <http://un.mfa.lt/missionny/lt/lietuva-jungtinese-tautose/lietuvos-prioritetai-ji>

³ Publication about Lithuanian soldiers in International Operation 1994-2014, released by Ministry of National Defence. 2014, 105.

the EU and NATO. Therefore, in order to prove its motivation, Lithuania has attempted to fulfill its commitments on deployment to EU and NATO peace operations both before and after accession. A greater importance devoted to missions led by NATO and EU than UN also indicates Lithuania's priorities and strategic goals - primarily, to consolidate its member status in NATO and EU through implementation of international commitments⁴ and to strengthen partnerships with the member states of NATO and EU⁵. Similarly, alliances with the US and other European countries has a significant importance for Lithuania that seeks to receive international support and military assistance, mainly from the NATO and EU, in order to ensure Lithuania's economic and geopolitical stability. Highlighting the politics of the Russian Federation as a source of instability in its neighborhood as well as a threat to Lithuania's security⁶, the Lithuanian government has emphasized the need for constructive partnerships with NATO and EU allies to ensure security in the region and counterbalance Russia's influence. Accordingly, Lithuania's engagements in peace missions led by NATO, EU and other international coalitions could be perceived as a strategic way to help to ensure international allies support in return.

Currently Lithuania is active in 5 peace operations and missions. As of November 2015, 2 Lithuanian police officers are deployed in the UN mission in Cyprus (UNFICYP). Lithuania also provides military personnel to 2 NATO-led missions (KFOR mission in Kosovo and Resolute Support Mission (RSM) in Afghanistan) and 2 missions led by EU (European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) ATALANTA in Somalia and European Union Training Mission (EUTM) in Mali). The largest number of Lithuanian soldiers currently active are in Afghanistan supporting NATO's RS mission with 21 military personnel⁷. Lithuania's total contribution to this mission for the year 2015 has reached nearly 100 military representatives providing training and recommendations to Afghanistan security forces. Pro-active engagement in the RS mission in Afghanistan could be seen as a continuation of Lithuania's participation in previous ISAF missions, as well as implementation of international commitments to Afghanistan's stability and development.

⁴ Report on Lithuanian Government work in 2013, approved by Lithuanian Government in March 26 2014.

⁵ Report on Lithuanian Government work in 2014, approved by Lithuanian Government in March 25 2015. Available in Lithuanian at <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/499d6de0d84311e4894f9bde45468d3f>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ NATO report on approximate numbers of forces provided to NATO's Resolute Support Mission by contributing nations, December 2015, <http://www.rs.nato.int/troop-numbers-and-contributions/index.php>

Civilian Contributions to the Lithuanian-led Mission in Afghanistan

Lithuania's most significant contribution was to NATO's ISAF mission in Afghanistan where 3021 soldiers were deployed from 2003 to 2014⁸. At that time Lithuania carried out its first independent international mission in Afghanistan by leading one of the 30 ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in Ghor region since 2005 for more than 8 years. The PRT's task was to help strengthen the authority of Afghani central government throughout the province, provide security and stability and facilitate reconstruction of the province. It is worth mentioning that the Lithuanian-led Ghor PRT was a joint civilian-military mission composed of 2 structural parts - military unit and civilian element - where military and civilian personnel from 8 countries were working under Lithuania's leadership. EU police mission (EUPOL) comprised of police officers from 7 countries (including Lithuania) also operated at Lithuanian PRT camp from 2007. Ghor PRT was the first mission in which Lithuania was present not only with military and police personnel, but also other civilian representatives. In addition, the role of civilian capacities was equally as important for accomplishing the mission, as the role of the military. Although the Lithuanian military unit and civilian element cooperated closely by coordinating activities and exchanging necessary political, security and intelligence information, both parts were structurally separated. The military unit and civilian element were accountable to different ministries of Lithuania - the former to Ministry of National Defence while the latter to Ministry of Foreign Affairs. MFA set up the Lithuanian Special Mission which was sent to Afghanistan to organize the work of the civilian element of the PRT and coordinate implementation of civilian tasks. The Lithuanian Special Mission was led by a diplomat who was appointed by MFA and replaced constantly every year.

Concerning the regulation of the mission, it should be noted that co-operation between the military unit and the civilian element as well as their respective roles, rights and duties were clearly pointed out in joint decrees issued by the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs⁹.

⁸ Publication about Lithuanian soldiers in International Operation 1994-2014, released by Ministry of National Defence. 2014, 106.

⁹ Two joint decrees were issued one after another respectively – the former was valid from 2006 to 2009 and the later from 2009 till the end of the mission. Important regulatory changes were made in terms of leadership. First decree marked a slight civilians' subordination to military by defining the Military Commander not only as a commanding officer of military unit but also as a Head of the whole PRT while the Head of Special Mission (civilian) was only Political Representative of PRT. The latter decree consolidated more equal status of leadership in the mission by defining Military Commander of the military unit as the Military Commander of the PRT and describing Head of the Special Mission as the highest Political Representative of Republic of Lithuania in Afghanistan. In addition, the roles of Political Representative of PRT as well as Civilian Leader of PRT were attributed to the Deputy Head of the Special Mission. Second decree also adjusted the principle of coordination of activities between civilian element and military unit by creating PRT's governing group which composed of two military representatives (Military Commander of PRT and Chief

According to the decree's provisions¹⁰ the civilian element is composed of personnel of Lithuanian Special Mission, the civilian experts who are subordinated to the Special Mission and other civilian personnel (civilian experts in Lithuania-led PRT delegated by foreign countries, international organisations and institutions). What is more, other civilians who were implementing projects of Lithuanian development cooperation while being in PRT were also assigned to the civilian element and were subjected to the same regulations¹¹. The decree very clearly defined functions and divided responsibilities between the civilian and military units. For example, it was pointed out that the civilian element is in charge of development cooperation projects while realization of quick impact projects is under military unit rule¹². Thus the civilian element lead by the Lithuanian Special Mission mostly performed development cooperation tasks, implementing social, agricultural, electricity generation-related and local infrastructure development projects. The Lithuanian Special Mission coordinated 226 development cooperation projects in Afghanistan financed under the framework of the Development Cooperation and Support for Democracy program by Lithuania and other international donors.¹³ Plenty of projects provided opportunities for Lithuanian civilian experts to contribute to development cooperation between Lithuania and Afghanistan. According to Lithuanian MFA information, personnel of Lithuanian governmental institutions, experts in various fields including agriculture, veterinary, archeology, medicine, architecture, engineering, academic society and various NGOs involved in development projects in Afghanistan to some extent¹⁴. To sum up, it was the first time when Lithuanian civilian expertise was used in PO in such broad scope including not only personnel of public institutions but also other civilians.

of Staff of Military Unit) and two civilian representatives (Civilian Leader of PRT and Development Assistant of Special Mission). First decree on co-operation between military unit and civilian element in Lithuania-led Ghor PRT, November 17 2006, available in Lithuanian at <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.15B3A9DECC1E> The following decree on co-operation between military unit and civilian element in Lithuania-led Ghor PRT, September 3 2009, available in Lithuanian at <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.77CE620A9A1E>

¹⁰ Only the second joint decree issued by Minister of National Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs on 2009 is being analyzed because of its broader extent and significant alterations made in comparison with the first one.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Information leaflet about results achieved over the Lithuania-led mission in the Afghanistan released by Ministry of National Defence, 2014, 1.

¹⁴ Unfortunately, it is impossible to find official information and data on exact numbers of civilian participants in Lithuanian-led PRT's development projects.

Lithuanian Military Role in Peace Operations

It comes as no surprise that Lithuania's participation in Peace Operations has been largely dominated by military personnel followed by significantly less amount of police officers and other civilians. The perception of the military as the principal peace keeper as well as international and national security provider is reflected both in public discourse and in the policies of decision makers in Lithuania. The latest polls on trust in national institutions shown comparatively high confidence in military by Lithuanian society. More than 60% of the respondents¹⁵ claimed to have trust in military and national defence. The recent political decision to restore mandatory military service for young men also demonstrates political elite's efforts to construct militaristic identity by strengthening the role of the military. It would be fair to say that understanding of peace keeping activities as pertaining exclusively to the military sphere is a prevailing mindset of Lithuanian society as well as the political elite.

According to the data, 6 056 Lithuanian military personnel and troops have had a chance to contribute to international security and peace building efforts in different parts of the world from 1994 to 2014¹⁶. During that time Lithuanian military representatives participated in 27 international missions and operations overall: 5 UN missions, 11 NATO-led operations, 3 OSCE missions, 5 ES-led operations and missions and 3 other operations which were led by a particular country¹⁷. Putting the emphasis on the recent deployments, in 2013 Lithuanian Parliament adopted a resolution which regulates the amount of Lithuanian military units (composed of Lithuanian soldiers and civil servants of the national defence system)¹⁸ sent to participate in international operations for 2014-2015. By this resolution, the Lithuanian military was provided with a mandate to participate in 5 international peace operations with imposed number of military units: NATO-led ISAF mission in Afghanistan with up to 200 military representatives, NATO-led KFOR mission in Kosovo with up to 5 military representatives, EU-led operation „ATALANTA“ off the coast of Somalia with up to 30 military

¹⁵ According to the charts, the current level of trust in military varies from 60% to 70% depending on survey. Poll data is available in Lithuanian on official Ministry of National Defence website: http://www.kam.lt/lt/naujienos/874/pasitikejimas_krasto_apsauga_890.html

¹⁶ Publication about Lithuanian soldiers in International Operation 1994-2014, released by Ministry of National Defence. 2014, 107.

¹⁷ Ibid, 105-107.

¹⁸ Concept of military units include both Lithuanian soldiers and civil servants of the national defence system. Civilian service within the national defence system is a part of civil service of Lithuania regulated not only by Law on Civil Service but also by Statute of Civilian National Defence Service and Law on the Organisation of National Defence System and Military Service. Statutory civil servants fulfill civilian national defence service under contracts on civilian national defence service. These civil servants while participating in international operations are assigned to the armed forces.

representatives, NATO-led operation „Ocean Shield“ with up to 30 military representatives and France-led operation „Sangaris“ with up to 10 military representatives¹⁹. During 2014-2015 Lithuania's military personnel also were deployed in an EU Training Mission in Mali, yet it was regulated by separate mandate issued exclusively for this mission. Currently Lithuanian Parliament is preparing a resolution on participation of Lithuanian military units in international operations for the period 2016-2017. According to the initial resolution which has yet to be adopted by Parliament, Lithuania will send its military units to 4 international missions: up to 50 military representatives to the NATO-led ISAF mission in Afghanistan, up to 5 military representatives to the NATO-led KFOR mission, up to 30 military representatives to the EU-led operation „ATALANTA“ and up to 40 military representatives to the UN-led mission in Mali²⁰. Although Lithuania originally planned to participate in the mission in Mali with 20 military representatives, the number was increased to 40. Important alterations were made after the meeting of European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs on 17 November 2015 where France, immediately after the Paris terror attacks, asked members of the EU to support its military forces in the fight against terrorism in Africa and the Middle East²¹.

In 2004 the Lithuanian Parliament amended the Law on International Operations, Military Exercises and Other Military Co-operation Events²² which laid the legal basis for two distinct agents. Firstly, it constitutes the legal framework for the participation of Lithuanian military units (soldiers and civil servants of national defence system) in international operations as well as other military exercises and co-operation events. Secondly, it regulates the deployment of foreign military units (soldiers and civil servants assigned to the armed forces) in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania. It is clearly marked that this law is not applicable to Lithuanian police or other State paramilitary forces not assigned to the armed forces. According to the law, Lithuanian military units may be transferred to the operational command or control of the institutions of the UN as well as of member states or institutions of NATO and the European Union²³. It should be emphasized that adoption of this law is mainly determined by process of accession to NATO as Lithuania committed to change its laws in

¹⁹Resolution of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania on participation of Lithuanian military units in international operations, April 23 2013, available in Lithuanian at: http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=467703

²⁰ Draft of Resolution of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania on participation of Lithuanian military units in international operations, November 3 2015, available in Lithuanian at http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=1091263&p_tr2=2

²¹ Additional conclusions of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Lithuanian Parliament for resolution on participation of Lithuanian military units in international operations, December 4 2015, available in Lithuanian at: http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=1101112&p_tr2=2

²² The latest version of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on International Operations, Military Exercises and Other Military Co-operation Events, adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, January 29 2004. http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_e?p_id=247223&p_query=&p_tr2=

²³ Ibid.

order to set up a legal framework for participation of Lithuanian military personnel in collective defence operations. Therefore international operations here are divided into two categories as collective defence operations, which primarily related to principle of collective defence enshrined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty and other operations²⁴. In general, the Law's Chapter on International Operations regulates the decision making process for use of Lithuanian military personnel in international operations abroad. Regulation of both categories of international operations is slightly different, yet the focus should be put on the so-called other operations, which includes international POs itself. Decisions on participation in other operations are made by Lithuanian Parliament by adopting a resolution at the proposal of the President of Lithuania. Lithuanian Parliament also establish the maximum size of Lithuanian military units used in the international operations and maximum duration of their stay in the territory of the other states by adopting the resolution at the proposal of the President of Lithuania. The exact size and duration of deployment of Lithuanian military units is set by the Ministry of National Defence, in compliance with the maximum size and duration approved by the resolution of the Parliament.

Deployment of Lithuanian Civilians in PO

However, deployment of civilians in peace operations is considerably less compared to military involvement. Taking into consideration non-military (civilian) engagements in (post)-conflict operations, the most active role is performed by police officers. Police staff started to engage in POs from 1996 when 9 police officers were deployed in UN mission UNTAES in Eastern Slavonia²⁵. Since then Lithuania has participated in 20 different crisis management, peace-building and peace observation missions organized by the UN, EU, OSCE and defunct Western European Union²⁶. Deployment of police officers in international peace operations is regulated through several laws and bylaws. In 2006 the Police Commissioner General of Lithuania passed a decree on participation of police staff in international missions²⁷. This decree in detail regulates the principles of selection and sending of police officers as well as their rights and obligations while working either in missions of international institutions or special missions. Regulations on career perspectives after completing the mission are also formulated in this document. According to the decree, police officers return to their previous positions after the mission or could be appointed to other equivalent positions. Furthermore,

²⁴ Although the law does not refer particularly to Peace Operations it should be understood that PO lie under regulation of the Other Operations.

²⁵ General information about history of deployment of police officers in international peace operations, available in Lithuanian on official Police Department website: <http://www.policija.lt/index.php?id=106>

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Decree of the Police Commissioner General of Lithuania on participation of police officers in international missions, November 16 2006.

police officers could be offered with new equivalent or higher positions after their assessment is made by the mission command. Importantly, the Lithuanian Government passes a new resolution for each particular mission in order to determine the obligations for the Police Department with respect to financing of personnel preparations, equipment, medical examinations and health insurance as well as their payments during the missions²⁸. The Statute of the Internal Service (for institutions under Ministry of the Interior of Lithuania, such as Police Department, State Border Guard Service, etc.) also includes some provisions about the period of time statutory civil servants are allowed to spend either in international organizations or on their missions.

The Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania adopted the Law on Secondment of Persons to International and EU Institutions or Foreign Institutions²⁹. This law represents the overall legal framework for sending career civil servants, statutory civil servants, prosecutors or other persons for work at international and EU institutions. The concept of international and EU institutions also includes international civilian operations and missions that recruit personnel on a secondment basis. In a general manner, this law provides regulations on co-ordination of delegation, principles of selection of candidates, requirements for candidates, and training of selected candidates. Although career civil servants, statutory civil servants, prosecutors and other persons³⁰ are delegated by different institutions where they work, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the overall co-ordination of the delegation. The law also presents comprehensive provisions on social guarantees for seconded persons, including payment of remuneration and insurance of seconded persons and their family members. For example, seconded persons and their spouses shall be provided with state social insurance as well as monthly benefit to provide themselves with the residential accommodation. Also expenses of health insurance and travel from Lithuania to a foreign state and back shall be covered for both seconded persons and their family members. In cases when such expenses are not covered for seconded person by international institution to which this person has been seconded it is covered from the State budget.

Lithuania has greatly improved its legal and institutional framework related to sending of Lithuanian civilians to international institutions in the last decade, though it is obvious that the legal basis is largely dedicated to delegation of civil officers from state institutions to work directly in international

²⁸ For example, Lithuanian Government passed a resolution on participation of Lithuanian police officers in European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL), June 27 2007, available in Lithuanian at: <https://e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.AC1FBA6508E0>

²⁹ The Law on Secondment of Persons to International and EU Institutions or Foreign Institutions, adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, July 14 2009 http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=382980

³⁰ Other persons not referred to career civil servants, statutory civil servants or prosecutors are delegated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs itself.

institutions, more accurately in EU structure. Although the aforementioned laws formally regulate involvement of civilians in POs, in fact it is not clear how Lithuanian civilians contribute to (post)-conflict operations practically. Apart from police, lack of official information makes it difficult to evaluate other civilian engagement in such peacebuilding activities as state building, democratization or reconciliation as well as the existing conditions to use civilian expertise, especially which comes from private sector. For instance, Lithuanian-led PRT in Ghor region in Afghanistan was a joint civilian-military mission, thus civilian experts had an opportunity to engage in mission implementation mainly through development cooperation projects and initiatives. However, the data provided about Lithuanian civilian presence is minimal, fragmented, and principally present in very general statements that experts from both public and private sectors were involved in mission. Therefore it remains unclear what was the extent of Lithuanian civilians' participation, what part of civilian experts came from the private sector or civil society, which states institutions, apart from MFA, delegated civilian experts, and finally, what political incentives, if any, were created to use civilian capacities in further POs.

Lithuanian Development Cooperation

It should be noted that the potential to deploy civilians abroad appeared within recognition of international development cooperation policies. With the accession to EU in 2004 Lithuania has undertaken to allocate funds for development cooperation and provided assistance to developing countries. Equally Lithuania has started building a legal and institutional framework for the realization of development cooperation projects. In 2013, the Lithuanian Parliament passed the Law on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, which determines the targets and guidelines of the Lithuanian development cooperation policy as well as its implementation, coordination and financing³¹. This law acknowledged the MFA's "ownership" over the overall coordination of Lithuanian development cooperation policy. The MFA is responsible for elaborating and implementing development cooperation policy as well as preparing its guidelines for every 3 years. In order to include other ministries in development policy planning, a National Commission for Development Cooperation was set up in 2014. This institution consists of representatives of all ministries and other institutional stakeholders and functions as an advisory body to the MFA³². According to the Development Cooperation Policy Guidelines for 2014-2016, Lithuania as a donor

³¹ The Law on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, May 16 2013, available in Lithuanian at: http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=449238

³² Resolution of the Lithuanian Government on formation of National Commission for Development Cooperation, January 15 2014, available in Lithuanian at: <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/32e6778081e711e3903d9adbf15c062f>

country is to focus on transferring its own reform experiences in transition to democracy and market economy to countries that are currently facing democratic and economic transformation³³. Geographically, Lithuania intends to provide bilateral aid primarily to the European Union's Eastern Partnership countries on Eastern Europe (Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine) and Southern Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia). The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, that has a post-conflict background, is also listed as a bilateral aid recipient. Lithuania is willing to focus its bilateral aid efforts on these priority sectors: administrative and institutional capacity-building, European integration processes, social and economic reforms, and the development of civil society³⁴.

Lithuania's financial contributions to development cooperation increased fivefold between 2004 and 2014. According to the 2014 data, the official development assistance (ODA) allocated by Lithuania amounted to 34.61 million Euro, reaching 0.1 % of gross national income (GNI)³⁵. However, Lithuania failed to achieve its commitments to increase ODA allocations to the level of 0.33 % of GNI by 2015 in accordance with the Conclusions of the European Council. It is also important to note that the major part of Lithuania's budget of ODA is spent on a multilateral basis through contributions to different international and regional organizations, mainly to the European Development Fund and the EU budget used for the implementation of EU external policy. For example, Lithuania's assistance in 2014 provided on a multilateral basis was 29.93 million Euro (86 %), while its bilateral ODA amounted to 4.68 million Euro (14 %) only³⁶. It means that Lithuania spent most of its ODA budget for paying regular membership fees in multilateral agencies rather than implementing concrete development projects directly in partner countries.

³³ Development Cooperation Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Lithuania for 2014-2016, approved by Lithuanian Government, January 15 2014, available in Lithuanian at: <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/b932760081e611e3903d9adbf15c062f>

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ General information about Lithuanian official development assistance, available on an official website of Development Cooperation Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <https://www.orangeprojects.lt/en/statistics>

³⁶ Ibid.

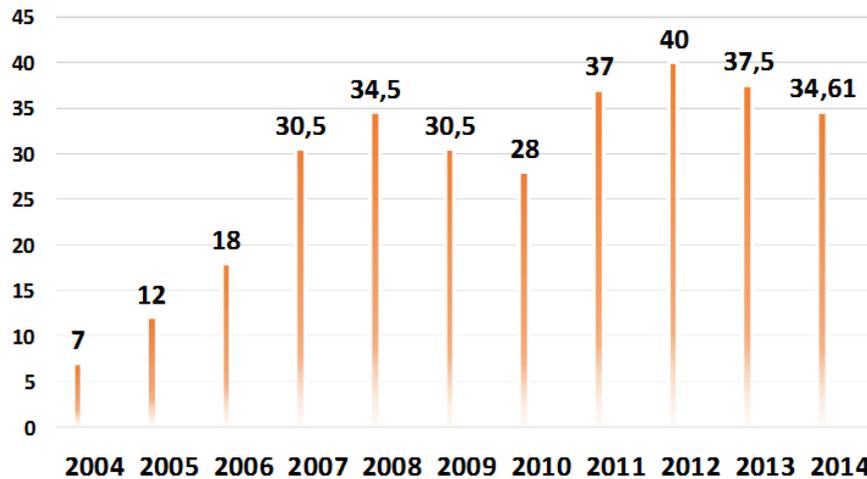


Table 1: Lithuanian Official Development Assistance 2004-2014 (mln. EUR)³⁷

Source: Development Cooperation Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <https://www.orangeprojects.lt/en/statistics>

When analyzing Lithuania's development cooperation, it is also important to notice the difference between development projects implemented in peace missions where military is present and other development cooperation projects. While Lithuania currently provides military personnel to 4 POs in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Somalia and Mali, it is only in Afghanistan that Lithuania is involved in implementing development cooperation projects. The remaining part of bilateral aid is now provided to priority countries in the Eastern neighbourhood of the EU (Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia). Lithuania continues to provide both military and civil assistance to Afghanistan, after completion of an eight-year Lithuania-led mission of the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Ghor Province in 2013. Since 2006 more than 200 different development projects have been implemented in Afghanistan with Lithuania's assistance. Lithuania has facilitated dozens of reconstruction projects in Ghor Province, including the installation of 3 hydroelectric power plants, the construction of 22 schools as well as the first public library in Chaghcharan, and the reconstruction of the provincial hospital. Activities related with development of Afghani skills through trainings about harvesting, warehousing as well as family planning classes for women were also organized³⁸. Development cooperation with Afghanistan is an example showing that there is an opportunity for

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ General information about Lithuania's development cooperation with Afghanistan, available on an official website of Development Cooperation Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <https://www.orangeprojects.lt/en/development-cooperation-with-afghanistan>

the State to use more of Lithuanian civilian capacities in other (post-) conflict areas, not only in transitional and developing countries from its neighbourhood.

Conclusions

The Lithuanian-led mission in Ghor province in Afghanistan, presented in detail before, was the most notable attempt to use Lithuanian civilian capacities in peace operations to date. However, it should be perceived as an exception rather than a situation-changing experience. Lithuania's involvement in POs is still dominated by the military while deployment of civilians is considerably less frequent. Nevertheless, Lithuania has begun to recognise the role of civilian capacities in the (post-) conflict areas mainly due to its integration into the EU and NATO. Legal and institutional frameworks related to the deployment of civilians abroad has been developed. Still Lithuania should continue to improve legal basis that will regulate the participation of civilians in POs concretely. It is not a surprise that the perception of the military as the primary peace keeper both at national and international levels prevails within society and policy makers. Important obstacles to overcome this mindset and present the important role of non-military components are further militarization of society and lack of information in public discourse about civilian contributions to peace operations. The military dominate over civilians not only in terms of involvement in POs but also by media coverage. At the same time political elite should more actively support the use of civilian expertise, regardless of the military contribution to peace building. Although Lithuania has also been involved in international development cooperation projects as a donor country, the deployment of civilians to POs through development cooperation is still in the second line of priorities, therefore it could and should be improved.

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