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# U.S. Country Commercial Guides



Lithuania

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## **Doing Business in Lithuania**

### **Market Overview**

Entrance into the European Union in 2004 made Lithuania part of one of the world's largest markets, with 456 million consumers, and increased Lithuania's appeal as a destination for U.S. goods and services. Lithuania's proximity to markets of the Community of Independent States (CIS), the country's improving infrastructure, competitive living and operating costs, and highly-skilled workforce offer opportunities for U.S. producers and suppliers to expand into EU and global markets.

Lithuania has been a member of the WTO since 2002 and joined the EU and NATO in 2004. Lithuania adopted the Euro currency on January 1, 2015. Lithuania's determination to join the EU and NATO accelerated improvements in Lithuania's legal and banking systems and tax and customs regimes; the fiscal restraints the government imposed in order to meet EU accession commitments spurred dramatic economic growth and business development.

Lithuania demonstrated remarkable resilience to the global economic slowdown in 2019: Lithuania's GDP grew by 3.9%, compared to growth of just 1.5% in the European Union. In addition, Lithuania was one of the three EU countries with faster GDP growth in 2019 than in 2018. Unfortunately, in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on global economy, including that of Lithuania. We have yet to see what the final impact of the pandemic will be on the global economy, but in the most likely scenario, the European Union will experience a recession in the first half of 2020, after which the economy will return to its normal path of growth. Experts estimate that Lithuanian GDP will contract by around 1.7 percent in 2020 and forecast growth of around 3 percent in 2021.

In 2019 Lithuanian exports totaled EUR 14 billion, and imports reached EUR 12.3 billion. Compared to 2018, exports and imports grew by 4.7% and 2.8%, respectively.

In 2019 Lithuania's largest trade partner was Russia, which accounted for 14% of Lithuania's exports and 14.7% imports. U.S. exports to Lithuania in 2019 reached \$535 million; U.S. imports from Lithuania totaled \$1.2 billion during the same period. According to Lithuanian trade data, the United States was Lithuania's 10th largest trading partner in 2019, making up 1.2% of total trade turnover.

A wide range of economic and demographic statistics is available on the website of [Lithuanian Statistics Department](#).

### **Market Challenges**

Some problems, such as inefficient government bureaucracy and a lack of regulatory transparency, continue to discourage some investors. The Lithuanian government, however, has made and continues to make progress in addressing these problems, and they do not represent significant obstacles to U.S. trade and investment in Lithuania. Demographic trends such as an aging population, emigration of the workforce towards higher-wage countries, and a shrinking domestic market, pose challenges that may be more difficult to overcome.

### **Market Opportunities**

Major infrastructure projects currently pending or underway include decommissioning of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant; construction of the Via Baltica highway and the Rail Baltica railway to connect the Baltic countries to

the rest of Europe; expansion and modernization of the Klaipeda seaport facilities; construction and modernization of electric power transmission lines to Poland and Sweden; construction of a natural gas storage facility; construction of a gas pipeline connecting Lithuania with Poland; and, renewable energy infrastructure investments, particularly in wind and biomass.

### **Market Entry Strategy**

There are no laws regulating the relationship between a foreign company and its distributors or agents in Lithuania. The provisions of a given distribution agreement define the terms of the relationship.

A joint venture with a local partner is usually the best way for a U.S. company to start a business in Lithuania.

## **Leading Sectors for U.S. Exports and Investment**

### **Agriculture**

Lithuania is in a good position to serve as a base for distribution for all three Baltic countries (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia) for agricultural products from the United States. In 2018, Lithuania imported agricultural and fish products worth \$2.5 billion with U.S.-sourced imports worth \$37 million. Products from the U.S. that have strong sales potential in the Lithuanian market include: fish and seafood products; nuts; wines and distilled spirits; and, highly processed and functional ingredients.

For more information visit: [Exporter Guide/ Lithuania](#).

### **Building Materials**

The construction sector in Lithuania is growing rapidly. Economic growth, growing wages, and the wide availability of credit boosted construction sector growth as opportunities for real estate developers and investors expanded. For almost a decade, real estate prices increased at an annual rate of approximately 10%. In 2018, the Lithuanian Association of Construction Companies reported 37% growth of construction company profits compared to 2017.

EU development funds provide additional impetus for the development and expansion of this sector. EU funds will pay for the reconstruction of railways, the renovation of regional roads, seaports, and airports, and the construction of new nature preservation facilities.

### **Leading Sub-Sectors**

Machinery, equipment, tools

Building materials, insulation materials

Automation equipment/systems

### **Opportunities**

Virtually all products associated with building renovation and construction are in high demand, including paints, doors, windows, plumbing equipment, lighting, insulation materials, heating systems, tools, and machinery.

### **Web Resources**

[Lithuania Construction Company Association](#)

## **Energy**

Until a few years ago, Lithuania had no alternative gas supply or electricity interconnectivity with EU countries, except for limited interconnections with Latvia. In order to reduce Lithuania's dependence on energy supplies from a single source, the government implemented a number of projects. A liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal in Klaipeda was completed at the end of 2014, and at the end of 2015, electricity interconnections between Sweden and Lithuania (NordBalt) and between Poland and Lithuania (LitPol Link) became operational.

Since December 2009, due to the permanent shutdown of the state owned Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant (NPP), Lithuania's electricity generation structure has changed significantly, and Lithuania has changed from being a net exporter of electricity to a net importer of electricity.

The energy sector is particularly important to the Lithuanian economy, and energy security is a strategic priority for the government, which seeks to break Lithuania's energy isolation and secure sufficient and competitive internal capacities of energy production. Energy sector projects underway currently include upgrades to the electricity grid and work to synchronize the Baltic grid with Continental Europe, construction on the Gas Interconnector Poland-Lithuania (GIPL), and decommissioning of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant.

Lithuania has also taken steps to liberalize its electricity market and ensure a consumer's right to choose his or her electricity supplier and to purchase electricity for a real market price. Lithuania's regulated tariffs benefit only household consumers, but these tariffs are set to be abolished in 2020. On January 1, 2010, the electricity market was officially launched in Lithuania (the first among the Baltic states) — a crucial step towards the common Baltic electricity market. A restatement of the Law on Electricity, which entered into force in February 2012, created legal preconditions for the integration of Lithuania's electricity market into the Nordic market.

### **Leading Sub-Sectors**

Energy saving and storage technology

Cogeneration technology

Smart grid technology

### **Opportunities**

Info on opprtunities: [TED Europa](#)

### **Web resources**

[Enterprise Lithuania](#)

[Invest Lithuania](#)

[Energy Ministry](#)

## **Pollution Control equipment/Environmental Services**

The Lithuanian government launched its environmental protection program in 1992, defining and prioritizing all major environmental problems in the country. Economic development increased the urgency of resolving environmental problems. Lithuania added new policies regarding environmental cleanup and pollution prevention to the legal framework in 1995.

Some projections estimate a need for \$50 million in annual spending to comply with EU environmental requirements. Particularly in the renewable energy sector, substantial investments are already underway, and plans are being prepared to rollout residential energy efficiency programs, for example. The Lithuanian Ministry of the Environment is responsible for preparing the country to meet these requirements. The bulk of spending on the environment will go toward improving wastewater treatment, sewage networks, and waste management. Environmental protection is a priority in the national Public Investment Program. With ambitious environmental targets set out for 2020, 2030, and 2050, there will be opportunities in the environmental sector in areas such as protection and prevention, remediation, monitoring, and waste disposal.

### **Leading Sub-Sectors**

Environmental protection infrastructure development /renovation projects

Climate Change programs implementation

### **Opportunities**

U.S. environmental consulting companies appear to be more active than equipment manufacturers and suppliers in this sector. There are substantial opportunities for environmental service providers willing to team with local partners. Such opportunities include laboratory chemical analysis, site assessment, soil and groundwater remediation, environmental impact consulting, and services related to hazardous and other waste management. About four percent of the waste management equipment sold in Lithuania is of U.S. origin.

### **Web resources**

[Enterprise Lithuania](#)

[Invest Lithuania](#)

[Environment Ministry](#)

## **Computer Software and Hardware**

The Lithuanian IT market has been growing rapidly. The computer and peripherals market in Lithuania is well-developed, and all major hardware and software suppliers have a market presence. There are about 500 computer companies in Lithuania, of which approximately 20 dominate the market.

The focus of the Lithuanian IT sector in recent years has been on creating the necessary infrastructure to meet the demands of an information society. Demand for software development and consulting is growing rapidly. Supporting networks -- including LANs and WANs -- and internet applications are in high demand.

### **Opportunities**

The best prospects for U.S. IT exports are powerful multi-media processors, networking equipment, and internet and ecommerce application software. Supporting networks including LANs and WANs and internet applications are in demand. IT goods and services exports comprise only about 0.3% of Lithuania's total exports at present, leaving substantial room for growth.

### **Web resources**

[Enterprise Lithuania](#)

[Invest Lithuania](#)

[InfoBalt Association](#)

## **Medical Equipment/Pharmaceuticals**

The Lithuanian health system is a mixed system, predominantly funded from the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) through a compulsory health insurance scheme, and supplemented by state contributions on behalf of the economically inactive population. Public financing of the health sector has gradually increased since 2004 to 6.6% of GDP in 2018. The state healthcare system is intended to serve the entire population, and the Health Insurance Law requires all permanent residents and legally employed non-permanent residents to participate in the compulsory health insurance scheme (typically paying 6–9% of taxable income), without an option to opt-out.

The Ministry of Health is responsible for implementing the health system regulation through setting standards and requirements, licensing health-care providers and professionals, and approving capital investments. In the 1990s, many health administration functions were decentralized from the Ministry of Health to regional authorities. Sixty municipalities varying in size from under 5,000 to over 500,000 residents became responsible for managing primary and social care, and for public health activities at the local level. They also own the majority of outpatient clinics and small-to-medium sized hospitals.

The private sector plays a limited role in inpatient care, but plays a substantial role in dental care, cosmetic surgery, psychological therapy, some outpatient specialties and primary care. Since 2008, the NHIF has increased its contracts with private providers for outpatient care.

Additionally, development of the life sciences sector in Lithuania is a priority for the government. As a result, there are a number of innovative companies producing medical equipment, including U.S. private sector investors, and Lithuania's export promotion agency, Enterprise Lithuania, routinely organizes trade shows that draw international participation focused on life sciences.

## **Opportunities**

The best prospects for U.S. suppliers are in modern diagnostic equipment, patient-monitoring systems, high-tech surgical devices, oncology medicines, radiation treatment equipment, cardiovascular surgical devices, and nursing equipment and supplies.

### **Web resources**

[Enterprise Lithuania](#)

[Invest Lithuania](#)

[Ministry of Healthcare](#)

[Lithuanian Association of Medical Companies](#)

[State Medicines Control Service](#)

[State Patient Fund](#)

## **Fintech**

Major companies including IBM, AIG, Western Union, and Nasdaq have established a presence in Lithuania to capitalize on the strong business services sector, alongside tech giants like Google. Lithuania's comparative advantages in business services, ICT, and financial compliance, supports growth in the spinoff fintech sector, and the country has attracted increasing numbers of foreign fintech startups, joining domestic success stories such as CoinGate, Debifo, and Bankera. The explosion in the number of fintechs choosing Lithuania as their new hub can be attributed to the creation of a regulatory sandbox by the Bank of Lithuania and streamlined regulatory processes. Available to both existing authorized financial institutions and start-ups, the sandbox aims to provide a platform for firms to test innovation before bringing a product to market, ensuring no crucial errors when it reaches the hands of consumers. The number of jobs in the sector rose 30 per cent in 2019 to reach over 3,400. And according to projections, the number of fintechs is expected to rise again in 2020 by 16 per cent to over 250 companies,

generating 1,000 more new jobs. These are likely to have a demand focused on IT, software development, compliance and AML and business development.

### **Opportunities**

In recent years Lithuania has proved to be very appealing as an EU destination for fintech development. For U.S. fintech companies considering expanding their business, Lithuania has the ability to deliver three critical factors: regulation, infrastructure, and talent.

### **Web resources**

[Enterprise Lithuania](#)

[Invest Lithuania](#)

[Bank of Lithuania](#)

## **Customs, Regulations and Standards**

### **Trade Barriers**

There are no significant trade barriers for U.S. companies when exporting to Lithuania.

#### **Import Tariffs**

The duties for non-EU countries are relatively low, especially for manufactured goods (4.2% on average for the general rate); however, textile, clothing items, and food-processing industry sectors still face protective measures. Goods transiting Lithuania are not subject to duties. It is possible to obtain a temporary duty exemption for items such as commercial samples and for goods intended for public displays at exhibitions or trade fairs. For further information visit Lithuanian Customs [https://ec.europa.eu/taxation\\_customs/business/calculation-customs-duties/what-is-common-customs-tariff/taric\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/business/calculation-customs-duties/what-is-common-customs-tariff/taric_en)

#### **Import Requirements and Documentation**

The duties for non-European countries are relatively low, especially for manufactured goods (4.2% on average for the general rate); however, textile, clothing items (high duties and quota system) and food-processing industry sectors (average duties of 17.3% and numerous tariff quotas) still face protective measures.

Goods transiting Lithuania are not subject to duties. It is possible to obtain a temporary duty exemption for items such as commercial samples and for goods intended for public displays at exhibitions or trade fairs. For further information visit [Taxation and Customs Union site](#)

Agricultural Documentation info on the website of the [Lithuanian Customs Department](#)

#### **Labeling and Marking Requirements**

The following information, in Lithuanian, is required on retail packaging, or otherwise marked on the product (a sticker, label, etc.):

- Name of product (indicating clearly the contents of the package)
- Name of the manufacturer or the name of the company that had the product manufactured
- Amount of contents (weight or volume of the contents to be specified, measures in the metric system)

If warranted, the following information should also be included on the retail packaging or otherwise clearly identified on the product: contents of the product, care instructions, operating instructions, and a warning of possible danger related to the use or disposal of the product.

A retail-size food package must show the name of the manufacturer, packer or importer, commercial name of the product, net metric weight or volume, ingredients in descending order of weight, last recommended date of sale, and storage instructions if perishable or intended for infants. This information described above must be provided in Lithuanian.

More on the marking of packages from [Practical Guide to Doing Business in Europe](#)

## **U.S. Export Controls**

Note the U.S. government export controls that companies need to abide by when exporting to Lithuania: [Consolidated Screening List Search Engine](#) [Consolidated Screening](#).

As a member of the European Union and NATO, Lithuania shares responsibility for international security. An essential part of this is the efficient implementation of export control measures and a foreign policy oriented towards preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

### **Temporary Entry**

Goods transiting Lithuania are not subject to duties. It is possible to obtain a temporary duty exemption for items such as commercial samples and for goods intended for public displays at exhibitions or trade fairs.

### **Prohibited and Restricted Imports**

The Integrated Tariff of the European Communities (TARIC) lists various rules applying to specific products being imported into the customs territory of the EU or, in some cases, when exported from it. To determine if a product is prohibited or subject to restriction, check the TARIC for that product for the following codes:

CITES	Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species
PROHI	Import Suspension
RSTR	Import Restriction

### **Customs Regulations**

Information on TARIC [Taxation and Customs Union](#)

### **Standards for Trade**

Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) to notify to the WTO proposed technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures that could affect trade. Notify U.S. ([www.nist.gov/notifyus](http://www.nist.gov/notifyus)) is a free, web-based e-mail registration service that captures and makes available for review and comment key information on draft regulations and conformity assessment procedures. Users receive customized e-mail alerts when new notifications are added by selected country or countries and industry sector(s) of interest and can also request full texts of regulations. This service and its associated web site are managed and operated by the USA WTO TBT Inquiry Point housed within the National Institute of Standards and Technology, part of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

For additional information, check EU article on standards at <https://www.trade.gov/knowledge-product/european-union-ce-marking-and-eu-standards>

### **Trade Agreements**

[List of trade agreements with the EU and its Member States, including detail descriptions](#)

## **Selling U.S. Products and Services**

### **Distribution & Sales Channels**

Many foreign investors believe that Lithuania has the best road infrastructure in the Baltic region. With a population of less than three million, the country's three international airports and good rail and road networks permit transport of goods in all directions. The EU has recognized Lithuania as a prime transport center in the region and has funded construction of the Rail Baltica through Lithuania, which will, inter alia, switch Lithuania from the Soviet rail gauge to the EU standard. This will link the country even more effectively to both the EU and the other Baltic countries. Investors may sell goods in Lithuania by agreement with an agent, distributor, or retailer. For more information on Lithuanian companies see the [Lithuanian Business Directory](#).

### **eCommerce**

Lithuania is among the leading countries of the EU in information communications technologies and is ranked first in the World Competitiveness Rankings for communication technology. In the EU, it has a leading position in the number of people aged 16 to 24 who have gained ICT skills through formal education. Lithuanians are proud to have the fastest download and upload speeds in the EU. Lithuania takes first place on the continent for density of network of public internet access points. As a result, 92% of all financial operations are performed via e-banking. The most modern ICT technologies (EDGE technology, mobile WiMAX 4G Internet, 3G mobile communications infrastructure, etc.) are fully implemented and used throughout the whole country. Lithuania has one of the highest broadband penetration rates in Europe. Fiber networks reach 78% of the population, and eCommerce websites are widely used in the retail and services sectors.

### **Selling Factors & Techniques**

Selling factors and techniques acceptable for a Lithuanian customer are very similar to those in the United States or elsewhere in Europe. Local market research companies can assist in identifying marketing methods for a specific commodity. For more information on Lithuanian companies, see [Lithuanian Business Directory](#)

### **Trade Financing**

Various payment methods are possible in Lithuania. The most popular of those include wire transfers as pre-payment or after-payment, letters of credit, or payment by credit card. Checks are not common as a payment method and are rarely accepted. For more information about the methods of payment or other trade finance options, please read the [Trade Finance Guide](#).

### **Protecting Intellectual Property**

Several general principles are important for effective management of intellectual property (IP) rights in the EU and legal counsel is advisable to ensure that IP rights are properly protected. It is the responsibility of the rights' holders to register, protect, and enforce their rights where relevant, retaining their own counsel and advisors. Companies may wish to seek advice from local attorneys or IP consultants who are experts in EU law. The U.S. Commercial Service can provide a list of local lawyers upon request.

First, it is important to have an overall strategy to protect IP rights. Second, IP protections in EU Member States differ from those in the United States. Third, rights must be registered and enforced in the EU under national laws.

U.S. trademark and patent registrations will not protect IP rights in the EU. Registration of patents and trademarks is on a first-in-time, first-in-right basis, so it is recommended that a company apply for trademark and patent protection even before selling its products or services in the EU market. There is no such thing as an "international copyright" that will automatically protect an author's writings throughout the entire world. Protection against unauthorized use in a particular country depends on the national laws of that country. However, most countries do

offer copyright protection to foreign works under certain conditions, and these conditions have been greatly simplified by international copyright treaties and conventions.

It is vital that companies understand that intellectual property is primarily a private right and that the U.S. government generally cannot enforce rights for private individuals in EU. While the U.S. Government stands ready to assist by providing advocacy support, there is little it can do if the rights holders have not taken fundamental steps necessary to secure and enforce IP rights in a timely fashion. Moreover, in many countries, rights holders who delay enforcing their rights on a mistaken belief that the USG can provide a political resolution to a legal problem may find that their rights have been eroded or abrogated due to legal doctrines such as statutes of limitations, laches, estoppel, or unreasonable delay in prosecuting a lawsuit. In no instance should U.S. Government advice be seen as a substitute for the obligation of a rights holder to promptly pursue its case.

It is always advisable to conduct due diligence on potential partners. Negotiate from the position of your partner and give your partner clear incentives to honor the contract. A good partner is an important ally in protecting IP rights. Consider carefully, however, whether to permit your partner to register your IP rights on your behalf. Doing so may create a risk that your partner will list itself as the IP owner and fail to transfer the rights should the partnership end. Projects and sales in the EU require constant attention. Work with legal counsel familiar with EU laws to create a solid contract that includes non-compete clauses, and confidentiality/non-disclosure provisions.

It is also recommended that companies understand the importance of working together with trade associations and organizations to support efforts to protect IP and stop counterfeiting. There are a number of these organizations, both EU and U.S.-based. These include:

- [The U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [National Association of Manufacturers \(NAM\)](#)
- [International Intellectual Property Alliance \(IIPA\)](#)
- [International Trademark Association \(INTA\)](#)
- [The Coalition Against Counterfeiting and Piracy](#)
- [International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition](#)
- [Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America \(PhRMA\)](#)
- [Biotechnology Industry Organization \(BIO\)](#)

## **IP Resources**

A wealth of information on protecting IP is freely available to U.S. rights holders. Some excellent resources for companies regarding intellectual property include the following:

- For information about patent, trademark, or copyright issues -- including enforcement issues in the US and other countries -- call the STOP! Hotline: 1-866-999-HALT or register at [www.StopFakes.gov](http://www.StopFakes.gov)
- For more information about registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), contact the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) at: 1-800-786-9199.
- For more information about registering for copyright protection in the US, contact the US Copyright Office at: 1-202-707-5959.
- For more information about how to evaluate, protect, and enforce intellectual property rights and how these rights may be important for businesses, a free online training program is available at [www.stopfakes.gov](http://www.stopfakes.gov)

- For US small and medium-size companies, the Department of Commerce offers a "SME IP Advisory Program" available through the American Bar Association that provides one hour of free IP legal advice for companies with concerns in Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Russia, and . For details and to register, visit: [http://www.abanet.org/intlaw/intlproj/iprprogram\\_consultation.html](http://www.abanet.org/intlaw/intlproj/iprprogram_consultation.html)
- For information on obtaining and enforcing intellectual property rights and market-specific IP Toolkits visit: [www.StopFakes.gov](http://www.StopFakes.gov) This site is linked to the USPTO website for registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), the U.S. Customs & Border Protection website to record registered trademarks and copyrighted works (to assist customs in blocking imports of IP-infringing products) and allows you to register for Webinars on protecting IP.
- The U.S. Commerce Department has positioned IP attachés in key markets around the world. For contact information, please see: [http://www.uspto.gov/ip/global/attache/Attache\\_Contacts\\_2012-08.doc](http://www.uspto.gov/ip/global/attache/Attache_Contacts_2012-08.doc) or [contact@ita-trade.gov](mailto:contact@ita-trade.gov) ITA's Office of Intellectual Property Rights Director, Stevan Mitchell at [Stevan.Mitchell@trade.gov](mailto:Stevan.Mitchell@trade.gov).

### **Selling to the Public Sector**

The Public Procurement Office, which reports directly to the Government (Prime Minister's Office), coordinates and monitors public procurement with the relevant ministries and other authorities. The Law on Public Procurement governs all public procurement in Lithuania.

Most of the public tender announcements are published in the information supplement Informaciniai Pranesimai of the government's official paper "Valstybes Zinios" (in Lithuanian only) and on the Internet sites of the Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union, the U.S. Mission to the European Union, and the Lithuanian government ministries.

Below is a list of internet sites of Lithuanian ministries:

1. [Environment Ministry](#)
2. [Finance Ministry](#)
3. [Defense Ministry](#)
4. [Ministry of Culture](#)
5. [Ministry of Social Affairs](#)
6. [Transport and Communications](#)
7. [Healthcare Ministry](#)
8. [Science and Education Ministry](#)
9. [Justice Ministry](#)
10. [Economy and Innovation Ministry](#)
11. [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)
12. [Ministry of Interior](#)

13. Ministry of Agriculture
14. Energy Ministry

Currently, the best opportunities for U.S. suppliers and service providers are in the environmental protection, defense, transportation, chemicals, communications, information technology, food products, and energy sectors.

U.S. companies bidding on Government tenders may also qualify for U.S. Government advocacy. A unit of the U.S. Commerce Department's International Trade Administration, the Advocacy Center coordinates U.S. Government interagency advocacy efforts on behalf of U.S. exporters bidding on public sector contracts with international governments and government agencies. The Advocacy Center works closely with our network of the U.S. Commercial Service worldwide and inter-agency partners to ensure that exporters of U.S. products and services have the best possible chance of winning government contracts. Advocacy assistance can take many forms but often involves the U.S. Embassy or other U.S. Government agencies expressing support for the U.S. bidders directly to the foreign government. Consult [Advocacy for Foreign Government Contracts](#) for additional information.

#### Multilateral Development Banks and Financing Government Sales

Price, payment terms, and financing can be significant factors in winning a government contract. Many governments finance public works projects through borrowing from the Multilateral Development Banks (MDB). A helpful guide for working with the MDBs is the [Guide to Doing Business with the Multilateral Development Banks](#). The U.S. Department of Commerce's (USDOC) International Trade Administration (ITA) has a Foreign Commercial Service Officer stationed at each of the five different Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs): the African Development Bank; the Asian Development Bank; the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; the Inter-American Development Bank; and the World Bank.

## **Business Travel**

Most international visitors to Lithuania arrive at Vilnius International Airport, about four miles south of the capital city. The largest of three passenger airports in Lithuania, Vilnius Airport is served by more than 20 scheduled and charter airlines with nonstop flights to more than a dozen European cities. Visitors from the United States and Canada can make connections via these cities. An affordable alternative to Vilnius Airport is Kaunas Airport, about one hour's drive northwest of Vilnius. Several low-cost European airlines, including Ryanair, fly into this airport.

Visitors from the United States who drive in Lithuania are required to carry an International Driving Permit with their home driver's license. This document is available at AAA offices in the United States.

## **Business Customs**

Lithuanians are usually punctual for meetings and visitors are expected to arrive on time. Generally, it is always a good idea to arrive about ten minutes before your appointment, in order to allow time to prepare for the meeting. If you know that you are going to be delayed, it is advisable to call ahead and apologize for your delay. Lithuanians favor face-to-face meetings because they need to foster relationships for mutual understanding. Punctuality may not be as strict in social situations.

Business partners do not expect presents at the first meeting, but small gifts to business associates are generally acceptable, and you might be expected to bring a souvenir from your own country, something small and unique that represents your country or your company. In business, conservative/classic clothing is common. Men tend to wear a dark suit with a tie, while women might wear a trouser suit, or jacket and skirt. For business meetings, a suit is always appropriate for both men and women. Lithuanians expect their foreign business associates to be well-dressed, and business attire is appropriate for almost all formal occasions.

During normal working hours, there is a less formal code. Men take off their jackets and often wear short sleeved shirts. In small and medium-sized companies, there is often no dress code, with many opting for business casual, unless they have some sort of business meeting or formal event to attend.

## **Travel Advisory**

More info on [travel in Lithuania](#)

## **Visa Requirements**

U.S. citizens do not need a visa to travel to Lithuania if they plan to stay no longer than 90 days in a half year, counting from the first day of entry. For longer stays, work, study, or residence in Lithuania, a U.S. citizen must obtain a temporary residence permit. The 90-day period begins with entry to any of the Schengen group countries. Multiple visits to Schengen countries may not exceed 90 days in any six month period. More information on traveling to the Schengen area is available at U.S. Passports & International Travel - Schengen FAQs

To travel to Lithuania, U.S. citizens must hold a valid U.S. passport with a term of validity that exceeds the intended period of stay in Lithuania by at least three months and a valid health insurance policy for international travel, which covers all costs relating to emergency medical care during the stay in Lithuania, including the transportation costs from Lithuania to the place of permanent residence of the individual in case of his/her severe medical condition or death.

Information regarding extension of the stay or how to receive an entry visa for the purpose of work, education, training, or other professional activity may be obtained from the Embassy of Lithuania in the United States <https://usa.mfa.lt/>.

## **Currency**

Lithuania is an EU member state which joined the Eurozone by adopting the euro on January 1, 2015.

## **Telecommunications/Electronics**

Telecommunication service providers offer high quality solutions depending on client needs. EU mobile users traveling to other countries in the EU are able to call, text or surf the net without paying any extra charges.

Electrical outlets in Lithuania supply electricity at 220 volts AC.

## **Transportation**

Lithuanian roads are among the best in Eastern Europe. Lithuania has a network of four-lane highways connecting Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Panevėžys, and Palanga. Smaller towns are accessible by well-kept asphalt roads. Some villages can be reached only by gravel roads. Car rental is readily available in the airports.

Lithuanian railroads are not on par with those in Western Europe. Before planning to go somewhere by rail, you should first check the map of Lithuanian railroads to determine if both your origin and destination have a rail connection and whether there is a relatively straight route. Moreover, not every rail line has passenger traffic, as the railroads lost market share to bus services over the past 25 years. Even where the rail services exist, they are less frequent than bus counterparts.

Although Lithuania has three passenger airports, there are no internal domestic flights. Good road connections and the small country size ensure quicker transportation by car than by plane.

## **Language**

The official language in Lithuania is Lithuanian (native to some 85% of the population and spoken by 96%). The largest minority languages are Russian and Polish, spoken natively by 8.2% and 5.8% of the population, respectively. More than 97% of the country's population speaks at least one foreign language.

English is the most popular foreign language in Lithuania today. It is spoken by more than 30% of the population and is extremely common among young professionals. Over 80% of 20-34 year olds with a university degree are proficient in English. English is widely accepted in business settings.

## **Health**

Healthcare in Lithuania is of a high standard with numbers of doctors per 1000 people greater than in most western societies. Hospitals are well-equipped to perform even the most difficult surgeries. Doctors are well-trained and sought-after by western hospitals. There is generally no need to get any vaccination before going to Lithuania. Major infectious diseases such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, or HIV are extremely rare. Ticks are common, and tick-borne encephalitis is a concern for individuals who spend time in forested areas of Lithuania.

**For Lithuanians and EU citizens, most medical services are free of charge.**

## **Local Time, Business Hours and Holidays**

The local time in Lithuania is Universal Time (Greenwich Mean Time) + 2 hours.

Daylight Savings Time is observed in Lithuania. It begins at 2 a.m. local time on the last Sunday in March, and it ends at 2 a.m. local time on the last Sunday in October.

Lithuania observes a five-day workweek, with eight working hours per day and 40 working hours per week. The work day typically lasts from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for manufacturing-related industries, or from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. for service institutions, including a one-hour lunch.

### **National Holidays in Lithuania 2020**

Jan. 1, Wed	New Year's Day
Feb. 16 Sun	Independence Day
Mar. 11 Tue	Independence Restoration Day
Apr. 12 Sun	Easter Sunday
Apr. 13 Mon	Easter Monday
May 1 Thurs	Labor Day
Jun. 24 Tue	St John's Day
Jul. 6 Sun	King Mindaugas' Day
Aug. 15 Fri	Assumption Day
Nov. 1 Sat	All Saints' Day
Nov. 2 Sun	All Soul's Day
Dec. 24 Wed.	Christmas Eve
Dec. 25 Thu	Christmas Day
Dec. 26 Fri	2nd Day of Christmas

### **Temporary Entry of Materials or Personal Belongings**

There are no restrictions on entry for personal belongings, unless they are items regulated by customs regulations and subject to import license requirements, such as firearms, drugs, jewelry, tobacco, or alcohol. In such cases, the traveler will be asked to fill in a customs declaration form.

### **Travel Related Web Resources**

[Lithuanian Customs](#)

[European Union Customs](#)

[Travel information](#)

[Weather forecast](#)

[Living in Lithuania](#)

[U.S. Embassy Vilnius](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[State Department consular information sheet](#)

## **Investment Climate Statement (ICS)**

The U.S. Department of State's Investment Climate Statements provide information on the business climates of more than 170 economies and are prepared by economic officers stationed in embassies and posts around the world. They analyze a variety of economies that are or could be markets for U.S. businesses.

Topics include Openness to Investment, Legal and Regulatory systems, Dispute Resolution, Intellectual Property Rights, Transparency, Performance Requirements, State-Owned Enterprises, Responsible Business Conduct, and Corruption.

These statements highlight persistent barriers to further U.S. investment. Addressing these barriers would expand high-quality, private sector-led investment in infrastructure, further women's economic empowerment, and facilitate a healthy business environment for the digital economy. To access the ICS, visit the U.S. Department of State's [Investment Climate Statement](#) website.

## **Political Environment**

For background information on the political and economic environment of the country, please click on the link to the U.S. Department of State [Countries & Areas](#) website.