



OUTCAN Info Sheet 2020

Vilnius, Lithuania

LOCATION

Country: Lithuania

Town: Vilnius

Entry/Exit requirements: Blue; Green Passport, NATO Travel orders (NTO). SOFA Stamp in Passport.

Other info to Consider:

- NATO Force Integration Unit in Vilnius
- Family (non-dependants) can visit and stay 90 days **without visa** (Schengen Area).

POPULATION

Size: 540,000 (as of 2014) (capital city)

Ethnicity: over 97% nationals, some Poles and Russians

LANGUAGE(S)

Official language: Lithuanian

Prevalence of French or English speaking: Very limited. Some establishments will have an English-speaking employee; however, English is not spoken freely and commonly. Limited to no French.

COST OF LIVING

Exchange rate to consider: Euro

QUALITY OF LIFE

Climate and potential for severe weather, natural disasters:

- Expect cold temperatures, snowstorms and windstorms in winter.

Laws and Culture:

- Penalties for possession, use or trafficking of illegal drugs are severe. Convicted offenders can expect lengthy jail sentences.
- Penalties for drinking and driving are severe. The legal blood alcohol limit is 0.04 percent for experienced drivers, 0.00 for new drivers, motorcyclists, taxi drivers and truck drivers. Convicted offenders can expect heavy fines and jail sentences.

Safety and Security:

- You must carry an international driving permit.
- Petty crime, such as pickpocketing and purse snatching, occasionally occurs, particularly on public transport and in bars and nightclubs.
- There is a threat of terrorism in Europe. Terrorist attacks have occurred in a number of European cities. There is a potential for other violent incidents.
- Credit card and ATM fraud is a concern, particularly in areas frequented by tourists.
Roads are generally in good condition but lanes are not always clearly marked.
- Drivers can be aggressive.

Level of isolation:

- There are three Canadian families posted to this location.
- May feel very isolated due to language barrier.

HOUSING

- Houses are generally of a good standard, equipped with a completed fitted kitchen, patio and/or balcony, storage room and secure parking
- Members on temporary duty will be provided accommodations.
- It is imperative that members do not secure any type of housing without obtaining prior approval from CFSU(E) Housing Officer.

EMPLOYMENT

Are there employment opportunities for spouses? Due to tax and legal implications, spousal employment on the economy is not a realistic option.

- Limited, language barrier.
- There are very limited employment opportunities available through CFMWS, so families should plan to be single income for the duration of the posting.

Op Tempo: The op tempo will vary greatly depending on position. TD is possible.

HEALTH CARE

Access: Satisfactory medical care is available in Lithuania.

- All family has access to the Baltic American Clinic.
- Highly accessible via private clinic (almost no wait times), public access very similar to Canada, incl. wait times.
- English services are available, French is very limited.
- All bills associated with the care of dependents are the member's personal responsibility and are to be claimed through PSHCP.

Special needs:

- Depending on language required (English/French), area of specialization and degree of support needed.
- It may be a wait before finding an appropriate match and at times may not be possible based on availability of English/French speaking providers or resources.
- It is highly advised that the family consult with Medical Screening Officer in Canada and / or the Canadian Element to ensure that the required services are readily available in either English or French before accepting a posting.

Consideration for pregnancy / birth: Health care for pregnancy and birth is available on the economy, private care.

Dental: Dental care can be accessed in town. You are required to pay up front, and you can then claim your expenses.

SCHOOLING

- Schooling is typically at the American International School of Vilnius (IB) for grades JK-12, Vilnius International School (IB) for grades JK-8, and École Française de Vilnius for grades JK-5.

Curriculum vs. Canadian curriculum:

- The curriculum varies depending on choice of school.
- None of them offers Canadian history or geography at the elementary level.

Resources for special need children:

- Access to special needs services is depending on the choice of school, language required (English/French), area of specialization and degree of support needed, it may be very limited.
- Consult with CEM and school prior to any commitments.

CHILDCARE

Things to Consider:

- Local childcare is available; no guarantee that staff will be English or French speaking.

TRANSPORTATION

Things to Consider: Airport: Vilnius International (VNO)

- You should carry an international driving permit.
- Penalties for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs are severe.

Public Transport:

- Good public transportation throughout the city.
- Rail service is efficient and reliable. Most trains are new and comfortable.
- Bus service throughout the country is safe and reliable. Frequent bus and air services link Lithuania to neighbouring countries.
- Taxis are inexpensive. Use only officially marked taxis from taxi stands or reputable hotels.
- The Curonian Spit—an elongated sand dune that separates the Curonian Lagoon from the Baltic Sea—is divided between Lithuania and the Russian Federation, with a border crossing at Nida.
- Canadians wishing to visit the Curonian Spit region in Russia must possess a Russian visa.

RESOURCES AND AMENITIES**Is there a Military Family Services centre available in that location?**

- No, under MFS(E) Riga & Remote.

Psychosocial / Mental Health Resources:

- Not at post, MFS(E) SW for dependants only, CAF SW/Mental Health Team for member and family are located in Geilenkirchen, Germany. Padre is located in Belgium.

Communications (e.g. Quality of Internet connection): Very good service & very reasonable prices.

ACTIVITIES**Access to sports or other leisure activities:**

- Plenty of recreational activities and venues available in this area for the whole family.

Availability of playgrounds: Yes, many.

RESTRICTIONS TO CONSIDER

Are common law relationships recognized? Yes

Are same sex couples recognized? Yes. Lithuanian law does not prohibit sexual acts between individuals of the same sex; however, homosexuality is not widely accepted in Lithuanian society.

Medications that are illegal in the country:

- Use without a prescription of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances is illegal. Cannabis is illegal.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- **European Commission Country Reports (2019)**
https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2019-european-semester-country-reports_en
- **Canadian Travel Advisories**
<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>
- **CIA World Factbooks (One Pagers from US)**
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pl.html>
- **Living Abroad (from Gov.UK)**
<https://www.gov.uk/topic/help-british-nationals-overseas/europe>
- **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**
<https://data.imf.org/?sk=4FFB52B2-3653-409A-B471-D47B46D904B5>

For more comprehensive information, please feel free to reach out to the resources below;

- MFS(E) Social Worker : Chebat.Myriam@cfmws.com or Myriam.Chebat@Forces.gc.ca
- CAF Social Worker: Martin.Laferrieresimard@forces.gc.ca
- MFS(E) Riga Remote: + 371 231 16 869, MFSE.Rigaremote@cfmws.com
- MFS(E) Regional Office: +49 (0) 2451-717-173, MFS.Europe@cfmws.com