

Position Paper 1: Lithuania



By: Stacey Boateng & Davey Nicely

Comparative Government

Doctor Paige Tan

Lithuania became a member of the European Union on May 1, 2004. The main priority of the Nation of Lithuania is to preserve and maintain its culture. There have been three issues that have been of interest in regards to the prosperity of the Lithuanian language and culture. The first issue is the Syrian crisis, although Lithuania is sympathetic and desires to help ensure the protection of the migrants, the nation does not want to allow more immigrants into the country out of fear that they will lose their rich heritage and the nation will become taken over by immigrants. In order to protect the culture of Lithuania and also provide assistance, the nation has decided to donate to the humanitarian effort to get Syria back to being a place of prosperity for its citizens. The second issue of interest is the relations with the neighboring republic of Russia. Lithuania was a part of the USSR until 1990 and since then has been fighting to maintain independence. Russia's aggression of its surrounding republics has Lithuania concerned. Lithuania being a small nation understands how strong Russia is, and does not want to return to being controlled by them like once before. Lithuania feels it is essential to take action sooner than later to be prepared and ensure that the EU and NATO will help protect them, if conflict would occur. Finally Lithuania supports Turkey being accepted into the European Union, because of the potential benefits and security it can provide to the nation. Lithuania's main concern is security; therefore, Lithuania believes Turkey is one less republic that could be influenced by Russia.

View on Migrant Crisis:

Since 2011, there have been over nine million Syrians who have fled the country looking for asylum. The Lithuanian government is said to receive about 1105 Syrians seeking asylum in Lithuania each year. This seems rather low considering Germany has already accepted hundreds of thousands in Syrian refugees already. The European Union's plan to cope with the migrant crisis is to distribute the refugees amongst the members of the European nation. The Lithuanian government is reluctant to taking any more refugees, because they do not want the country to be dominantly populated by immigrants. There is a fear of not being able to assimilate the refugees. The Muslims living in Lithuania are Sunni and have assimilated into speaking the Lithuanian language. There are 3,200 Sunni Muslims living in Lithuania. Lithuania has skepticism about immigration due to the fact that all of the Baltic nations were a part of the predominantly Russian lead socialist brotherhood in the soviet sphere. The Lithuanian government wants to protect its heritage and language.

Solution:

Although the European Union has agreed to give Lithuania 17.2 million dollars in order to fund the refugees, they believe the best option is making donations in order to found the safety and protection of the migrants. Lithuania has already given the

equivalent of over \$26,000 American monthly in aid of the refugee crisis. This is the best and most practical way that Lithuania can provide assistance to the crisis and also protect its already fleeting heritage. The nation of Lithuania is constantly fighting to keep the language and heritage alive and does not want to risk losing its relevance by allowing more than the allotted numbers of refugees take asylum in the nation of Lithuania.

Lithuania has also given 18,000 euros to the UNICEF fund. The Lithuanian government also is trying to help the efforts to bring about peace in the Syrian government. The goal of the Lithuanian government is to help the Syrian crisis by helping to rebuild education and allow access to medical supplies in all areas of the nation of Syria. Although Lithuania does want to assist in the safety and protection of the Syrian refugees, they also want to make sure the Lithuanian culture does not fall victim to the assimilation that a mass influx, if immigrants would bring to the nation.