

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND DEMOCRACY PROMOTION PROGRAMME FOR 2018

Overview

The Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Programme’) is an integral implementing measure for the official development assistance (hereinafter referred to as ‘ODA’) of Lithuania financed with special budget allocations earmarked for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereinafter referred to as ‘the MFA’). ODA means assistance and humanitarian aid for developing countries and territories funded from the state and municipal budgets. According to preliminary statistics, in 2018 Lithuania’s ODA constituted about EUR 50.0 million, i.e. 0.11% of gross national income (GNI) (EUR 52.55 million or 0.13% of GNI in 2017, and EUR 52.1 million or 0.14% of GNI in 2016). Despite the insignificant change in the overall volume of ODA, the reduction of ODA in terms of percentage was mostly influenced by GNI growth. Lithuania is committed to ensure that the value of this indicator should reach 0.33% of GNI by 2030.

In 2018, the MFA ensured the continuous and effective engagement of Lithuania in the shaping of the development cooperation policy that meets the national interests and the implementation of this policy through international, EU and bilateral arrangements, thereby strengthening the role of Lithuania as a responsible and reliable donor country. The aim of Lithuania’s development cooperation policy was to reflect fully the national priorities of its foreign policy by focusing on the Eastern Partnership countries (especially Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine).

Great attention was devoted to the increased engagement of national and municipal authorities and non-governmental organisations in the development cooperation activities, as well as to the publicity of those activities, for the purpose of ensuring the largest possible public support.

With a view to further strengthening the role and capacities of Lithuania in the practical implementation of the EU development cooperation policy, the function of the Central Project Management Agency (hereinafter referred to as ‘the CPMA’), which in the current year joined the network of the EU development cooperation agencies, has been increasing.

Shaping the EU and global development cooperation policy

In 2018, the MFA representatives ensured full engagement in the shaping and implementation of the EU and global policy on development cooperation and humanitarian aid, supported international efforts to reduce poverty worldwide and promote long-term sustainable development of developing countries, and contributed to international efforts in addressing humanitarian crises and challenges of illegal migration.

Lithuania presented its National Voluntary Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the UN High-level Political Forum that took place on 9–18 July 2018 in New York.

During the reporting period, the greatest attention and efforts were devoted to the protection of Lithuania’s interests in negotiations launched on financing EU external action under the EU multiannual financial framework for the years 2021-2027. This issue dominated in all discussion formats of negotiations: meetings of the ministers for EU development cooperation, meetings of the Directors General for EU development cooperation, as well as at the working parties of the Council which include representatives of the Member States responsible for development cooperation.

Much attention was devoted to the EU relations with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) after 2020: the Council agreed and in July granted the negotiating mandate to the European Commission stipulating an approach compliant with Lithuania’s interests to work

towards achieving a successful future partnership, especially in the sector of migration. The initiative of the European Commission and the EU High Representative concerning the establishment of an EU-Africa strategic alliance should be mentioned as well.

In the sector of humanitarian aid, the focus was retained on the key principle of humanitarian aid: providing aid where it is needed the most.

As Lithuania became a member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (hereinafter referred to as ‘OECD’) in 2018, there was a significant focus on engagement in the activities of this international organisation and especially the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in which Lithuania has participated as an observer since 2013.

Funds and activities

To finance the Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme, EUR 7 757 800 were earmarked and used from the state budget allocations of the Republic of Lithuania approved for the MFA.

Purpose	Funds, thou. euros
Contribution to the European Development Fund (EDF)	5 731.5*
Voluntary contributions to multilateral funds	496.8
Projects	1 199.7
Humanitarian aid	300.0
Participation in activities of EU, UN and other international organisations, and programme monitoring	62.3
Other development cooperation activities (events, exhibitions, publications, etc.)	17.4
Total for the Programme	7 757.8

* The additional contribution of EUR 2 412 600 made in December 2017 as a portion of the first contribution for 2018 was not included.

Multilateral development assistance

As part of fulfilment of the international commitments, contribution to the international efforts for poverty reduction, increase of resilience of aid recipient countries and the most vulnerable society groups and promotion of democratic values, the MFA provided multilateral development assistance as mandatory and voluntary contributions to funds and international organisations that carry out or coordinate development cooperation activities. In 2018, Lithuania assigned EUR 5 731 500 from the Programme for the contribution to the European Development Fund the money from which is used to implement the EU development cooperation policy with the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. Participating in the activities of the said Fund, Lithuania supported the poorest countries of the world. This Fund also partially finances the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa which uses its money to support measures of combating illegal migration.

Voluntary contributions made to other funds engaged in development cooperation activities constituted EUR 496 800 in 2018.

Voluntary contributions	Funds, thou. euros
Funds for implementing the SIDA programme on support for European Humanities University	220.0
Restoration Supervision Committee-Fund for the Basilica of the Nativity in Palestine	50.0
The European Endowment for Democracy (EED)	25.0
OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine	20.0
Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund	20.0
Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)	20.0
Implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia (2016-2019)	20.0
WTO Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund	20.0
UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine	15.0
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Environmental Remediation Account for Central Asia (ERA)	15.0
EU Trust Fund for Colombia	12.0
OSCE Project Coordinator Office in Kiev	10.0
EU-Latin America and Caribbean Foundation	10.0
Implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova (2017-2020)	10.0
UNESCO initiative 'Revive the spirit of Mosul'	10.0
Lifeline Embattled CSO Assistance Fund	9.8
Project of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media office (safety of female journalists)	5.0
Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Georgia	5.0
Total:	496.8

Humanitarian aid

In 2018, Lithuania's allocations for humanitarian aid totalled **EUR 2 697 258**.

The main attention and the humanitarian aid funds were devoted to: (1) support and rehabilitation of the suffering Ukraine and victims in Eastern Ukraine (46% of the Programme funds), (2) support of refugees in Lithuania, and (3) the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (support of Syrian refugees in Turkey in the region).

Humanitarian aid in 2018 (Programme)	Funds, thou. euros
Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), voluntary contribution (declared on 5 December 2017 in Geneva)	20.0
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), humanitarian aid for Palestinian refugees	20.0
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), humanitarian aid for Ukraine	20.0
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), humanitarian aid for Ukraine	35.0
UN Yemen Humanitarian Fund, humanitarian aid for Yemen	20.0
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), humanitarian aid for Syria	20.0
International Organization for Migration (IOM), humanitarian aid for Ukraine	50.0
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), humanitarian aid for Syria	20.0
United Nations World Food Programme (UN WFP), humanitarian aid for Somalia	15.0
United Nations World Food Programme (UN WFP), humanitarian aid for Mali	15.0
Government of the Republic of Guatemala, humanitarian aid for Guatemala	10.0
United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), voluntary contribution, provision of humanitarian aid	20.0
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), humanitarian aid for Ukraine	30.0
Expenses for transportation of humanitarian aid to Ukraine	5.0
2. Funds of other authorities and institutions of the Republic of Lithuania (contributions and expenses treated as humanitarian aid)	
Ministry of Finance, Facility for Refugees in Turkey	1 145.6
Ministry of Health, membership fee, International Committee of the Red Cross	10.0
Refugee Reception Centre	1 186.6

Akmenė district municipality, shipment of medical equipment for Mariupol War Hospital No. 61, Ukraine	50.0
Radviliškis district municipality, rehabilitation of victims of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine and technical humanitarian aid for Ukraine	5.0
Total (thou. euros rounded up to one decimal place):	2 697.3

Bilateral development assistance

In 2018, the Programme funds were used to implement 84 development cooperation projects (of which 70 were bilateral, nine regional and five awareness raising projects) for the value of more than EUR **1.1 million**.

In accordance with the development cooperation policies set out in the Inter-institutional Action Plan on Development Cooperation for 2018-2020, Lithuania's priority in development cooperation in 2018 was the Eastern Partnership countries, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Special attention was devoted to Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine where Lithuania provided assistance while implementing bilateral projects to promote political and economic integration with the EU, as well as social and economic reform. In 2018, Lithuanian experts provided consultations and technical assistance in support of the appropriate implementation of the European Union Association Agreements with Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia.

The diplomatic missions of the Republic of Lithuania accredited to the partner countries contributed to the implementation of Lithuania's development cooperation policy as they not only administered 40 development cooperation projects but also helped to identify the needs of assistance beneficiaries, were actively engaged in the search for partners and contributed to coordination of the donor activities.

Ukraine. Taking the needs of Ukraine into consideration, Lithuania consistently continued the transfer of best practices while implementing the EU Association Agreement with Ukraine (AA/DCFTA), provided assistance to Ukrainian citizens victims of the annexation of the Crimea and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, supported the implementation of educational and health care reform and the promotion of women's independence and entrepreneurship. Lithuanian experts transferred their experience in the sectors of anti-corruption, sustainable energy, heritage protection, courts, taxes and establishment of registers. In 2018, 23 bilateral and five regional projects were implemented with the Programme funds in Ukraine.

Lithuania continued to implement joint support projects with Sweden for educational establishments in Eastern Ukraine involving teachers' qualification development, student exchange and improvement of the learning conditions in Eastern Ukrainian schools.

Assistance was continued to reform the provision of mental health services in Eastern Ukraine by establishing primary care institutions in the sector of psychosocial rehabilitation. Doctors and representatives of administrations of health care establishments from Luhansk, Donetsk, Poltava and Dnipro regions underwent refresher training in Lithuania.

The MFA coordinated the assistance of Lithuanian authorities and non-governmental organisations for Ukraine, assessed Ukraine's needs for assistance and maintained contacts with partners in that country. In 2018, a visit of MFA representatives was organised to Kiev and Kherson aimed at evaluating the sustainability and continuity of the projects being implemented and improving the coordination of activities with other donors. The visit included a meeting with representatives of the EU, Sweden, Canada and other international donors, project promoters and participants. Lithuania's engagement in projects financed by other donors was successful. The Central Project Management Agency began implementing the European Commission project 'Support for Public Finance Management in Ukraine' worth more than EUR 50 million. The Ministry of Finance of the

Republic of Lithuania allocated EUR 0.5 million to fund this project which will be implemented in cooperation with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency SIDA and the European Commission delegation to Ukraine.

In Georgia, the Programme funds were used in 2018 to finance 10 bilateral and six regional projects in the following sectors:

- Regional development and strengthening local self-government;
- Economic development by applying DCFTA opportunities
- Promoting women's social and economic activity;
- Strengthening civil society and democracy;
- Environmental protection;
- Building administrative and institutional capacity.

With a view to strengthening the influence of civil society and promoting European and Euro-Atlantic integration, Lithuania organised 20 contests about the European Union for pupils and an international summer festival in Tbilisi for Georgian and European students, and prepared collections of articles on Georgia's objectives in the European integration process.

In the environmental sector, the Programme funds were used to install a solar power plant at the Prezeti settlement for internally displaced persons, and the Environmental Project Management Agency shared good practices with employees of the Georgia's Ministry of Energy concerning the possibilities of energy efficiency and integration of renewable sources in buildings.

The cooperation between Georgia and Lithuanian municipalities was expanded through the implementation of the cooperation project of Alytus district and Guria region which involved entrepreneurship workshops, a seminar on business financing and placing on the EU market, meetings and discussions with local self-government representatives and development of partnership competences. The relations between Panevėžys district municipality and Akhmeta region were enhanced by transferring the experience in regional economic development.

In Moldova, in 2018 Lithuanian implemented eight bilateral and five regional projects in the following sectors:

- Regional development and strengthening local self-government;
- Promoting women's social and economic activity;
- Strengthening civil society and democracy, and support for public awareness;
- Empowering youth and promoting social activity;
- Building administrative and institutional capacity.

As part of the contribution to the promotion of democratic society and support for the independent media and pluralism, training on investigative journalism for 60 participants was organised in the autonomous region of Gagauzia in Moldova. With a view to encouraging young citizens of Moldova for critical thinking and social activity, 18 pupils were introduced to the technology of producing video reports and interviews. The project 'European Lessons' was continued resulting in the preparation of anticorruption educational measures intended for the promotion of democracy and civil society.

Institutional capacity and good governance were enhanced in 2018 through the financing of projects in the sectors of trade in food products and transport security. New partnerships established between the National Libraries and scientists of the two countries working in the field of historical memory provided useful skills to the partners in Moldova and promoted future cooperation opportunities.

In Belarus, the Programme funds in 2018 were used to finance 15 projects. The greatest attention was devoted to initiatives oriented towards the promotion of social and economic activity of youth, support for civil society and public information, building of democracy and open civil society, conservation of the Litvak's cultural heritage and improvement of the social and economic situation of young persons with disabilities by developing their entrepreneurship. A fairly great response among the Belarusian public was evoked by the projects on cherishing the historical memory

(perpetuation of the historical memory in Kuropaty), the project on equal opportunities that analysed the spread of rhetoric degrading women in the media and the projects on Belarusian youth. Support for Belarusian young people is especially important as Lithuania is seen as a communicator of youth initiatives and European values. The year 2018 saw the implementation of a project for Belarusian customs capacity building and promotion of international trade.

While providing assistance to Belarusian civil society, the MFA continued cooperation with the representatives of international organisations residing in Vilnius which support democratic processes in Belarus (Freedom House, Barys Zvozkau Belarusian Human Rights House, the public establishment International Civil Initiative Centre 'Our Home', etc.). Lithuania issued free visas to the participants in the projects implemented by these organisations in Vilnius and dedicated to building democracy and open civil society.

In 2018, overall support was continued for the functioning of the European Humanities University (hereinafter referred to as 'EHU') in Vilnius. EHU further pursued its mission of educating personalities that have critical thinking, creativity and responsibility for the purpose of fostering the Western intellectual tradition in the areas of the humanities, social sciences and arts in Belarus. These activities contribute to building democratic society in Belarus and strengthening the ties of Lithuania and the whole European Union with Belarus. In 2018, EHU continued the planned reform. Coordination of donor support for EHU was further managed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency SIDA. In 2018, the MFA earmarked a contribution of EUR 220 000 to support EHU under the MFA and SIDA agreement on delegated cooperation signed in 2016. Similarly to the previous years, support to EHU was provided by issuing free visas to Belarusian citizens arriving at EHU for the entrance examinations, doors open days, conferences and other events.

In 2018, 153 students graduated EHU and 222 students were enrolled (95% of those enrolled were Belarusian citizens). In the academic year 2018/2019, the number of EHU students equals 745. A total of 2 286 students have graduated EHU since the relocation of the University to Vilnius. At present the three main donors of EHU are the European Commission with annual allocations of EUR 1 million, SIDA which grants between EUR 0.5 million and EUR 0.8 million, and Lithuania with funds of EUR 0.2 million.

In Armenia, the beginning of 2018 was marked by distinct political events which actively engaged the whole Armenian civil society and non-governmental organisations. In 2018, the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in Armenia implemented two projects that contributed to the promotion of social activity and entrepreneurship of youth and women and civil society. The Armenian NGO 'Martuni Town Women's Community' implemented the project 'Increasing pedestrian traffic safety in Armenia'. The second project, 'Empowerment of women using start-ups' was implemented by the NGO 'New Technology Education Fund'. This project helped Armenian women to foster their independence, establish own business and independent undertakings. The participants with the best results were awarded financial prizes which boosted the participants' interest in such training and ensured the sustainability of project results.

In Azerbaijan, the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania implemented two projects in 2018. One of them was devoted to the reduction of child accidents in the former war conflict zone through the promotion of children's occupation and the development of their social welfare, while the other one was intended for the strengthening of women's independence, development of business ideas and business management. The implementation of the project 'Installing a safe children's playground' involved the demining of the Khanbagi School territory of Karimli village in the former war conflict zone and the establishment of a safe space for children to play. The project 'Building capacity of women creating and managing businesses independently in Azerbaijan' was implemented in cooperation with the US development cooperation programme USAID.

In the EU Eastern Partnership countries, a total of nine **regional projects** on administrative and institutional capacity building was implemented as part of the EU Association Agreements, ensuring the enactment of the rule of law principles, support for the dissemination of independent information and strengthening of young journalists' competences and skills. While

implementing the project activities, Lithuanian experts provided long- and short-term consultations on European integration issues; a forum of the Constitutional Courts of Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine and Lithuania was organised which presented a joint publication dealing with the enactment of the rule of law principles and ensuring protection; relations between the Lithuanian, Ukrainian and Georgian court administrations were established and strengthened, the book *Teismiesčio byla [The Case of Justiceville]* for teenagers and *Savanorių vadovas: kaip teikti paramą nukentėjusiesiems ir liudytojams teisme [Volunteers' Guide: How to Provide Support to Victims and Witnesses in Court]* were translated into the Russian language; training for journalists was organised; more than 300 articles in Russian and English about the relevant political, social and economic issues of the Eastern Partnership countries and Russia's information war in those countries were prepared and published, and the international conference 'The Art of Disinformation: Lessons Learned and Future Challenges' was held at which experts from Lithuania, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine shared their experience.

The Programme funds were used to finance 10 development cooperation projects in **migration origin and transit countries and other states** included on the OECD list of assistance recipients: two projects in Mongolia and one project in each of Algeria, Bhutan, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine and Turkey. These projects promoted young people's entrepreneurship, strengthened women's social and economic independence and built capacities in education and agriculture. One project was devoted to support studies of Middle Eastern students in Lithuania who have no opportunities for access to education in their home countries.

Women's rights and equal opportunities

Contributing to the development of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the partner countries is one of the ongoing objectives and priority sectoral policies of Lithuanian development cooperation. In 2018, the Programme funds were used to implement nine projects in Armenia, Palestine, Moldova, Mongolia, Georgia and Ukraine intended for building the capacity of organisations operating in the sector of gender equality and increasing the social and economic empowerment of women. In Moldova, girls were encouraged to have access to and use information technologies and learned to create websites. In Georgia, women participated in entrepreneurship and job search training and learned the basics of accounting, computer literacy and business establishment and small trades such as cooking, hairdressing, knitting or plant production which could give them independence and promote social and economic activity. Representatives of Georgia's local government authorities and grassroots organisations gained experience in ways to better engage women in economic regional development.

The development cooperation assistance and humanitarian aid of Lithuania contributed to the implementation of the United Nations (hereinafter referred to as 'the UN') Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) On Women, Peace and Security. In 2018, a voluntary contribution of EUR 20 000 was allocated to the UN Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

As an observer Lithuania continued cooperation with the OECD Development Assistance Committee's Network on Gender Equality. It was also an active participant in shaping the EU development cooperation policy in the sector of gender equality and contributing to the implementation of the EU Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 with the provided development cooperation assistance.

EU Twinning and TAIEX programmes

In 2018, Lithuania continued its successful participation in the EU Twinning Programme by transferring the expertise to the beneficiary countries (the European Commission funded EU Twinning Programme supports cooperation between related institutions of different countries). Under the EU Twinning Programme, 54 calls for proposals were issued in 2018, and Lithuanian institutions,

acting individually or in a consortium with other EU Member States, submitted 14 project applications and won seven projects for a total of EUR 10 million. It is noteworthy that in 2004–2018 Lithuania won 99 EU Twinning projects, 50 of which were selected in the last four years (2015–2018). In terms of the number of projects won in 2018, Lithuania ranks among the top five EU Member States together with France, Spain, Germany and Croatia. Lithuania and Austria each won the largest number or four projects.

Under the EU Twinning Programme, in 2018 Lithuanian institutions took part in the implementation of 34 projects: in Macedonia (4), Georgia (4), Moldova (7), Ukraine (4), Azerbaijan (4), Turkey (1), Kosovo (1), Croatia (3), Albania (1), Jordan (1), Serbia (3) and Belarus (1). The geography of Lithuania's participation in the EU Twinning Programme expanded: in 2017, Lithuania won a project in Jordan.

Of the seven projects won in 2018, Lithuania manages four ones (2 in Moldova and 2 in Serbia) as a senior partner of a consortium of the parties. Two projects (in Georgia and Turkey) were won individually, and the role of Lithuania in the Moldovan project is that of a junior partner. The largest number of projects is being implemented in the sector of justice and interior affairs (4) and public service, education and finance (2). In 2018, the most active participants in the EU Twinning projects were the Police Department, the Customs Department and the CPMA.

In 2018, Lithuanian experts attended 71 events of the TAIEX Programme (seminars, training, expert missions), of which 10 ones took place in Lithuania. Under the EU TAIEX Regio Peer-to-Peer Programme (sharing of expertise among the EU Member States), Lithuanian experts as beneficiaries went abroad for training/traineeship 14 times. A total of 33 new experts from Lithuanian institutions were registered in the TAIEX Expert Database in 2018.

In December 2018, the MFA and the CPMA organised training for Lithuania's public sector employees at which they were introduced to the EU Twinning Programme and the application of the provisions concerning the preparation of proposals and implementation of projects of the new EU Twinning Manual that entered into force on 1 July 2017.

It is important to note that by implementing EU Twinning projects and participating in the EU TAIEX Programme Lithuania not only transfers its reform experience but also increases its visibility in the partner countries and among the donors.

Building capacity to participate in the development cooperation activities

The implementation of the activities of the three-year project 'Improving the implementation of the development cooperation policy and building capacities of public governance institutions of Lithuania and their employees' financed under Measure No. 10.1.1-ESFA-V-912 'Promotion of national reform and improvement of the activities of public administration institutions' of Priority Axis 10 'Society-Oriented Smart Public Administration' of the Operational Programme for EU Structural Funds Investment European Union in 2018 included the following:

- Guidelines for participation in international development cooperation activities and practical recommendations for participation in international development cooperation and projects (methodology) were prepared.
- Training was organised for Lithuanian public governance institutions on the calculation of Lithuania's ODA in accordance with a manual for calculating ODA of Lithuania prepared as part of project implementation.
- The second meeting of the Practitioners Club intended for Lithuanian public governance institutions interested in international development cooperation activities was held.
- The international conference 'Lithuanian Development Cooperation Partnerships in Ukraine' dedicated to the strengthening of cooperation of donors that provide assistance to Ukraine, public sector institutional capacity building in the sector of development cooperation, broader public information and engagement in the provision of support to partner countries was organised.
- Two study visits to the Spanish development cooperation agencies FIIAPP and AECID and the

Swedish Development Cooperation Agency SIDA were organised.

- As part of implementation of the activities intended for building competences of the project promoters, Lithuania attended a meeting of the EU development cooperation Practitioners Network; organised training on the principle of lecturer training in accordance with the guidelines and the methodology for participation in international development cooperation activities; and also took part in various trainings on the theme of development cooperation.
- A discussion/forum of representatives of Lithuanian diplomatic missions in developing countries was organised which brought together employees of Lithuanian diplomatic missions engaged in the coordination of development cooperation activities. Together with representatives of the MFA Development Cooperation Department, the event addressed the relevant issues, challenges and problem areas of development cooperation and discussed the expansion of Lithuania's targeted cooperation development.
- Employees of the MFA and CPMA took part in two-day training on the drafting of strategic documents which surveyed the process of drafting and implementing development cooperation country, regional and thematic strategies, and presented practical examples and models of strategies relevant for Lithuania.
- Training entitled 'Submitting EU Twinning proposals' and 'Implementing EU Twinning projects' was organised for employees of Lithuanian public governance institutions.
- Information was disseminated constantly on possibilities for participating in international development cooperation activities: Lithuanian public governance institutions were provided with information on issued calls for proposals and other possibilities, advice received on relevant questions and assistance for participation in tendering procedures.

Awareness raising

A special public opinion survey conducted by Eurobarometer in June-July 2018 has shown that 81% of the respondents of Lithuania believe that providing aid to developing countries is important, and 77% agree that financial assistance contributes to a more peaceful and equal world. In accordance with a national public survey, however, only 19% of the respondents of Lithuania have heard of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in 2015. Therefore the MFA has carried out consistent activities intended for awareness raising, especially information for youth, on the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and the importance and benefit of development cooperation. In 2018, five public education and awareness raising projects were implemented by Lithuanian non-governmental organisations.

For twelve years in succession the MFA has contributed to the organisation of the international human rights documentary film festival 'Inconvenient Films'. The festival presented an abundant programme of 57 documentary films in Vilnius and other cities of Lithuania, organised meetings with film producers and discussions with film participants, human rights activists and experts. The key themes of the 2018 festival were information wars and modern activism. Great attention was devoted to the engagement of schoolchildren in the project – a programme of documentary films, 'Films that help you to grow', was presented in different Lithuanian cities. The online film watch platform for schools, 'Inconvenient Films Classroom', was supplemented with 11 new films accessible to all Lithuanian teachers in their everyday work with pupils. The festival activities engaged more than 16 000 viewers all over Lithuania.

The projects implemented by the National Non-Governmental Development Cooperation Organisations' Platform, the Lithuanian Children and Youth Centre and the association LITDEA were aimed at enhancing the competences of teachers and educators in the area of the sustainable development goals and training young persons as sustainable development ambassadors for work with communities. In addition, interactive lectures, discussions, knowledge competitions, hackathons and festivals on the sustainable development and development cooperation topics were organised, and three volunteers went on traineeships of the Global Education Network of Young Europeans

(GLEN) programme in India, Ghana, Uganda and Nepal.

Major meetings and events in Lithuania financed from the Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme

On 13 April 2018, the MFA in cooperation with the CPMA organised training for development cooperation project promoters which presented the communicational, financial, result sustainability and other aspects of development cooperation projects, and enhanced cooperation among project promoters, the MFA and CPMA in implementing the Programme.

On 27 April 2018, an extended meeting of the National Development Cooperation Commission attended by representatives of more than 40 Lithuanian state institutions, non-governmental organisations and business associations was held. The meeting discussed Lithuania's development assistance in 2017, the draft Inter-institutional Action Plan on Development Cooperation 2018-2020, the benefit of participation in the EU Twinning Programme and possibilities of early engagement and changes in the development cooperation legal framework.

On 9 October 2018, the MFA in cooperation with the CPMA organised training for development cooperation project applicants concerning the criteria for project evaluation, the technical requirements for development cooperation applications and the new electronic application platform.

On 29 November 2018, the annual development cooperation conference '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Leave No One Behind' for discussing the results and tasks of Lithuania's development cooperation took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The conference focused on two sectors – strengthening the regions and self-government, and the economic and social empowerment of women.

With a view to strengthening the coordination of assistance provided to the partner countries and inter-institutional cooperation, on 29 November 2018 the MFA organised round tables with representatives of state institutions and non-governmental organisations providing assistance to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and migration origin and transit countries, and employees of the Lithuanian missions engaged in development cooperation activities. The discussions addressed the needs for assistance to these countries, shared experience in project implementation and presented plans of future initiatives.

Amendments to the legal framework

During the reporting period, the existing version of the Inter-institutional Action Plan on Development Cooperation (hereinafter referred to as 'the Action Plan') was subject to revision. The amendments to the Action Plan were influenced by the decisions of the European Commission on the provision of the Member States' funds to the Facility of Refugees in Turkey (Lithuania plans to earmark EUR 2 615 816 from the state budget in 2019-2023), and by the decision of the Government to move the Action Plan measure 'Contribute to activities of the Migration Information Centre of the International Organization for Migration seeking to ensure the provision of information on all matters related to return to Lithuania and residing in Lithuania' to the draft 2019-2021 Inter-institutional Action Plan on the implementation of the 2018-2030 Strategy for the Demographic, Migration and Integration Policy prepared by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour and the Office of the Government.

Prepared by the MFA Development Cooperation Department