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Lithuania's Contribution to International Operations: the Current Situation and Potential Scenarios**

The article provides the information on Lithuania's military contribution to the assurance of international security and stability – the participation of the military personnel of the Republic of Lithuania (further – RL) in international operations and training missions of the European Union in 2004–2017. The study briefly familiarizes the reader with legal principles of participating in international operations and presents essential restrictions affecting the number of military personnel participating in international operations. The author of the article thoroughly analyses the change in the number of troops of the Lithuanian Armed Forces in international operations conducted by NATO, the European Union, the United Nations, and other strategic partners in 2004–2017. The military contribution of Lithuania is provided within the context of joint military operations carried out by NATO, the EU, and the UN, the tendencies of the change in the participation of the Lithuanian military personnel in international operations are presented as well. Keeping in mind the change in the resources (financial and human) allocated and available to the National Defence System of the RL and the political will to participate in international operations, expressed by the Seimas of the RL, the author attempts to find out, on the grounds of historical perspective, their potential connection with and influence on the Lithuanian military contribution to future international operations.

Introduction

The participation of military personnel and civilian employees of the National Defence System of the RL in international NATO-, the European Union-, the United Nations- and others-led operations as well as in training missions of the European Union make it possible to implement the interests

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** The assessments and views provided in this article are exceptionally the author's own and they do not in any way represent the official position of the National Defence Ministry of the Republic of Lithuania or its subdivisions.

of the RL foreign policy, shape a positive image of the RL in the international community, contribute to the attempts of international organizations to ensure peace and stability, as well as implement tasks and priorities of the National Security Strategy of the RL. In 2004, when Lithuania became a full-fledged member of NATO and the European Union and sought to guarantee the implementation of the accepted international commitments, the contribution of the country in ensuring the international security and stability, assigning military personnel and civilian employees of the National Defence System for international operations, and the EU training missions became particularly important. As R. Karoblis, the Minister of National Defence of the RL put it, “If we want someone to defend us, we also have to contribute to the Defence of others, the interests of others.”¹

The geopolitical security situation getting ever more and more complex in 2004–2017, the evolving new-nature threats to the international security and stability, the growing number of regions going through crises, determined not only the increasing number of international operations conducted by NATO, the European Union, the United Nations’ countries and other organizations but also changes in the manner of these operations and tasks assigned to them. The contribution of the international community seeking to ensure the stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan and Iraq, rendering assistance to other regions hit by crises in Africa and Asia, military training missions of the EU, fighting against piracy and armed robbery at sea, fighting of the global coalition against the terrorist organization the “Islamic State”, international support of Georgia and Ukraine, and fighting the disruption of the network of illegal migration in the Mediterranean Sea, demonstrate a broad spectrum of tasks set for international military operations and training missions. Due to this reason, it is important to review how the Armed Forces of Lithuania were prepared for these challenges and to what extent Lithuania contributed to the attempts of the international community by sending Lithuanian troops to participate in international operations and training missions with the aim to guarantee international security and stability.

A thorough analysis of the contribution of Lithuanian troops to the international operations and EU training missions, as well as essential changes and tendencies, has not yet been performed. The only publication providing more fact-related information is the review book “On the Guard of Peace:

¹ LR Krašto apsaugos ministras Raimundas Karoblis, 2017-10-12, http://kam.lt/lt/naujienos_874/aktualijos_875/seimas_apsiprende_del_lietuvos_kariu_dalyvavimo_tarptautinese_operacijose_2018-2019_merais.html

Lithuanian Military Personnel in International Operations in 1994–2014”. Although the information on the participation of military personnel in international operations is periodically renewed on the websites of the RL’s Ministry of National Defence² and the Defence Staff of the Lithuanian Armed Forces,³ as well as in open information sources they, however, do not reflect essential changes and tendencies.

The objective of this article is to review the contribution of the participation of Lithuanian troops in international operations and EU training missions, its changes in 2004–2017, as well as provide potential perspectives of the participation in international operations or training missions. The main tasks of the study are these: a) to survey legal fundamentals and essential restrictions concerning the participation of Lithuanian troops in international operations and EU training missions; b) provide the contribution (and its changes) of Lithuanian troops to the international operations or training missions conducted by NATO, the European Union, the United Nations and other strategic partners in 2004–2017; c) assess the potential impact of the resources, allocated to the National Defence System of the RL, on the participation of Lithuanian military personnel and civilian employees of the National Defence System in international operations and training missions.

The actual information on the participation of the Lithuanian Armed Forces’ (further – LAF) military personnel in international operations provided in this article could not only encourage the academic community to carry out more comprehensive research in this area but also enliven discussions at the political–strategic level by involving politicians, scientists, and high-ranking officers, prior to making decisions on the participation of Lithuanian troops in international operations. One of the potential scientific research directions is a qualitative analysis on the role and significance of groups of influence (for example, society, politicians, civilians of the National Defence System (further – NDS), generals/staffs of the NDS) in making decisions in Lithuania on the participation of Lithuanian troops in international operations. In addition to that, in assessing the contribution of Lithuania to international operations and EU training missions in the future, it would be possible to perform the analysis not only of the quantitative change expressed by the number of NDS troops in international operations but also the assessment of the qualitative contribution change. A more comprehensive analysis of the capabilities assigned to the international operations or changes in the assessments of tasks set for the tro-

² <http://kam.lt/download/54136/lietuvos%20dalyvavimas%20tarptautin%C4%97se%20operacijose.pdf>

³ <http://www.gynybosstabas.lt/lt/vykdomos-to/>

ops, delegated duties and the performed by them tasks in international operations would provide a possibility to analyze more objectively and in depth the factual–qualitative contribution of Lithuania to the assurance of international security and stability. It should also be pointed out that there is a shortage of analysis, as well as information, on Lithuania’s contribution to civilian international operations or EU training missions related to assigning NDS civilians or civil servants, the importance of whom, in responding to challenges in crisis regions, is rapidly increasing.

1. Lithuania’s Participation in International Operations

1.1. Basis of the Participation in International Operations

Implementing foreign policy, the RL follows the universally acknowledged principles and norms of International Law, seeks to ensure the country’s security and independence, the welfare and basic rights and freedoms of its citizens, and contributes to the building of the international order resting on the law and justice.⁴ One of the tasks of RL foreign policy is to contribute actively to the attempts of the international community to prevent terrorism and conflicts and to enforce, restore, build, and keep peace in the regions affected by crises.⁵ Participating in the activity of international institutions and organizations, Lithuania also takes part in international humanitarian efforts, responding to crises and peacekeeping missions, and other actions.⁶

Lithuania, while shaping and implementing a national security policy, contributes to the maintenance of international peace and comprehensive security, grounded on democratic values, law and justice.⁷ In the National Security Strategy, renewed in 2017, one of the priorities of the RL national security policy and long- and medium-term tasks – active participation in enhancing the international security and stability was also established.⁸ The Strategy foresees that operating as an active and responsible member of the international community, the RL will contribute to the attempts of the international community

⁴ Lietuvos Respublikos Konstitucija (Lietuvos Respublikos piliečių priimta 1992 m. spalio 25 d. referendume), 135 str.

⁵ Lietuvos Respublikos Nacionalinio saugumo pagrindų įstatymas (1996 m. gruodžio 19 d. Nr. VIII-49), I dalis, V skirsnis

⁶ *Ibidem*, II dalis, 10 skyrius, II skirsnis.

⁷ Nacionalinio saugumo strategija (2017 m. sausio 1 d. Nr. XIII-202), I skyrius, 3 punktas.

⁸ *Ibidem*, V skyrius, 18.6 punktas.

to keep peace and stability in the world, prevent interstate and ethnic conflicts, resolve long-lasting conflicts, fight against international terrorism and organized crime, as well as contribute civil and military capabilities within its power to the international operations and missions of NATO, the EU, and other international organizations and coalitions formed for this purpose.⁹

The Seimas of the RL takes the decision to employ the Armed Forces when it is necessary to defend the Motherland or carry out the international commitments of the State of Lithuania.¹⁰ Decisions on the participation of LAF units in international military operations are taken by the President of the Republic and the Seimas in the order established by the Constitution and laws.¹¹ The main law regulating the participation of Lithuanian troops and civilian NDS employees in international military operations stipulates that the resolution on the departure of military units of the RL and their employment for the purpose of other operations on the territories of other states is passed by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania by adopting a resolution at the request submitted by the President of the Republic.¹² Proposals for the participation of military units of the RL in international operations are submitted to the President by the Ministers of National Defence and Foreign Affairs.¹³

It is worth mentioning that, in times of peace, one of the main tasks of the LAF is to maintain combat readiness, prepare for international operations, and participate in them,¹⁴ whereas the most important task of the Commander of the Armed Forces is to properly train the Armed Forces for the armed Defence of the State, while ensuring their interaction with the armed forces of other NATO states and participation in international missions.¹⁵

⁹ *Ibidem*, V skyrius, 18.6.2 papunktis.

¹⁰ Lietuvos Respublikos Konstitucija (footnote 4), 142 str.

¹¹ Lietuvos Respublikos Nacionalinio saugumo pagrindų įstatymas (footnote 5), I dalis, 8 skyrius.

¹² Lietuvos Respublikos tarptautinių operacijų, pratybų ir kitų karinio bendradarbiavimo renginių įstatymas.

¹³ Krašto apsaugos sistemos organizavimo ir karo tarnybos įstatymas (1998 m. gegužės 5 d. Nr. VIII-723), II skirsnis, 10 str., 2 p., 9 papunktis.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, III skirsnis, 12 str. 1 p.

¹⁵ Krašto apsaugos sistemos organizavimo ir karo tarnybos įstatymas (footnote 13), III skirsnis, 13 str. 6 p.

1.2. Resolutions of the Seimas of the Republic Of Lithuania on the Participation in International Operations in 2004–2017

Participation in international operations is a tool to implement Lithuania's commitments to the international security and strengthen the collective Defence of NATO, the common security and Defence policy of the European Union, the peacekeeping attempts of the United Nations, as well as multi-lateral and bi-lateral military cooperation.¹⁶ The actual participation of Lithuania in international operations and its contribution to them depend on the security situation, the international operations conducted by NATO, the European Union and the allies as well as on the need expressed by the strategic partners and Lithuania's possibilities.¹⁷

Taking the decision on the participation of the RL military units in international operations, the RL Seimas expresses the political will of the country and grants the Lithuanian military personnel and NDS civilian employees the right to participate in international operations. By granting the right to military personnel to participate in international operations or EU training missions, the RL Seimas, by the afore-mentioned decision, determines not only specific international operations or regions and states of the participation in international operations, but also the permissible maximum number of military personnel and civilian NDS employees allowed to participate in international operations. Due to this reason, the resolutions of the RL Seimas on the participation of military units of the Republic of Lithuania in international operations can be considered as the main legal normative act providing the legal basis, and determining restrictions, for the military personnel of the LAF and civilian NDS employees to participate in international operations.

The summary of the resolutions of the RL Seimas on the participation of Lithuanian troops and civilian NDS employees in international operations in 2004– 2017 is presented in Table 1.

¹⁶ Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017). LR Seimo nutarimo projekto dėl Lietuvos karių dalyvavimo tarptautinėse operacijose pristatymas LR Seime. Krašto apsaugos ministro Raimundo Karoblio kalba. http://kam.lt/lt/naujienos_874/aktualijos_875/seimas_apsiprende_del_lietuvos_kariu_dalyvavimo_tarptautinese_operacijose_2018-2019_metais.html , 2017-10-12 19.24 val.

¹⁷ Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017), Tarptautinis bendradarbiavimas, Tarptautinės operacijos ir misijos, http://kam.lt/lt/tarptautinis_bendradarbiavimas/tarptautines_operacijos.html , <https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/seimas-apsiprende-del-lietuvos-kariu-dalyvavimo-tarptautinese-operacijose.d?id=76032645> , 2017-10-12 19.25 val.

Table 1. Resolutions of the Seimas on the participation in international operations.

No.	Resolution of the RL Seimas	Valid until	Years and permissible maximum number of troops and civilian DoD employees allowed to participate in the international operation
1.	29 September 2004, No. IX-2468	31-12-2005	2005 up to 330
2.	9 June 2005, No. X-240	31-12-2007	2005 up to 350 2006 - 2007 up to 420
3.	14 June 2007, No. X-1184	31-12-2010	2008 - 2010 up to 420
4.	19 November 2009, No. XI-494	31-12-2013	2011 - 2013 up to 420
5.	12 June 2012, No. XI-2059	31-12-2013	2012 - 2013 up to 355
6.	23 April 2013, No. XII-249	31-12-2015	2014 - 2015 up to 265
7.	18 March 2014, No. XII-788	01-06-2014	2014 up to 275
8.	22 December 2015, No. XII-2232	31-12-2017	2016 – 2017 up to 130
9.	29 June 2016, No. XII-2541	31-12-2017	2016 - 2017 up to 175
10.	28 June 2017, No. XIII-525	31-12-2017	2017 up to 235

The largest change in the number of military personnel and civilian NDS employees allowed to participate in international operations in 2004–2017, determined by the resolutions of the RL Seimas, is presented in Figure 1. It should be pointed out that the largest number of troops of the LAF and civilian NDS employees allowed to participate in international operations was set by the resolutions of the RL Seimas in 2006–2012 (420 troops) and the smallest in 2015–2016 (130 troops). The record number of troops of the LAF and civilian NDS employees determined by the resolutions of the RL Seimas and allowed to participate in international operations in 2006–2012 was not affected, even by the fact that the financing allocated to the National Defence System of the RL fell at that time to the lowest point ever (in 2006 to 1.16 percent and in 2012 – to 0.77 percent of the GDP).

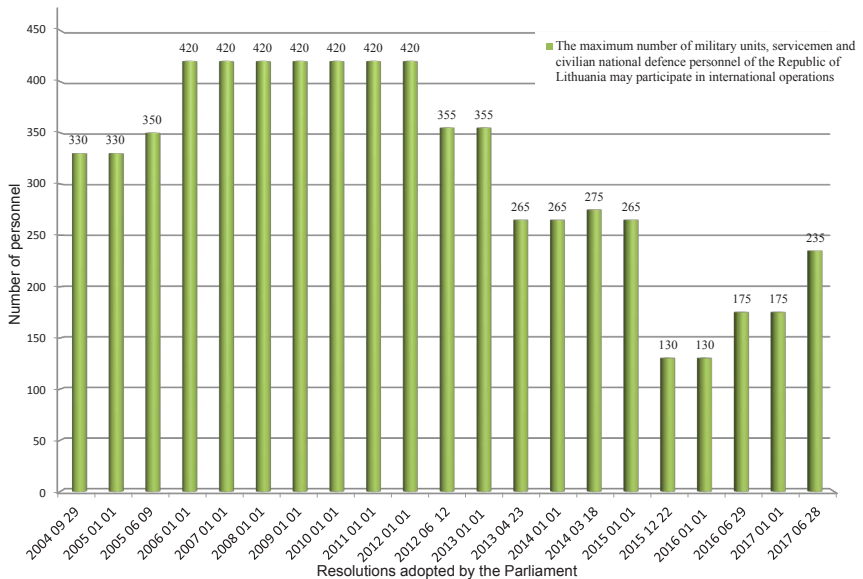


Figure 1. The maximum number of military units, servicemen and civilian national Defence personnel of the Republic of Lithuania may participate in international operations

1.3. Participation of Lithuanian Military Personnel in International Operations

1.3.1. Survey of the Lithuanian contribution to NATO operations in 2004–2017

Until 2014, 97 percent of the military personnel of the LAF who planned to participate in international operations took part in NATO operations, 2 percent in those of the United Nations, and 1 percent in EU operations.¹⁸ From the beginning of the participation of LAF military personnel in NATO operations, from 1996 until 2014, more than 4,600 troops participated in NATO operations.¹⁹ The annual average of the number of Lithuanian troops in NATO operations, excluding Special Operations Forces, is presented in Figure 2. The greatest contribution of Lithuania to NATO operations within the above-mentioned period was in Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Ghor

¹⁸ Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija (2014). "Taikos sargyboje: Lietuvos kariai tarptautinėse operacijose 1994–2014 m.", p. 35.

¹⁹ *ibidem*, p. 37

Province Reconstruction Group, which operated from 2005 until 2013 and numbered about 150 LAF military personnel,²⁰ was the largest contingent of Lithuanian troops in Afghanistan. The number of military personnel serving in the Province Reconstruction Group led by Lithuania during the mentioned period was approximately 2,500 Lithuanian troops. Lithuania assigned to the NATO KFOR operation in Kosovo until the end of 2009, a platoon-size unit that carried out tasks within the composition of the Polish battalion. In 2005, a water purification unit of the LAF was deployed in Pakistan as a constituent part of NATO Rapid Reaction Forces.²¹ Individual Lithuanian warriors participated in the NATO training missions in Iraq until the end of 2011 and from 2014, they participated in “Ocean Shield”, the fighting against piracy operation, and the air Defence mission in Turkey. In 2013, when Lithuanian military personnel finished their participation in the activities of the Ghor Province Reconstruction Group under the NATO International Security Support Forces and handed over the infrastructure of the camp to the Afghanistan National Security Forces and NATO transformed that operation into “Resolute Support”, the annual average number of Lithuanian troops participating in NATO operations considerably decreased.

In 2017, the contribution of Lithuania to “Resolute Support”, the NATO operation in Afghanistan, increased from 21 to 29 military personnel of the LAF, 1 Lithuanian warrior was retained in NATO KFOR operation in Kosovo.²²

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 37

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 71.

²² Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017), Lietuvos karių dalyvavimas tarptautinėse operacijose 2017 m. gruodžio mėn., http://kam.lt/lt/tarptautinis_bendradarbiavimas/tarptautines_operacijos.html, 2017-12-07 17.24 val.

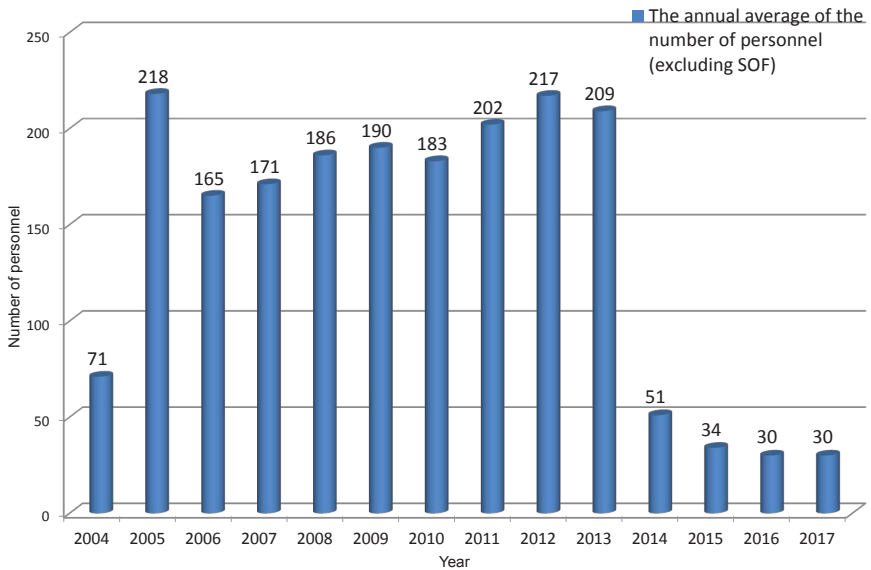


Figure 2. **The annual average of the number of personnel (excluding SOF) of the Republic of Lithuania involved in NATO-led operations**

1.3.2. Survey of the Lithuanian contribution to the European Union operations in 2004–2017

The participation of Lithuanian troops in the international operations and training missions of the European Union in 2004–2017 kept growing. From 2004 to the end of 2010, individual staff officers were assigned to the EU operation “Althea” in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In total, 12 LAF officers participated in this operation during those six years.²³ Starting in 2011, Lithuania assigned one staff officer to the EU military marine operation “Atlanta”, devoted to fighting against armed robbery at sea. Lithuania’s contribution to EU operations began to increase in 2013, when two Lithuanian warriors were assigned to the EU military training operation in Mali starting in March. In August of the same year, 2 military personnel were additionally deployed to the EU operation “Atlanta”, the Autonomous Vessel Protection Detachment (further – AVPD) which was comprised of 16 LAF troops and devoted to safeguarding the World Food Program ships as well as the National Support Element. The total contribution of 20 LAF

²³ Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija (2014). “Taikos sargyboje: Lietuvos kariai tarptautinėse operacijose 1994-2014 m.”, p. 59.

military personnel to the operation “Atlanta” became the greatest contribution of Lithuania to the European Union operations.²⁴ The AVPD formed from LAF troops was also assigned to the EU operation “Atlanta” in 2015, 2016, and 2017.

In 2015, the EU began to conduct the military marine operation EU-NAVFOR MED “Sophia”, seeking to prevent the illegal shipment of people from North Africa.²⁵ From the beginning of the operation, Lithuania assigned one officer to the operation headquarters in Rome and from 2016, additionally assigned two officers to the operation forces headquarters deployed on a ship. In 2017, Lithuania increased its contribution to this priority EU operation by assigning a Vessel Inspection detachment made up of 12 Lithuanian military personnel. Starting in April 2017, Lithuania assigned one staff officer to the operation headquarters and to the military training European Union operation in the Central African Republic (EUTM RCA). The annual average of the Lithuanian military personnel number in EU operations is presented in Figure 3.

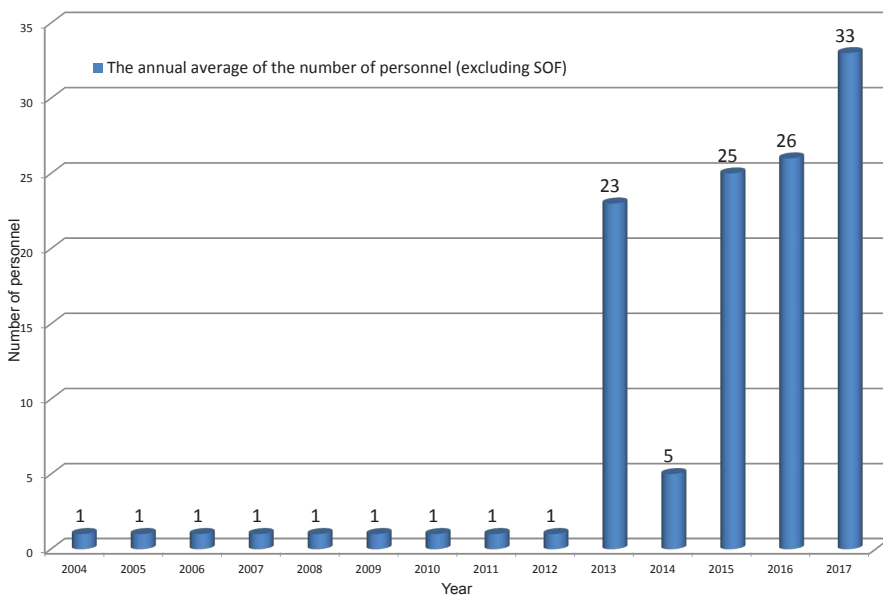


Figure 3. The annual average of the number of personnel (excluding SOF) of the Republic of Lithuania involved in NATO-led operations

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 79.

²⁵ Lietuvos kariuomenės Jungtinis štabas (2017), vykdomos tarptautinės operacijos, <http://www.jungtinis-stabas.lt/lt/vykdomos-to/eunavformed/>, 2017-12-10 15.28 val.

1.3.3. Survey of the Lithuanian contribution to the United Nations operations in 2004–2017

Actively contributing to the keeping of peace and international security of the United Nations (further – UN), Lithuania participated, starting with 1994, in the UN-led peacekeeping operations. During that period, Lithuania was involved in more than 14 UN-led international operations.²⁶

Countries are rated according to the contribution of states in terms of military personnel, military experts, staff officers, police officials to the UN operations. For Lithuania's contribution in terms of troops and police officials to UN operations in 2004–2017 and its place in the ratings, see Figure 4.

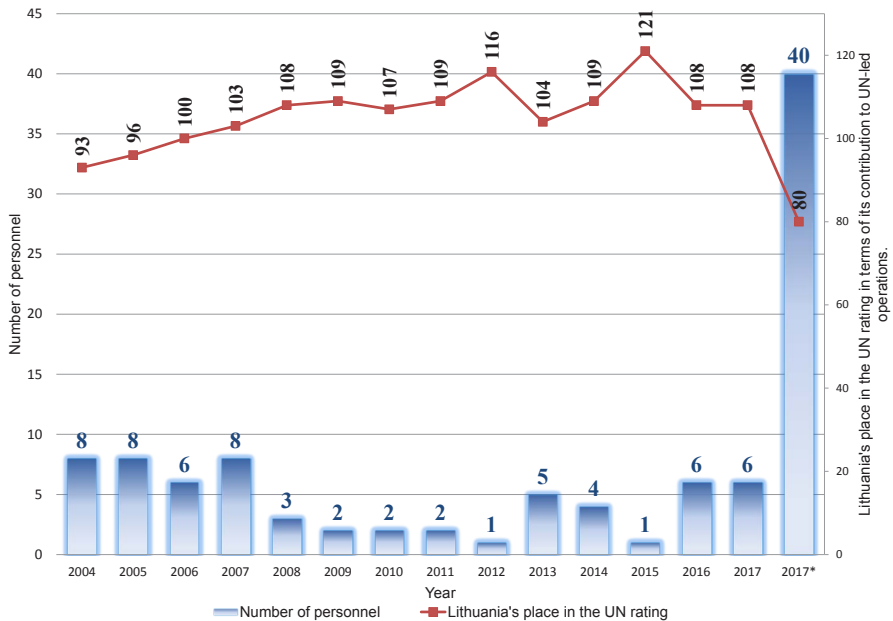


Figure 4. The annual average of the number of personnel of the Republic of Lithuania involved in UN-led operations²⁷

²⁶ Lietuvos Respublikos nuolatinė misija Jungtinėse Tautose (2017). Lietuvos prioritetai Jungtinėse Tautose. <https://mission-un-ny.mfa.lt/missionny/lt/lietuva-jungtinese-tautose/lietuvos-prioritetai-jt>, 2017-11-10 11.21 val.

²⁷ United Nations Peacekeeping (2017), Peacekeeping Operations, Resources, Data Troop and police contributors (2004-2017), <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>, 2017-11-28 18.55 val.

Lithuania's contribution to the UN operations in 2004–2017 fluctuated from 1 to 8 military personnel and police officials. During the mentioned period, Lithuania contributed to UN operations in 2004, 2005, 2007 when Lithuania sent 8 LAF warriors and police officials. The smallest Lithuania's contribution to UN operations was in 2009–2012, when only 1–2 military personnel and police officials participated in UN operations. Lithuania's place in the UN rating, according to the number of personnel assigned to participate in UN operations, fell from 93 in 2004 to 108 in August 2017.

It would be possible to assess Lithuania's contribution to UN international operations in terms of military personnel and police officials if it were compared to the contribution supplied by the Nordic and Baltic countries. The comparison of Lithuania's contribution to UN operations with the contribution of the Nordic and Baltic countries is provided in Figure 5.

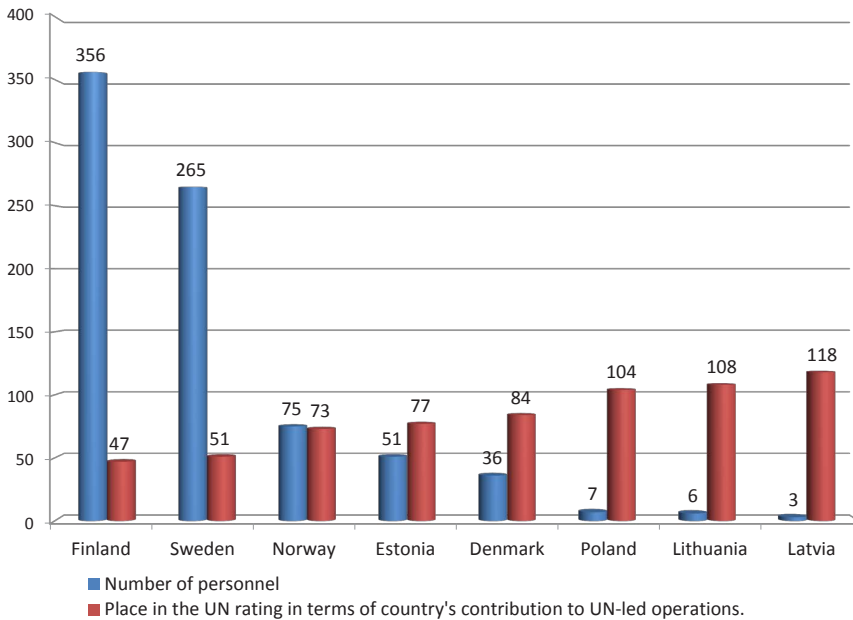


Figure 5. **Nordic and Baltic countries contributions to the UN operations and the place in UN rating**^{28 29}

²⁸ *Ibidem.*

²⁹ *Comment.* On 30-12-2017, the information in the UN datum base about the record increase in Lithuania's contribution to UN operations was not yet renewed. The actual Lithuania's contribution in 2017 of 39 troops and a police official would enable Lithuania to rise in the UN rating and find itself between Estonia and Denmark according to the supplied contribution to UN operations in the context of the Nordic and Baltic countries.

In October 2017, the Force Protection Unit with the National Support Element formed from the military personnel of the LAF left for the UN Situation Stabilization Operation in Mali (MINUSMA).³⁰ The contingent of Lithuanian troops in this operation increased from 5 to 39³¹ while the general contribution of the country to UN operations increased to 40 warriors and police officials. Lithuania, according to the size of the assigned contribution to UN operations, should rank 80th³² among all the UN members at the end of 2017.

1.3.4. Operations conducted by NATO, the EU, the UN, allies and other international operations in 2017

In 2017, NATO conducted 3 international operations: “Resolute Support” in Afghanistan, the peacekeeping operation in Kosovo (KFOR), and the “Sea Guardian” operation in the Mediterranean Sea, where approximately 18,000 troops participated. Apart from these operations, NATO provided support to the African Union, Turkey, and conducted air police missions at the request of allies. According to the data of the Defence Ministry of the Republic of Lithuania,³³ in 2017, Lithuania made military contributions to two NATO operations: the peacekeeping operation in Kosovo and “Resolute Support” in Afghanistan.³⁴

In 2017, the European Union conducted a total of 16 military and civilian operations and missions³⁵ on three continents (Europe, Africa, Asia)³⁶ in which more than 4,000 troops and civilians participated. From the aforementioned operations, 6 were conducted on the grounds of military capabilities. According

³⁰ LR užsienio reikalų ministerija (2017). Spaudos pranešimas „Dar 34 Lietuvos kariai pradėjo tarnybą Malyje“ <http://www.urm.lt/default/lt/naujienos/dar-34-lietuvos-kariai-pradejo-tarnyba-malyje,2017-11-02-17.24> val.

³¹ Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017), Lietuvos karių dalyvavimas tarptautinėse operacijose 2017 m. gruodžio mėn., http://kam.lt/lt/tarptautinis_bendradarbiavimas/tarptautines_operacijos.html, 2017-12-10 11.22 val.

³² *Comment*. Making the assumption that the contribution provided to UN operations by other countries will not change substantially.

³³ Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017), Lietuvos karių dalyvavimas tarptautinėse operacijose 2017 m. gruodžio mėn., http://kam.lt/lt/tarptautinis_bendradarbiavimas/tarptautines_operacijos.html, 2017-12-10 17.26 val.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

³⁵ European Union External Action Service (2017), Military and civilian missions and operations, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/area/security-and-defence_en, 2017-08-11 10.34 val.

³⁶ *Ibidem*.

to the data of the National Defence Ministry of the Republic of Lithuania,³⁷ in December 2017 Lithuanian troops were involved in four out of six EU-led military operations or training missions: the EU operation “Sophia” in the Mediterranean Sea, the EU operation “Atlanta”, fighting against piracy in the Indian Ocean, the EU military training mission in the Central African Republic and the EU military training mission in Mali.

In 2017, the United Nations conducted a total of 15 international peacekeeping operations³⁸ in which more than 10 thousand troops, police officials and civilians participated. In 2017, Lithuania contribution to two³⁹ UN peacekeeping operations – the stabilization operation MINUSMA in Mali and UNFICYP in Cyprus. In December 2017, 39 Lithuanian military personnel and a police official participated in these peacekeeping operations.

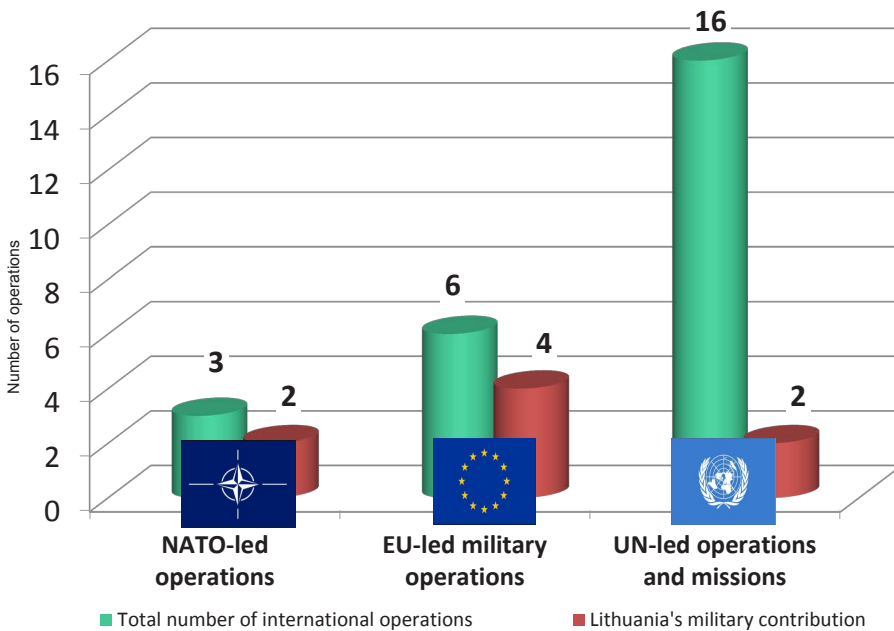


Figure 6. Lithuania's contribution to international operations

³⁷ Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017), Lietuvos karių dalyvavimas tarptautinėse operacijose 2017 m. gruodžio mėn., http://kam.lt/tarptautinis_bendradarbiavimas/tarptautines_operacijos.html, 2017-12-10 11.24 val.

³⁸ United Nations Peacekeeping (2017), Peacekeeping Operations, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/factsheet.shtml>, 2017-12-28 11.55 val.

³⁹ Ibidem.

Participating in the “Global Coalition for Fighting the Islamic State” in 2017, Lithuania made a military contribution of 6 military instructors to the operation “Inborn Determination” in Iraq.⁴⁰ According to the data of the National Defence Ministry of the Republic of Lithuania,⁴¹ about 40 military personnel of Lithuania were involved in this operation for training purposes. The strength of the Lithuanian military contingent in international operations in 2017 is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Strength of the Lithuanian military contingent in international operations in 2017⁴²

Operation	Number of troops	Total
NATO KFOR	1	30 troops participated in NATO operations
NATO operation “Resolute Support” in Afghanistan	29	
EU operation “Sophia”	15	33 troops participated in EU operations and military training missions
ES operation “Atlanta”	15	
EU training mission in the Central African Republic	1	
EU training mission in Mali	2	
Operation “Inborn Determination” in Iraq	6	6 military personnel in the USA-led operation
UN stabilization operation MINUSMA in Mali	39	39 troops in the UN operation
Operation for training purposes in Ukraine	about 40	about 40 troops

Lithuania’s military contribution in 2017 to NATO, the EU, the UN and other international operations in terms of military personnel expressed as a percentage in compliance with the data in Table 2 is provided in Figure 7.

⁴⁰ The Global Coalition (2017), Partners, Lithuania, <http://theglobalcoalition.org/en/partners/lithuania/>, 2017-09-10 19.23 val.

⁴¹ Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017), Lietuvos karių dalyvavimas tarptautinėse operacijose 2017 m. gruodžio mėn., http://kam.lt/lt/tarptautinis_bendradarbiavimas/tarptautines_operacijos.html, 2017-12-01 12.26 val.

⁴² Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017), Lietuvos karių dalyvavimas tarptautinėse operacijose 2017 m.

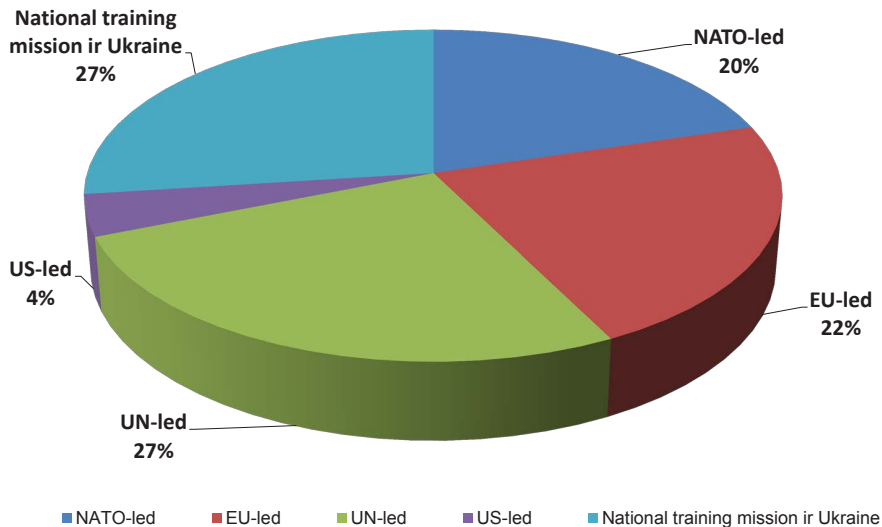


Figure 7. **Percentage of the Lithuanian troops participating in NATO, the EU, UN-led international operations**

Taking into consideration the above-presented information, one can draw the conclusion that Lithuania, having decreased its military contribution to NATO-led operations since 2014, began to increase it in international operations conducted by the EU, the UN, and other partners. On the grounds of the data about the participation of Lithuanian troops in international operations in 2017 (see Fig. 7), one can notice the tendency that Lithuania assigns a balanced military contribution to NATO-, the EU-, and the UN-led international operations.

2. Resources Available To the National Defence System of the Republic of Lithuania for Participation in International Operations

Consideration of the effectiveness of military capabilities or the armed forces of the state should begin with an assessment of resources – financial, human, physical, and technological – that the national command of the country

supplies to military organizations⁴³. The amount of the budget is in principle one of the most general indicators showing the resources allocated to the armed forces by the political power. At the same time, this amount helps to show the relative importance of the armed forces or military power in comparison to other state institutions and conveys the general understanding of the strength of the armed forces structure in absolute figures⁴⁴. The commitments of NATO countries to the Alliance and their attitude to Defence are also assessed in accordance with the assignments allocated by the country to Defence: factual expenditure and as a percentage from the GDP. During the NATO summit in Ryga in 2006⁴⁵, member countries agreed to seek to stop the reduction of the expenditure assigned to Defence and to strive to increase consistently the real financing to Defence. At the NATO summit in Wales⁴⁶ in 2014, the provision on the assignment of 2 percent from the GDP for Defence was recorded in writing. During the summit, it was agreed that all members of the Alliance will strive to increase the real financing for Defence during the nearest decade by allocating not less than 2 percent from the GDP, while investments in armaments and equipment modernization should make up not less than 20 percent of the Defence budget. Lithuania's participation in international operations also depends on financial resources – on the financing of the National Defence System of the RL (further – NDS RL) – because the actually allocated funds to the NDS RL financing directly influences the possibility to maintain military units and troops of the LAF in the area of international operation.

The number of military personnel and its quality is the second constituent part of the resources enabled to perceive the national power of a country.⁴⁷ It is obvious that the strength of the armed forces is important as the primary index of military power; secondly, how quantity in a combat environment still influences quality.⁴⁸ A sufficient number of well-trained and motivated personnel assigned to ensure the execution of tasks set to the NDS RL create preconditions for a successful participation of the country in international operations as well.

⁴³ Ashley J. Tellis, Janice Bially, Christopher Layne, Melissa McPherson (2001), *Measuring National Power in the Postindustrial Age*, p. 136 https://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1110.html, 2017-06-30 19.45 val.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 136

⁴⁵ NATO, *Riga Summit Declaration* (2006), <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm>, 2017-08-10 21.44 val.

⁴⁶ NATO, *Wales Summit Declaration* (2014), http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm, 2017-08-10 22.11 val.

⁴⁷ Ashley J. Tellis, Janice Bially, Christopher Layne, Melissa McPherson (footnote 43), p. 138, https://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1110.html, 2017-06-30 19.55 val.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p.138

Summing up, one can state that without the political will – resolutions of the RL Seimas – one of the essential factors determining the participation of Lithuanian military personnel and civilian NDS employees in international operation resources which are available to the NDS RL can be distinguished. Assigning military personnel and civilian NDS employees to international operations, resources can be divided into two main parts: assignments allocated to the National Defence System and human resources (personnel). The author does not analyze the influence of physical and technological resources on the participation of military personnel of the LAF in international operations because of the lack of publicly accessible information.

2.1. Assignations Allocated to the National Defence System

The information on the expenditure assigned by Lithuania to Defence in 2004–2017, on the grounds of the World Bank data,⁴⁹ is presented in Figure 8. The financing assigned by Lithuania to Defence, as a percentage of the country's GDP, kept consistently decreasing in 2004–2013: in 2004 – 1.2 percent, in 2013 – 0.76 percent. In Lithuania, the increase in the expenditure for Defence as a percentage of the GDP was registered only starting with 2014 and assignments to Defence in 2017 have already amounted to 1.78 percent of the GDP. It is planned that Lithuania will implement the recommendations of NATO and will ensure that the expenditure for Defence is not less than 2 percent of the GDP in 2018.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ The World Bank (2017), Data Bank, World Development Indicators, Military expenditures, Lithuania, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&series=MS.MIL.XPND.CN&country=LTU> 2017-07-10 18.22

⁵⁰ 2017-01-17 d. LR Seimo nutarimas Nr. XIII-202 „Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo 2002 m. gegužės 28 d. nutarimo Nr. IX-907 „Dėl Nacionalinio saugumo strategijos patvirtinimo“ pakeitimo“

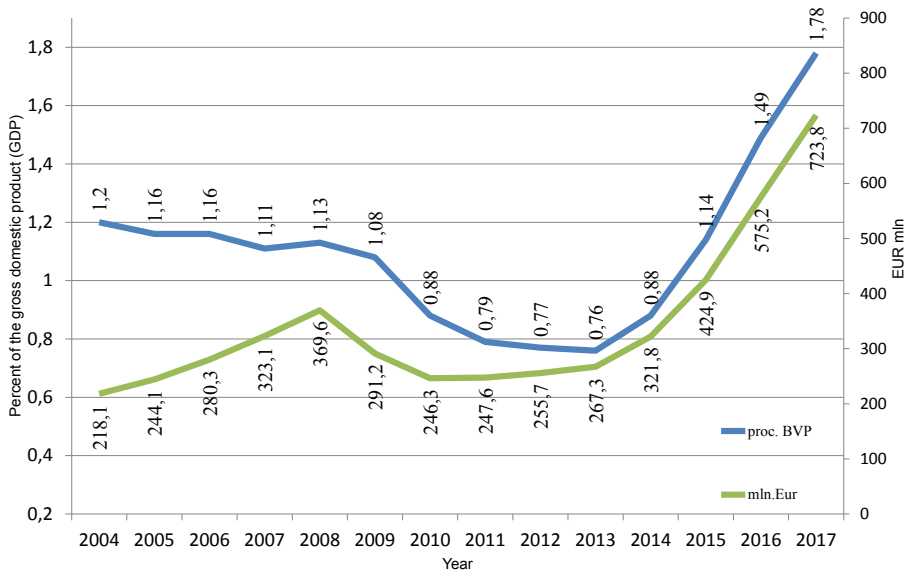


Figure 8. Lithuania's Defence budget ⁵¹

The financing assigned by Lithuania to the NDS in 2004–2017 kept changing. Although factual assignments to the NDS in 2004–2008 kept consistently increasing by about 40 million euros annually, in 2009 the financing decreased by nearly 80 million euros while in 2010, it returned almost to the level of 2005, consisting of only slightly more than 246 million euros. A substantial increase in Defence expenditures, annually by nearly 150 million euros, was fixed from 2014. It is worth mentioning that the financing to the NDS in 2017, in comparison with 2010, increased approximately threefold and amounted to nearly 724 million euros.

The increase in the Lithuanian Defence budget in 2014 by 20.4 percent, in 2015 by 32.0 percent and in 2016 by 35.2 percent enabled the country to maintain one of the fastest growth rates in terms of assignments to national Defence amongst all NATO states.⁵² The fast increase in Lithuanian Defence expenditure of recent years helped Lithuania move from the last but one place in the rating

⁵¹ The World Bank (2017), Data Bank, World Development Indicators, Military expenditures, Lithuania, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&series=MS.MIL.XPND.CN&country=LTU> 2017-07-10 18.22

⁵² LR Krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017), *Krašto apsaugos ministerijos 2016 m. veiklos ataskaita. 1 priedas. Gynybos finansavimas*, http://kam.lt/download/57846/12-01-344_2016%20m.%20veiklos%20ataskaita.pdf, 2017-09-20

in 2013⁵³ to 9th amongst all NATO countries according to the expenditure for Defence from the GDP⁵⁴.

2.2. Human Resources of the National Defence System

Lithuania assigns professional military service personnel (further – PMS), volunteer military personnel, and civilian NDS employees⁵⁵ to international operations. These three categories of NDS personnel enjoy an essential significance in assessing human resources of the NDS. A change in the NDS human resources in 2004–2017 is illustrated in Figure 9.

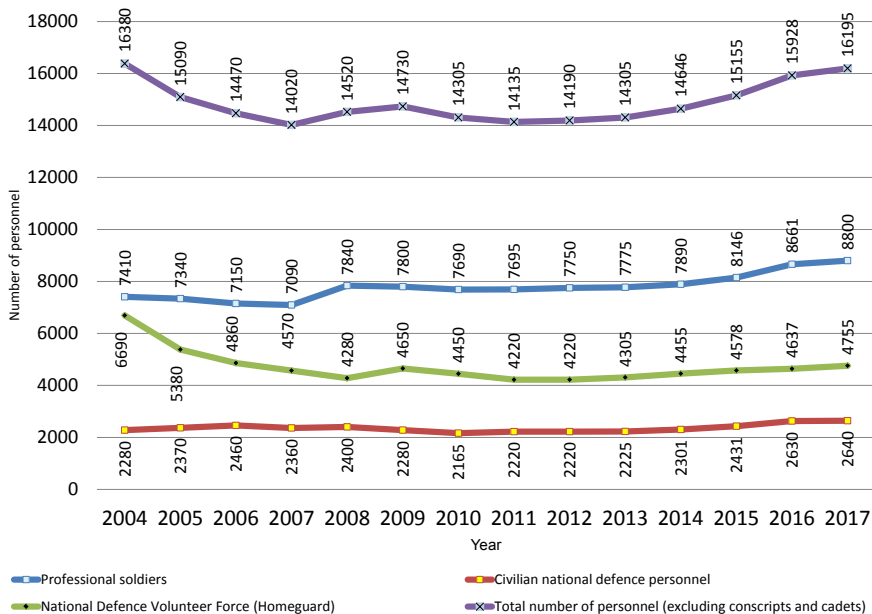


Figure 9. Human resources of the Lithuanian Defence System⁵⁶.

⁵³ NATO (2014), Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence, (PR/CP (2014)028). http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_topics/20140224_140224-PR2014-028-Defence-exp.pdf.

⁵⁴ NATO (2017), The Secretary General's Annual Report 2016, p. 110, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_03/20170313_SG_AnnualReport_2016_en.pdf, 2017-09-22.

⁵⁵ Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2004 m. kovo 17 d. nutarimas Nr. 287 „Dėl Lietuvos karių ir civilių krašto apsaugos sistemos tarnautojų tarnybos tarptautinių operacijų kariniuose vienetuose, tarptautinėse operacijose ir rengimosi joms sąlygų patvirtinimo“, II dalis, 4 punktas. <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalaAct/TAR.412D8A47D01B>, 2017-10-02.

⁵⁶ LR Krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017), KAS personalo skaičius, http://kam.lt/lt/personalo_politika_512/skaiciai_ir_faktai_537.html, 2017-08-26 19.28 val.

In 2004–2017, the number of PMS personnel increased from 7,410 to 8,800 or by 18.8 percent. From 2004, the number of military volunteer personnel kept consistently decreasing until 2012 (from 6,690 to 4,200). In spite of the fact that from 2013, the number of military volunteer personnel began to grow consistently and in 2017 amounted to 4,755, the general number of military volunteer personnel, in comparison with 2004, decreased by 29.1 percent. The number of civilian NDS employees in 2004– 2017 increased from 2,280 to 2,640 or by 15.8 percent. The smallest number of NDS personnel was in 2007 – 14,020 and in 2006–2014, it was, on average, 11.28 percent smaller than in 2017.

Assessing the general change in the NDS human resources from 2004 (16,380 people) to 2017 (16,195 people), it may be stated that the number of human resources did not actually change (decreased by only 1.1 percent), however, it should be noted that military volunteers were replaced by PMS personnel.

3.3. Comparison of the Political Will and Resources of the National Defence System

While comparing the largest number of military personnel and civilian NDS employees allowed under the resolutions of the RL Seimas to participate in international operations with those available to the NDS RL human resources, one can get the indicator showing, as a percentage, the part of the NDS RL human resources that were permitted to participate in international operations (see Table 3).

Table 3. Indicators of the participation of PMS personnel and civilian NDS employees in international operations

Years	NDS human resources	Number of PMS personnel and military volunteers	Largest permissible number of troops civilian NDS employees to participate in IO (Resolution of the RL Seimas)	Percentage of NDS human resources permissible to participate in IO	Percentage of PMS personnel and military volunteers to participate in IO
2004	16,380	14,100	330	2.01	2.34
2005	15,090	12,720	350	2.32	2.75
2006	14,470	12,010	420	2.90	3.50
2007	14,020	11,660	420	3.00	3.60
2008	14,520	12,120	420	2.89	3.47
2009	14,730	12,450	420	2.85	3.37

2010	14,305	12,140	420	2.94	3.46
2011	14,135	11,915	420	2.97	3.52
2012	14,190	11,970	355	2.50	2.97
2013	14,305	12,080	265	1.85	2.19
2014	14,646	12,345	275	1.88	2.23
2015	15,155	12,724	265	1.75	2.08
2016	15,928	13,298	175	1.10	1.32
2017	16,195	13,555	235	1.45	1.73

Taking into consideration the fact that the number of civilian NDS employees actually sent to international operations in 2004– 2017 is relatively small in comparison with the number of PMS personnel and military volunteers, Table 3 also provides the percentage of the permissible number of PMS personnel and volunteers allowed to participate in international operations. It should be pointed out that it was allowed to send the largest part of NDS human resources to international operations in 2007 – 3.00 percent (military personnel – 3.60 percent), in 2011 – 2.97 percent (military personnel – 3.52 percent), in 2010 – 2.94 percent (military personnel – 3.46 percent) and the smallest one in 2016 – 1.10 percent (Military personnel – 1.32 percent).

Seeking to more accurately assess the financial resources then available to the NDS RL and their change and ratio to NDS human resources, it is possible to calculate the relative NDS annual financing indicator per one PMS warrior, military volunteer, or civilian NDS employee in a specific year (Table 4). The indicator shows how many euros, from the financing means allocated to the NDS RL, fell per one PMS warrior, military volunteer, or civilian NDS employee of the NDS RL.

Table 4. Relative annual NDS financing indicator per one PMS warrior, military volunteer or a civilian NDS employee

Years	NDS financing million euros	NDS human resources	Number of PMS warriors and military volunteers	Relative annual NDS financing per one PMS warrior, military volunteer or a civilian NDS employee in euros	Relative annual NDS financing per one PMS warrior, military volunteer in euros
2004	218,1	16,380	14,100	13315,02	15468,09
2005	244,1	15,090	12,720	16176,28	19190,25
2006	280,3	14,470	12,010	19371,11	23338,88
2007	323,1	14,020	11,660	23045,65	27710,12

2008	369,6	14,520	12,120	25454,55	30495,05
2009	291,2	14,730	12,450	19769,18	23389,56
2010	246,3	14,305	12,140	17217,76	20288,30
2011	247,6	14,135	11,915	17516,80	20780,53
2012	255,7	14,190	11,970	18019,73	21361,74
2013	267,3	14,305	12,080	18685,77	22127,48
2014	321,8	14,646	12,345	21971,87	26067,23
2015	424,9	15,155	12,724	28036,95	33393,59
2016	575,2	15,928	13,298	36112,51	43254,62
2017	723,8	16,195	13,555	44692,81	53397,27

Taking into consideration the above-provided information, it is possible to make the conclusion that this indicator was the smallest in 2004 (13,315 euros), in 2005 (16,176 euros), in 2010 (17,217 euros), and in 2011 (17,516 euros) and the largest in 2016 (36,112 euros) and 2017 (44,692 euros).

The comparison of the political will – the established decisions under the RL Seimas resolutions on the participation of military units and military personnel of the LAF in international operations in 2004–2017 – and the resources available to the NDS is provided in Figure 10.

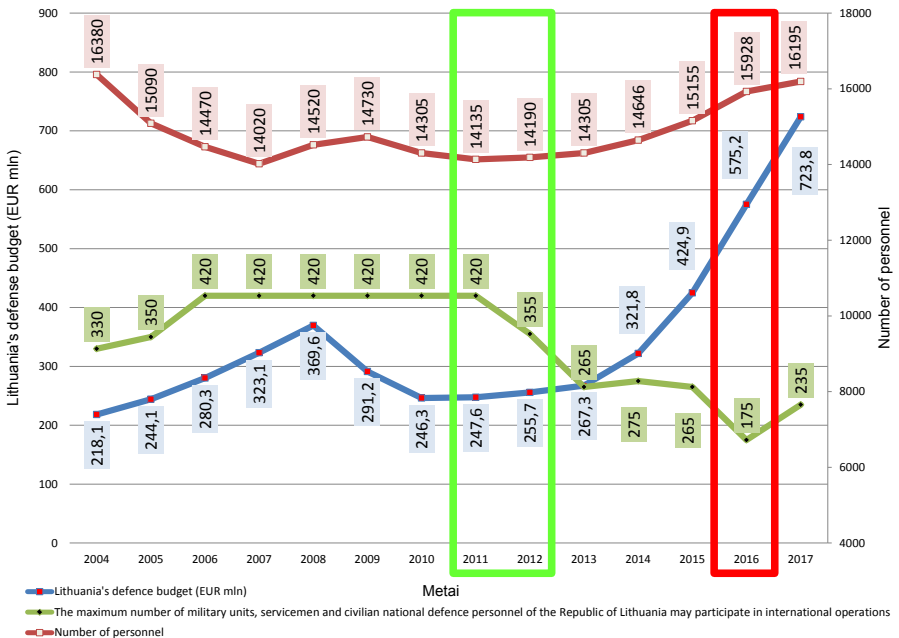


Figure 10. Comparison of the political will to participate in international operations and the resources available to Lithuania's National Defence System

It is noteworthy that in 2010 and 2011, the RL Seimas set the largest permissible number of military personnel and civilian NDS employees to participate in international operations, however, the financial and human resources then available to the NDS were the smallest. Whereas in 2016, the relatively largest resources then available to the NDS RL but the smallest number of military personnel able to participate in international operations under the resolution of the RL Seimas were registered. It is also noteworthy that it was not just the resources available to the NDS that played the decisive role when, at the time of crisis, the LR Seimas was passing the resolution on the participation of military personnel in international operations. It is likely that during the afore-mentioned period the attraction of allies was actually perceived as the assignment of Lithuania's contribution to international operations; therefore, the largest share of the NDS resources were allocated for just that.

Instead of Conclusions: Potential Scenarios of Lithuania's Participation in International Operations

In 2004–2017, military personnel from all branches of the LAF, including the Volunteer Forces of the National Defence, participated in international operations. This shows the high level of the employability of the LAF, military training and professionalism, as well as the capability of the LAF to adapt to the imposed requirements and assign military contribution to international operations seeking to ensure international security and stability. Until 2013, Lithuania assigned the greatest contribution to NATO operations while Afghanistan was a priority region. Starting with 2013, a new tendency emerged – the contribution of the LAF to the EU-led operations continued increasing, until, in 2017, Lithuania's contribution to UN operations was at its limit and Lithuania started to conduct a national operation in Ukraine for the training purposes of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Due to this reason, in 2017, a proportionate participation of the Lithuanian troops in NATO-, the EU-, the UN-, and other allies-led operations is observed and the country's contribution to the national operation in Ukraine becomes apparent as well. It is highly probable that the proportionate military contribution of Lithuania to NATO-, the EU-, or UN-led international operations will be maintained in the nearest future and the main partners for participating in them will be the USA, Germany, Baltic, and Nordic countries.

The contribution of Lithuanian military personnel to international opera-

tions during the afore-mentioned period shows an increase not only in the number of military personnel when it is gradually passed from the assignment of individual staff officers or instructors to that of units (Province Reconstruction Group, Forces Protection Unit) or groups (instructors, vessel inspection, autonomous vessel protection) but also in quality. The deployment of high-qualification specialists of the Special Operations Forces, the Redeployed Communications module to the operations region, the nomination of Lithuanian officers to important positions in operation staffs and headquarters show the qualitative change of the LAF in terms of the contribution to international operations. The LAF are developing combat, combat support and other niche capabilities and in the future, the need for their participation in international operations will not decrease and in certain cases will even increase. Consequently, Lithuania will have the possibility to consider and choose what contribution to assign to international operations in the future in accordance with the need expressed by the allies: a) to send individual military personnel, staff officers, small groups of instructors, or certain specialty military personnel (communications, CIMIC specialists, etc.); and b) to deploy combat, combat support units, perhaps even battalion-strong ones to the operation area where they could acquire genuine combat experience that would be particularly valuable in preparing for the armed Defence of the State.

The actual participation of Lithuania in international operations and the contribution in them will depend on the security situation, NATO-, the European Union-, and allies-led international operations, the need expressed by the strategic partners, and Lithuania's possibilities.⁵⁷ The international security situation will directly influence the potential participation of Lithuania in international operations. It is likely that the number of international operations going on in the world in which Lithuania could participate will not drastically change in the future. Lithuania will further retain the possibility to choose from approximately sixteen European Union-led operations and missions, the same number of the United Nations operations, several NATO-led operations and initiatives as well as operations or training missions conducted by other Lithuanian allies or partners. Taking into consideration the security situation in the region, the concentration of Lithuania's military contribution to several priority NATO missions, the EU and the UN regions is likely to further remain on while to other on-going international operations and missions contribution will be assigned according to possibilities.

⁵⁷ LR Krašto apsaugos ministerija (2017), Tarptautinis bendradarbiavimas, Tarptautinės operacijos, http://kam.lt/lt/tarptautinis_bendradarbiavimas/tarptautines_operacijos.html, 2017-11-03 19.33 val. <https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/seimas-apsisprende-del-lietuvos-kariu-dalyvavimo-tarptautinese-operacijose.d?id=76032645>

NATO's transformation and the new "30-30-30-30" Initiative – the European Union's Initiative in the area of Defence, the European Peace Facility, the Joint Expeditionary Forces' (JEF) Initiative developed by the United Kingdom, the European Intervention Initiative proposed by the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, potential projects of the Nordic–Baltic countries' cooperation in international operations will most probably influence the decisions taken by Lithuania on the participation of LAF military personnel in international operations and the increase in contribution to them seeking to ensure the international security and stability.

Having joined NATO, Lithuania took on commitments on the participation in international operations as well as pledged to assign not less than 2 percent from the GDP for Defence. Even at the time of the crisis, when the financing for the NDS substantially decreased, Lithuania kept its commitments for the participation in international operations while the number of military personnel of the LAF participating in international operations was recorded. It is noteworthy that NDS resources – the allocated assignments and human resources – although being one of the most important factors, however, not the only one within the category of significant factors playing a decisive role in passing resolutions by the RL Seimas on the participation of Lithuanian military personnel in international operations. This suggests the conclusion that the participation of Lithuanian military personnel in international operations will continue to remain one of the priorities of the Lithuania's foreign and Defence policy and, together with the growing number of the PMS personnel and the financing for the NDS, this pressure by the allies to increase Lithuania's contribution to international operations may also grow. Without waiting for the pressure from allies, Lithuania can itself make the decision to increase participation in international operations seeking to have a still more qualified LAF.

In 2017, the RL Seimas passed the resolution on the participation of Lithuanian troops and civilian NDS employees in international operations in 2018–2019 thus increasing the maximum number of Lithuanian troops and civilian NDS employees permitted to participate in international operations to 255. Although this permissible number of military personnel and civilian NDS employees allowed to participate in international operations is nearly two times larger than in 2016, it is still considerably smaller than in 2006–2012 when 420 military personnel and civilian NDS employees were permitted to participate in international operations. One may notice a certain breakthrough concerning decision-making on the factual participation of military LAF personnel in international operations in the RL Government Program Implementation Plan. The

Plan established the indicator stating that the number of military personnel of the LAF participating in international operations and missions in 2016 would not be smaller than 40 while in 2020, this number will be increased from 50 to 150.⁵⁸ Taking into consideration the available experience of the participation in international operations, the growing NDS financing, and the increasing number of PMS personnel, it may be stated that there are all the preconditions and possibilities for Lithuania in the near-term and medium-term perspectives to increase the number of troops participating in international operations to 420.

Taking into consideration the assigned, available, planned by the NDS resources (financial and human), and the experience of participation in international operations, one may make the conclusion that in the long-term perspective the participation in international operations, and Lithuania's military contribution to them, should consistently grow. On the other hand, the same resources will remain particularly important, seeking to ensure the development and modernization of the Armed Forces, the development of priority areas, preparation of the military for the armed Defence of the State, including the assurance of the interaction with allies as well as for the implementation of the for potential total military conscription. Because of this reason, the proper financing, distribution of resources and clear prioritization of the tasks set by the NDS will directly influence the potential increase in the number of military personnel in international operations.

June 2017 – May 2018

⁵⁸ Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės nutarimas „Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos įgyvendinimo plano patvirtinimo“ (2017 m. kovo 13 d. Nr. 167 (aktuali redakcija)), 5.5.3. darbo rodiklis.