

"Lithuania is proud to follow up on these commitments. As a new donor country, we know that it will take time to measure up to the high expectations in the field. We are providing advice and assistance in an increasing amount and geography. Over the past year alone, our development aid has grown by 60 per cent. We are determined to further increase our aid and diversify its geography. We remember what it means to receive help when we needed it. And we know and accept the responsibility to help others in our turn." *Speech by the President of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus at the United Nations General Assembly, September 2006.*



Lithuania

Has Lithuania established a timetable to reach the target of 0.17% by 2010? NO

Will Lithuania meet the EU target of 0.17% of GNI in 2010 without inflating its aid? NGO prediction: LIKELY

Lithuania spent more than €34 million in 2007, almost doubling in a year the total amount of its ODA. In terms of ODA/GNI, Lithuania also made a sharp increase and currently provides 0.11% of its GNI as ODA. Lithuanian NGOs welcome this upward trend and encourage the government to continue increasing its ODA levels to make sure that it reaches, by 2010, the 0.17% target.

• Aid quality

However, the trend of improving ODA figures needs to be coupled with government efforts to improve the quality of its aid. Lithuanian NGOs are still worried that their government's aid allocation continues to be highly driven by national commercial interests and security reasons. In 2007 the government tripled the aid allocated to Afghanistan, which now constitutes almost half of the aid budget. Moreover, the Development Cooperation Policy Guidelines explicitly state that one of the main drivers of development cooperation should be "strengthening Lithuania's trade and economic relations with partner countries."

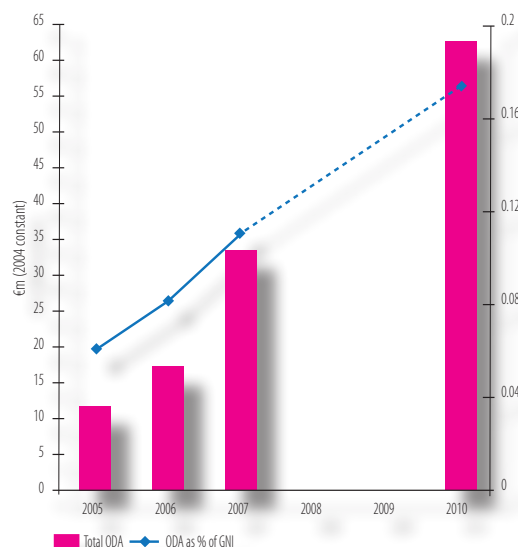
The lack of public awareness is one of the main challenges facing Lithuanian NGOs in their efforts to advocate for a strengthened poverty focus in development cooperation. Limited access to crucial information affects to an even greater extent the capacity of NGOs to monitor their government's performance and raise awareness among public opinion on what should be the goals of Lithuanian aid.

However, there are prospects for joint government and civil society cooperation aimed at improving information and awareness on development cooperation and increasing the profile of poverty reduction as the ultimate goal of development aid.

Lithuanian NGOs call on the Lithuanian government to:

- improve the transparency of Lithuanian aid;
- work with NGOs to increase the poverty focus of development cooperation.

Lithuania total ODA and % ODA/GNI



Organisations consulted: Institute of Social Ethics.