

POLITICAL NEWS



The euro adoption event, during which the Prime Minister of Lithuania Algirdas Butkevičius together with Estonian Prime Minister Taavi Roivas and Latvian Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkēvičs withdrew the first bills of the euro. Photo by BFL/Valda Kalnina.

TWEETS & QUOTES

 **Dalia Grybauskaitė** @Grybauskaite_LT · Jan 1
Good luck #Latvia! Wish you all the best in your #Presidency of the EU Council!
[@eu2015lv](#)

 **Lithuania MFA** @LithuaniaMFA · Jan 8
UK & LT Foreign Ministers started meeting by expressing solidarity with French people, #CharlieHebdo, @foreignoffice

 **Linas Linkevicius** @LinkeviciusL · Jan 8
Ordinary delivery of Ru 11th 'humanitarian' convoy 2Donbas- w/out #ICRC checks & violating Ukr sovereignty. Where is the improvement?

Successful Start of the Euro

[Thanks to careful preparations, the start of the changeover has been successful.](#) No major problems have been encountered so far and banks and retailers were generally doing well in the first days of the changeover, said the European Commission. According to the Commission survey, cash payments in litas have reduced in the first days of January.

CNN: 11 Smart Ways to Spend Euros in LT

CNN writes that “small but lively Lithuania” adopted the euro on 1 January <...> the country is a vibrant mix of east and west Europe. So what are some of the best ways to keep that new currency from burning a hole in your pocket? [CNN has compiled a list of 11 ways to spend it.](#)

UN Security Council: Lithuania at Mid-Term

[Lithuania is halfway through its UN Security Council non – permanent membership term.](#) Throughout 2014, it has focused on addressing the conflict in Ukraine, ensuring the rule of law, protecting civilians in armed conflict, strengthening cooperation between the UN and the EU, and proper implementation of Security Council’s decisions on sanctions. During the second year of its membership, Lithuania will continue to focus on strengthening the rule of law and human rights, safety of journalists, combating the illicit trade in arms, and conflict prevention. In May 2015, it will chair the Security Council for the second time.

NATO CPE in Ukraine

Lithuania’s Embassy to Ukraine is becoming [NATO contact-point embassy to](#) Ukraine for a period of two years. “I am glad that Lithuania has been entrusted with the honorable task of representing the Alliance in Ukraine. We seek to reinforce NATO cooperation with Ukraine and promote the country’s Euro-Atlantic integration”, Foreign Minister Linas Linkevicius said. The Embassy to Ukraine will replace Poland’s representation at the function of NATO’s contact-point embassy in the country.

NATO Air Policing Mission

[On January 8 four MiG-29 fighters of the Polish Air Force have landed at the Lithuanian Air Force Base at Šiauliai to reinforce the Baltic Air Policing Mission carried out by an Italian air contingent.](#) NATO has been sending troops and air assets to guard the eastern border of NATO since March 2004 when Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia entered the Alliance. As of April 2014, Allies have been contributing additional air assets to the NATO Baltic Air Policing Mission in order to implement NATO reassurance measures.

ECONOMY NEWS

How large is return migration to Lithuania?

New data documents emerging evidence of return migration of Lithuanians back home
www.LTUworld.com



20,500

Number of Lithuanian citizens who returned home in 2013

▲453%

Percentage change in return migration to Lithuania in 2013, compared to 2010

WE SUGGEST

Vytis – an ancient symbol from the Lithuanian state coat-of-arms, a symbol of Europe and our common values. National side of the Lithuanian euro explained.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0IBUmuZs-A>

A Record Year for Invest Lithuania

2014 proved to be a [record year for Invest Lithuania](#), the nation's foreign investment development agency, with [29 foreign companies deciding to establish or develop their businesses in Lithuania](#).

Altogether almost 2,000 new jobs are planned over the next three years. In comparison to 2013, 2014 saw an increase of one third in the number of new projects created, while the number of planned jobs rose by one fifth. Add to this the fact that the amount of capital investments more than doubled; making 2014 the agency's strongest year yet.

Game Insight Supports 3D Printing via Lithuanian Startup Toyze

[Lithuanian startup Toyze has signed a licensing agreement with global developer and publisher Game Insight](#) for three of its mobile game properties, *The Tribes*, *Dragon Eternity* and *Mirrors of Albion*. *The Tribes* is one of *Game Insight's* most successful and popular titles with 24 million players and has consistently been ranked as a top 10 grossing game in over 100 countries. Both *Toyze* and *Game Insight* are based in Vilnius, Lithuania. *Game Insight* has moved its headquarters from Moscow to Vilnius in spring 2014.

Lithuanian Projects Receive Funds from AppCampus

[Ten Lithuanian projects have received funding from Microsoft and Aalto University's global mobile applications business accelerator programme for further activity since the start of AppCampus in 2012](#). For Žilvinas Ledas, board member of the Lithuanian Game Developers Association, this success is partly down to improved communication between Lithuanian game developers. "This year game developers have started communicating more actively between themselves. New faces have emerged in the market. New companies have been established and communication is really getting better". According to Ž. Ledas, more active communication is not only promoting game development in Lithuania, but also attracting the attention of international companies.

TOURISM

LT Among Forbes Top Travel Destinations

Lithuania will become a card-carrying member of the Eurozone starting 1 January, 2015 — which means traveling there is about to become a whole lot easier, [indicates Forbes Life naming Lithuania among top 3 travel destinations for 2015](#). It's also home to three UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including the old town of capital city Vilnius, a Baroque masterpiece and one of the largest old towns in Central and Eastern Europe; and the Curonian Spit, a 60-mile peninsula of spectacular beaches which is now the pride of the country and backed by Europe's largest moving sand dune.

UPCOMING EVENTS & VISITS

8-13 Jan.	Commemoration of The Day of the Defenders of Freedom , Vilnius.	23-25 Jan.	International Tourism and Active Leisure Exhibition Adventur 2015 , Vilnius.
14 Jan.	Official Celebration Marking the Introduction of the Euro at the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania , National Museum.	5-7 Feb.	Studies 2015 : 13 th International Exhibition of Knowledge and Education, Vilnius.

Disclaimer: Information based on CNN, Forbes, Invest Lithuania, MFA and MoD press releases

