

Lithuanians are afraid to serve in the army

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In 2015 the Lithuanian army reintroduced compulsory military service due to the potential threat caused by the Russia.

Young Lithuanians try to avoid the service. Some of them even are not afraid of penalties and imprisonment.

It is well known that Lithuanian authorities intend to increase the number of servicemen of the Lithuanian Armed Forces by 25%. From 2020, it is planned that their number will increase from 20,790 to 26,850 by 2024.

The political crisis in neighboring Belarus and military exercise near the Lithuanian border force the authorities to actively seek for young people.

There have always been several reasons why young men avoid military service: family, well-paid work, loan, etc. But the main reason is the fear of participating in a possible military conflict.

Military service can seriously affects people's lives. Some young men in Lithuania say: "I love my Motherland, but I will lose too much while serving."

In addition, it seems that in order to implement the plans, the Ministry of of National Defence is already seriously considering options to draft young people with disabilities into the army.

For example, recently a young disabled man with Down syndrome was detained at the airport for "two years of hiding from compulsory military service." He and his family have been living in the United Kingdom for 13 years. The parents were shocked – they did not receive conscript mail, did not hide

anywhere, and were sure that their disabled son would not be included in the lists of conscripts.

The child underwent several heart surgeries and was diagnosed with Down syndrome. And this is far from the first such case.

According to the Ministry of National Defence of Lithuania, thousands of files for draft evasion were opened in the courts, but most cases resulted in fines, 270 – in 2016, 5.5 thousand – in 2017, 7.4 thousand – in 2018 and 6.8 thousand – in 2019.

As you can see, the number of such persons is increasing every year. Most likely, in the near future there will be many times more of them. They will go abroad and may never return to Lithuania.

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