Polity IV Country Report 2010: Lithuania

Score: 2009 2010 Change
Polity: 10 10 0
Democ: 10 10 0
Autoc: 0 0 0
Durable: 19
Tentative: No

Polity IV Component Variables
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Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)
End Date | Begin Date | 6 September 1991 (Ind.)

Polity Fragmentation: No

Constitution 1992

Executive(s)
Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius (TS-LKD); appointed by Parliament, 9 December 2008
President Dalia Grybauskaite; directly elected, 17 May 2009; 69.1%

Legislature
Unicameral:
Parliament [or Seimas] (141 seats; 71 members directly elected, 70 proportionally elected; most recent elections, 12 and 26 October 2008)
Homeland Union-Lithuanian Christian Democrats (TS-LKD): 45
Social Democratic Party of Lithuania (LSP): 25
National Resurrection Party (TPP): 16
Order and Justice (TT): 15
Other parties: 36
Non-partisans: 4

Judiciary Supreme Court

Narrative Description:

Executive Recruitment: Competitive Elections (8)
The Lithuanian prime minister is recruited through a competitive multiparty electoral system. The majority party (or majority coalition) in the National Assembly selects the chief executive. Members of the legislature are popularly elected. Since independence Lithuanian has swung between governments of the right-wing Homeland Union and the left-wing Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (the reformed Communist Party). However, in the aftermath of the October 2000 elections a centrist coalition government

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1 The research described in this report was sponsored by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The views expressed herein are the authors' alone and do not represent the views of the US Government.
was formed despite the electoral victory of the Social Democratic Coalition (led by the Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party). This centrist coalition collapsed in June 2001. Following legislative elections in October 2004, Prime Minister Brazauskas was reappointed and subsequently formed a coalition government composed of the LSDP, the New Union–Social Liberals (NS-SL), the populist Labour Party (DP), and the Farmers and New Democracy Union (VNDPS). In the summer of 2006 Prime Minister Brazauskas resigned after the Labor Party pulled out of the governing coalition. Parliament approved the President’s second nominee for the post of Prime Minister, Gediminas Kirkas. The new Social Democrat government represented the fourteenth administration in fifteen years of independence. In parliamentary elections held 28 October 2008, conservatives defeated the Social Democrats and the leader of the Homeland Union, Andrius Kubilius, was elected prime minister on 27 November 2008.

**Executive Constraints: Executive Parity or Subordination (7)**
As outlined in the 1992 constitution, the Seimas is the highest organ of state authority. While executive authority primarily falls within the hands of the prime minister, in recent years the role of the president has been strengthened. As a result, the Lithuanian political system has shifted from one dominated by the legislature to one of parity between the executive and legislative branches. The judicial branch is largely free from executive influence.

**Political Participation: Institutionalized Open Electoral Competition (10)**
Political participation in Lithuania is highly competitive and institutionalized. The political parties represent a range of competing ideologies and platforms but they are largely unanimous on most issues regarding the country’s democratization process, its transition to a market economy, and membership in NATO and the EU. The Government generally respects freedom of speech, press and human rights. The rights of the country’s Slavic minorities are protected.