

## Kirkilas to resign if corruption continues

Nov 09, 2006  
By TBT staff

Prime Minister Gediminas Kirkilas has pledged to resign if Lithuania's corruption levels do not decline in the coming year. "I believe it is a matter of honor to reduce the corruption index," he said in an interview with Ziniu Radijas news radio. Kirkilas expressed certitude that the corruption perception index (CPI) would be lower in Lithuania next year, at least due to "transparent performance of the government itself."

Earlier this week, Transparency International announced that Lithuania still failed to rise above the five-point mark given to countries capable of curbing corruption. The 2006 CPI score for Lithuania is 4.8. The country achieved the same score in 2001 and 2002 as well. In 2003, 2004 and 2005, the Baltic state's CPI stood at 4.7, 4.6 and 4.8, respectively.

"Since 2004, when Lithuania became a member of the EU and NATO, there has been virtually no serious anti-corruption policy at the national level," said Rytis Juozapavicius, the head of the Transparency International's Lithuanian office. "Only separate institutions, such as the State Tax Inspectorate, which, according to the Lithuanian Map of Corruption survey, managed to effectively reduce bribery over the three years from 2002 to 2005, are capable of curbing corruption." The Corruption Perceptions Index ranks countries in terms of the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials and politicians. It is a composite index, drawing on corruption-related data in expert surveys carried out by a variety of reputable institutions.

On the 10-point scale, 0 signifies absolute corruption, while 10 indicates minimal corruption. Among other European Union members, Lithuania is ahead of Latvia and Slovakia (4.8), Greece (4.4) and Poland (3.7) in terms of CPI.

The highest CPI score, 9.7, this year is in Finland and Iceland. Denmark ranks third (9.5).

**In cooperation with BNS**

(c) Copyright 2006 Baltic News Ltd.

<http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/16794/>