

Protest



14

DEC
15:35 UTC

Lithuania Tactical: Protests against LRT amendments to be held at Independence Square in Vilnius on December 16-18; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation

- On December 16-18, journalists and cultural figures will hold protests in Vilnius against proposed amendments to the broadcasting law, which aim to simplify the procedure for dismissing the head of Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija (LRT), Lithuanian National Radio and Television.
- The newly registered draft law will be discussed in the Seimas on December 16 and could be adopted as early as December 18. Organizers see the draft law as a threat to the independence of the state and public media.
- On December 16, a gathering will take place from 12:00 (local time) at Independence Square, followed by a protest at 18:00 at the same location.
- On December 17, a gathering will begin at 09:00 at Independence Square, followed by a protest at 18:00 at the same location. The organizers are calling for the largest participation on this day.
- On December 18, a gathering will start at 07:00, followed by a protest at 18:00, both at Independence Square.



Source: [Facebook](#)

Assessments & Forecast

1. Based on the social media estimates, coupled with the December 9 protest on the same issue, which saw about 10,000 participants, the protests are likely to witness turnouts ranging from the high thousands to low tens of thousands, with the protest on December 17 expected to be the largest.
2. Given heightened sentiments surrounding the protest issue, as well as the anti-government sentiments, the protests carry an elevated potential for unrest in the form of localized clashes between protesters and police officials.
3. As such, a bolstered security presence should be anticipated in the vicinity of Independence Square to monitor proceedings. In the event of escalating unrest, authorities are liable to deploy forcible crowd dispersal measures, including conducting arrests.
4. Significant disruptions to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic should be expected in the vicinity of Independence Square during the slated timings.

Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing in Vilnius on December 16-18 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of Independence Square due to the elevated potential for localized unrest at the protests.
2. Allot for travel-related disruptions due to the slated protests.