



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

Fifth periodic reports of States parties

Lithuania*, **

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not formally edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.

** Annexes can be consulted in the files of the Secretariat.



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I. Introduction

1. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the Government) hereby submits the Fifth Report on the Implementation in the Republic of Lithuania of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (hereinafter referred to as the Convention) as required under Article 18 (1) (b) of the Convention (hereinafter referred to as this Report). This Report gives information on the progress made in the Republic of Lithuania in implementing the Convention in 2008-2010 as well as information according to the Concluding Comments of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women delivered to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania following the examination of Lithuania's Third and Fourth Reports by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its 44th Session on 30 June-18 July 2008 in New York. This Report has been prepared by taking account of the Guidelines and General Recommendations for the Preparation of Reports adopted by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Moreover, this Report contains additional information requested in writing (paragraphs (b) to (d)) by Ms. Dubravka Šimonović, a rapporteur of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, on 8 February 2011.

2. This Report was prepared by the Commission set up pursuant to Order No. A1-418 of 14 September 2010 of the Minister of Social Security and Labour, formed of representatives of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of the Interior. The draft Report was examined on 2 December 2010 by the Commission of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, which is composed of representatives of not only governmental institutions but also of NGOs and which regularly invites representatives of the Office of the Ombudsman for Equal Opportunities, social partners and university-based gender studies centres, to its meetings. The text of the draft Report was posted on the website of the Ministry to make it accessible for everybody who is interested.

II. Information according to articles of the Convention

Article 1

3. In the period of 2008-2010, definitions of direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of sex, sexual harassment, harassment on the grounds of sex, and instruction to discriminate did not change. Definitions in the Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men are fully in line with the corresponding definitions laid down in the European Union legislation.

4. The National Strategy for Combating Violence against Women approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania by Resolution No. 1330 of 22 December 2006¹ defines the concept of violence against women (paragraphs 6 and 7) as all intentional physical, psychological, economical, sexual acts by one family member, usually a man, against another family member, usually a woman, violating the

¹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 144-5474, 2006.

woman's constitutional rights and liberties as a citizen and a human being and causing her economical, physical, psychological or moral harm. Domestic violence can affect both sexes, but the absolute majority of victims are women. Paragraph 14 of the Strategy describes violence against women as a serious violation of human rights inflicting both physical and psychological harm on the victim. This definition is in principle in line with the definition of gender-based violence proposed by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in its General Recommendation No. 19 (1992).

Article 2

Subparagraph (a)

5. Gender equality is de jure ensured in Lithuania by the Constitution and other legal acts. Legislation of the Republic of Lithuania has been harmonised with the European Union legislation and does not contain discriminatory provisions. More information about legislation has been submitted in the previous reports. Year 2008 marked the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men prohibiting any form of discrimination on the grounds of sex. The principle of equality between women and men and the relevant provisions have been mainstreamed in legal acts in a variety of fields, particularly on employment and labour, social protection, education and science, culture, etc.; thus, increasingly much attention is given to de facto ensuring equal opportunities of women and men, through different programmes, measures, projects, etc. More information on implementing actions is presented below, in the section concerning Article 3 and other articles of the Convention.

6. The Programme of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved by Resolution No. XI-52 of 9 December 2008 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania² sets that support shall be made available to programmes aimed at reducing discrimination on the grounds of sex, that equal opportunities policies shall be continued to make sure that nobody is discriminated on the grounds of sex, and that domestic violence shall be reduced by adopting, as a matter of urgency, a law that will clearly define violence prevention measures, powers and duties of professionals, responsibility to report violence, organisational measures to prevent violence, etc. Moreover, the Programme of the Government requires taking measures to guarantee non-discrimination in employment relations in the labour market on the grounds of sex, paternal or maternal duties and other important grounds and to facilitate work-life balance by developing the network of pre-school establishments and social services at home.

Subparagraphs (b) and (c)

7. Amendments to the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (amended Articles 3, 12, 13, and 25 and new Articles 5³ and 7³) aimed to improve further the legal protection against discrimination on the grounds of sex came into force in 2008.³ The amended Law expands the obligation to develop and implement programmes and measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for women and

² *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 146-5870, 2008.

³ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 75-2923, 2008.

men and to support, in accordance with law, similar programmes of non-governmental organisations (public institutions, associations and charitable foundations) that contribute to the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men, over to municipalities.

8. The Law prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex in social security systems. Specifically, the Law prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex in defining and applying social security provisions, including in systems substituting or supplementing the public social security system, also in defining participation and access conditions, setting contributions and their rates, setting benefits, including additional benefits for spouses and dependents, and establishing the duration and retention of the entitlement to benefits. The Law also prohibits discrimination in setting and applying social security provisions in the event of illness, disability, old age, including early retirement, accidents at work, occupational diseases and unemployment, as well as social security provisions entitling to any social benefits, including widowhood and orphanage pensions, other benefits and allowances. Prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of sex applies with respect to employees, including self-employed persons, persons whose careers were interrupted by illness, maternity, accident or forced unemployment, as well as job-seeking persons, pensioners, disabled employees and persons entitled to claim benefits on their behalf.

9. The Law specifies that any act or omission, legal norm, assessment criterion or practice that prevent from creating and preserving equal conditions in social security provisions shall be considered as violating equal rights for women and men, if, on the grounds of sex: compulsory or non-compulsory participation in social security systems is established for the person concerned; a person's access to the systems is restricted; different conditions are applied in relation to the retention of deferred payments, where the employee withdraws from the systems; different rules concerning the minimum period of participation are applied; different rules concerning the reimbursement of contributions or the retention of the entitlement to a benefit, where the employee withdraws from the systems, are applied; different conditions for awarding benefits and restrictions concerning their receipt are set; different conditions are set to exercise (acquire) the right to the share of funds accumulated on behalf of participants for the periods of maternity/paternity leave or any other special-purpose leave for family reasons, when the leave was granted in accordance with laws or under the contract and the contributions during the above-mentioned period was paid by the employer; different rates of benefits are established, unless it is necessary to take into consideration the factors of actuarial calculation, which differ in the fixed contributions systems according to gender; different rates of contributions payable by the participants are set, except for contributions for biometrical risk insurance, in which case it is necessary to take into consideration the factors of actuarial calculation, which differ according to gender; different rates of contributions are set, with the exception of the fixed contributions system, when it is sought to make net payments as similar as possible for the participants of both genders, and the fixed benefits systems where the contributions are used to ensure adequacy of funds required to cover the costs of guaranteed benefits.

10. On 23 July 2009, amendments to Article 12 of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, expanding the powers of the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, came into force. Since then, the Ombudsman for Equal Opportunities

has been conducting independent investigations of cases of discrimination and independent reviews of the situation in terms of discrimination, publishing independent reports, providing opinions and recommendations on the implementation of the Law in relation to any discrimination-related issues, and making proposals to state or municipal institutions of the Republic of Lithuania concerning legislative improvements and equal rights enforcement policies.

11. To ensure legal protection of women against violence, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, implementing its Programme, has endorsed, by Resolution No. 1091 of 10 July 2010⁴, the draft text of the Law on the Protection against Domestic Violence and amendments to the Code of Administrative Offences (amendments to Articles 224 and 259¹ and introduction of a new Article 183¹) and tabled the two pieces of legislation to the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania for approval. The draft Law was presented at a session of the Seimas on 14 September, and, supported by an absolute majority of votes, the deliberation procedure was commenced.

12. The draft Law aims at protecting natural persons against domestic violence, which, due to the scale of damage to the public, is classified as an act with implications for the public; specifically, the Law aims to ensure efficient prevention to minimise cases of violence, persecute each and every case of violence, ensure a rapid response to emerging threats by applying preventive sanctions, and provide adequate comprehensive assistance to victims. The goals of the draft Law will be sought by setting up legal mechanisms for the protection against domestic violence, including prevention, sanctions and their application, a comprehensive set of services to victims, and by defining personal rights, duties and responsibilities of the perpetrator and the victim.

13. The draft Law defines the concepts of domestic violence, physical, psychological and sexual violence, the perpetrator and the victim of violence, and envisages concrete preventive measures and actions to be funded by the state and to be implemented by state or municipal institutions in cooperation with NGOs. The draft Law suggests the following sanctions on perpetrators: formal admonition, obligation to move out, prohibition to approach the victim and to seek contacts, obligation to attend a course on non-offending behaviour. It also envisages a mechanism for applying these sanctions promptly and efficiently on the occurrence of an act of violence, to ensure separation of the perpetrator and protection on the victim. Moreover, it envisages the provision of comprehensive assistance to victims, including a temporary safe shelter, where necessary, and psychological, legal, social and other assistance, including free-of-charge counselling by phone, and lays down the procedure for providing the assistance.

14. Paragraph 1 of Article 140 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania, *Causing Physical Pain or a Negligible Health Impairment*, states that “a person who, by beating or other violent actions, causes to a person physical pain or a negligible bodily harm or a short-term illness shall be punished by community service or by restriction of liberty or by arrest or by imprisonment for a term of up to one year”. Paragraph 3 of the same Article states that “a person shall be held liable for an act provided for in paragraph 1 of this Article only subject to a complaint filed by the victim or a statement by the victim’s authorised

⁴ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 89-4707, 2010.

representative or at the prosecutor's request". Article 407 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Republic of Lithuania states that criminal proceedings concerning criminal acts punishable under, inter alia, Article 140 (1) shall only be commenced in response to a complaint filed by the victim or a statement by the victim's authorised representative. These cases shall not be subject to pre-trial investigations, with the exception of conversion of private prosecution to public prosecution in accordance with Article 409 of the Code. For the time being, practical application of Article 140 (1) of the Criminal Code is limited to the issuance of a warning by a police officer to the perpetrator that further violent actions will incur criminal liability and to suggesting the victim to initiate private prosecution in the court. This explains the relatively small number of criminal proceedings for violence against women in Lithuania. With the adoption of the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence, the situation will hopefully change. More information about this draft Law is provided in this Report above.

15. It should be noted that technical possibilities to collect and store information on sanctions imposed on perpetrators of violence against women have been too limited up to now. Fortunately, in October 2010, the European Commission signed an agreement for funding the project of the establishment of an integrated criminal justice information system, shortly referred to as the e-Proceedings project. The system will connect databases of the Police Department under the Ministry of the Interior, the Information Technology and Communications Department under the Ministry of the Interior, the National Courts Administration, the General Prosecutor's Office and the Prison Department under the Ministry of Justice. E-Proceedings will automatically generate the layout of a criminal file, forms of procedural documents, statistic cards in order to facilitate recording of all actions by officers of institutions involved in the investigations and all information relevant for the investigation of a criminal act from the moment of initiation of the investigation to the announcement of judgment. Once this project is implemented, statistical data on reported and investigated criminal acts will be generated from the data in the procedural documents, which will facilitate obtaining more accurate and complete data on criminal acts and on persons convicted for such criminal acts.

16. Article 2 (b) of the Convention refers to sanctions. A sanction in criminal legal terms is defined as a penalty within a certain range defined in the criminal law, imposed on a person who has committed a criminal act. The Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the CC) imposes criminal sanctions for discrimination (including discrimination against women).

17. Chapter XXV of the CC covers three types of criminal acts involving discrimination: Article 169 — *Discrimination on the Grounds of Nationality, Race, Sex, Descent, Religion or Belonging to Other Groups*; Article 170 — *Incitement against Any National, Racial, Ethnic, Religious or Other Group of Persons*; and Article 170¹ — *Creation and Activities of Groups and Organisations Aiming at Discriminating a Group of Persons or Inciting against It*.

18. A person who takes action to hinder, on the grounds of sex, <...> a group of persons or a person belonging thereto to participate on a par with other persons in political, economic, social, cultural, labour or other activities, or to restrict the rights and freedoms of such a group of persons or of a person belonging thereto shall be punished by community service or by a fine or by restriction of liberty or by arrest or by imprisonment for a term of up to three years (Art. 169 of the CC).

19. Incitement against a group of persons (Art. 170 of the CC) covers three types of criminal acts:

(a) A person who, for the purpose of distribution, produces, acquires, sends, transports, stores or distributes items ridiculing, expressing contempt for, urging hatred for or inciting discrimination against a group of persons or a person belonging thereto on the grounds of sex, <...> or inciting violence, a physical violent treatment of such a group of persons or a person belonging thereto, shall be punished by a fine or by restriction of liberty or by arrest or by imprisonment for a term of up to one year;

(b) A person who publicly ridicules, expresses contempt for, urges hatred for or incites discrimination against a group of persons or a person belonging thereto on the grounds of sex, <...> shall be punished by a fine or by restriction of liberty or by arrest or by imprisonment for a term of up to two years;

(c) A person who publicly incites violence or a physical violent treatment of a group of persons or a person belonging thereto on the grounds of sex, <...> or finances or otherwise supports such activities shall be punished by a fine or by restriction of liberty or by arrest or by imprisonment for a term of up to three years.

20. A person who organises a group of accomplices or an organised group or organisation aiming at discriminating a group of persons on the grounds of sex, <...> or inciting against it, or who participates in the activities of such a group or organisation or finances or otherwise supports such a group or organisation, shall be punished by a fine or by restriction of liberty or by arrest or by imprisonment for a term of up to one year (Art. 170¹ of the CC).

21. Legal entities, too, are liable under criminal law for inciting against any group of persons and for creating, or participating in, a group or organisation aiming at discriminating another group of persons or inciting against it. Pursuant to Article 43 (1) of the CC, a legal entity is punishable for the commission of a criminal act by a fine, restriction of operations of the legal entity, or liquidation of the legal entity.

22. By introducing several alternative penalties for the offences concerned, the legislator has given a wide discretion to courts to judge what penalty is appropriate. It is hoped that with each individual case being assessed properly, the purpose of penalty laid down in Article 41 (2) of the CC can be achieved even through the most lenient penalty. It is also believed that the types of punishment envisaged for the criminal acts concerned will discourage potential offenders from committing criminal acts.

23. Discriminatory intentions are qualified as an aggravating circumstance; hatred on the grounds of sex is listed as one of such intentions (Art. 60 (1) (12) of the CC). A court shall take this into consideration when imposing a penalty (Art. 54 (1) (7) of the CC). Thus, a sanction for a criminal act involving discrimination on the grounds of sex may be heavier than a sanction for the same criminal act not involving this aggravating circumstance (Art. 61 (2) of the CC states that a court, having assessed mitigating and/or aggravating circumstances, their number, nature and interrelation, <...> shall make a reasoned choice between a more lenient or a more severe type of penalty and the size of penalty with reference to the average size). Thus, a criminal act involving discrimination against a person on the grounds of sex may carry a heavier sanction.

24. Heavier criminal liability for a murder (Art. 129 of the CC), severe health impairment (Art. 135 of the CC), and non-severe health impairment (Art. 138 of the CC) may be imposed on the perpetrators, where these criminal acts have been committed with the intention to express hatred for a person on the grounds of sex (as a qualifying feature of these criminal acts). Here, only one type of penalty is possible, i.e. deprivation of liberty: of up to five years for non-severe health impairment, from two to twelve years for severe health impairment, and up to twenty years or life imprisonment for a murder. It should be noted that both the aggravating circumstance concerned and the qualifying feature of criminal acts were introduced in the CC in 2009.

25. In 2008, the Criminal Code introduced two new criminal sanctions: prohibition to approach the victim and obligation to participate in offending behaviour treatment programmes; these may be imposed in addition to the penalty proper (Art. 67 (3) of the CC) and must be relevant for achieving the purpose of penalty (Art. 67 (1) of the CC). These criminal sanctions are not limited to criminal acts involving discrimination but, when imposed for such acts, they contribute to the protection of the victim and to the fight against discrimination as they not only facilitate the achievement of the purpose of the penalty but are also preventive in nature.

26. In 2009, a draft Law Amending the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Republic of Lithuania (No. XIP-677; hereinafter referred to as the draft CCP) was submitted to the Seimas for consideration; the Law will give more rights to the victim in private prosecution proceedings (in which the victim plays a prosecutorial role), e.g. the private prosecutor will have the right to apply to the court for the imposition of a supervision measure or other procedural coercive measure on the offender (Art. 2 and Art. 14 of the draft CCP), or the victim, the owner of the housing, will have the right to restrict ownership rights to the housing, if the offender has been obligated to live separately from the victim (Art. 3 of the draft CCP). These amendments are aimed at ensuring better protection of victims of criminal acts (including women) who can additionally suffer from discrimination.

Subparagraph (d)

27. With a view to implementing Recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to Lithuania of 18 July 2008, efforts were made in 2008 to strengthen capacities of civil servants to address gender equality issues. 105 civil servants and workers (59 women and 46 men) of administrative units of the Ministry of the Interior and institutions under the Ministry of the Interior participated in trainings on gender equality in 2008. 24 workers of the Ministry of Environment and 39 workers of the Ministry of Transport and Communications have used the knowledge acquired in gender equality training in practice.

28. In 2009, the Training Centre of the Ministry of Justice organised a training course for judges and prosecutors on the application of European and national legal acts prohibiting discrimination. The training was attended by 39 judges and prosecutors. 4 judges also participated in seminars on equal rights of women and men in the European Union law organised and financed by the Academy of European Law.

29. The Action Plan of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014 envisages Measure *To Raise Public Awareness on Equal*

Opportunities for Women and Men through Legal Educational Programmes in the Media; the responsible institution — the Ministry of Justice.

Subparagraph (e)

30. The Office of the Ombudsman for Equal Opportunities, which conducts independent investigations of cases of discrimination on any of the grounds covered in the Law on Equal Treatment, received 219 complaints and conducted 3 investigations on its own initiative in 2008. In 2009, the number of complaints slightly dropped: 165 complaints were received and 3 investigations were conducted on the initiative of the Ombudsman, of which 44 cases concerned alleged discrimination on the grounds of sex, accounting for 20% of the total number of investigations carried out in 2008, and 43 investigations were carried out in response to complaints about violation of equal opportunities of women and men, accounting for 26% of the total number of investigations carried out by the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman in 2009.

31. In 2008, like in the previous years, more complaints about discrimination on the grounds of sex were filed by women than men (see Annex 1), whereas in 2009 more complaints about discrimination on the grounds of sex were received from men (see Annex 2).

32. In 2008, complaints from women accounted for 52% of all complaints, with the remaining 48% filed by men. In 2009, 61% of all complaints received by the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman were filed by men and 39% by women. The complaint statistics demonstrates that men are breaking the old stereotypes and more actively fight for their rights. They do not think anymore that discrimination can only be targeted against women and that equal treatment is of no concern to men.

33. Article 24 of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men gives the power to the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman to adopt the following decisions:

(a) To refer the investigation dossier to a pre-trial investigation institution or a prosecutor if features of a criminal act have been identified;

(b) To address the person or institution concerned with a recommendation to discontinue actions that violate equal rights and to amend or repeal the legal act related thereto;

(c) To initiate administrative proceedings and impose administrative sanctions;

(d) To dismiss the complaint if the alleged violation has not been corroborated;

(e) To terminate the investigation if the complainant withdraws his/her complaint or when there is a lack of objective evidence about the committed violation or when the complainant and the offender have reconciled or when actions that violate equal rights have been ceased or when legal acts that violate equal rights have been amended or repealed;

(f) To admonish for committing the violation;

(g) To suspend the investigation if the person who has filed the complaint or whose actions are complained about is ill or away;

(h) To ban temporarily, pending the final decision, the display of an advertisement if there is sufficient evidence that the advertisement already displayed or still to be displayed can be qualified as inciting ethnic, racial, religious hatred or hatred on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, disability, beliefs or age, and would seriously harm public interests, would humiliate human honour and dignity and pose a threat to public moral principles;

(i) To impose an obligation on the advertisers to remove such prohibited advertisements, and to establish the deadlines and the conditions for the discharge of this obligation.

34. In 2008, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman adopted 18 decisions to refer the case to prosecution authorities, 49 decisions to recommend to discontinue actions violating equal rights and to amend or repeal the legal act related thereto, 2 decisions to impose an administrative sanction, 40 decisions to dismiss the complaint as unfounded, 47 decisions to terminate the investigation, and 15 decisions to issue an admonition (for percentage shares, see the diagram in Annex 3).

35. In 2009, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman adopted 5 decisions to refer the case to prosecution authorities, 45 decisions to recommend to discontinue actions violating equal rights and to amend or repeal the legal act related thereto, 33 decisions to dismiss the complaint as unfounded, 79 decisions to terminate the investigation, and 5 decisions to issue an admonition (for percentage shares, see the diagram in Annex 4). The annual statement of the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman for 2010 is currently underway.

36. The Code of Administrative Offences requires the investigation of an administrative offence be based on the principle of equality of all persons before the law and determines the investigating body. Moreover, the search of a person and the check of objects may only be performed by a person of the same gender as the person being searched, in the presence of two other persons of the same gender.

Subparagraphs (f) and (g)

37. The Criminal Code is being continually improved to combat discrimination against women. In 2009, the CC was updated by introducing a new Article 170¹ (*Creation and Activities of Groups and Organisations Aiming at Discriminating a Group of Persons or Inciting against It*). Alongside, Article 170 of the CC was amended by introducing a new Paragraph 1 and amending Paragraph 2⁵ These amendments were aimed at ensuring a more efficient fight against discrimination by employing legal penal measures, i.e. by criminalising new dangerous acts or expanding the existing criminalisation.

38. The new Paragraph 1 introduced to Article 170 of the CC criminalises distribution, production, acquisition, shipment, transportation, and storage (with the intent to distribute) of items ridiculing, expressing contempt for, urging hatred for or inciting discrimination against a group of persons or a person belonging thereto on the above-mentioned grounds. This expanded the possibility to prosecute a person for inciting against a group of persons, i.e. from now on, a person may be prosecuted for inciting discrimination against or hatred for, etc., a certain group of persons (e.g. women) irrespective of whether these acts have been committed

⁵ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 89-3663, 2009.

publicly or not. Criminalisation of such acts will presumably prevent discriminatory information from entering the public space, since, e.g., criminal prosecution of a person who has acquired discriminatory items with the intent of distribution will possibly avert the risk of such items becoming public.

39. Article 170¹ of the CC criminalises the creation of a group of accomplices or an organised group or organisation aiming at discriminating a group of persons on the grounds of sex, <...> or inciting against it, or participation in the activities of such a group or organisation, or financing or otherwise supporting such a group or organisation. This is another contributor to the fight against discrimination (including discrimination against women) by penal measures because the mere fact that the creation of, and participation in, such groups or organisations is punishable will hopefully prevent further offending actions by members of such groups, e.g. ridiculing persons for belonging to a certain group (including ridiculing women).

40. In addition to the fact that discrimination of women is classified as an aggravating circumstance to be taken into account by the court in determining the penalty (Art. 54 (1) (7) of the CC) and as a qualifying feature of certain criminal acts, the CC dedicates a separate chapter for criminal acts against equal rights and freedom of conscience. An example is Article 169 criminalising discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, race, sex, origin, religion or belonging to other groups. Such activities may carry a penalty of up to three years of imprisonment. Article 170 of the CC criminalises incitement against any group of persons, including a group of persons formed on the basis of sex. Such activities may carry a penalty of up to three years of imprisonment. It should be mentioned that criminal liability also arises for the creation of, and participation in, groups and organisations aiming at discriminating, or inciting against, a group of persons (including on the grounds of sex).

Article 3

41. The second National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2005-2009 was completed in 2009. To evaluate the impact of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2005-2009 and other programmes contributing to its goals and objectives, the Women's Issues Information Centre conducted, in 2009, an external evaluation of the developments in the situation of women and men in all spheres⁶. According to the findings of the evaluation:

42. People in Lithuania are increasingly adopting a more modern and more positive attitude towards women and gender equality but the process is slow. Women's attitude towards gender equality is more positive than men's. The improvement in attitudes and behaviour with respect to women is more visible in the spheres addressed by Government-approved programmes.

43. The attitude towards equality of women in the labour market has changed significantly in 2000 compared to 1994. The majority of people do not share the view that in the shortage of jobs men applicants should be given priority over women anymore. 70% of the Lithuanian population would prefer a family in which

⁶ <http://www.socmin.lt/index.php?1606775163>

both the husband and the wife have jobs and both take care of their children and household.

44. More women than men receive lower incomes; thus, the threat of poverty feminisation remains. More men than women of the working age have jobs and men still dominate in senior positions, which testifies to the still existing secondary role of women in the labour market.

45. Lithuanian people's attitude towards women in politics is becoming increasingly positive, and the number of those who believe women should not be involved in politics at all has significantly decreased. More and more people share the view that the more women in politics, the higher the likelihood of positive changes in many public policies.

46. Over the period between 2000 and 1994, the gender gap and the number of cases of discrimination on the grounds of sex, also cases of violence and sexual harassment, has been reduced significantly. Progress in this regard was driven by the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men as well as amendments to other legal acts, also by the implementation of national programmes of equal opportunities of women and men in cooperation with NGOs, researchers and social partners, the implementation of the National Strategy for Combating Violence against Women, and other programmes adopted by the Government covering measures aimed at ensuring gender equality, also activities by the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman and the establishment of the gender equality mechanism, particularly the Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, and it coordinated and result-focussed activities.

47. The slowest change has been recorded in the attitude towards women's role in the society and in the family, which is probably still heavily influenced by discriminatory patriarchal stereotypes. The traditional sharing of domestic responsibilities in the family is also changing too slowly. The fact that this issue was not captured by the national programmes of equal opportunities of women and men prompts a conclusion that changes are only happening in the spheres addressed by the above-mentioned and other programmes.

48. Women's and men's equal opportunities programmes are well visible for the society, are well-focussed and bring about positive changes in the situation of women and men in the relevant spheres. Lithuanian people would prefer more attention and higher financing for addressing concerns in the area of employment and in the labour market, such as the possibility to find a job and hold equal position, receive equal pay for the same work, balance career and private life, exercise human rights, eliminate violence in the family and the society.

49. More information on the results of implementation of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2005-2009 and on the objectives and actions envisaged in the new National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014 is presented in sections below on individual articles of the Convention.

50. As part of implementing the Programme of the Government, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved, by Resolution No. 530 of 4 May 2010⁷, a National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014

⁷ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 56-2757, 2010.

(hereinafter referred to as the Programme). The Programme sets the aim of enforcing, in a consistent, integrated and systematic manner, equal opportunities of women and men in all spheres of life and of ensuring implementation of EU and international commitments in the area of gender equality.

51. The Programme has been written by the interinstitutional standing Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the light of results of implementation of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2005-2009 approved by Resolution No. 1042 of 26 September 2005 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁸, which was assessed by external experts as part of the external evaluation of the developments in the situation of women and men in all spheres of life⁹. The conclusions section of the evaluation give a description of the current state of affairs and the changes that took place since the start of the Programme, the main problems, and the need to continue measures that proved efficient and to introduce new ones. The authors of the Programme also took note of suggestions made by non-governmental organisations, social partners and gender study centres to make sure that gender equality problems in the relevant spheres are tackled consistently and systematically and gender gaps are reduced. Furthermore, the Programme took into account recommendations made to Lithuania by United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women following the examination of the Third and the Fourth Reports. Actions envisaged in the Programme also address many of the critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action. Moreover, the Programme envisages actions to implement the UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The Programme's Action Plan lists measures to address the identified problems, designates responsible implementers, and sets implementation deadlines, financing sources and implementation criteria.

52. The Programme seeks to address problems in relation to equal opportunities of women and men in the following areas of priority: employment, education and science, health care, environmental protection, national defence, decision-making, and implementation of EU and international commitments for gender equality. A special section in the Programme is dedicated to the development of mechanisms and methods of implementation of equal opportunities for women and men with a view to ensuring better management and efficiency.

53. Programme goals in the area of employment: to improve opportunities for women to restart career after a childcare leave and facilitate reintegration and stay of older women in the labour market; to improve opportunities for women, especially in rural areas, to start and develop their own business; to promote more active economic participation of women and men in rural areas; to facilitate improvement of professional skills of rural people, both women and men; to create conditions for women and men to balance work and family duties; to promote the development of family-friendly workplaces; to seek to reduce the wage gap between men and women; to promote equal approach, recognition and treatment of women and men in the labour market; to reduce sectoral and professional gender segregation in the labour market; to integrate issues of equal opportunities of women and men in the labour market into social partnerships and social dialogue.

⁸ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 116-4202, 2005.

⁹ <http://www.socmin.lt/index.php?1606775163>

54. Programme goals in the area of education and science: to ensure monitoring of application of the principle of equal opportunities of women and men in education and science establishments; to encourage women to pursue highest academic degrees; to encourage men to pursue higher education.

55. Programme goals in the area of health care: to address women- and men-specific health issues; to ensure continuous public awareness-raising and dissemination of information on the impact of healthy lifestyles on life expectancy and on the consequences of health-damaging behaviour with a view to reducing the gap between men's and women's average life expectancy; to ensure accessibility of tests for cervical, breast and prostate cancer and the provision of information on the availability of such tests; to reduce morbidity with heart and vascular diseases and disability and mortality caused by such diseases.

56. Programme goals in the area of environmental protection: to mainstream gender equality in environmental projects implemented by public authorities; to create equal conditions to benefit from project results; to promote cooperation among non-governmental organisations in mainstreaming gender equality in environmental projects.

57. Programme goals in the area of national defence: to identify causes of different situation of women and men in the national defence system; to seek to reduce differences of women's and men's situation in the service; to improve competences of civil servants, military personnel and administrative staff of the Ministry of National Defence, institutions under the Ministry of National Defence and other institutions of the national defence system on women's and men's situation in the society and gender equality issues, including issues of implementation of the UNSCR 1325.

58. Programme goals in the area of decision-making: to seek equal representation of women's and men's interests in economic and political decision-making; to encourage women, especially in rural areas, to play an active role in the community through local initiatives, community projects and active partnership when taking decisions of relevance to the community.

59. Programme goals in the area of EU and international cooperation: to ensure implementation of EU and international commitments in the area of gender equality; to develop cooperation with the European Institute for Gender Equality; to disseminate globally Lithuania's experience in enforcing equal opportunities for women and men.

60. Programme goals in the area of developing mechanisms and methods to implement equal opportunities for women and men: to promote cooperation among central and municipal authorities and institutions, educational and science institutions, NGOs and social partners aimed at ensuring equal treatment of and equal opportunities for women and men; to encourage municipalities to take actions to ensure equal opportunities for women and men; to improve capacities of civil servants and employees of public authorities on the issue of equal opportunities for women and men; to disseminate information contributing to the prevention of violation of the principle of equal rights for women and men; to strengthen capacities to address gender equality issues; to conduct regular assessments of changes in the situation of women and men; to collect statistics segregated by sex; to compile and disseminate high quality statistics for robust analysis of gender gaps

and decision-making; to encourage discussions on the topic; to improve provision of gender-specific statistical information to users.

61. To implement the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014, an Action Plan was adopted and approved by Order No. A1-323 of 7 July 2010 of the Minister of Social Security and Labour¹⁰. The Action Plan sets out concrete actions, implementation deadlines, responsible institutions, and needed state budget allocations for each individual action.

62. The Programme establishes the mechanism for its implementation. Responsibility for carrying out actions to implement the Programme is shared by all ministries. The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, non-governmental organisations, social partners and municipalities are advised to take part in the implementation of the Programme, while ministries responsible for the implementation of individual actions under the Programme are advised to cooperate with women NGOs, universities, the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, social partners and municipalities.

63. Coordination of the implementation of the Programme is the responsibility of the Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (hereinafter referred to as the Commission) set up by Resolution No. 266 of 7 March 2000 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania¹¹ and formed of representatives of ministries and non-governmental organisations. Before 15 January every year, members of the Commission have to develop, by using established performance measures, and submit to the Ministry of Social Security and Labour reports on the implementation of the Programme. Members of the Commission who represent the Ministry of Social Security and Labour then produce, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Commission, a consolidated Programme implementation report. The report is then examined at an open sitting of the Commission with all stakeholders present. Approved by the Commission, the report is to be submitted by 15 February to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. Each body or institution implementing the Programme inform the public and, where necessary, other institutions on the progress of implementation of the Programme within their competence. The final evaluation of the overall impact of the Programme will be performed by external evaluators in 2014, when the Programme will be completed. The results will be compared against the previous external evaluation carried out in 2009.

64. The principle of equal opportunities for women and men and specific measures to achieve it are also covered in other programmes; certain specific problems, like e.g. reduction of violence against women, are addressed by specialised programmes. Thus, the Programme is being implemented in coordination with other programmes contributing to the achievement of Programme goals and objectives and to the solution of problems identified.

65. The Action Plan 2007-2009 for the implementation of the National Strategy for Combating Violence against Women was continued in 2008-2009. In this period, priority was given to actions geared towards the provision of comprehensive assistance to victims of violence, prevention of violence, support to NGOs engaged in combating violence, work with perpetrators, provision of information to the

¹⁰ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 83-4391, 2010.

¹¹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 22-564, 2000.

public. As mentioned in the Fourth Report, progress of implementation of the Action Plan is reported annually to the Government. Every year since 2009, results of implementation of the Action Plan of the National Strategy for Combating Violence against Women has been presented and discussed with NGOs and other stakeholders. The presentation of results of 2009 took place on 5 March 2010, and the results of 2010 on 4 February 2011. Below is some information on the results of implementation of the Strategy in 2008-2010.

66. Increasingly more comprehensive assistance is provided to women victims of violence. More detailed information on the financing of this assistance both from the state budget and the EU Structural Funds and on the establishment of new aid centres was provided to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2010. Comprehensive assistance is available to women victims of violence in all regions of Lithuania, but not in every municipality yet. Moreover, due to the economic recession, the financing was not adequate. Once the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence comes into force, needs-based assistance to every woman victim of violence will be mandatory in every municipal territory, including rural localities.

67. In 2008, using state budgetary funds, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour supported 29 projects aimed at offering comprehensive assistance to women victims of violence. Most of the projects were promoted by women's NGOs (cf. 20 projects of this kind were supported in 2007). In 2008, social services were provided through projects to 2,144 women victims of violence (cf. 1,838 women in 2007). The majority of these women were provided with consulting and information services, psychological aid, temporary housing, catering, legal assistance, etc. Toll-free hotline established in 2004 extended its working hours to 24 hours a day to make sure that assistance to victimised women is available round the clock. 2 training seminars were organised for crisis centres and volunteers with the aim to enhance the quality of assistance available. A training programme was developed for workers of crisis centres who answer the toll-free hotline calls and for volunteers.

68. With a view to ensuring continuous prevention of violence against women, an awareness-raising campaign was carried out in 2008 throughout Lithuania, aimed at combating violence against women, promoting intolerance of the public to violence against women, and changing discriminatory approaches in the society to interrelations between women and men. Innovative measures were employed to inform and guide the public, such as a mobile expert bureau, motor-shops, indication of the toll-free hotline number on packing of commodities, such as detergents, display of posters with words *NO to Violence* in stores of the largest retail network "Maxima", etc. 1,000 posters, 10,000 stickers and 600 badges were distributed during the campaign. The public was urged not to tolerate violence and informed of the availability of assistance to women victims of violence, and individual expert consultations were provided, including on the availability of legal assistance and sanctions on perpetrators. Organisers of the awareness-raising campaign *16 Days without Violence against Women*, together with the U.S. Embassy organised a procession in Vilnius on 7 December, with representatives of governmental and non-governmental organisations, U.S. Embassy staff, members of the Seimas and ministries, and active members of the community.

69. To improve legal literacy so that available legal instruments of protection against violence can be effectively used, 10 legal education seminars were organised

in 7 counties for 357 participants: police officers, medical personnel, social workers, social pedagogues, NGOs, and local population.

70. Women's NGOs make a visible contribution to combating violence against women; therefore, their activities are supported from the state budget annually. In 2008, financial support was given to 19 non-governmental organisations, mainly women's (cf. 13 women's NGOs in 2007). Non-governmental organisations organised 9 conferences attended by 550 participants, 95 seminars attended by 790 participants, and 39 discussions attended by 355 participants: social workers of municipalities and wards, NGOs, and police officers.

71. Efforts were also made to improve work with perpetrators. In 2008, 9 projects were co-financed (cf. 6 in 2007) to promote the establishment of crisis centres for men and self-assistance groups for perpetrators. 258 men applied to the organisations implementing such projects (cf. 152 men in 2007) for assistance, 80 of them eager to change their violent behaviour. They were provided with individual consultations by psychologists and social workers and attended group therapy sessions.

72. A practical manual for social workers *Methodology of Changing Violent Behaviour* was produced and released in 200 copies, to guide leading and assistant social workers in organising their work with perpetrators of violence. The Methodology was disseminated among organisations working with perpetrators and providing assistance to women victims of violence. The Police Department released methodological guidelines (5 thousand copies) and a memo (10 thousand copies) for police officers directly dealing with domestic conflicts.

73. Legal framework was being further improved and specialist capacities further strengthened in the area of combating violence against women. The Law on Courts was supplemented¹² (in force since 1 September 2008) to provide for a possibility for justices to specialise in certain types of cases. Also, the Criminal Code was amended¹³ to introduce, inter alia, a prohibition for the perpetrator of violence to approach the victim and an obligation imposed by a court on the perpetrator to attend offending behaviour treatment programmes. Prohibition to approach the victim and obligation to participate in offending behaviour treatment programmes are criminal sanctions that may be imposed in addition to the penalty proper.

74. In 2008, the Ministry of Culture organised two conferences for audio-visual market players to discuss problems of violence against women. In 2009, actions were planned too, but the implementation was not feasible due to budget cuts for the Ministry of Culture.

75. In 2008, a seminar of 3 academic hours on the topic *Provision of Legal Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence* was given for municipal staff responsible for organising and providing primary legal assistance and state-guaranteed legal aid, under the training plan for providers of state-guaranteed legal aid approved by the Minister of Justice. 62 persons participated in the seminar.

76. To analyse and evaluate of the spread of violence against women (by different cross-sections such as form of violence, victim, perpetrator, etc.) and the situation of victims of domestic violence, a survey *Analysis of Violence against Women and*

¹² *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 81-3186, 2008.

¹³ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 73-2796, 2008.

*Overview of the Situation of Victims of Violence*¹⁴ was carried out. The survey aimed at identifying the scale of violence against women, the number of women affected by violence in Lithuania and beyond, the most common forms of domestic and other types of violence, and factors having an impact on domestic violence against women. The survey also inquired into the situation of victims of violence, their knowledge of available forms of assistance, frequency of applying for assistance, perceptions of violence and “transferability-adoptability” of violence. The survey was conducted by interviewing 1,000 women in the 18-74 age-group by telephone. The results of the study revealed that 15% of married women in Lithuania have been constantly subjected to domestic violence in recent years and as much as 56% of divorced women had suffered domestic violence in the past.

77. The survey reported, inter alia, that the most common form of violence was psychological violence. It affected the majority of victimised women. Moreover, women usually suffered from more than one form of violence: nearly half of all women victims of violence were attacked physically.

78. The survey also reported that violence against women was spread to a similar extent among all social-demographic groups of the society irrespective of the level of income, education, place of residence, etc. About half of the respondents indicated they were usually attacked by the perpetrator under the influence of alcohol. Most of the women knew about the fact of existence of organisations providing assistance, and about one-fifth of them even knew their names and contact information. But as much as one-third of them indicated they had never addressed any institution or their family or friends for help.

79. Moreover, the survey not only revealed the spread and forms of violence and other characteristics, but also unclosed deep-seeded persistent problems caused by violence: ‘transferability’ of violence from generation to generation, poor understanding of violence and the resultant tolerance. The fact that violence is usually hidden away from the eyes of the public worsens the possibility to offer efficient assistance to victims and perpetrators.

80. The implementation of the Strategy’s Action Plan was continued in 2009. 16 measures under the Strategy were implemented: 9 by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, 3 by the Police Department under the Ministry of the Interior, 1 by the Ministry of Culture, 1 by the Ministry of Justice, and 1 by the Department of Statistics under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. Also, 1 measure was implemented by the Prison Department under the Ministry of Justice and 1 by the Fire Prevention and Rescue Department under the Ministry of the Interior. The implementation of the measures was funded from the state budget.

81. Provision of comprehensive assistance to women victims of violence was continued. In 2009, like every year before, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour launched a tender for projects for the provision of comprehensive assistance to victims. Due to the economic downturn, the budget available for supporting different projects was cut by 30%; nevertheless, 29 projects were supported, like in 2008. The projects provided comprehensive assistance to 1,548 women victims of violence in 2009. Details on the nature and duration of the services are provided in Annex 5.

¹⁴ <http://www.socmin.lt/index.php?1606775163>

82. NGOs are being supported further for their activities in the field of combating violence against women. In 2009, like every year before, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour supported 20 NGOs, mostly women's, engaged in reducing violence against women. NGO activities were supported with LTL 348.5 thou. The largest part of these funds, 42%, were spent on salaries and social security contributions, 34% on the procurement of services, and 6% on the improvement of infrastructure of the organisations concerned. The remaining share of the funds was used for the maintenance of premises and means of transport, also for bills for communication services.

83. Non-governmental organisations were mainly engaged in the prevention of violence against women and the provision of information and guidance. In 2009, they organised 11 conferences, in which 311 representatives of institutions engaged in the area of combating violence against women participated: social workers from wards and NGOs, representatives of police and prosecution authorities. 64 seminars were organised and attended by 687 social workers and volunteers who wished to work in the area of combating violence against women. 45 discussions and 106 meetings with representatives of different organisations engaged in the area of combating domestic violence against women were organised. In addition, non-governmental organisations engaged in the area of combating violence against women participated in 120 events, including international, dedicated to violence against women.

84. Further efforts were made to promote work with perpetrators. In 2009, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour supported 9 projects selected by way of tender, aimed at working with perpetrators. 97 perpetrators who wished to abandon their violent behaviour applied for assistance from the projects. They were provided with individual psychological consultations and attended therapy groups. The perpetrators who sought help and wished to change their behaviour in the family were provided with 387 hours of psychological consultations and 366 hours of self-assistance group exercises.

85. The majority, 34%, of perpetrators who participated in the projects were men between 30 and 40 years of age. 17% of project participants belonged to the 26-29 age-group. Older men perpetrators accounted for 37% of all project participants. The perpetrators who sought help and wished to change their behaviour were provided with 387 hours of psychological consultations and 366 hours of self-assistance group exercises. The work with perpetrators was based on the *Methodology of Changing Violent Behaviour*, a practical manual for social workers, produced and released in 2008 as part of implementing the Strategy's Action Plan.

86. In 2010, state budget allocations of LTL 230 thou were made available to support 18 projects aimed at providing comprehensive assistance to women victims of violence and at working with perpetrators. Comprehensive assistance was provided to 1,017 victims of violence, 852 of whom were victims of domestic violence (836 women and 16 men). All victims of violence were provided with information and consulting services: 500 persons with psychological assistance, 128 persons with housing, catering and other necessities, 249 persons with legal assistance. Psychological assistance was provided to 93 perpetrators who wished to desist from violent behaviour. Support was given to 12 non-governmental organisations which shared LTL 117.24 thou for their activities in the area of combating violence against women. Non-governmental organisations organised 7 conferences attended by 379 specialists from different organisations, 34 seminars attended by 341 social

workers of wards and NGOs and representatives of police and judicial institutions, and 29 round-table discussions attended by 361 representatives of different organisations active in the area of combating violence against women. 73 volunteers and representatives of NGOs participated in different courses and trainings.

87. In the beginning of 2009, a special website was launched (www.bukstipri.lt) (*Be Strong*) under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior. The website provides legal and other educational information as well as surveys and statistics. In this website, women who suffer from domestic violence can find advice on how to recognize violence and where to apply for assistance. It also gives contact information of women crisis centres and other organizations that provide assistance to women victims of domestic violence, including a hotline number for informational and psychological assistance and other useful links.

88. The website's section *Legal Information* provides an exhaustive list of persons entitled to lodge complaints about domestic violence or notify and report criminal acts to police, prosecution or other judicial authorities. It also provides information about the legal qualification of an act (depending on the type of violence), on health impairments and their verification, criminal prosecution of the perpetrator, private prosecution, sanctions that may be imposed on the perpetrator and also gives an example of a complaint in private prosecution. In this website, women affected by domestic violence may also put questions. The website is regularly updated with latest legal information and news, and the information is also disseminated through the media.

89. In November 2009, the Police Department under the Ministry of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the PD) organized a preventive campaign *No to Domestic Violence*. During this campaign, police officers placed a strong focus on families in risk groups which do not only suffer from the problem of violence but also from such problems as alcohol abuse, neglect of parental duties and similar problems. Meetings with top officials of courts, prosecution authorities, social partners (municipal social workers, child protection specialists, representatives of associations providing assistance to victims of domestic violence) were organized to explore efficient forms of cooperation in relation to domestic violence, ensure prompt exchange of information, analyze concrete cases of domestic violence, all with a view to ensuring the provision of optimal and comprehensive assistance to victims of violence, promoting desistance, providing consulting services to people, etc., by employing existing legal social and other measures.

90. Information about the implementation of the campaign *No to Domestic Violence* was disseminated through the local media and police websites; local communities were informed about illegal acts qualifying as domestic violence and about legal consequences of such acts, also about the availability of assistance to victims of violence and ways to protect against violence.

91. Pursuant to Order No. 5-V-37 of 21 January 2008 of the Lithuanian Police Commissioner General, specific officers were nominated in local police offices to be responsible for dealing with domestic violence. Trainings are regularly organized for police officers on the topic of prevention of domestic violence. In 2008, 53 police officers attended three training workshops on the topic of domestic violence against women, organised by the Lithuanian Police Training Centre.

92. In 2009 and 2010, the Lithuanian Police School organised seminars on domestic violence in all counties (attended by 164 police officers in 2009 and 211 in 2010). In 2009, the school also organized a seminar *Discrimination. Enforcement of the Principle of Legal Opportunities* (attended by 24 police officers).

93. By the data of the Prison Department under the Ministry of Justice, 341 persons were convicted and served a custodial sentence in 2009 for violence against their wives or cohabitants. Of this number, 192 perpetrators were inquired by applying the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide and the Brief Spousal Assault Form for the Evaluation of Risk. These methodologies were used to identify the need for individual interventions. Psychological assistance was provided to 235 perpetrators. In correctional institutions they were subjected to individual psychotherapy directed towards the correction of cognitive processes, motivation, control of aggression, and participation in psychotherapy groups for the identification and control of emotions. The perpetrators subject to supervision by correctional institutions were also involved into a correctional programme *Only You and Me* aimed at correcting violent behaviour.

94. By the data of the Institutional Register of Criminal Acts provided by the Department of Informatics and Communications under the Ministry of the Interior, 321 women suffered from criminal acts committed by the spouse, cohabitant or partner in 2009, including 131 women in rural areas, compared to 359 women, including 158 rural, in 2008, 418 women in 2007, and 633 women in 2004 when measures aimed at reducing violence against women were not being taken yet. Differently, the number of women victimized by their biological or adoptive children hardly changes at all. By the data of the above-mentioned Register, 96 women were victimized by their biological or adoptive children a year in 2007-2009. For comparison: in 2004 when measures aimed at reducing violence against women were not being taken yet, 118 women suffered from criminal acts committed against them by their biological or adoptive children.

95. In 2009, local police authorities and their structural units received 41,982 calls to intervene in domestic conflicts (33,927 in 2008); offices of police preventive units investigated 11,071 complaints and notifications concerning domestic violence (12,506 in 2008), including 7,423 for violence against women (8,066 in 2008); in 4,149 cases of domestic violence against women, pre-trial investigations were dropped (4,355 in 2008); 647 pre-trial investigations were started (680 in 2008); 2,560 reports were drawn up for offences under the Code of Administrative Offences (Art. 174 *Petty Hooliganism*, Art. 171 *Failure to Use Parental Power or Use Thereof against the Best Interests of the Child*, Art. 183 *Causing Public Disorder*, etc.).

96. In 2009, 5,967 notices on the need for assistance were generated in the information system of the Emergency Response Centre in response to applications concerning domestic violence and were forwarded to relevant assistance services. However, the Centre may not indicate exactly how many of these notices were related to violence against women.

97. In the light of the experience and results of the implementation of the Action Plan 2007-2009 of the National Strategy for Combating Violence against Women, the second Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for Combating Violence against Women was produced for the period of 2010-2012 and approved by Resolution No. 853 of 19 August 2009 of the Government of the

Republic of Lithuania. Actions planned for 2010-2012 will be further geared towards the provision of comprehensive assistance to women victims of violence, including the improvement of accessibility of legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, and towards further implementation of awareness-raising measures aimed at the prevention of violence, further support two women's organizations engaged in the area of reduction of violence, further work with perpetrators, and further improvement of data collection and analysis.

Article 4

Paragraph 1

98. To take account of the Concluding Observations of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning temporary special measures, the Action Plan of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014 envisages measure *To Develop Recommendations for the Application of Temporary Special Measures*. Implementation of the measure is planned in 2011 by the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman. As part of implementation of this measure, the concept of temporary special measures will be defined and explained and recommendations for possible applications of these measures will be developed.

99. Once these recommendations for the application of temporary special measures are developed, a number of seminars and trainings on the application of temporary special measures will be organized in cooperation with the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman in 2012-2014 both on the national level and in individual regions of Lithuania, as part of another measure under the Action Plan of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014.

100. In Lithuania's higher education system, no special measures are applied to ensure de facto equality between men and women. Equal conditions are ensured in Lithuania both for men and women to choose a profession, to study under the same curricula, to take the same examinations as well as to have equal access to study grants, education, diplomas, post-graduate studies, etc.

Paragraph 2

101. To improve protection of women who return to the labour market after maternity leave against discrimination on the grounds of sex, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour proposed amendments to Article 179 of the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania. The amendments were passed by the Seimas into the Law Supplementing Article 179 of the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania¹⁵ that came into force on 23 July 2009. The Law obliges the employer not only to accept a woman worker back to the same or equivalent job position after the maternity leave but also to guarantee no less favourable conditions than before, including the wage, and the right to benefit from all improvement in the conditions, including the wage, which she would have had if she had worked that period.

102. To ensure the possibility for women soldiers to balance maternity and career and for men soldiers to balance childcare and career, the Minister of National

¹⁵ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 87-3664, 2009.

Defence approved, by Order No. V-163 of 29 February 2008¹⁶, a Statute of Military Service. Paragraph 52 of the Statute provides that pregnant and breastfeeding women soldiers or women soldiers just after giving birth as well as men soldiers who have a child under 14 years of age or a disabled child under 18 years of age may be called to serve on watch and to work, in the case of necessity, extra hours (after working hours and during holidays or days-off) only subject to their consent. Paternity leave was introduced for men soldiers in 2006.

103. To ensure additional protection and promotion of maternity, amendments to the Law on Sickness and Maternity Social Insurance in force since 1 January 2008 provided that maternity/paternity benefits shall be payable until the child is 2 years old (cf. one year old, according to the previous rules): 100% of the reimbursable remuneration payable in the first year and 85% in the second year. If two or more children are born from the same pregnancy, the benefit was multiplied by the number of children born. With the economic recession, the Law on Sickness and Maternity Social Insurance was amended with effect from 1 July 2010 to reduce the amount of the benefit by 10%: 90% is now payable until the child is 1 year old and 75% until the child is 2 years old, plus the maximum reimbursable remuneration was reduced to the fourfold amount of the insured income approved for the current year (down from the fivefold amount that was applicable previously).

104. Pursuant to the Law on Support for Employment¹⁷, pregnant women, mothers/adoptive mothers, persons who actually take care of a biological/adoptive child under the age of 8 years or a disabled biological/adoptive child under the age of 18 years, also persons who take care of their family members who need permanent nursing or care are classified in the labour market as a group of persons entitled to additional support. Active labour market policy measures may be applied with respect to these target groups such as: subsidized employment, labour rotation, community service, support for self-employment and vocational training.

105. Pursuant to the Law on Social Enterprises¹⁸, a mother who is the only caregiver of a child under the age of 8 years and who has been unemployed for more than six months since the date of her registration with a labour exchange office is attributed to a target group of persons employed in social enterprises. Therefore, an enterprise which has acquired the status of a social enterprise is entitled to state aid of the following types to promote employment of the above-mentioned persons: partial reimbursement of wages and state social insurance contributions; subsidy for the creation of workplaces and for adaptation of workplaces to disabled employees and acquisition of new or adaptation of the existing work tools; and subsidy for the training of employees who are attributed to the target groups.

Article 5

Subparagraph (a)

106. As part of implementing measures for 2008-2009 under the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour continued to finance the cycle of seminars given by the Gender

¹⁶ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 30-1057, 2008.

¹⁷ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 86-3638, 2009.

¹⁸ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 96-3519, 2004.

Studies Centre of the University of Vilnius aimed at breaking stereotypes about women's and men's roles in economic activity. In 2008-2009, four seminars were organized for 120 representatives of social partners, the academic community, the media and other target groups. Topics discussed at the seminars included the impact of stereotypes on gender intercommunication in organizations, socialization processes and stereotypes, advanced paternity in Lithuania, views of the academic community and non-governmental organizations about gender roles in the labour market, the impact of stereotypes on the possibility to balance family life and career, etc.

107. In the light of the concern expressed by the Committee about gender stereotypes and its recommendations for further action, the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014 states that the view that women and men play different roles in the professional area and in the public life is still existent. This hinders equal opportunities of women and men in the labour market, limits opportunities for women to find a job and to stay in the labour market and pursue a career, increases professional and sectoral segregation in the labour market which leads to the wage gap, hinders the possibility to participate on equal footing in all fields of life and is a serious obstacle for women's aspirations for economic independence.

108. Unbiased approach to women and men that promotes equal opportunities for women and men in many fields, particularly in the labour market and decision-making, can be promoted by training, education and provision of information. Therefore, one of the Programme goals is to promote equal treatment, equal recognition and equal estimation of women and men in the labour market and to reduce sectoral and professional gender segregation in the labour market by contributing to the reduction of the wage gap.

109. The Action Plan of the Programme envisages specific measures to implement this goal. Every year in 2010-2014, the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman will organize training for the media on unbiased and non-discriminatory image of women and men in the media. In 2011-2014, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour together with gender study centres will develop and implement a training course *Representation of Men and Women in the Lithuanian Media and Literature*. The Ministry of Culture will monitor the implementation of the principle of the equality between women and men in cultural projects and will analyze and report the results on the annual basis. Every year in the period of 2011-2014, training will be organized for training and vocational guidance staff of local labour exchange offices on stereotype-free vocational guidance and information to women and men.

110. Article 19 (1) (3) of the Law on the Provision of Information to the Public¹⁹ (hereinafter referred to as the Law) prohibits publishing information in the media which instigates war or hatred, ridicule, humiliation, discrimination, violence, physical violent treatment of a group of people or a person belonging thereto on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, race, nationality, citizenship, language, background, social status, beliefs, convictions, views or religion. This provision, which has expanded the list of the grounds of discrimination, is included into the new draft Law on the Provision of Information to the Public that is currently under consideration.

¹⁹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 82-3254, 1996.

111. The draft Law on the Provision of Information to the Public also includes a new provision concerning the possibility to suspend provisionally the reception and retransmission of TV programmes broadcasted and re-broadcasted from the European Union Member States and other European countries which have ratified the European Convention on Transfrontier Television where such TV programmes obviously violate the requirements of Article 19 (1) (3) of the Law. The draft Law also allows to take measures to restrict free reception of sponsored programmes through audio-visual media when such measures are necessary in order to ensure public order, particularly crime prevention, investigation, detection and criminal prosecution, including protection of minors and fight against instigation of hatred on the grounds of race, sex, religion or nationality, and against humiliation of any individual person, also to ensure public health protection, public safety, including national security and defence, and the protection of consumers, including investors.

112. As part of implementing measures under the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, the Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with the Education Development Centre organized a number of seminars on gender equality for school teachers and social pedagogues in 2008 and 2009. A teaching aid *Possibilities to Foster Gender Equality in School* was produced for teachers and social pedagogues. This publication provides information to teachers about goals of the promotion of gender equality in school and offers methodological tools and recommendations to assist them to organize gender equality education in class and in a wider school community. Seven non-formal education projects on gender equality were selected for financing by way of tender. Also, a Study of Social Justice Indicators in Education was conducted. Due to limited availability of funding, only international research was conducted, plus a standardized testing project financed with EU funds. Four national brief analyses were conducted (types of schools, differences in gender achievements, civic education in the basic education, equal learning possibilities for boys and girls and equal learning possibilities in different schools). In 2009, a thorough study on possible signs of discrimination in general education was conducted to make scientific recommendations about how to eradicate discrimination in schools.

113. To change the stereotypical attitudes and to enhance accessibility and efficiency of psychological assistance, 54 pedagogical-psychological services were fully operational in municipalities and employed increasingly more staff. In 2009, they had 287.65 staff positions; special pedagogues, speech therapists, psychologists, social pedagogues, and neurologists. These services provided consultations to children, families and schools. Educational establishments, too, have positions of a social pedagogue, psychologist, assistant teacher, and other specialists providing assistance. An important role in the formation of cultural behavioural patterns is played by class tutors; other school staff also influence greatly children's self-valuation and self-cognition.

Subparagraph (b)

114. On 3 June 2008, the Seimas approved, by a resolution, the Conceptual Framework for National Family Policy²⁰. As stated in the Conceptual Framework, complementarity of gender and generation distinctions insures completeness of interrelations: equal cooperation between a man and a woman and close

²⁰ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 69-2624, 2008.

interrelations between generations determine mutual adoptability of cultural values and constructive behavioural patterns. This has an impact on solidarity, and democratic- and civic-mindedness of the society. The Conceptual Framework states that gender differences do not automatically create unequal opportunities and do not necessarily lead to discrimination but they are a catalyst for different expressions, views, talents and experiences which allow to cooperate creatively in all spheres of public life; it also states that complementarity of genders, which manifests itself and is fostered primarily in the family, does not mean the classification of different spheres of life and duties into men's and women's but it means equal cooperation of a man and a woman in all types of activity (they are both responsible for the family and for childcare) by recognizing and appreciating their individuality and the value of different — and therefore inter-complementary — expressions, which insures the dynamics of human creativity and interrelations.

115. Political parties, community-based organizations and individual natural persons signed, on 1 October 2010, a National Agreement on the Creation of Family-Friendly Environment which sets the following goals: to develop services and infrastructure for the family, to strengthen positive attitudes of the public towards the family, to ensure well-being and financial security of the family, and to facilitate the implementation of the procreative on function of the family.

116. Authorities also implement a Family Well-Being Action Plan 2008-2010 of the National Demographic (Population) Political Strategy, the main aims of which are: to promote youth employment; to develop flexible forms of employment; to create conditions for family members to balance professional and family duties; to seek equal rights, duties and opportunities for women and men in public life and in the family; to improve childcare and education services; to enhance capacities of family members to cope with psychological and social problems; to ensure security of a child; to expand the choice of housing to families with children; to reduce poverty and social exclusion of families; to seek that every family can have children; to limit the danger of risky sexual behaviour on reproductive health and fertility; to analyze family and birth-rate dynamics and factors; to identify the need for support to families; to evaluate efficiency of policies; to promote cooperation between the state, municipalities and the general public in addressing issues related to ensuring family well-being; to foster shared responsibility of the community and institutions for the development of the child.

117. To maintain a positive attitude of the public to the family, a Family Ambassadors Project is being implemented. Family Ambassadors are harmonious and community-active families which send a message by their lifestyles and works, through different channels, including the media, about the value of the family and its importance for a person and the society as a whole. Currently, 37 families have been nominated Family Ambassadors.

118. To promote, identify and present to the society harmonious families which stand a good example of how family values should be fostered, to encourage families to take a more active role in the public life, to unleash their creativity and to show the value, the beauty and the power of family, a contest *Harmonious Family* was conducted in 2009 and 2010.

119. With a view to ensuring a better social dialogue in the society on issues important for the family, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour initiated a cycle of debates *The Family — the Society — the State*, as a platform for discussions on

family issues. Discussions were organised on the following topics: “Work overshadows family and nothing can be done about it”, “Can the society do without marriage?”, “Good relations do not require much effort”, “The State interferes too much into family matters” (videos can be viewed on the website www.socmin.lt). Participants of the debates, representing different professions (lawyers, scientists, economists, psychologists, philosophers, businessmen, etc.), were divided into two opposite camps — advocates and opponents of the topic selected for the particular debate — and tried to defend their position and to persuade the audience. Each debate was subsequently reflected in the printed media and on the Internet. The viewers expressed a wish to continue this kind of public debate which looks into issues of importance to the family and which does not evade controversial issues that lead to hot discussions in the public.

Article 6

120. In 2008, implementation of the second Programme for the Prevention and Control of Trafficking in Human Beings 2005-2008 approved by Resolution No. 558 of 19 May 2005 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania²¹ was completed. Under Measure 12 of the Programme for the Prevention and Control of Trafficking in Human Beings, *To Support Projects Implemented by Public Authorities and Non-Governmental Organizations Aimed at Providing Social Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings, Their Protection and Re-Integration into the Society*, 15 projects of social assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings, their protection and re-integration into the society (hereinafter referred to as the projects) selected by a way of tender in 2008 were financed by allocating LTL 400 thou.

121. Under these projects, support was given to 922 persons (107 actual and 815 potential victims of trafficking in human beings (hereinafter collectively referred to as the victims), including 92 mothers and 68% of persons under eighteen years of age. For the majority of these victims, support was provided off the shelter. 60% of the victims were provided with psychological assistance, 40% with information services, 22% with legal aid, 38% with social support, 50% with catering services, 68% of the victims attended group sessions, and 10% needed medical aid. Project implementers working in the area of prevention organized public lectures, group sessions, social competence and self-assistance exercises, conferences, seminars, meetings and discussions.

122. To ensure integration of actual and potential victims of trafficking in human beings into the labour market, 15% of the victims were provided with employment and work therapy services, 8% with vocational guidance services, and with support for integration into the labour market.

123. Consistent and focused policy of prevention and control of trafficking in human beings in line with international commitments of Lithuania was continued as before. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved, by Resolution No. 1104 of 9 September 2009²², a new Programme for the Prevention and Control of Trafficking in Human Beings 2009-2012 (hereinafter referred to as the

²¹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 65-2333, 2005.

²² *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 112-4761, 2009.

Programme). The strategic goal of the Programme is to address, in a consistent and systematic manner, problems related to the prevention and control of trafficking in human beings on the national level. Other goals of the Programme include: to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings; to protect rights of victims of trafficking in human beings and to provide comprehensive assistance to them; to ensure functioning of the mechanisms for the provision of assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings and for the protection of witnesses; to ensure effective international cooperation between competent authorities and non-governmental organizations of the Republic of Lithuania and foreign countries in combating trafficking in human beings. The Programme has been developed by taking account of the results achieved and problems encountered during the implementation of the previous Programme for the Prevention and Control of Trafficking in Human Beings 2005-2008, also of the need to continue efficient measures of this previous programme, as well as of the latest trends in the area of trafficking in human beings in Lithuania and foreign countries.

124. With a view to implementing Directive 2004/23/EC of 31 March 2004 of the European Parliament and the Council on setting standards of quality and safety for the donation, procurement, testing, processing, preservation, storage and distribution of human tissues and cells (OJ L 102, 7.4.2004, p. 48-58), the Seimas adopted a Law Amending and Supplementing Articles 13, 15, 41, 142, 172¹⁹, 172²¹, 173⁵, 214, 214¹⁰, 214¹⁹, 221, 224, 232, 232¹, 233, 246¹, 246⁶, 259¹, 262, 281, 288, and 320, introducing new Articles 41¹², 43¹¹, 43¹², 142¹¹, and 187¹³, and repealing Articles 214¹² and 214¹³ of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the CAO) in 2009²³. Among the new articles added to the CAO were Articles 43¹¹ and 43¹²: *Violation of Legal Acts Governing the Donation, Procurement, Testing, Processing, Preservation, Storage, Distribution and Transplantation of Human Tissues, Cells or Organs, Also Products Made of Human Tissues, Cells or Organs for Human Application; and Hindering Officials of the National Transplantation Bureau under the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania to Perform their Functions Laid Down in Legal Acts or Failure to Comply with Their Legitimate Instructions*. These new provisions of the CAO are relevant for the prevention and control of trafficking in human beings as sale of human organs and tissues is one of the underlying reasons of trafficking in human beings.

125. New provisions for their prevention of trafficking in human beings were also added to the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Legal Status of Aliens²⁴ of 1 February 2008. These concern first of all Article 26, *Conditions of Issue or Replacement of a Residence Permit*, which sets out, in paragraph 1, the conditions that an alien must meet in order to qualify for a residence permit. Paragraph 2 sets that the alien who is or has been a victim of human trafficking and who cooperates with the pre-trial investigation body or the court in combating human trafficking or offences linked to human trafficking may be exempted from the conditions set above.

126. On 12 February 2008, Lithuania signed the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings 2005, which is applicable to all forms of trafficking in human beings, whether national or transnational, and whether connected with organized crime or not. The Convention requires, inter alia, that the

²³ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 89-3805, 2009.

²⁴ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 137-5199, 2004; No. 22-803, 2008.

problem of trafficking in human beings be addressed in non-discriminatory manner. The Convention also covers the prevention of trafficking in human beings, protection of rights of victims of this crime, assistance to victims, criminalization and investigation and other relevant aspects of combating this crime. Currently, the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings is under the ratification process.

127. A new wording of the Law of Republic of Lithuania on Compensation of Damage Caused by Violent Offenses came into force on 1 March 2009. On the basis of this Law, the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania issued Order No. 1R-88 of 20 March 2009, whereby a list of violent offenses, the damage caused by which may be compensated, was approved. The list of such violent offenses includes crimes connected with trafficking in women and the use of women for prostitution: Art. 147 of the CC, *Trafficking in Human Beings*; Art. 157 of the CC, *Purchase or Sale of a Child*; Art. 308 (2), *Involvement in Prostitution*. More detailed information on the provisions of the Criminal Code related to the trafficking in human beings has already been presented in the previous reports.

128. To reduce the scale of trafficking in human beings, much focus was placed on the development of education and training. The Ministry of the Interior together with non-governmental organizations and Vilnius Office of the International Organization for Migration (hereinafter referred to as the IOM) launched a number of awareness-raising campaigns for the general public (target risk groups, particularly minors) to spread information on dangers posed by trafficking in human beings.

129. In 2008, 16 posters on the prevention of trafficking in human beings were set up in public bus stops and on streets as part of the awareness-raising campaign, and information on the risk of trafficking in human beings and on ways of enticement was posted in websites of 90 schools of Lithuania. A 15-second-long audio clip on trafficking in human beings was produced and aired (40 times) on one of the most popular youth radio stations. Also, two surveys (in the form of questionnaires) were conducted in order to ascertain the scale of the problem of trafficking in human beings, to find out how much young people are aware of this crime and to identify the need for providing information to target groups.

130. An educational seminar was organized on 6 November 2008 for the media. The seminar was attended by representatives of national and regional press, television, radio, news websites and other media. Presentations during the seminar were made by officials from the Ministry of the Interior, the Lithuanian Criminal Police Bureau and the General Prosecutor's Office, social workers, the Ombudsman for the Protection of the Rights of the Child, and the Inspector of Journalist Ethics. It should be mentioned that 12 publications on the topic of trafficking in human beings were published in the media after this educational seminar.

131. In order to improve early prevention, the Ministry of the Interior continued to provide financing to the provision of advice and consultations on the Internet in 2008 (the services were provided by the IOM). Between 16 December 2007 and 15 December 2008, the IOM was providing advice and consultations to potential victims of trafficking in human beings (particularly to young persons) on the Internet (130 times) and by phone (about 400 calls), as well as individually (26 consultations). In 2009, the Police Department posted on its website (www.policija.lt), a special prevention-targeted section 'Police Advises', information under the heading *What You*

Should Know in order to Avoid Becoming a Victim of Trafficking in Human Beings?

The Lithuanian Criminal Police Bureau also has a special electronic mailbox (prekybazmonemis@policija.lt) for communicating with the public on this issue and for the public to report information on trafficking in human beings.

132. In 2008, 15 persons affected by trafficking in human beings addressed diplomatic missions and consular offices of the Republic of Lithuania (5 persons addressed Lithuania's Embassy in Greece, 1 in the United Kingdom, 1 in the USA, 1 in the Netherlands, 1 in Belgium, 4 in Spain, 1 in Norway, and 1 in Japan).

133. Lithuania continues to actively contribute to international and regional cooperation for combating trafficking in human beings by participating in the work of the Council of the Baltic Sea States Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings.

134. Lithuanian police officers cooperated with judicial authorities of Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Spain, Latvia, Norway and Belgium for the purpose of pre-trial investigations started in Lithuania for criminal acts connected with trafficking in human beings, and they also provided legal assistance in response to requests from foreign countries.

135. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is making efforts to strengthen interinstitutional and international cooperation in the area of trafficking in human beings. Matters related to consular assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings are covered by training programmes for diplomats of the Republic of Lithuania and other civil servants who are seconded abroad to carry out consular functions in diplomatic missions and consular offices of the Republic of Lithuania. Consular officers seconded to the European Union Member States participated in training seminars on the topic of assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings in Berlin and Warsaw.

136. In 2009, 10 victims of trafficking in human beings applied for assistance (2 in Greece, 2 in Spain, 2 in the United Kingdom, 2 in Germany, and 1 in Ukraine). These persons were provided with different types of consular assistance: issuance of return documents, provision of the possibility to contact their families, organization of protection and temporary accommodation during stay in the state concerned, provision of information about non-governmental organizations active in Lithuania in the area of providing assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings, compensation of expenses of return to Lithuania. LTL 3,608.10 was used for this purpose in 2008 and EUR 383.17 in 2009.

137. In 2010, assistance was provided to three victims of trafficking in human beings: 1 in the Czech Republic, 1 in Spain, and 1 in Germany. Consular assistance was again provided in the form of issuance of return documents, provision of the possibility to contact their families, organization of protection and temporary accommodation during stay in the state concerned, provision of information about non-governmental organizations active in Lithuania in the area of providing assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings, etc.

138. On 5-8 May 2009, the European Police College (CEPOL) organized a training course *Trafficking In Human Beings and Illegal Immigration* in Vilnius (30 judicial officers from EU countries participated). On 5-7 May 2010, CEPOL organized another seminar, *Trafficking In Human Beings*, in Vilnius (37 judicial officers from EU countries and Iceland participated). On 20-21 May 2010, Vilnius hosted the

Baltic Sea Regional Conference *Prevention and Control of Trafficking in Human Beings. Regional Aspects* (over 90 participants).

139. On 3 June 2010, the Lithuanian Caritas Organisation hosted a discussion *Trafficking in Human Beings for the Purpose of Forced Labour. Situation in Lithuania*, under the project *Assistance to Victims of Prostitution and Trafficking in Human Beings*. The discussion was attended by representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Labour Inspectorate, the Lithuanian Labour Exchange, the Lithuanian Confederation of Trade Unions, the Women's Issues Information Centre, the Mother-and-Child Boarding House of Vilnius, the Lithuanian Criminal Police Bureau, and the International Organization for Migration.

140. As part of implementing Measure 6.1 of the Programme for the Prevention and Control of Trafficking in Human Beings 2009-2012²⁵, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour selected, by way of tender, 5 projects to provide social support to victims of trafficking in human beings and forced prostitution and to promote their re-integration into the society and the labour market; LTL 87 thou were allocated from the state budget for these projects. As part of these projects, social support was provided to 118 victims of trafficking in human beings and forced prostitution, including 64 actual and 54 potential victims (girls from special boarding schools, teenage girls from families belonging to risk groups, etc.). 105 victims of trafficking were provided with social assistance off the shelter. 16 supported persons were employed.

141. By implementing the supported projects, project implementers provided direct consultations on issues of concern to victims of trafficking and prostitution and assisted them in their efforts to integrate into the society and the labour market (lodging, social, psychological, legal and medical services, targeted information, employment and work therapy, vocational guidance, restoration of contacts with families), provided them with the most necessary objects and food products, and conducted educational preventive activities: gave lectures, organized seminars and workshops, developed methodological materials, organized meetings, conducted a preventive campaign against trafficking in human beings, invited young volunteers to contribute to their efforts in this field, carried out a preventive campaign *Do Not Sell Yourself*, initiated a conference *Trafficking in Human Beings and Human Rights*.

142. Every year, the U.S. Department of State conducts an assessment of efforts of foreign governments in combating trafficking in human beings, pursuant to the U.S. Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000. All countries are classified into four groups: those which fully comply with the minimum standards and make maximum effort (Tier 1); those which make less effort (Tier 2); those which have serious problems in combating trafficking in human beings (Tier 3); and those on the Watch List (in-between Tier 1 and Tier 3). In 2009, the U.S. Department of State rated countries of the world in terms of their achievements in the field of combating trafficking in human beings; the rating was performed on the basis of information collected by diplomatic missions, public authorities, NGOs and from other independent sources. Lithuania has been rated as Tier 1 country, i.e. a country which makes maximum effort in combating trafficking in human beings, for several years in turn.

²⁵ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 112-4761, 2009.

Article 7

Subparagraph (a)

143. As part of implementing measures envisaged for 2005-2009 in the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, further efforts were made in 2008 and 2009 to promote more active participation of women in decision-making in all municipalities of Lithuania by inviting them to attend seminars, round-table discussions and other events.

144. Thanks to consistent implementation of the objectives under the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, women's engagement in politics is growing constantly. Two women out of seven candidates ran for President in the presidential election of the Republic of Lithuania held on 17 May 2009. For the first time in Lithuania's history, the presidential election was won by a woman.

145. In the elections to the European Parliament held on 7 June 2009, women won three seats out of twelve allocated for Lithuania in the European Parliament. 26 women (18.44%) and 115 men (81.56%) were elected to the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania for the 2008-2012 tenure. A woman was also elected for the position of the Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania.

146. In the municipal election of 2007, 337 women were elected to municipal councils out of the total of 1,504 members elected, accounting for 22%. In some municipal councils, women accounted for up to 40% of the members. 5 women were elected mayors (12%). New elections to municipal councils will take place in 2011.

147. Decision-making remains one of the priority areas of the new National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014. The Programme explicitly acknowledges that in a democratic society all citizens, both women and men, must take part in decision-making and interests of both genders must be equally represented. Balanced participation of women and men in policymaking and in political decision-making ensures a better response to the diverse needs of the society. Engagement in political, economic, societal and public life is not only a tool to pursue both women's and men's goals and interests, but also an indicator of the level of achievement of the principle of equality between women and men and non-discrimination on the grounds of sex. The Programme also states that women's participation in political and economic decision-making is inadequate and that rural women and men are not engaged actively enough in the process of making decisions relevant to the local community. To boost participation of women and men in decision-making, a number of awareness-raising campaigns will be conducted in 2011 and 2012 to inform the society of the benefits of participation. Throughout the period of the Programme, the network of women politicians' clubs will be supported in all regions and awareness-raising campaigns will be organized to promote participation of rural population in societal life.

148. Much focus in the Programme is placed on the enforcement of the equality of women and men in science. By the women-to-men ratio in science, Lithuania is one of the leading countries in the European Union, but in terms of the number of women holding highest academic and executive positions Lithuania is only just at the EU average. In 2009, the highest share of women scientists were engaged in medical sciences and in nature and social sciences (58%). In technological sciences, however, women accounted for only 26%, and 32% in physical sciences. Among

holders of a habilitated doctor's degree in Lithuania, women accounted for 20%, and among professors, 17%. Although Lithuania has 22 universities and 35 research institutes, only three of them were headed by a woman in 2008.

Subparagraph (b)

149. Within the Cabinet, women hold the posts of the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Finance. Among vice ministers, women account for 27.3% (9 of 33). The National Auditor is a woman and Lithuania's delegate to justices of the European Court of Human Rights is also a woman.

150. By the data of a statistical survey of employment, women accounted for 38.9% of all types of institutional heads in 2009 (legislature, senior public officials, companies, institutions, organizations, etc.). By the data of the Department of Statistics as of 1 January 2010, women accounted for 56% of justices, 47.1% of prosecutors, 86.6% of notaries public, 50.5% of bailiffs, and 37.7% of attorneys.

151. By the data of 2008 of the Civil Service Department under the Ministry of the Interior, women accounted for about 75% of career civil servants, excluding statutory civil servants, and about 62% of civil servants of political (personal) confidence. 34% of senior managers of central and municipal authorities were women, and the remaining 66%, men. In 2009, women accounted for 75% of career civil servants, excluding statutory civil servants, and about 59% of civil servants of political (personal) confidence. The women-to-men ratio in managerial positions in central and municipal authorities did not change, accounting for 34% and 66%, respectively. As of 1 July 2010, these proportions changed but very slightly. Women accounted for 76% of career civil servants, excluding statutory civil servants, and about 60% of civil servants of political (personal) confidence. The proportion of men in top managerial positions dropped by 1%, to 65%. The numbers of civil servants, excluding statutory, segregated by job position groups and sex for 2008-2010 are given in Annex 6.

152. By the data of the United Nations as of 1 January 2010, Lithuania is among the 15 UN Member States whose presidents or heads of state are women, and among the 32 UN Member States whose heads of parliaments are women, and among the 11 UN Member States whose ministers of national defence are women, and is above the UN average by the number of women members of parliament (63rd place).

153. For the first time ever, a special section is dedicated in the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014 to the issue of equal opportunities for women and men in the system of national defence. For the first time in Lithuania's history, the Ministry of National Defence is headed by a woman. By the number of women in the armed forces, Lithuania ranks relatively high on the global scale: women in Lithuania account for 11.6% of professional military personnel (cf. 3% in Italy²⁶, 16.7% in Canada²⁷, and about 20% in the USA²⁸). However, representation of women in decision-making is still quite low: women in executive positions account for 15.86% of the total female staff in institutions of the national defence system, while men account for 30.12% of the

²⁶ <http://www.nato.int/ims/2008/win/reports/italian-2008.pdf>

²⁷ <http://sen.parl.gc.ca/lpepin/index.asp?PgId=1050>

²⁸ http://usmilitary.about.com/od/womeninthemilitary/Women_in_the_United_States_Military.htm

total male staff. The distribution of women and men by positions in the national defence system is presented in Annex 7.

154. To ensure equal opportunities of women and men and to take account of biological (physiological) differences between a woman and a man, also to take account of the experience of other NATO member states, the requirements for physical preparedness of military personnel are differentiated according to gender. Cadets studying in the General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania are provided with basic knowledge of gender equality, and professional military service personnel are provided, as part of their training for international operations, with legal information about specific protection of children and women in armed conflicts. An overview of equal opportunities of cadets conducted by the Department of Humanities of the General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania in 2008 made a conclusion that the cadets' attitudes are greatly influenced by differentiated approach towards equality of a woman and a man in the national defence system and that cadets' knowledge on this issue is inadequate.

155. Therefore, a study is planned to be conducted in the national defence system in 2011 to collect information on trends in the area of management of human resources in the Ministry of National Defence, institutions under the Ministry, and other institutions belonging to the national defence system, with a special focus on gender equality; this information will be posted on the Internet. In addition, a number of seminars will be organized for civil servants, military personnel and administrative staff of the Ministry of National Defence, institutions under the Ministry and institutions belonging to the national defence system, aimed at enhancing their competences in the area of equal opportunities of women and men. Also, training programmes organized in the national defence system will be reviewed to identify which of them should be updated to cover the issue of gender equality. In the General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania, the curricula of social studies and humanities will be updated to mainstream gender equality.

Subparagraph (c)

156. To ensure equal conditions for women to participate in non-governmental organisations on equal footing with men, Article 5² of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men²⁹ prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex in relation to membership of, and involvement in, an organisation of employees or employers, or any other organisation (association) whose members are united by a particular profession, including the benefits provided by such organisations (associations). Article 7² of the Law sets that any acts that prevent from becoming a member of an organisation of employees or employers, or any other organisation (association) whose members are united by a particular profession, or involving in them, including the benefits provided by such organisations (associations), on the grounds of sex shall be treated as violating equal rights for women and men.

157. The legal base of Lithuania guarantees opportunities for all women to participate in non-governmental organisations and associations actively engaged in social and political life. Surveys and studies demonstrate that women in our country successfully make advantage of these opportunities: women account for 55% of people who take part in social activities as volunteers, as reported by a public

²⁹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 140-5755, 2007.

opinion poll conducted in 2010 by the Social Information Centre on the initiative of company TEO LT. While men more often volunteer when it comes to organising massive sport events, women volunteers are more active in the area of social assistance to young people, children, elderly people and people with disabilities. Looking at the wider picture of practical NGO activities, women are active participants in NGOs, as social assistance is the area with the largest share of volunteers and the largest number of NGOs (about 45% of the total number of NGOs). According to a quantitative survey of non-governmental organisations conducted by the Social and Economic Development Centre (SEDC), women interests are represented by 16% of all NGOs, with membership accounting for 1.1% of Lithuania's population (the largest membership belongs to sport organisations and clubs, with 3.5% of the population).

158. Pursuant to the Conceptual Framework for the Development of Non-Governmental Organisations approved by Resolution No. 85 of 20 January 2010 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of Justice has drafted a Law on the Provision and Control of Financial Support to Non-Governmental Organisations. The draft Law will be further elaborated to take into account comments and suggestions already provided by stakeholders and the general public to the Government. The Law aims at facilitating the development of non-governmental organisations, improving the organisation of their activities, and enhancing their value for the society. The Law will also define the concept of a non-governmental organisation, lay down the rules, based on objective criteria, for providing financial support to non-governmental organisations from the state or municipal budgets, and set the requirements against which the use of the financial support will be monitored. The draft Law on the Provision and Control of Financial Support to Non-Governmental Organisations will not contain any discriminatory provisions.

Article 8

159. In the foreign affairs system, the proportion of women and men in state representation positions is quite balanced: women account for about half of the total staff. The number of women in the highest diplomatic positions grew from 15% to 20% over the reporting period. Statistical information on women in the diplomatic service in 2008-2010 is provided in Annex 8.

160. Lithuanian women are members of management of international organizations and run for the highest positions, which makes their presence visible in the international community. In the autumn of 2009, Lithuania's Ambassador Extraordinarily and Plenipotentiary was elected Vice-Chairman of the UNESCO Executive Board (before taking up this position, she headed different committees). At the same time, she became a member of the Bureau of the Executive Board. Moreover, it was the first time in Lithuania's history when a woman ambassador ran for the highest position in an international organization (UNESCO Director General). In January 2010, she assumed the position of the special representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to Moldova.

161. In 2009, Lithuania took over a two-year Presidency of the Community of Democracies. The Community of Democracies was established ten years ago as an intergovernmental structure with the aim to strengthen democracy and democratic institutions around the world. Today it unites over 100 democratic countries of the

world. (More information about the Lithuanian Presidency is available on the website www.urm.lt/db).

162. As the country holding Presidency of the Community of Democracies, Lithuania initiated the establishment of a permanent Working Group on Gender Equality chaired by high-level officials of Lithuania and the USA: Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania and the United States Ambassador for Global Women's Issues. The constituent meeting of the Working Group on Gender Equality took place in April 2009 in Vilnius.

163. On 2-3 July 2010, a high-level meeting of the Community of Democracies was organised by the Lithuanian Presidency in Krakow, Poland, to mark the tenth anniversary of the establishment of this organization and to discuss possibilities to strengthen democracy in the modern world. Six working groups had parallel sessions during the conference; Lithuania initiated sessions of the Parliamentary Forum of the Community of Democracies, Young Leaders Forum and the Working Group on Gender Equality. The Working Group on Gender Equality was co-chaired by the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania and the Deputy Director of the Office of Global Women's Issues of the U.S. Secretary of State. The Working Group on Gender Equality discussed the way forward in organising its activities.

164. On 23 September 2010, Lithuania initiated and organised, in cooperation with the Council of Women World Leaders, a ministerial meeting of the Community of Democracies, the UN Democracy Caucus, on the topic *Women as a Critical Force in Democratic Governance* chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. The meeting was dedicated to discussing women's role in democratic governance. The meeting was also attended and addressed by the President of the Republic of Lithuania.

165. A high-level conference to close the Lithuanian Presidency of the Community of Democracies will be held on 30 June-1 July 2011 in Vilnius. The conference will be started with a meeting of women world leaders on the first day, to be followed by a meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of member countries of the Community of Democracies on the second day. About 600 officials, including high-level officials, 200 representatives of NGOs and 100 representatives of international media are expected to come to Lithuania to participate in this event under the Lithuanian Presidency. Two parallel sessions will be organized: a Youth Forum and a Parliamentary Forum. This Presidency closing event will also mark the tenth anniversary of the high-level international conference *WoMen and Democracy* hosted in Vilnius in 2001.

166. In 2011, Lithuania took over Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). One of the first events organized under the Lithuanian Chairmanship of the OSCE was dedicated to women's issues. On 3-4 March 2011, Vilnius hosted an international conference organized in cooperation with the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna, on the issue of women in business; the conference provided the opportunity for women from around the world who run or intend to start a business to discuss issues of concern in plenary sessions and in working groups and also to see concrete good practices of Lithuanian women entrepreneurs, particularly in sectors that are considered non-traditional for women, and to visit business companies run by women. The conference gave the opportunity for women from different countries to discuss business development ideas, to find new partners for new bilateral or

multilateral business projects, to encourage women to start business in less traditional sectors, to continue sharing good practices, etc.

167. Lithuania's engagement in international operations is organized by respecting, inter alia, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on the impact of armed conflicts to security of women and participation of women in peace building and Resolution 1820 (2008) on sexual violence in armed conflicts.

168. Professional military personnel during their training for international operations are provided with legal information about specific protection of children and women in armed conflicts, including the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). However, Lithuania does not have competent specialists who could give lectures on the situation of women in armed conflicts, on their specific needs during conflicts and on women's participation in international operations. Therefore, the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014 includes a special measure to be implemented in 2011 and 2012: to train experts who could give such lectures to military and civil personnel going on international missions. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has set up an interinstitutional working group to develop a special action plan for the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000).

Article 9

169. On 15 July 2008, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania passed a new Law on Citizenship³⁰ to replace the previous version of the Law of 17 September 2002. Despite the change of legal regulation of citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania, the conditions, bases and rules for acquiring and losing Lithuanian citizenship laid down in the Law continue to be gender-neutral. The new Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania has retained the provision that all citizens of the Republic of Lithuania shall have all social, economic, political and personal rights and freedoms enshrined and guaranteed by the Constitution, laws and other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania, as well as international agreements to which Lithuania is a party. Equal legal treatment is guaranteed to all citizens of the Republic of Lithuania irrespective of sex.

170. The Law on Citizenship also lays down the principle that marriage or dissolution of marriage shall not lead to the loss of Lithuanian citizenship. Specifically, the Law provides that a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania who has entered into or dissolved a marriage with a citizen of another state or a stateless person shall not automatically lose citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania.

Paragraph 2

171. In accordance with the Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania, a child whose at least one of the parents holds Lithuanian citizenship is a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania regardless of whether the child was born in or outside the territory of the Republic of Lithuania. The child acquires citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania regardless of who of the parents — mother or father — is a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania.

³⁰ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 83-3293, 2008.

172. One of the reasons for adopting the new Law on Citizenship was to revise the conditions for acquiring Lithuanian citizenship at birth and to provide, in line with the principle of acquisition of Lithuanian citizenship at birth enshrined in Art. 12 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, that a child who acquires citizenship of another state in addition to citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania at birth shall be a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania, i.e. the child may have dual citizenship. Provisions concerning children born in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania to stateless persons habitually residing in Lithuania as well as children whose parents are not identified have not changed in the new Law on Citizenship. The Law provides that citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania shall be granted at birth not only to a child both of whose parents are citizens of the Republic of Lithuania but also to a child whose one of the parents is a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania, irrespective of whether the child was born in or outside the territory of the Republic of Lithuania (Art. 9 (1)).

173. Article 11 (2) of the Law on Citizenship provides that a foundling or a child living in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania, both of whose parents are unknown or both of whose parents or his only parent are dead or recognised missing, or both of whose parents or his only parent have been recognised legally incapable in accordance with the established procedure, or where the parental powers of both of his parents or his only parent have been restricted and the child has been placed under permanent guardianship (custody), shall be a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania unless circumstances due to which the child should acquire a different status come to light. Article 8 (2) of the Law provides that if both or one of the parents of a child lose citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania, the child who is under the age of eighteen years (fourteen in the old version of the Law) shall also lose citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania. However, this provision shall not apply if the child would become a stateless person by reason of the change of citizenship of his parents.

Article 10

174. The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania³¹ defines equal opportunities as one of the guiding principles of the educational system: the educational system must be socially fair, ensure equality for individuals irrespective of gender, race, ethnic background, language, origin, social position, religion, beliefs or convictions, assure each individual persons access to education and the opportunity to attain general education and acquire a primary qualification, and create conditions to improve the existing or acquire a new qualification.

175. Equal opportunities for everybody to acquire education have been ensured at general education schools of Lithuania. Pre-primary, primary, basic and secondary education is among the top priorities of the education policy and forms the basis for life-long learning.

176. In 2009, 642 pre-school educational establishments functioned in Lithuania: 506 in urban and 136 in rural areas. 194 general schools had pre-school education groups. In 2004-2008, increasingly more children in the 1-6 age-group attended pre-school or pre-primary educational establishments. In 2009, pre-school institutions

³¹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 23-593, 1991, No. 63-2853, 2003.

and pre-primary education groups in general schools were attended by 93.7 thousand children, which accounted for 55% of all children in the 1-6 age-group; however, there is quite a gap in the number of rural and urban children in pre-school and pre-primary education: 72.6% in urban and only 22.8% in rural areas. Girls accounted for 48.3% of all children attending pre-school institutions of the country.

177. Since 1 September 2007, all educational establishments, both public and private, which provide pre-school education, have been developing their curricula themselves, as provided for in the Description of the Criteria for Developing Pre-School Curricula approved by Order No. ISAK-627 of 18 April 2005 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania³². To maximise the quality of pre-school education, the Description will be revised in the near future. Educational establishments develop their curricula by taking account of the traditions and needs of their children, families and local communities, their own capacities, regional specifics, and legal acts governing early education of children. For this purpose, they may also use pre-school curricula recommended by a panel of primary education experts.

178. Primary and basic education in Lithuania is implemented in accordance with the General Curricula of Primary and Basic Education approved by Order No. ISAK-2433 of 26 August 2008 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania³³. The General Curricula define the content of primary and basic education on the national scale with a view to ensuring coherence, accessibility and quality of education countrywide. Schools and teachers follow the General Curricula in formulating the contents of teaching on the level of school and class by adapting it to the needs of individual classes and individual schoolchildren so that schoolchildren can achieve the best possible results according to their abilities. In schools, the contents of teaching is based on the principles of sustainable development of the society, with particular focus on cultural, biological and landscape diversity, responsibility for the environment on the local and global scale, peace and conflicts, civic-mindedness, reduction of poverty, climate change, democracy, justice, health, gender equality, etc., which are integrated into the contents of different subjects. The intention is to make sure that basic education brings up a person who has general competencies, respects and tolerates people of different cultures, genders, social groups and age, knows his and other persons' rights and duties, perceives himself as a member of the community and the society. Basic education programme is finalized with an assessment of attainments. Schoolchildren in the final grade who have completed successfully the basic education programme are recognized as having acquired basic education.

179. The secondary education programme is implemented in accordance with the Description of Secondary Education Curricula approved by Order No. ISAK-1387 of 30 June 2006 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania³⁴. Secondary education curriculum is built on the principle of individualisation and differentiation of education according to the schoolchildren's needs, tastes and capabilities, to enable them to plan their professional career, to select the subjects relevant to the line chosen, and to choose among different courses. Having completed the secondary education programme and passed *matura*

³² *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 52-1752, 2005.

³³ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 99-3848, 2008.

³⁴ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 76-2930, 2006, No. 53-2050, 2007.

examinations, learners are considered to have acquired secondary education, which is certified by a diploma.

180. Evaluation and certification of the advancement and attainments of a learner is gender-neutral. Assessments of attainments in basic education and *matura* examinations in secondary education are uniform in all schools of the country, regardless of the region, the form of the educational establishment, or gender of the learner.

181. In 2009-2010, 1,364 general education schools functioned in the country, with 440,504 learners altogether, girls accounting for 49.3% of all learners and learners in rural schools accounting for 21.3% of all learners (93,852 learners in rural schools). In 2009, basic education diplomas were issued to 47.3 thousand learners (92% of the total population of 16 years of age), 40.7 thousand or 86% of whom continued studies for secondary education (92% of girls and 79% of boys). In 2009, 38.4 thousand final-grade learners successfully completed secondary education, accounting for 93% of all final-grade learners.

182. Schools, vocational training establishments, youth centres, education centres, non-formal education institutions have put in place vocational information, counselling and guidance systems, set up and technically equipped vocational information points, and trained staff to work at such points. The Minister of Education and Science and the Minister of Social Security and Labour have approved, by Order No. ISAK-739/A1-116 of 29 April 2005, the Requirements for the Provision of Vocational Information and Consultation Services aimed at helping people to make use of the opportunities in the field of education, training and employment and to actively pursue a career. These services were targeted, in gender-neutral manner, both at those who had not started their career yet and those who already had a record of employment, also at the unemployed and employers.

183. The purpose of vocational training is to help a person to acquire, change or improve qualification and to prepare for participation in a changing labour market. Vocational schools provide primary vocational training to persons from the age of 14 years. Different training programmes are applied. Successful completion of a training programme leads to the issuance of a vocational diploma or a certification of qualification. Learners who have successfully completed, in parallel to the vocational training programme, basic education programme acquire basic education, and those who have successfully completed secondary education programme and passed *matura* examinations acquire secondary education. Vocational training system is socially fair; it ensures equality of all persons irrespective of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social position, religion, beliefs or views; it assures the opportunity for everybody, irrespective of gender, to pursue qualified vocational training and to acquire the first qualification and it creates conditions to upgrade the existing qualification or to acquire a new one and to make use of all advantages of studies.

184. At the start of the 2009/2010 school-year, the ratio between girls and boys in vocational schools were 59 to 100. In the 2009/2010 school-year, Lithuania had 78 vocational schools, with 47,886 learners altogether. In 2009, 7.7 thousand students of vocational schools acquired secondary education in addition to a profession. In the 2009/2010 school-year compared to the previous school-year, the number of students in vocational schools grew by 4000 or 9%, to hit a record high of the last decade. Vocational schools were dominated by men, who accounted for

62.7% compared to 37.3% of women students. Men-dominated studies included engineering (98%), architecture and construction (96%), transport (98%), while girls dominated in such professions as social caretaking or nursing, hairdressing (98%), hotels, restaurants and public catering (76%).

185. Higher schools in the Republic of Lithuania enjoy autonomy of academic, administrative, economic and financial activities, which is built on the principle of self-governance and academic freedom as defined by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the Law on Higher Education and Research³⁵, and statutes of higher schools. Higher education schools in Lithuania are classified into universities and colleges. All higher school students, irrespective of gender, can take academic leave for justified reasons, e.g. health problems, including maternity leave and parental leave until the child is three years old.

186. A college is a higher school which provides college studies and develops applied research and/or professional art. College studies focus on preparing students for professional activities and creating conditions to acquire a professional bachelor's degree and/or professional qualification based on applied research. Persons who successfully complete a college programme acquire a professional bachelor's degree in the relevant area or a professional bachelor's degree and a professional qualification. In the 2009/2010 school-year, Lithuania had 23 colleges, with 56,704 students altogether, girls accounting for 57.6%. Women accounted for 75% of pedagogical staff in colleges. In higher schools, girls dominate in the following fields: journalism and information (94.3%), social services (91.5%), pedagogics (92%), and health care (86.9%). Study fields dominated by men included engineering and related professions (96%), computers (91.5), architecture and construction (79.9%), and transport services (79.9%).

187. A university is a higher school which provides university studies, conducts research, is engaged in experimental (social, cultural) development, and/or develops high-level professional art. At the start of the 2009/2010 school-year, Lithuania had 23 universities, with 144,301 students altogether, women accounting for 60.2% and men for 39.8%. Given that women account for a larger share of population of Lithuania (53% of women compared to 46% of men), these figures show that men less often than women pursue higher education. It should be noted that the number of women and men lecturers in universities is almost equal, men accounting for 50.2%. Among university students, women dominate in social services (87.5%), psychology (89%), health care (79.8%), pedagogics and humanities (77%), and journalism (78.7%). It should be noted that over the period of 2003-2008, the relative difference in the number of men and women in nature, technology and applied research studies has slightly increased, from 32.3 p.p. in 2003 to 33.5 p.p. in 2009. In 2007, there were 12 women and 24 men per 1000 population of the 20-29 age-group, who had completed mathematics, natural sciences or technology studies. This indicator was the second largest in the European Union, after Portugal. In 2009, 44.6 thousand students graduated from higher schools in Lithuania, women accounting for 66%. Women with professional bachelors, bachelor's or master's degree accounted for 61.5% of all holders of these degrees, and 55% of holders of a doctor's degree.

³⁵ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 54-2140, 2009.

188. In Lithuania, there are two main problems related to gender equality in the higher education system: first, women with higher education hold job positions in which they are less likely than men to further their career and earn higher income, and second, the number of women researchers holding highest academic and executive positions is disproportionately low.

189. To improve the situation, the Ministry of Education and Science has approved, by Order No. ISAK-1600 of 2 June 2008, a Strategy for Ensuring Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Higher Education aimed at laying a solid and real base for gender equality in higher education. To implement measures anticipated in the Strategy, a project *Strengthening Gender Equality in Higher Education* is being implemented; the project is financed from the EU structural support funds allocated for 2007-2013, under a sub-programme *Dissemination of Knowledge on Research and Development* of the Researchers Career Programme approved by Order No. ISAK-2335 of 3 December 2007 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania³⁶. As part of implementation of the goal *To Encourage Women to Seek Highest Academic Degrees; to Encourage Men to Acquire Higher Education*, of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014, recommendations are planned to be issued to higher education and research institutions concerning the enforcement of equal opportunities for women and men researchers.

Subparagraph (b)

190. The Law on Education guarantees equal access to the same curricula, teaching methods, teaching aids, and premises and equipment of the same quality at general education schools. As of the beginning of 2009, Lithuania did not have a single school exclusively for girls (women) or boys (men), and does not plan to open such a school in the future. The primary education programme underlines that a modern Lithuanian school shall promote harmonious interrelations between boys and girls.

191. In Lithuania, the profession of a teacher in a pre-school educational establishment is very unpopular among men: women among teachers in pre-school educational establishments accounted for as much as 99.1% in 2009. Urban pre-school establishments employed many more teachers with higher education and with a profession of a pre-school educator than rural ones, accounting for, respectively, 70% and 53.8% of all pedagogical staff.

192. In terms of access to education and equal opportunities in rural and urban schools, it should be noted that there are 93,852 schoolchildren in rural schools (accounting for 21.3% of all schoolchildren) and 346,652 (78.7%) in urban schools; school space per pupil is 18.2 m² in rural schools and 10.1 m² in urban schools; the number of computers is 8.6 per 100 pupils in rural schools and 11.1 in urban schools. Urban schools have more teachers with higher pedagogical education, accounting for 91.1% of all pedagogical staff, while in rural schools this ratio is 86.1%.

193. National and international comparative evaluations of schoolchildren's attainments report differences between girls and boys. In general, overall attainments of girls are higher than those of boys, but the situation varies from subject to subject. The most worrying situation is in the subject of the native

³⁶ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 7-261, 2008.

Lithuanian language, where girls' attainments are much higher than those of boys in all age-groups. In rural schools and schools of smaller towns, boys' attainments in the subject of the Lithuanian language are particularly low. Attainments in the subjects of mathematics and social studies have also been changing in the recent years: girls in higher grades demonstrate higher attainments in these subjects than boys. In 2009, about 1% of children in general education schools had to repeat the yearly course, girls accounting for about 30% of this number.

194. Vocational schools ensure, by laying this down in their own regulations, equal access for all schoolchildren to school's library, gym, textbooks, teaching aids and premises of the same quality, accommodation in dormitories, school self-governance, sport events and physical exercises, and equal opportunities to choose among other means of self-expression, etc. Vocational training curricula are developed in accordance with the requirements for professional competence and general skills in the relevant field, irrespective of where the curriculum will be followed — rural or urban vocational school. The Open Information, Counselling and Guidance System AIKOS does not contain a single vocational training curriculum dedicated exclusively for women or exclusively for men (Order No. V-1435 of 27 August 2010 of the Minister of Education and Science *On the Approval of the Procedure for Developing and Approving Formal Vocational Training Curricula*³⁷).

Subparagraph (c)

195. Since the restoration of independence, the system and process of education have been continuously reformed and textbooks and curricular regularly updated in order to reflect visions of the modern world and social and political developments. *The Procedure for Supplying Schools with Textbooks and Teaching Aids on General Education Subjects* approved by Order No. ISAK-1051 of 19 May 2009 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania³⁸ specifies that one of the key methodological principles to be followed in writing a textbook is the principle of equal opportunities and requires that a textbook respected the basic values of a democratic society and of the State of Lithuania and be unbiased in terms of sex, age, disability, abilities, social status, race or belonging to a certain ethnic group, religion or beliefs. A qualitative analysis of teaching aids — textbooks of Grade 10 in high schools — conducted in 2010 as part of research *Tolerance and Multicultural Education in General Schools* concluded that the phraseology used in the textbooks was universal and unprejudiced.

196. Goals set for education in Lithuania include the enforcement of democratic traditions, reduction of social exclusion, elimination of inequality, and promotion of cultural diversity. The educational system aims to promote tolerance and respect and get rid of prejudices and stereotypes in relation to different social groups of the society. Civic-mindedness, democracy, tolerance, gender equality and sexual education topics are mainstreamed in various subjects taught in schools. In 2008, a teaching aid *Possibilities to Foster Gender Equality in School* was released for teachers and social pedagogues. This publication provides information to teachers about the goals of promotion of gender equality in school and offers methodological tools and recommendations to assist them in organizing gender equality education in class and in a wider school community.

³⁷ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 105-5436, 2010.

³⁸ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 61-2450, 2009.

197. At present, three higher schools (Vilnius University, University of Šiauliai, and Kaunas University of Technology) have Gender Study Centres within their structures. These centres conduct studies and research on gender equality and carry out scientific, informational, educational, and advisory activities in order to raise public awareness on the impact of culturally formed stereotypes on social phenomena and their developments. One of the main goals of gender study centres is to integrate gender studies into the overall process of education in universities.

198. As part of implementing measures under the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2005-2009, the Ministry of Education and Science organized eight qualification advancement training courses on gender equality in 2008, which were attended by 315 participants. A teaching aid *Possibilities to Foster Gender Equality in School* was produced for teachers and social pedagogues. Seven non-formal education projects on gender equality were selected by way of tender for financing. In 2009, a conference was organized to discuss gender-specific peculiarities of working with children; the conference was attended by 45 social pedagogues and other child aid specialists.

199. Despite many measures being implemented, the majority of the pedagogues and educational assistance specialists still have inadequate competencies in the area of equal opportunities of women and men. As part of implementing the objective *To Ensure Monitoring of Application of the Principle of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men in Educational and Science Establishments* of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014, efforts will be made to integrate the dimension of equal opportunities of women and men in tenders for project financing, and also to organize seminars dedicated to changing the discriminatory approach to women and men in education.

Subparagraph (d)

200. Lithuanian vocational and higher schools ensure equal opportunities for their students to get scholarships or other types of material assistance irrespective of gender.

201. Pursuant to the Law on Vocational Training³⁹, students of vocational training schools who pursue their first profession and students of vocational training schools of the system of interior affairs are eligible to scholarships and other material assistance, in the manner prescribed by the Government. Students with special needs studying for the first profession and not eligible to scholarships are entitled to free meals and other material assistance as established in legal acts.

202. Pursuant to the Law on Higher Education and Research⁴⁰, students are also eligible to social and incentive scholarships. Social scholarships financed from the state budget may be granted, in the manner prescribed by the Government, to students in the first cycle, the second cycle and the integrated studies of a higher education institution. Incentive scholarships are financed from the budget of a higher education institution or other funds and are awarded to the best students taking into consideration their study results or other academic achievements.

³⁹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 98-2478, 1997, No. 67-3338, 2010.

⁴⁰ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 54-2140, 2009.

203. In 2009, a system of the state-supported loans was introduced to replace the system of state loans that had been in place since 1999. The idea underlying state-supported loans is that credit institutions provide loans to students and the state acts as the guarantor for such loans.

204. In 2010, the circle of recipients of social scholarships was expanded: they are now available to students of both public and private higher schools, both financed by the state and self-financed.

205. Social scholarships are available to students who:

(a) Come from low-income families or are single persons eligible to a social benefit under the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Cash Social Assistance for Low-Income Families (Single Residents);

(b) Have a working capacity of 45% or lower or have serious or medium disability as established by legal acts;

(c) Are not older than 25 years of age and who have been placed under statutory guardianship (childcare) until the age of majority or whose both parents (or the only parent) are dead.

206. Incentive scholarships available to students have been taken out of state regulation since 2009. It is now up to the higher school itself to determine which students can expect an incentive scholarship for what academic results and of what size, in accordance with scholarship granting rules approved by the rector of a university or the director of a college.

Subparagraph (e)

207. The National Education Strategy for 2003-2012 specifies the development of a continuous, accessible and socially fair system of education facilitating lifelong learning as one of its principal goals. To develop education in Lithuania, efforts will be made to achieve by 2012 that all Lithuanian population have real lifelong learning possibilities as well as possibilities to continuously refresh and enhance their skills and that at least 15% of working-age adult population of the country study each year. In the beginning of the 2009/2010 school-year, 14,850 adults studied under general education programmes (38% women and 62% men), accounting for 3.4% of all learners. Despite the fact that the overall number of learners dropped, the share of adult learners in general education programmes has not changed. The number of economic entities engaged in providing non-formal adult education has increased over the past three years. Compared to 2008, the number of public-private and totally private institutions has particularly increased (by 1.6 and 1.8 times, respectively).

208. In 2010, there were 103 institutions engaged exclusively or additionally in providing formal and non-formal adult education. These included adult training centres, labour market training centres, youth and adult schools, secondary schools, educational centres, educational and pedagogical psychological assistance centres, vocational training centres, basic schools, gymnasiums, colleges, institutes, other schools and centres. They carried out their activities in 42 municipalities. However, educational establishments of this type are mainly based in towns and particularly concentrated in the capital. Only six establishments are based in regions (Vilnius, Kaunas, Švenčioniai, Trakai, and Klaipėda). By the data of the Department of

Statistics, none of the adult schools were based in a rural area. 18 municipalities do not have a single school providing either formal or non-formal adult education. The demand for adult education can partially be met by educational establishments based in larger towns; however, in this case, learners would have to commute, which does not increase their motivation to study.

209. Encouragingly, the share of population aged 30-34 with higher education is growing year after year. In the period of 2003-2009, this share almost doubled, to account for 32.6% in 2009. The share of people with higher education grew both in urban and rural areas, but much faster in urban areas. In 2009, urban population with higher education accounted for 40.4% of people aged between 30 and 34 years, while the share of rural population in this category was three times smaller.

210. In the period of 2003-2009, the share of women aged 30-34 years with higher education was growing faster than that of men. In 2009, they accounted for 39.7%, surpassing men by 1.5 times (25.8%). This trend shows that women in Lithuania are more motivated to pursue higher education than men. The share of people aged 25-64 years with higher education was also growing. From 2005 to 2009, it grew by five percentage points to account for 25.5% in 2009. The majority of educated population aged between 25 and 64 years were people with higher education, accounting for about one-fourth (25.5%). Slightly more than one-fifth of adult population (22.2%) have secondary education and a professional qualification, and another one-fifth (19.3%) have only secondary education. The past few years have revealed the trend: the higher education, the more people have acquired it. The number of adult people with only basic education, or with basic education and a professional qualification, or with an education ranking between secondary and higher (not provided anymore) or with primary education has been decreasing in recent years. Higher education is acquiring increasingly high significance for the society as a whole and for an individual person. The number of adult people with higher education is growing significantly, while the number of people with low education is decreasing. The number of adult population with secondary education only has been decreasing until 2008, but started increasing in 2009. The number of people with secondary education and a professional qualification has been growing since 2006.

211. The level of lifelong learning among Lithuanian population has been decreasing recently. The share of learners accounted for 3.8% in 2003, followed by a growth to 5.3% in 2007 and a drop to 4.5 in 2009. The level of lifelong learning, both overall and among women (particularly!), and both among urban and rural population, has dropped compared to 2007 and 2008. In contrast, the level of lifelong learning among men has barely changed. In 2009, the level of lifelong learning in the 25-64 age-group was 5.4% for women and 3.6% for men, and was lower among rural people (2.3%) than among urban population (5.5). By the lifelong learning indicator, Lithuania lags behind the EU average of 2009 (9.3%). This is one of the factors that might have an impact on social exclusion in a rapidly changing economic and social environment.

Subparagraph (f)

212. Lithuania does not have programmes dedicated exclusively to girls or women early school leavers. Such programmes are being implemented with respect to all children regardless of gender. In 2005, Lithuania launched a project *Return of Early School Leavers* supported from the EU Structural Funds, which is being

implemented up till now. The aim of the project is to improve and coordinate preventive actions to address the problem of school dropouts and to increase the number of people with basic education. Project activities are also aimed at addressing the problem of school absenteeism, by increasing the availability of pedagogical-psychological assistance, ensuring adequate infrastructure, developing new training programmes (modules), introducing special classes for children who often miss classes or do not learn, developing prevention (return) models, improving assistance to children with learning difficulties, improving competencies of teachers and educational assistance specialists and upgrading their working environment, analyzing problems and the efficiency of programmes being implemented, etc. As part of implementing this project, a model of prevention of general school dropouts and their return to school was created, together with recommendations for its implementation. The model has been implemented in practice.

213. In order to reduce the number of children who do not study under compulsory education programmes in general schools, a Programme for the Return of Children Not Attending School Back to School was approved in 2008. One of the measures under this programme is to identify the number of children who do not attend school by comparing data of the Residents' Register of the Republic of Lithuania and the Schoolchildren's Register. For the time being, the data are being verified in order to avoid possible technical errors as the system is on the trial stage.

214. The share of early school leavers, i.e. persons aged 18-24 years who have not acquired secondary education and who do not study, accounted for 8.7% in 2009. This ratio was lower than the EU average of 2009 which was 14.4%. The share of early school leavers was lower among girls than among boys. This is typical of almost all EU countries. The difference between the share of boys and girls among early school leavers varied from 0.2 to 12.7 percentage points in EU countries. In Lithuania, the share of boys aged 18-24 years with basic education only was 11.5% in 2009, twice higher than that of girls (5.7%).

Subparagraph (g)

215. In Lithuania, good conditions have been created for all schoolchildren to get access to general physical training programmes and education standards. Equal opportunities have been created for everybody to take an active part in sport matches and physical exercises. The contents and methodology of formal and non-formal education is differentiated according to age and gender of schoolchildren, to respect anatomic, physiological, mental and social specifics of different genders (without discrimination). In general education schools, vocational training and sport institutions, women and girls, equally with boys and men, may choose a non-formal sporting activity (extra-curricular education) according to their likings and abilities. However, women and girls in sports are twice as few as boys and men, because their motivation to exercise and go in for sports is much weaker. Girls are more sensitive to the quality of hygienic conditions and being more studious they often spend more time for studying.

216. Non-formal education is a constituent part of the education system of Lithuania. The purpose of non-formal education is to satisfy schoolchildren's needs of cognition, education and self-expression and to help them become active members of the society. 67% of schoolchildren take part in non-formal education in Lithuania in the total. In the 2009/2010 school-year, 20% of all children of general

schools also attended non-formal education schools. Sport was Number One type of non-formal education. It was popular among schoolchildren of all grades, in all types of residential areas, and all types of schools. As of the beginning of the 2009/2010 school-year, 51 municipal sport schools functioned in the country. There are also sport centres and clubs that are not registered as educational establishments but provide non-formal education services to children in the area of sports. Boys are particularly active in sport activities. More than half of all boys (53%) and less than one-fifth of all girls (18%) engage in sport activities. Among those who attend sport groups, boys account for 61% and girls for 39%. Sport groups in non-formal education establishments are more popular than those in general education schools. Having chosen to attend a sport group, children usually do not undertake any other additional extra-curricular activity.

Subparagraph (h)

217. As part of implementing the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2005-2009 approved by Resolution No. 1042 of 26 September 2005 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁴¹, the Ministry of Health earmarked funds in 2008 for raising public awareness on health and family planning issues. Particular focus was placed on raising awareness among rural woman. A booklet *Family Planning* was produced and released in 10 thousand copies and disseminated through regional and local primary health-care centres; also, lectures were given on contraception and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases.

218. Curricula taught in all types of schools support and promote, irrespective of gender, social and ethnic values that foster family and society morals, critical thinking and ability to properly judge moral norms. In order to raise a mature person and to prepare children for family life, the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania issued Order No. ISAK-179 of 7 February 2007⁴² to approve the Preparation for Family Life and Sexual Education Programme. On 23 May 2008, the Minister of Education and Science issued Order No. ISAK-1469 to approve an Action Plan for the implementation of this Programme. Also, a qualification-enhancement training programme was prepared and accredited for teachers and 4 four-day-long seminars *Integrated Preparation for Family Life and Sexual Education* were organised for school specialists, teachers and class masters. Moreover, methodological guidelines on the issue of preparation for family life and sexual education were released for parents. Commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Science, a study was conducted in October-November 2008 to assess the feasibility of implementing the Preparation for Family Life and Sexual Education Programme in general education schools of Lithuania. The study looked into the ways to implement this Programme and to tackle problems encountered in implementing it, into functions of the methodological team of an educational establishment, teachers' competences to implement the Preparation for Family Life and Sexual Education Programme and the need for training in this respect, values of the respondents in relation to family, contraception, pregnancy and sexual minorities. By the data of municipalities, the Preparation for Family Life and Sexual Education Programme was being implemented in 526 schools (nearly half of all schools of the country) in the 2010/2011 school-year.

⁴¹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 116-4202, 2005.

⁴² *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 19-740, 2007.

219. In 2010, on the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Education Development Centre in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Transport and Communication and other social partners drafted a General Programme for Human Safety and Health (hereinafter referred to as the Draft Program). The Draft Programme envisages systemization and updating of health promotion programmes, setting of general human safety, health and sexual education goals and targets for primary, basic and secondary education, their correlation with different subjects, and with preventive and other programmes. The Draft Programme should be started in the 2011/2012 school-year and be implemented via human safety lessons and integrated into other subjects and non-formal education.

220. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour supports, by using state funds for this purpose, projects implemented by non-governmental organizations aimed at promoting an independent and viable family based on mutual assistance and shared responsibility of family members and ensuring succession of generations as well as at creating legal, social and economic conditions to strengthen the family and ensure its full functioning. In 2008, support was provided to projects that contributed to the strengthening of the institute of the family aiming at disseminating experiences of a harmonious family and traditional family values through mass media, conducted educational activities, contributed to raising public awareness on the importance of the family and on the need to enhance the self-value of the family and the value of the family in the society and to promote an environment-friendly family, provided consulting, mediation and representation social services. In 2009, priority was given to projects that conducted educational activities, contributed to raising public awareness on the importance of the family, fostered family self-value and its value in the society and promoted an environment-friendly family. In 2010, priority was given to projects contributing to the strengthening of the institute of the family and traditional family values by conducting preparedness for family life, fostering the culture of family interrelations, engaging in crisis prevention and teaching to take a constructive approach to conflicts in the family, promoting family mobilisation, mutual assistance and representation of family interests.

Article 11

221. Having examined Lithuania's Third and Fourth Reports on the implementation of the Convention in Lithuania, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women noted women's high level of participation in the labour market and the significant decrease in their unemployment rate. While noting a number of initiatives taken by Lithuania to support such participation and facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life, including the new labour legislation providing for more flexible opportunities of childcare leave, the recently established opportunity for men to take paternity leave, opportunities for flexible working arrangement and the encouragement of family-friendly policies in enterprises, the Committee expressed concern about the significant vertical and horizontal occupational segregation between women and men in the labour market, the persistence of a gender-based wage gap, and the low percentage of men taking parental leave.

222. The Committee urged to prioritise the realisation of de facto equality of women and men in the labour market, so as to achieve full compliance with Article 11 of the Convention. The Committee recommended taking concrete measures, including

provisional special measures, to eliminate vertical and horizontal gender segregation in the labour market and to close the wage gap between women and men, and it also urged to consider the possibility to amend the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men to include mandatory equality plans to be implemented by public and private employers, also covering pay issues and family-friendly policies in enterprises and to delegate the monitoring task to the Ombudsman of Equal Opportunities. Furthermore, the Committee recommended continuing efforts to ensure reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities and to promote equal sharing of domestic and family tasks between women and men, including by increasing the incentives for men to use their right to parental leave.

223. In 2008-2010, equal opportunities for women and men in the field of employment and in the labour market in the broadest sense remained a priority of the National Programmes of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2005-2009 and 2010-2014 and covered such targets as higher employment rate among women and reduction of women unemployment, especially among rural women, promotion of women entrepreneurship, reduction of the wage gap between women and men, improvement of the possibility to balance work and family duties, integration of women-men equality issues in social partnership and social dialogue, reduction of segregation in the labour market.

224. Economic growth until 2008 created favourable conditions to increase employment in Lithuania. Employment rate among women aged 15-64 years accounted for 62.2% in 2007 and exceeded the target of 60% set for women employment in the Lisbon Strategy to be achieved by the European Union Member States by 2010. Unemployment rate among women accounted for only 4.3% in 2007.

225. The economic recession affected women and men differently. By the data of a statistical survey of employment conducted by the Department of Statistics, the employment rate among women aged 15-64 years accounted for 60.7% in 2009, having dropped by 1.1% (down from 61.8%) compared to 2008, but it still exceeded the rate of employment of men (59.5%) and remained above the 2010 target of 60% set in the Lisbon Strategy. Employment among men dropped by as much as 7.6% in 2009 (to 59.5%) compared to 2008 (67.1%).

226. In 2009, unemployment among women was already significantly lower than men unemployment. By the data of a statistical survey of employment conducted by the Department of Statistics, men unemployment was 17% in 2009, having grown by 2.8 times over a year, while women unemployment accounted for 10.4%, having grown by 1.9 times over a year.

227. In 2009, the number of women in business increased compared to 2008. As reported by a small and medium business survey conducted by the Department of Statistics in 2009, women accounted for 28.7% of all people engaged in business, which was 0.7 percentage points higher than in 2008.

228. According to the data of the Department of Statistics, the average hourly gross wages of women is still lower than that of men but the wage gap is gradually shrinking. In 2007, women's average hourly gross wages in the domestic economy (excluding sole proprietorships) accounted for 80.7% of men's average hourly gross wages, with 77.8% in the private sector and 82% in the public sector. In 2008, women's average hourly gross wages in the domestic economy accounted for 81.8%

of men's average hourly gross wages: 78.6% in the private sector and 81.8% in the public sector. In 2009, women's average hourly gross wages in the domestic economy already accounted for 86.5% of men's average hourly gross wages (82% in the private sector and 86.3% in the public sector); in the 3rd quarter of 2010, women's average hourly gross wages in the domestic economy accounted for 87.4% of men's average hourly gross wages: 84% in the private sector and 85.9% in the public sector.

229. Segregation in the labour market is gradually diminishing. By the data of the Department of Statistics about employed population by types of economic activity, more and more women are employed even in traditionally men-dominated fields such as construction. Women employed in construction grew from 7.2% in 2007 to 12.4% in 2009. In 2009, women were mostly employed in human health-care and social work (87.7%), accommodation and health services (84%), education (80.9%), financial activity and insurance (77.8%). Men dominated in construction (87.6%), transport and storage (73.3%), and agriculture, forestry and fisheries (60.8%). All other fields employ more women than men or equal shares of women and men. For instance, in such economic sector as professional, scientific and technical activity, women account for 52.6%, wholesale and retail, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, 55.3%, real estate transactions, 53.7%, and industry, 44.4% (see Annex 9).

230. By the data provided in the Report from the European Commission "Equality between women and men — 2010"⁴³, Lithuania remained in the 3rd place in the European Union according to the difference between women and men in employment. By the rate of employment of older women Lithuania was in the 7th place in the EU, and by the rate of employment of women with children under 12 years of age — the 5th place.

231. These achievements have been made thanks to consistent and systematic implementation of objectives of the National Programmes of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2005-2009 and 2010-2014 in the area of employment, and measures and projects under this and other programmes financed from the state budget, the Employment Fund and the EU structural assistance funds. Measures in this area were implemented by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Ministry of the Economy, Ministry of Agriculture and subordinate institutions. Some of them are covered in more detail below.

232. By the data of the Ministry of the Economy, women more actively participated in events organised by business information centres and business incubators, the number of which was 780 in 2008. In 2008, the events organised by network institutions were attended by over 10,000 women, accounting for 60% of all participants. By the data of the Ministry of Agriculture, 846 people (59 men and 787 women) participated in various events organised by the Ministry in 2008.

233. 546 women, of whom 141 women were older than 50 years, participated in basic business training programmes organised by labour exchanges aiming at promoting self-employment and entrepreneurial skills. In 2008, 726 women with a record of unemployment of two and more years before registration with a labour exchange and 678 women over 50 years of age were referred to vocational training. 209 women over 50 years of age and 204 women with a record of unemployment of

⁴³ http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/booklets/equality/pdf/eul1450_090330_bas_en.pdf.

two or more years participated in non-formal education programmes. 139 women, 40 of whom were older than 50 years, participated in professional knowledge and skills refreshment programmes. Programmes introducing to various professions attracted 766 women, 169 of whom were older than 50 years.

234. In 2009, business start-up courses organised by labour exchanges were attended by 352 persons, including 189 women. Job-seekers wishing to become self-employed were offered individual consultations and information on how to start and develop a business and on the advantages provided by business certificates. 10 counties offered training to project promoters and participants of local employment initiatives. 27 conferences were organised to present implementation of local employment initiatives to the public. The ESF project *Support to Social Enterprises* organised a closing conference attended by managers of social enterprises, representatives of organisations and associations of the disabled, directors of local labour exchanges, etc. The conference was dedicated to informing representatives of associations of the disabled on state aid available to social enterprises, on the possibilities to enhance professional skills of persons belonging to target groups and on the importance of integration of vulnerable groups of persons into the labour market.

235. In 2009, the Ministry of the Economy continued to publish its quarterly bulletin *Women and Business*, which provides up-to-date information on policies targeted at promoting entrepreneurship among women, projects ongoing and underway, and other useful information. The Ministry of the Economy also produced a booklet for a starting businessman “How to start a business?” with an introduction to the business development policy, business start-up, business forms, financing possibilities, tax system, licences and permits and other issues of relevance to a starting businessman.

Paragraph 1

Subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c)

236. In 2008-2010, the main focus was placed on practical enforcement of the rights that have been already laid down in legal acts and that are specified in paragraphs a), b) and c) of this Article. To reduce gender gaps in employment and labour, gender equality aspects have been integrated into the EU structural support programming documents, thus creating the opportunity to use EU funds not only to support targeted projects aimed at ensuring equal opportunities of women and men but also to integrate specific actions targeting gender equality in all supported projects.

237. In the period of the EU structural assistance for 2007-2013, the European Social Fund is being tapped to finance interventions *Promotional activity of involving people at social risk and persons experiencing social exclusion into the labour market* and *Reconciling family and work commitments* under Priority 1 *Quality Employment and Social Inclusion* of the Human Resources Development Operational Programme.

238. To implement the intervention *Promotional activity of involving people at social risk and persons experiencing social exclusion into the labour market*, financing was allocated to 67 projects of the total value of LTL 107.4 million. 13 projects of this

number were aimed at reintegration of women back to the labour market after a long absence and integration of older women (over 50 years of age) into the labour market.

239. Intervention *Reconciling family and work commitments* directly contributes to facilitating integration of women in the labour market and promoting equal opportunities for women and men. It aims at creating favourable conditions for economically active people of working age (employed or job-seeking) to balance family and work commitments and at promoting the establishment of family-friendly workplaces. This intervention supports the provision of services to persons who, due to family commitments, are not employed or have difficulties to balance family and work duties, also childcare and social care for disabled or old persons. It also supports motivation of persons unemployed due to family commitments, consultations and training to improve general skills, mediation and other employment assistance. Project activities cover the establishment of a family-friendly workplace, the provision of education, training and guidance to employers, representative of employees and representatives of municipalities on ways to balance family and work commitments, the implementation of measures to promote sharing of family duties, surveys and research. 22 projects are being implemented under this intervention, with the total value of LTL 48.8 million.

240. During the EU structural assistance for 2004-2006, 96 projects were financed under Measure 2.3 *Prevention of Social Exclusion and Social Integration* of the Single Programming Document. 19 projects aimed at reducing social exclusion of women, increasing their social integration and ensuring equal opportunities in the labour market were completed in 2008.

241. Several projects, mainly implemented by women NGOs, stood examples of the best practice. One of them was a continual project *Let's Make Business* which was carried out by the Women's Issues Information Centre together with partners and was recognised as one of the best practices in the European Union. The project promoted integration of women in the labour market or the start of their own business as an alternative to addressing employment and social activity issues. The target group included 220 women from 11 regions of Lithuania characterized by a lack of activity on the part of community organisations, lack of motivating social measures to promote women entrepreneurship and volunteer activities in the community, and a lack of measures to promote integration in the labour market. Project beneficiaries acquired the lacking skills and qualifications and were provided with information on how these could be used and were also given the possibility to test the new skills in practice with the help of mediators, consultants, lecturers and experts. The integration model insures access for all participants to full expert assistance within 20 months on the average, as they seek to reach a certain specific goal: to get a job or to start and develop own business, also to enter into contacts with other participants in round-table discussions. This module-based project consisted of 3 components: the general; two special components — *Be Entrepreneurial* and *Be Visible to the Employer*; and the third one — consultations by specialists. Efficiency and quality was ensured by highest-skilled lecturers, individual and group consultations with lecturers, flexible schedule of trainings, appropriate periodicity of sessions and consultations. Continuity of integration of socially excluded persons in the labour market and promotion of entrepreneurship is ensured by organising training seminars and a closing conference. With a view to facilitating integration of socially excluded women in the labour market and promoting their entrepreneurship, a continual information campaign targeted at the

target group, employers, social partners and specialists in the field employment and business was conducted. During the campaign, the Women's Issues Information Centre organised a contest for the most socially responsible workplace in Lithuanian regions. The information campaign covered the dissemination of publications, promotions, publication of information on the regional press and on the Internet.

242. Another success story is the project *RETURN — Creation and Implementation of Models for Social and Professional Reintegration of Women back to the Labour Market after Long Absence* carried out by Women's Employment and Information Centre of Tauragė. The aim of the project is to address women's employment issues, promote equality within the community, deepen knowledge and enhance competences, improve social situation of women in the Tauragė county, and to bring about positive changes in the field of employment. The project's outcomes included preparation of training programmes and organisation of trainings under these programmes for improving social and general professional competences and skills to foster women's motivation to resume studies and return to professional activities. The reduction of unemployment among women makes a difference in other areas, too: equal opportunities are improved and public perceptions of women's roles are gradually changed.

243. Socially vulnerable women are beneficiaries of the project *Professional Rehabilitation Centre — Café for Socially Vulnerable Women* implemented by the Blessed Jurgis Matulaitis Family Support Centre. The project aims at developing and implementing a multi-tier programme for the reduction of social exclusion of socially vulnerable women and their integration in the labour market, which is expected to increase employability and competitiveness of project participants in the labour market. The programme is developing a package of services to local organisations operating in urban and/or rural communities. An all-inclusive programme to combat exclusion was developed; it addresses the development and application of methodologies to foster motivation to return to the labour market, provision of general competences (Lithuanian and English languages, computer literacy, basics of the labour law), vocational training in the local community's training centre-café, involvement of members of local communities in the activities of to the support network, promotion of interinstitutional cooperation among social partners active in the community and encouragement of employers to contribute actively to the solution of the problem of exclusion.

244. The economic recession brought significant changes to the labour market. In the beginning of the 2008, the major problem was the shortage of skilled workers, while in the end of the year it was a growing number of unemployed people. 214.2 thousand persons, including 103.3 thousand women, applied to local labour exchange offices in 2008. Compared to 2007, this number has grown by 47.5 thousand (or 28.5%). This growth was mainly a result of redundancies caused by unfavourable economic conditions, bankruptcies and reorganisations. The share of young people (under the age of 25 years) and men grew by about 80% in the overall number of unemployed population, whereas the share of women grew by only 8%. Women accounted for 48.2% and men for 51.8% of all registered unemployed people. As of the end of 2008, unemployment insurance benefits were paid to 34.3% of all unemployed persons registered with a labour exchange, or 32.6 thousand persons, including 15.2 thousand women. Another 111 persons, including 45 women, received early retirement unemployment insurance benefits.

245. Promotion of employment and reduction of unemployment are priorities of the Programme of the Government. 122 thousand job-seekers, including 68.2 thousand women, were employed in 2008 through the national labour exchange. Almost 16,000 unemployed, including nearly 7,000 women, became self-employed under business certificates. 36.3 thousand persons, including 20.3 thousand women, participated in active labour market policy measures financed from the Employment Fund. 55 projects of local employment initiatives were implemented in 29 municipalities. As part of these projects, 262 new jobs were created. More than half of all projects were implemented in rural areas (147 jobs were created, accounting for 56% of the total number of new jobs). Most of the projects were implemented in industry (26), services (24) and construction (5). Women accounted for 38% of the total number of persons newly employed.

246. In 2008, 19 new social enterprises were established, 16 of which were granted the status of a social enterprise for the disabled. Social enterprises are present in all counties of the country. There are 82 social enterprises overall in Lithuania, 60 of which are social enterprises for the disabled. They employ 2,615 workers, 64.4% of whom are attributed to target groups. Most of them are located in Vilnius (29) and Kaunas (19). With the use of state aid, social enterprises maintained workplaces for over 1,650 disabled persons, 51% of whom were women, and created 93 new jobs for the disabled and adapted 40 workplaces to disability of individual disabled persons.

247. In 2009, Lithuanian labour market saw a growth of labour supply and a drop of labour demand. Since the middle of the year, labour exchanges have been registering fewer new jobless persons and young people; however, as the average duration of unemployment grew longer and as the number of long-term unemployed went up, unemployment was three times higher in the end of the year. In 2009, local labour exchange offices had 369.4 thousand jobless persons on their lists, including 152.2 thousand women. More of the newly registered unemployed were long-term unemployed: 52.8 thousand persons, including 23.7 thousand women, registered over the year with local labour exchange offices have been unemployed for two or more years before registration.

248. In the 1st half of 2010, labour exchange offices continued to register large numbers of unemployed and the problem of limited employability remained. Local labour exchanges helped to find jobs for 121.8 thousand job-seekers, including 57.2 thousand women, in 2009. 18.2 thousand unemployed persons, including 9.6 thousand women, started their own economic activity under a business certificate. As of the end of the year, unemployment social insurance benefits were paid to 74.1 thousand unemployed persons accounting for 27% of the total number of the unemployed, including 32 thousand women.

249. A new version of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Support for Employment was adopted in July 2009 (hereinafter referred to as the Law)⁴⁴ to provide more focus and more funds for the promotion of active job-seeking. The possibility to support self-employment by one of the parents in a family with three or more children is also being considered.

250. In 2009, 46.9 thousand unemployed, of whom women accounted for 47%, were sent to participate in active labour market policy measures co-financed by the

⁴⁴ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 86-3638, 2009.

European Union structural funds, the Employment Fund and the state budget. About 18 thousand unemployed persons, woman accounting for 43%, were employed for community works. 41 local employment initiatives were implemented in 26 municipalities, and 162 new jobs were created. More than half of all projects were implemented in rural areas (91 jobs were created, accounting for 56% of the total number of new jobs). By types of economic activity, most of the projects were implemented in the services sector (20), industry (18) and construction (3). Women accounted for 42% of all persons newly employed.

251. In 2009, the status of a social enterprise was granted to 24 enterprises, 10 of which were granted the status of a social enterprise and 14 the status of a social enterprise for the disabled. Most of them are located in Vilnius (42) and Kaunas (20). As of the end of the year, there were 102 social enterprises in Lithuania, 74 of which were social enterprises for the disabled. In 2009, these enterprises created or adapted 80 workplaces for the disabled. Supported by the state, social enterprises employed 107 assistants to help 715 disabled persons, women accounting for 40%, to perform their work tasks.

252. Article 6 (1) of the Law on the Approval of the Statute of the Internal Service⁴⁵ lays down equal requirements for applicants to the internal service. It provides that applicants to the internal service must meet the requirements related to the citizenship of Lithuania, good reputation, age, education, health condition according to the requirements set by the Minister of Interior, and general physical preparedness differentiated between men and women. Article 6 (2) of the Statute of the Internal Service provides that the Minister of the Interior or heads of central institutions of internal affairs authorised by the Minister may lay down additional requirements for persons applying for service in certain subdivisions of institutions of internal affairs. However, such additional requirements may only be related to person's intellectual, physical and practical abilities, health condition, and moral and psychological suitability to perform specific duties in appropriate subdivisions. The Statute does not set any gender-related restrictions in recruiting persons to the internal service.

Subparagraph (d)

253. The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men requires that equal wages be paid to women and men for the same work or for the work of equivalent value. Other legal acts governing wages and salaries (Labour Code, Law on Public Service, etc.) also require that equal wages be paid to women and men for the same work or for the work of equivalent value. However, the wage gap still exists, but it is shrinking gradually.

254. By the data of the Department of Statistics, women's average hourly gross wages overall in the national economy (excluding sole proprietorships) was LTL 12.14 in 2009, which was 2.2% lower than in 2008 and 13.5% lower than that of men. In the public sector, women's average hourly gross wages was LTL 13.30 in 2009, which was 0.5% lower than in 2008 and 13.7% lower than that of men. In the private sector, women's average hourly gross wages was LTL 11.03 in 2009, which was 4.8% lower than in 2008 and 18.0% lower than that of men.

⁴⁵ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 42-1927, 2003.

255. By the data of the Department of Statistics, women's average monthly gross wages overall in the national economy (excluding sole proprietorships) was LTL 1,990 in 2009, which was 1.5% lower than in 2008 (LTL 2,020). In the public sector, women's average monthly gross wages was LTL 2,133 in 2009, which was only 0.3% lower than in 2008 (LTL 2,139); in the private sector, it was LTL 1,847, which was 3.6% lower than in 2008 (LTL 1,916).

256. Men's average monthly gross wages overall in the national economy (excluding sole proprietorships) was LTL 2,349 in 2009, which was 6.2% lower than in 2008 (LTL 2,505). In the public sector, men's average monthly gross wages was LTL 2,556, which was 4.8% lower than in 2008 (LTL 2,685); in the private sector, it was LTL 2,259, which was 7.4% lower than in 2008 (LTL 2,440).

257. In 2009, women's average monthly gross wages overall in the national economy (excluding sole proprietorships) was 15.3% lower than that of men: 16.5% lower in the public sector and 18.2% lower in the private sector.

258. In 2009, women dominated in human health-care and social work (83.5%), accommodation and catering services (77%), and education (76.4%).

259. By the data of the Department of Statistics, women's average monthly gross wages overall in the economy (excluding sole proprietorships) was lowest in the field of accommodation and catering services (LTL 1,225), followed by human health-care and social work (LTL 2,039) and education (LTL 2,093).

260. By the data of the Department of Statistics, in the 3rd quarter of 2010 women's average monthly gross wages overall in the national economy (excluding sole proprietorships) was LTL 1,924, which was 1.2% higher than in the 2nd quarter of 2010. In the public sector, women's average monthly gross wages did not change compared to the 2nd quarter of 2010 and was LTL 2,026; in the private sector, it was LTL 1,819, which was 2.1% higher than in the 2nd quarter of 2010. Women's average monthly gross wages overall in the economy was 14.7% lower than that of men. Over the year (the 3rd quarter of 2010 compared to the 3rd quarter of 2009), women's average monthly gross wages dropped by 2.8% overall in the economy, 4.6% in the public sector, and 0.6% in the private sector.

261. To reduce the wage gap between women and men, coefficients of salaries of less-paid workers in the public sector were increased with effect from 1 January 2009, as provided for in Resolution No. 1368 of 30 December 2008 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania *On the Amendment of Resolution No. 511 of 8 July 1993 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania Concerning the Procedure for Remunerating Workers of Budgetary Institutions and Organizations*⁴⁶, as follows: by 17% on the average for culture and art workers, by 10% for pedagogues (lower and upper limits of wage coefficients), and by 12% on the average for social workers. Moreover, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania has approved the following long-term programmes for increasing salaries for pedagogical staff, culture and art workers, social workers, and workers of science and study institutions:

⁴⁶ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 150-6101, 2008.

(a) Long-Term Programme for Increasing Salaries for Pedagogical Staff, approved by Resolution No. 193 of 5 March 2008 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁴⁷;

(b) Programme for Increasing Salaries for Culture and Art Workers for 2009-2013, approved by Resolution No. 401 of 17 April 2008 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁴⁸;

(c) Long-Term Programme for Increasing Salaries and Improving Social Guarantees for Social Workers for 2008-2012, approved by Resolution No. 419 of 29 April 2008 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁴⁹;

(d) Programme for Increasing Salaries for Workers of Science and Study Institutions for 2009-2012, approved by Resolution No. 509 of 28 May 2008 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁵⁰.

262. As part of implementing measures under the Programme of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania for 2008-2012 approved by Resolution No. 189 of 25 February 2009 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁵¹, a draft Law on Remuneration for Workers of State and Municipal Institutions of the Republic of Lithuania is underway (preliminary date of entry into force — 2011). Once adopted, the Law will ensure equal conditions of pay for work that requires equal qualifications and that is equally complicated, in institutions funded from the state budget, municipal budgets, State Social Insurance Fund and budgets of other funds founded by the state.

263. Elimination of the causes of the wage gap is also targeted by the National Programmes of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2005-2009 and 2010-2014. Specific measures are being carried out to eliminate discriminatory approaches towards women's and men's roles in the economic activity, to provide stereotype-free vocational guidance and information to job-seeking women and men, to promote balanced representation of women and men in decision-making, and to improve conditions to balance family and work duties thus reducing vertical and horizontal segregation in the labour market as one of the main structural causes leading to the wage gap between women and men.

Subparagraph (e)

264. The pensionable age-group contains many more women than men. By the data of 2009, average life expectancy after the award of pension is about 22.2 years for women and about 14.7 years for men. By the data of the Department of Statistics, women account for 58.39% of the total number of persons in the 60-64 age-group (162,712 persons). This difference is progressively higher, reaching 76.87% in the 85+ age-group. Women receive lower pensions than men. By the data of the Department of Statistics, the average old-age pension was LTL 679 for women and LTL 852.40 for men in 2008.

⁴⁷ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 29-1032, 2008.

⁴⁸ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 51-1899, 2008.

⁴⁹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 53-1968, 2008.

⁵⁰ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 63-2394, 2008.

⁵¹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 33-1268, 2009.

265. The Law on State Social Insurance Pensions of the Republic of Lithuania lays down equal formula for determining pensions for women and men. However, the size of pension varies from person to person depending on individual personal characteristics such as the length of record and insured income. Persons who have the required minimum length of record (30 years both for women and men) are entitled to equal basic part of pension, which accounts for 110% of the basic pension. Differently, the supplementary part of pension depends on the individual length of record and the insured income earned by the person concerned. By the data of the Department of Statistics, men's wages and the length of record are higher than women's. Women's length of record and personal insured income, which is taken into account for the purpose of calculating the coefficient of the insured income for the person concerned, is influenced by such factors as duration of maternity and childcare leaves. Before the adoption of the Law on Pensions 1995, all childcare leaves were taken into account for the purpose of calculating the length of record but for working women only. Since 1999, unemployed parents, too, are insured for the basic part of pension, with social insurance contributions payable by the state; since 2008, they are insured for the whole pension which depends on the set minimum salary. Caregivers were started to be ensured for the basic part of pension in 2000 (for the whole pension — in 2008). Thus, state-funded insurance does not cover all periods; therefore, people who, due to objective reasons, had given up their career for the sake of activities generating benefits to the society run the risk of receiving lower pensions. Usually women take longer leaves to take care of their children and other family members; therefore, state-funded insurance to cover such periods is expected to reduce the gap between women's and men's pensions. Moreover, the pension gap is explained by the fact that women have shorter lengths of record than men do. By the data of 2009, women to whom old-age pensions were awarded despite their not having the minimum length of record accounted for 4.32% of all recipients of old-age pensions (598,599 persons), while men accounted for only 2.5%.

266. To ensure higher income for persons receiving lower pensions, a decision was made to introduce legal regulation to ensure that when the basic part of pension is raised, low-pension recipients benefit relatively more, and when the supplementary part of pension is raised (by raising the rate of insured income of the current year), pensions of persons who used to receive low income increase less. Thus, any increase of the basic part of pension, which depends on the length of record only, is aimed at ensuring higher income for low-pension recipients. With this in mind, the basic part of pension was set at 110% of the basic pension. Because women's average state social insurance pension is statistically lower than that of men and because women's supplementary part of pension is lower due to shorter length of record and lower insured income, the increase of the basic part of pension benefited women more than men.

267. The reform of state social insurance survivor's pensions started in 2006 was continued in 2008-2010. The main purpose of the reform was to improve social guarantees for the insured by expanding the circle of recipients of state social insurance survivor's pensions. The Law was amended to provide that the award of the survivor's pension shall be conditional on providing evidence of the length of record only where the deceased spouse died after 1 June 1991. Also, the requirement that the minimum length of record be acquired in the Republic of Lithuania or a EU Member State does not apply where the survivor's pension is to be awarded

compensate for the deceased spouses' old-age or work incapacity (invalidity) pension. Furthermore, the required minimum number of years in marriage has been reduced from five to one where the surviving spouse does not have children with the deceased spouse, with effect from 1 January 2008. In 2008, 14.1 thousand women and 3.3 thousand men were newly awarded the survivor's pension, accounting for 58.4% and 13.8%, respectively. Women accounted for about 85% of the recipients of the survivor's pension. Thus, following the adoption of this amendment to the Law, the number of women receiving the survivor's pension has greatly exceeded that of men. Consequently, income of elderly women has changed accordingly. Income of women who only receive the old-age pension account for 79.9% of the average pension of men, while their old-age pension plus survivor's pension added together account for 82.8% of men's average pension.

268. For two years starting from 1 January 2010, social benefits payable from the budget of the State Social Insurance Fund and from the state budget will be subject to re-adjustment. Pursuant to the Provisional Law on the Re-Adjustment and Payment of Social Benefits (hereinafter referred to as the Provisional Law), state social insurance pensions shall be re-adjusted with effect for two years starting from 1 January 2010 by raising the basic part of the pension and reducing the insured income of the current year. The re-adjustment will not affect the bonus payable for the length of record. The Law does not apply to state social insurance old-age pensions, early old-age pensions, retirement pensions, work incapacity pensions awarded when 60 to 70% of work capacity is lost, pensions lower than the statutory threshold (LTL 650), state social insurance orphan's (loss of breadwinner's) pensions, and work incapacity pensions awarded when 45 to 55% of work capacity is lost (pensions for Group III invalids) if they are lower than LTL 325. The Law was not applicable to 29% of women and only 9.2% of men of the total number of old-age pension recipients (598,595). According to this Law, pensions are not adjusted for recipients of work incapacity pensions who have lost 75 to 100% of work capacity (pensions for Group I invalids) and recipients of state social insurance old-age pensions who have been attributed to the group of persons with significant special needs. Pension recipients who still work are subject to additional pension cuts. The more a person earns, the lower pension he receives. A pension may be cut by max. 70% and only where the pension-recipient's monthly earnings exceed LTL 4,200. By the data of the Department of Statistics, women's average wages were lower than men's in 2008, accounting for 79% of men's wages. Accordingly, women's pensions were cut less than men's in the period of applicability of the Provisional Law.

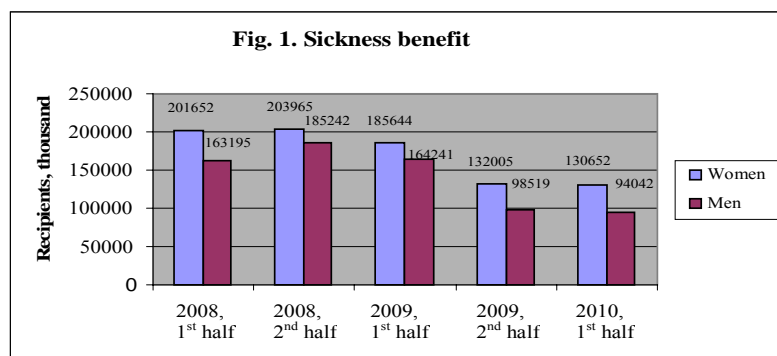
269. The payment of sickness benefits in the period of temporary incapacity to work is governed by the Law on Sickness and Maternity Social Insurance⁵² and the accompanying legislation — Regulations on Sickness and Maternity Social Insurance Benefits approved by Resolution No. 86 of 24 January 2001 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁵³.

270. The entitlement to this type of benefit is not gender-related, but an analysis of data of the Register of Persons Covered by State Social Insurance and Recipients of State Social Insurance Benefits of the Republic of Lithuania revealed that more women than men received sickness benefits in 2008-2010 (see Fig. 1). This could be

⁵² *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 111-3574, 2000.

⁵³ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 10-284, 2001.

explained by the tendency rooted in the society that it is women who commonly take a leave in the case of sickness of a family member or a child. Thus, sickness benefits are paid to compensate them for the loss of employment-related income.



271. No essential changes concerning payment of sickness social insurance benefits were introduced in the reporting period. Only the rates of sickness benefits have changed since 2008, but, as shown in Figure 1, this has not affected the distribution of recipients of benefits by gender.

272. Persons who get sick, lose working capacity due to accidents at work, on the way to/from work, as well as in the case of occupational diseases, are entitled to payments under the Law on Social Insurance of Occupational Accidents and Occupational Diseases⁵⁴ and the Regulations Concerning Benefits of Social Insurance of Occupational Accidents and Occupational Diseases approved by Resolution No. 309 of 22 March 2004 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁵⁵. As demonstrated by statistical data (see Fig. 2-5), many more men than women were recipients of benefits under this Law, except for the sickness benefit related to occupational accidents or accidents on the way to/from work in the first halves of 2009 and 2010 (see Fig. 2). This can be partly explained by seasonality when bad weather conditions increase the probability of getting injured on the way to/from work and at work in the course of carrying out work functions. Another reason — which is more likely — for the higher number of men among recipients of such benefits is the fact that proportionately more men are employed for more hazardous work in construction and manufacturing industry, whereas women dominate in such areas as pedagogical or social work, etc., where the risk of injuries is much lower.

⁵⁴ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 3207, 1999.

⁵⁵ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 44-1448, 2004.

**Fig. 2. Sickness benefit for accidents that work
(on the way to/from work)**

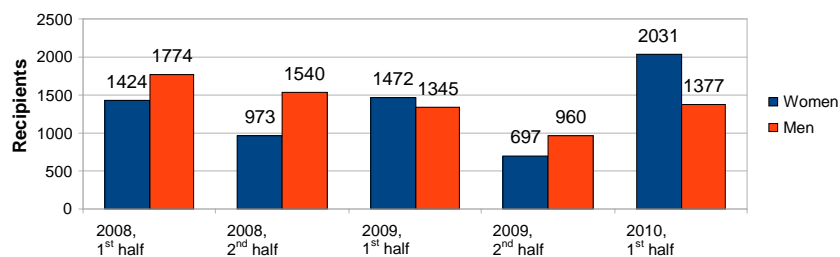
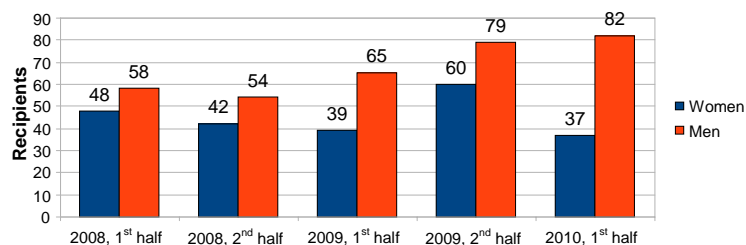


Fig. 3. Lump-sum compensations for the loss of working capacity



**Fig. 4. Periodic compensations for the loss of
working capacity**

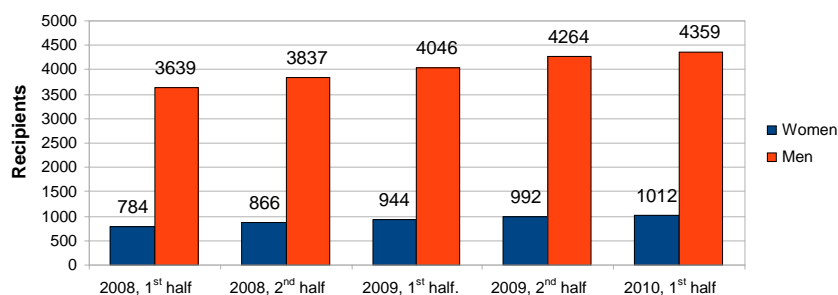
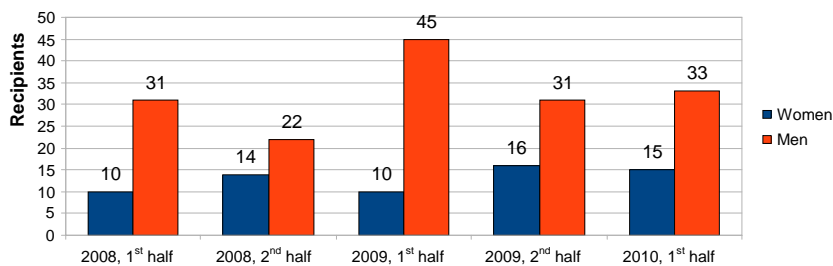


Fig. 5. Sickness benefit for occupational diseases



273. A comparison of the number of recipients of lump-sum and periodic compensations for the loss of capacity to work reveals that the difference in the number of men and women receiving lump-sum compensations for the loss of working capacity is much smaller than the difference in the number of men and women who receive periodic compensations for the loss of working capacity. Having in mind that the lump-sum compensation is payable to the insured in the case of loss of up to 30% of working capacity due to the insured event and the periodic one is payable in the case of loss of more than 30% of working capacity, women can be said to suffer less serious accidents at work than men.

274. As of the end of 2008, unemployment insurance benefits were paid to 34.3% of all unemployed persons registered with labour exchange, or 32.6 thousand persons, including 15.2 thousand women. Another 111 persons, including 45 women, received early retirement unemployment insurance benefits. As of the end of 2009, unemployment social insurance benefits were paid to 74.1 thousand unemployed persons, including 32 thousand women, accounting for 27% of the total number of the unemployed.

Subparagraph (f)

275. Information on the implementation in Lithuania of Article 11 (1) (f) of the Convention was given in the Third and Fourth Reports. Legislation governing the right to health protection, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction, did not change in 2008-2010.

Paragraph 2

Subparagraph (a)

276. Articles 129 and 132 of the Labour Code prohibit terminating the employment contract with a pregnant woman or with an employee raising a child (children) under the age of three years. More information on this issue has been submitted and in the previous reports.

277. Article 56 (4) of the Statute of the Internal Service prohibits to dismiss from the internal service a pregnant woman, as well as a mother or a father who alone raises a child under the age of 3 years, in the absence of the fault of the said officers (with the exception of the cases when an institution of internal affairs is wound up).

278. Analogical prohibition is set in Article 44 (4) of the Law on Civil Service and is applicable to other legal subjects — non-statutory civil servants.

Subparagraph (b)

279. To improve protection of women who return to the labour market after maternity leave against discrimination on the grounds of sex, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour proposed amendments to Article 179 of the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania. The amendments, i.e. the Law Supplementing Article 179 of the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania⁵⁶, were adopted by the Seimas and came into force on 23 July 2009. The Law obliges the employer not only to accept a woman worker to the same or equivalent job position after the maternity leave as provided for in the previous version of the Labour Code, but also to guarantee no

⁵⁶ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 87-3664, 2009.

less favourable conditions than before, including the wage, and the right to benefit from all improvements in the conditions, including the wage, which she would have had if she had worked that period.

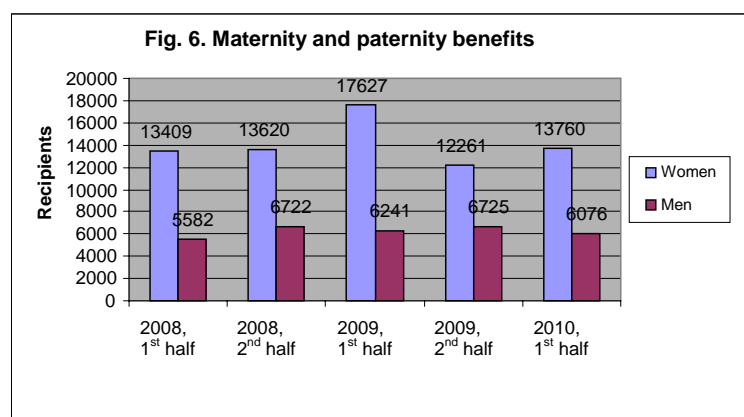
280. Unemployed pregnant women who are not entitled to state social insurance maternity benefits are entitled to a one-off benefit of LTL 260 (2 BSBs) 70 days before the expected date of delivery. In addition, depending on her property and income, a pregnant woman is entitled to a monetary social support for 70 calendar days before the expected date of delivery.

281. Article 38 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania states that family, motherhood, fatherhood and childhood shall be under the protection and care of the State. More detailed regulation of maternity benefits awarded and payable during maternity leave is laid down in the Law on Sickness and Maternity Social Insurance⁵⁷ and the Regulations on Sickness and Maternity Social Insurance Benefits approved by Resolution No. 86 of 24 January 2001 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁵⁸.

282. Maternity benefits are payable for 126 calendar days after 30 or more weeks of pregnancy. Women who have not exercised their right to take a maternity leave before the date of childbirth shall be paid a maternity benefit for 56 calendar days after the childbirth. In the case of complicated childbirth and if more than one child was born, the allowance shall be paid for extra days.

283. To provide for the possibility for the father of a child to take part in taking care of the child in the first month of life, the father has a right to take a paternity leave from the date of birth of the child until the child reaches the age of one month, and is entitled to a paternity benefit for this period.

284. As demonstrated by statistical figures (see Fig. 6), the number of fathers who have exercised their right to paternity benefit is much lower than the number of mothers. This is associated with the underlying idea behind maternity leave, which has been introduced, in the first place, in the interests of the woman and the child having in mind that pregnancy causes physiological changes in women. There are also instances when women raise their children alone.

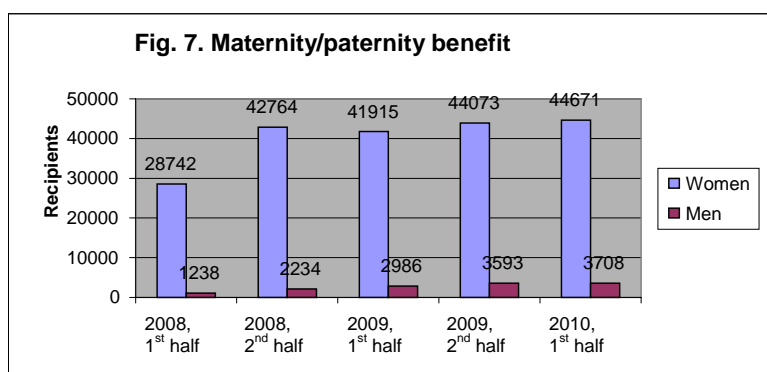


⁵⁷ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 111-3574, 2000.

⁵⁸ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 10-284, 2001.

285. On the expiry of maternity leave, one of the parents (or interchangeably) who has taken a childcare leave is entitled to maternity/paternity benefit until the child is two years old. The size of the benefit is 90% for the first year and 75% for the second year of leave, of the beneficiary's reimbursable remuneration which, for the purpose of calculating the benefit, is subject to a ceiling of four times the insured income approved by the Government (currently, LTL 4,680).

286. Statistical data show (see Fig. 7) that a much higher number of women compared to men make use of this possibility. This is partly associated with the fact that women traditionally play a more important role in taking care of their children and partly by the fact that the maximum size of the benefit is limited not only to a certain percentage of wages but also by a ceiling on income, which the benefit is conditional on. Having in mind that men's wages are higher than women's, as revealed by the data of the Department of Statistics, this right is more often exercised by women so that the family loses less income. Yet, it should be noted that the number of men exercising their right to paternity benefit is increasing: 3,472 men exercised this right in 2008 and 6,579 in 2009. The number of men exercising their right to paternity benefit is expected to grow in the years to come, as the approach to family and to division of family duties is becoming increasingly liberal.



287. With effect from 1 July 2001, legal acts governing activities of statutory civil servants and military personnel (these persons are not part of the state social insurance system and benefits are paid to them from the state budget) lay down that the average wages or a part of wages payable during maternity leave, paternity leave or childcare leave, as well as the maximum reimbursable wages and the duration of payment thereof shall be determined in accordance with the Law on Sickness and Maternity Social Insurance of the Republic of Lithuania. The version of the Law which will come into effect on 1 July 2011 establishes that the size of the benefit shall depend on the length of the selected childcare leave: if the insured person chooses to receive this benefit until the child is two years old, the benefit shall account for 70% of the recipient's reimbursable remuneration in the first year and 40% in the second year. If a one-year long childcare leave is opted for, the recipient shall receive a benefit of 100% of his/her average wages.

Subparagraph (c)

288. Family and career are the key values of the society in Lithuania. Men and women participate in the labour market which is characterized by long working

hours, high tension and high quality requirements as well as high use of new technologies. Both men and women who have family commitments, who have children to raise, and who take care of their elderly or disabled family members often encounter problems in balancing their work and family duties, but most often this problem affects women.

289. The European Union structural assistance funds are employed to tackle problems of balancing family and work duties. Pursuant to the Lithuanian Strategy for the Use of the European Union Structural Assistance for 2007-2013 approved by the European Commission on 26 April 2007 and the Operational Programme for the Development of Human Resources approved by the European Commission on 24 September 2007, 23 contracts were signed in the end of 2009 for the total value of LTL 54.4 million for projects under Measure VP1-1.1-SADM-04-K *Reconciling family and work commitments* co-financed by the European Social Fund. Since the commencement date of the projects, 1 project was terminated before any project activities took place and several other projects were trimmed in the volume. For this reason, the financing requirement for projects under this Measure decreased to LTL 48.8 million. The projects will be completed by the end of 2012. As part of these projects, 70% of the funds will be spent on care and social services for children, disabled and elderly persons, and the remaining 30% to promote family-friendly workplaces. This will create favourable conditions for economically active people of working age (employed or job-seeking) to balance their family and work duties and will promote the establishment of family-friendly workplaces.

290. Despite the fact that legislation grants the right to take childcare leave until the child is three years old both to women and men, this right is more often exercised by women, but men, too, increasingly exercise it. By the data of the Board of the State Social Insurance Fund under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, 4.56% of men exercised their right to take childcare leave in 2008, 7.11% in 2009, and 7.56% in the first nine months of 2010. Paternity leave was taken by 12,304 men in 2008, 12,966 men in 2009, and the projection for 2010 is 12,200 men.

291. Social assistance to help reconcile personal, family and work duties is one of the key directions of development of the social service system in the country. To improve assistance to people who take care of the disabled or elderly persons or children to balance their family and work duties, priority in the social services system in Lithuania is given to social services provided at home and in day-care centres and to short-term social care (respite care) by placing temporarily a disabled adult person or a child or an elderly person in a care facility.

292. By the data of the Department of Statistics, the volume of social services provided in out-patient social facilities is constantly growing in the country, e.g. services provided at home grew by more than 60% in 2009 compared to 2007. In 2009, 13.6 thousand persons received social services at home and 85.1 thousand persons in day-care centres (including 2.3 thousand disabled children and 6.8 thousand children from social risk families).

293. To ensure more flexible working arrangements and to facilitate reconciliation of family and work duties, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania adopted amendments to paragraph 2.7 of Resolution No. 990 of 7 August 2003 *Concerning*

*Working Time in State and Municipal Enterprises, Institutions and Organizations*⁵⁹, which came into force on 13 February 2010 and which provides for the possibility to set shorter working hours in a working day or a shorter week by agreement between the parties to be laid out in an individual time-schedule for an employee or a public servant concerned.

Subparagraph (d)

294. Information on the implementation in Lithuania of Article 11 (2) (d) of the Convention has already been given in the Third and Fourth Reports. Legislation governing the protection to women during pregnancy at work did not change in 2008-2010.

Paragraph 3

295. On 30 September 2009, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania adopted Resolution No. 1244 *On the Approval of Legislating Rules of the Republic of Lithuania*, pursuant to which the Ministry of Justice issues methodological guidelines concerning the drafting of legal acts, preparation of opinions on draft legal acts, monitoring of legal acts, and assessment of the likely impact of the proposed legal regulation. The above-mentioned Resolution requires that any draft legal acts submitted to the Government for consideration be accompanied by an opinion of the Ministry of Justice as well as opinions from other ministries and governmental agencies on issues falling within their competencies, including on equal opportunities between women and men. All ministries are responsible for monitoring applicable legal acts and, where a legal act can potentially discriminate women, for taking actions to withdraw such legal regulation.

Article 12

Paragraph 1

296. Laws regulating health care do not contain any discriminatory provisions. In Lithuania, every person irrespective of gender is entitled to use health-care services, including access to prophylactic programmes. In the light of the fact that the highest mortality rates in Lithuania are caused by blood circulation diseases and malignant tumors, special prophylactic programmes have been launched with respect to these diseases.

297. The Programme for Attributing Persons to the High-Risk Group of Heart and Vascular Diseases and for Financing Prevention Measures was continued in the reporting period, pursuant to Order No. V-913 of 25 November 2005 of the Minister of Health *Concerning the Approval of the Programme for Attributing Persons to the High-Risk Group of Heart and Vascular Diseases and for Financing Prevention Measures*⁶⁰. The aim of the Programme is to reduce morbidity with acute cardiovascular diseases and to identify new incidents of latent conditions of atherosclerosis and diabetes in order to reduce disability and mortality caused by heart and vascular diseases. The Programme under which free-of-charge tests are

⁵⁹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 79-3593, 2003; No. 97-3677, 2005; No. 88-3461, 2006; No. 17-641, 2007; No. 109-4619, 2009; No. 19-873, 2010.

⁶⁰ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 145-5288, 2005.

performed once a year to assess the likelihood of heart and vascular disease is open to men aged between 40 and 55 years and women between 50 and 65. The total number of people in these age-groups in Lithuania is 723 thousand. Under the Programme, 105,385 people were tested in 2008, 109,858 in 2009, and 148,455 in 2010. Financial allocations for the Programme amounted to LTL 5.8 million in 2008, LTL 7.3 million in 2009, and LTL 7.799 million in 2010.

298. Another programme is the Cervical Cancer Screening Programme which has been implemented in Lithuania since July 2004, pursuant to Order No. V-482 of 30 June 2004 of the Minister of Health *On the Approval of Financing for Malignant Cervical Tumour Preventive Measures from the Budget of the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund*⁶¹ Before 2008, free of charge tests for cervical cancer were available under this state-supported programme to women between 30 and 60 years of age; from 2008 onwards, the age limit was expanded to cover women between 25 and 60 years of age. Women are given the opportunity to take free-of-charge tests for cervical cancer once every three years. The Programme is financed from the budget of the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund and women do not have to pay for the tests. Financial allocations for the Programme are growing: LTL 5.8 million were allocated in 2008, LTL 5.9 million in 2009, and LTL 7.2 million in 2010.

299. During the second stage of the Programme (1 July 2007-30 June 2010), 345,832 women were screened, 126,742 of whom (44.8%) were screened repeatedly. Among women in the 25-60 age-group, the prevalence of cervical cancer in situ was over 50% compared to invasive cancer. Successful diagnosing of precancerous changes will help to reduce morbidity and mortality caused by cervical cancer. For the dynamics of cervical cancer and *ca-in-situ* in Lithuania in 2000-2009 see Annex 10.

300. In October 2005, a Breast Cancer Screening Programme was launched, pursuant to Order No. V-729 of 23 September 2005 of the Minister of Health *On the Approval of Financing for the Breast Cancer Screening Programme*⁶². The Programme is dedicated to women aged between 50 and 69 years. Women in this age-group can have free-of-charge tests for breast cancer once every two years. The Programme is financed from the budget of the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund. Financial allocations for the Programme amounted to LTL 4 million in 2008, LTL 4.5 million in 2009, and LTL 5.605 million in 2010. During the second stage of the Programme (1 October 2007-30 December 2009), 121,017 women were screened, 32,564 of whom (27%) were screened repeatedly. In 2010, 61,475 women were screened.

301. Under the Financing Programme for Early Diagnosis of Prostate Cancer approved by Order V-973 of 14 December 2005 of the Minister of Health⁶³, men in the 50-75 age-group, and men in the 45+ age-group whose fathers or brothers had prostate cancer, are entitled to free-of-charge tests for prostate cancer. In Lithuania, there are about 372 thousand men between 50 and 75 years of age. Financial allocations for this Programme amounted to LTL 8.3 million in 2008, LTL 7.59 million in 2009, and LTL 8.62 million in 2010. 126,718 men were screened in 2008, 101,466 in 2009, and 76,547 in 2010. The drop of the number of men tested was a result of a change in the rules. At the start of the Programme, men

⁶¹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 104-3856, 2004.

⁶² *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 117-4249, 2005.

⁶³ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 152-5617, 2005.

in the specified age-group had the opportunity to take tests for prostate cancer once a year. Later, in line with specialists' recommendations, this periodicity was changed to once every two years with effect from 1 July 2009.

302. Infertility affects 10 to 15% of families in Lithuania. This makes testing and offering medical treatment to infertile families particularly important. For this purpose, the Lithuanian Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists released, in 2008, a *Methodology for Diagnosing and Treating Infertility* to be followed by all health-care professionals. Furthermore, the Ministry of Health has drafted a Law on Assisted Reproduction, which, once adopted, will create preconditions to consider the possibility to compensate costs of infertility treatment, assisted reproduction procedures and medication.

303. In Lithuania, people have access to different forms of family planning, most popular of which are the intrauterine device and hormonal contraception. These two forms are used by about 30% of couples who do not want to have children.

304. A study on contraceptive behaviour of the Lithuanian population conducted by the Demographic Studies Centre of the Social Studies Institute in 2006-2007 reported that the overall level of the use of contraception grew by 1.5 times compared to the level of 1994-1995 to account for 75% in 2006-2007. The largest changes were recorded in the oldest age-group, i.e. women between 45 and 49 years of age, where the use of contraception has grown by almost three times over the period concerned: from 21% in 1994-1995 to 64% in 2006-2007.

305. Large changes took place in other age-groups too: the use of contraception in the 20-24 age-group grew from 47% in 1994-1995 to 85.5% in 2006-2007, in the 25-29 age-group from 56.9% to 79.3%, in the 30-34 age-group from 57.6% to 73.9%, in the 35-39 age-group from 51.4% to 72.4%, and in the 40-44 age-group from 39.3% to 71.2%. Still, as much as one-fourth of sexually active women indicated they did not use any measures of protection against unwanted pregnancy in 2006-2007.

306. Over 2008-2010, the availability of emergency contraception has greatly improved in Lithuania. As from 18 September 2008, the State Medicines Control Agency changed the classification of medical preparations *Postinor-2* and *Escapelle*, which can now be purchased without prescription.

307. No changes in abortion rules were introduced over the reporting period. The number of induced abortions has been gradually declining in Lithuania. Over the past ten years, the number of induced abortions has dropped by more than two times (see Annex 11).

308. More detailed information about women's health, including reproduction health, was delivered to the United Nations in October 2010. It should be noted additionally that family planning services in Lithuania are provided at primary health-care institutions by family doctors, obstetricians-gynaecologists, and obstetricians. The network of primary health-care institutions is quite well developed in Lithuania; therefore, primary health-care services are accessible to all people throughout the country. Everybody can get a consultation on family planning issues from a family doctor in the institution with which the person is registered on his/her own choice. In Lithuania, hormonal contraception, except medical preparations for emergency contraception, is subject to medical prescription. A woman who opts for hormonal contraception as a protection against pregnancy is

referred to an obstetrician-gynaecologist for the first consultation and prescription. Later, the use of contraception is followed up by a family doctor who issues further prescriptions. For persons covered by compulsory health insurance, these consultations are free of charge. Drugstores in Lithuania offer a wide choice of modern contraception.

309. Health offices are being established in urban and rural municipalities according to the Action Plan 2009-2013 for the implementation of the National Public Health Strategy 2006-2013. There are currently 32 health offices in Lithuania. They organize health promotion events, implement national and municipal public health programmes, organize seminars and trainings, and publish different publications and memos with a view to disseminating information to the public on the availability of contraception and on family planning issues.

310. Information on the implementation of Article 12 (2) of the Convention in Lithuania delivered in the Fourth Report has not changed over the period of 2008-2010.

Article 13

Subparagraph (a)

311. In Lithuania, families with children are supported financially. Low-income families, too, are eligible to social support (social benefit, compensation for heating and cold/hot water supply costs, free meals to children at schools, financial allocations for the acquisition of school items).

312. In order to ensure equal opportunities for women and men to exercise their social rights, a child benefit is payable to one of the parents, guardian (caregiver) or the child at the age of eighteen or above. In the case of a dispute between the parents as to who of them should receive the child benefit, the decision is made by taking into account the best interests of the child.

313. From 1 January 2008 on, the child benefit was payable for all children in general schools. In 2008, the child benefit was paid to 624.2 thousand children a month on the average.

314. The rules of awarding and paying the child benefit were revised in 2009 in the light of the economic and financial recession and with a view to ensuring support for the most vulnerable groups of the society, to make eligibility to the child benefit conditional on family income. Thus, the child benefit for a child between 2 and 7 years of age and for a child under 18 years of age in a large family is payable when the total income of the family or the cohabiting persons in the previous calendar year was lower than 1.5 of the state-supported income, i.e. LTL 525, per person a month. The child benefit is payable for a child since birth until 2 years of age where none of the parents of the child receive social insurance maternity/paternity benefit for this child or where a parent receives this benefit but it is lower than LTL 525.

315. These rules mitigate consequences of the economic recession on families with children that are most heavily hit by social economic problems, i.e. who receive low income and are dependent on social benefits and social assistance for schoolchildren. Children aged 7 or higher who study in schools and come from low-income families are eligible to another kind of state support — social assistance for

schoolchildren. This is one of the measures to balance the state budget because with the introduction of the limit of 7 years on the child benefit, public costs on the child benefit and its administration were reduced to LTL 117.87 million in 2010, allowing to save LTL 392.28 million a year which can now be used to meet the increased demand for social benefits. In 2010, about 152 thousand children received the child benefit a month on the average, which was 69% less a month than in 2009.

316. Cash social assistance provided by the state to low-income population can be applied for by any member of the family (one of the spouses, one of the cohabiting partners, or the child over 18 years of age) or a single person on equal conditions, i.e. the purpose of cash social assistance is to support those families or persons who, for objective reasons, do not earn enough for subsistence or for paying bills for utilities, so that subsistence income is guaranteed to every citizen of the country.

317. According to the Law on Cash Social Assistance for Low-Income Families (Single Residents)⁶⁴, a uniform system of financial social support based on income and property is applied in Lithuania. Low-income people irrespective of gender are eligible for a social benefit that guarantees the basic minimum of resources required for meeting basic physiological needs, also to a compensation for heating costs and a compensation for the supply of cold and hot water (hereinafter referred to as compensations) to finance a part of housing maintenance costs.

318. Subject to assessment of income and property of a family or a single person, the family or the single person is entitled to cash social assistance if every member of the family older than 18 years or the single person or a child between 16 and 18 years of age satisfy at least one of the conditions specified in the Law on Cash Social Assistance for Low-Income Families (Single Residents), i.e. are unemployed and receive unemployment social insurance benefit; have been registered with a local labour exchange office for at least six months in succession; are older than 18 years of age and work or study (until the age of 24 years); are of the retirement age or receive a pension of any type; is a parent taking care of a child under 3 years who does not attend a pre-school establishment or under 8 years if the family has three or more children, and the like.

319. The number of recipients of cash social assistance has greatly increased due to the complicated economic and financial situation in the country, higher unemployment and lower incomes: in 2008, 37.3 thousand persons (1.1% of the total population of Lithuania) received social assistance a month on the average, and 102.8 thousand persons (3.1% of the total population) received compensations. In 2010, social assistance was provided to 181.3 thousand people a month on the average (5.4% of permanent residents of Lithuania). Compared to 2009, the number of recipients of social assistance a month on the average has grown by 2.5 times. In 2010, compensations for heating costs were provided to 166.5 thousand people a month on the average during the heating season (5% of the total population of Lithuania). Over 2010, the number of recipients of compensation for heating costs has grown by 27.8% compared to 2009.

320. By the data of the Department of Statistics, rural people are more affected by poverty than urban population. The higher risk of poverty in rural areas has been prevailing for several years in turn. In 2009, the poverty risk was 32.7% in rural areas and 14.7% in urban areas and as much as three times lower, i.e. 10.5%, in

⁶⁴ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 73-3352, 2003; No. 130-4889, 2006.

major towns. In 2009, the poverty risk of women in rural areas was slightly higher than that of men: 33.9% for women and 31.4% for men. Among urban population, these figures were slightly lower: 16.4% and 12.6%, respectively.

321. The high level of poverty risk in rural areas (thus among rural women, too) was determined by the fact that income-in-kind generated from agricultural activities, which was a major source of income for many agricultural and other rural households, were not taken into account for the purpose of calculating their overall income.

322. The poverty risk is much higher (48.3% in 2008 and 46.4% in 2009) in incomplete families where a single adult parent (usually a woman) has to support children alone and in families where two adult persons are raising three or more children: their poverty risk was 32.9% in 2009.

323. By the data of the Department of Statistics, the poverty risk in the 18-64 age-group was almost the same for women and men, accounting for 18.6% and 18.4%, respectively, in 2009. The gap between women's and men's poverty risk is more visible in the 65+ age-group, accounting for 13.2% among men and 31.3% among women.

Subparagraph (b)

324. Laws of the Republic of Lithuania governing the provision of financial services have been harmonized with the European Union's legislation and they ensure the opportunity for all persons (both legal and natural), irrespective of gender, to use all financial services, including lending services (consumer credits, mortgages, factoring operations, loans for commercial transactions), leasing services (financial lease), etc.

325. The Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Financial Institutions defines the client of a financial institution as a person that is provided financial services by a financial institution. The Law also defines financial services and lays down the requirements for financial institutions to be followed in taking decisions concerning the provision of a financial service (including lending). Article 31 (3) of the Law sets, inter alia, that prior to taking a decision to lend, a financial institution must ascertain that the financial assets being pledged or other assets wherefrom a claim of the financial institution may be satisfied in the future actually exist and the acquired claim of the financial institution may be satisfied therefrom; that the client's present and projected financial as well as economic situation allows to assume that the client will be capable of performing his obligations; and that the client has been and is performing his financial obligations to financial institutions.

326. The Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Banks lays down the requirement for a bank to assess the risk associated with every transaction it concludes on the provision of financial services, the financial and economic situation of a client, the performance of obligations related to the transaction for the provision of financial services, the available means of ensuring the performance of these obligations as well as other circumstances influencing the value of the bank's assets. Therefore, before issuing loans to clients, banks must assess very carefully the client's capability to perform obligations under the credit agreement.

327. The Civil Code (Article 6.883) authorises the lender to refuse to grant a credit only where evidence exists that the credit will not be repaid in time.

Article 14

Paragraph 1

328. By the data of the Department of Statistics, 384.2 thousand people or 27.1% of the total employed population of the country worked in rural areas in 2009. Women accounted for 46.4% and men for 53.6% of all persons employed in rural areas. In 2009, like in the previous periods, the majority of rural women were engaged in agriculture (25.8%), wholesale and retail (15.6%), education (15.6%), and health care and social care (8.4%). Rural men were mostly engaged in agriculture (33.6%), processing industry (15.1%), construction (12.7%) and sales (11.4%). Agriculture and forestry employed 226 thousand people or 16% of all employed population in 2004, before this number dropped to 130 thousand people in 2009, accounting for only 9% of all employed population. Given the shortage of retraining programmes and owing to the fact that works requiring technical skills dominate in rural areas, it is more difficult for rural women than for women in urban areas to find alternative jobs because the supply of jobs in rural areas is lower partly because of the lower income-to-consumption ratio.

329. By the data of the Department of Statistics, the labour force activity rate of women, both urban and rural, is lower than that of urban and rural men. In 2009, the labour force activity rate in the 15-64 age-group was 67.8% among women and 72% among men.

330. In 2009, the unemployment rate of men was 16% in urban and 19.4% in rural areas, while the unemployment rate of women was 9.6% in urban and 12.8% in rural areas.

331. By the data of a statistical survey of employment, the rate of employment in the 15-64 age-group was higher among women (60.7%) than among men (59.5%) in 2009. The level of employment was 62.5% for urban men, 65% for urban women, 53.6% for rural men, and 50.1% for rural women.

332. Taking account of the recommendations made by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning the situation of rural women and women in other vulnerable groups, the issues of gender equality, fight against discrimination, and sustainable regional development have been identified as horizontal priorities of the National Report 2008-2010 on Social Protection and Social Inclusion Strategies (as approved by Order No. A1-431 of 1 July 2009 of the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania *On the Approval of the National Programme for 2010 as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion*⁶⁵, as amended by Order No. A1-695 of 24 December 2009 of the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania⁶⁶) (hereinafter referred to as the National Report).

333. As laid down in the National Report, gender equality and non-discrimination shall be insured by assessing the impact of each policy on the implementation of these principles and by applying targeted measures. They are aimed at ensuring gender equality, identifying and addressing, in a systematic manner, problems related to equal opportunities of women and men in all areas, particularly among

⁶⁵ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 83-3448, 2009.

⁶⁶ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 157-7121, 2009.

rural women, and mainstreaming gender equality in all public policies. For this purpose, all-inclusive measures are being implemented to cover labour market, social protection, education and other spheres. The Report envisages making efforts to balance family and work duties by improving services and support to the family, promoting the development of family-friendly workplaces, promoting application of flexible work arrangements and thus easing the burden of family duties which is most often carried by women. It also envisages continuation of measures to help change stereotypical public attitudes towards men's and women's roles, facilitate the return to the labour market after childcare leave, promote entrepreneurship among women and enhance participation of older women in the labour market, and continue to combat discrimination in the labour market, particularly in relation to women in vulnerable groups who are more than others exposed to manifold discrimination. In Lithuania, the problem of feminization of old age is particularly visible: single women dominate among old population. Therefore, social services to the elderly are being further developed and the system of social benefits is effectively employed. In addition, focus is placed on addressing certain family and societal problems most often affecting women (domestic violence, trafficking in human beings).

334. To promote sustainable regional development, efforts are being made to reduce regional disparities in the accessibility and quality of services (social security, health care, culture). Regional infrastructure of social services is being developed, local employment initiatives are being implemented, rural development and e-inclusion is being strengthened.

335. As part of implementing measures envisaged in the National Report for 2008-2010 in the area of gender equality and fight against discrimination, public awareness campaigns were organized concerning women's and men's family duties and concerning possibilities to take childcare leave, as provided for in the Plan of Measures for 2008-2010 under the Family Welfare Strategy of the National Demographic (Population) Political Strategy, also streamlined agricultural and rural development was sought and activities alternative to agriculture were being developed. Measures were taken to strengthen professional skills of farmers and other rural people engaged in agriculture, forestry or activities alternative to agriculture, and improve their capacities to take part in the rural development process. Consultations were provided to women starting or developing their own businesses in rural areas; gender equality issues were integrated into formal and non-formal education; trainings were organized for teachers on gender quality issues; trainings were organized for women returning to the labour market after a long leave and for older women to encourage them to seek employment; information on equal opportunities for women and men was disseminated to the public as part of legal education programmes carried out through mass media.

336. The National Anti-Discrimination Programme 2009-2011 approved by Resolution No. 317 of 15 April 2009 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania envisages measures to help to foster respect for a human being; ensure compliance with legal acts laying down the principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunities; promote legal awareness, mutual understanding and tolerance on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, beliefs, views and convictions, age, sexual orientation, disability, belonging to an ethnic group, and religion; inform the public about signs of discrimination in Lithuania and its negative impact on the opportunity for certain public groups to participate

actively and on equal footing with others in public activities and about instruments of protection of equal rights.

337. The Programme directly addresses problems of vulnerable groups. First of all, it acknowledges that discrimination on the grounds of sex in employment, education, culture, health care and other areas can affect any person: disabled people, young and old persons, persons of different races, nationalities, religions, beliefs and convictions or social status, and that too little is still known about discrimination of vulnerable groups of the society on the grounds of sex, including about specific problems caused to women and men belonging to certain social groups by discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, nationality, religion or convictions, health status or other similar basis. Taking into account the recommendations issued by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to Lithuania, a study will be conducted to assess the situation of women in vulnerable groups, which will focus particularly on the situation of rural women, disabled women, women belonging to national minorities, including Roma, older women (in the 55-60 age-group (pre-pension age) and 60+ age-group), and migrant women in different fields and from different perspectives. The tasks and objectives of this broad-scale study have already been formulated and the study is now on the stage of exploring financial possibilities, including the use of EU structural assistance funds, to conduct the study. The study will pursue the following goals:

(a) To collect the necessary information and to investigate the situation of women in vulnerable groups in the areas of employment, education, including lifelong learning, and culture;

(b) To collect the necessary information and to investigate capabilities of women in vulnerable groups to acquire housing, receive health-care services, social services, legal assistance, loans to start a business, and take part in decision-making;

(c) To compare the situation of rural and urban women in vulnerable groups in the above-mentioned fields;

(d) To compare the situation of women in vulnerable groups against the general situation of women and men in the above-mentioned fields and from the above-mentioned perspectives;

(e) To compare the situation of women in different vulnerable groups;

(f) To assess which vulnerable groups are more or less advantaged or disadvantaged compared to women in other vulnerable groups in certain fields and from certain perspectives;

(g) To identify possible signs of manifold discrimination against women on different grounds such as age, race, health status, religion, etc.;

(h) To define and assess problems encountered by women in vulnerable groups and to make recommendations for possible solutions.

338. In 2008, the Department of National Minorities and Lithuanians Living Abroad under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania commissioned a smaller-scale study *Situation of Men and Women Belonging to National Minorities in the Labour Market* as part of implementing the National Minorities Policy Development Strategy until 2015. The study aimed at assessing the situation of national minorities

in the Lithuanian labour market: collecting the latest information on the level of education of national minorities, their professional preparedness, the level of command of the official language, the level of income, reasons for losing the job, and analysing signs of discrimination in the labour market and comparing the situation of men and women belonging to national minorities and young people under the age of 29 years in the labour market. The study was conducted by the Institute of Labour and Social Research. 622 respondents belonging to national minorities in the municipalities of Vilnius city and Vilnius region and in the municipalities of Klaipėda city and Klaipėda region were interviewed. The study reported that problems encountered by national minorities hardly differ from those faced by the remaining population of Lithuania. 69.8% of the respondents had a paid job and worked.

339. Preparedness of women belonging to national minorities is better than that of men but women are more often than men economically inactive and unemployed. More women than men belonging to national minorities indicated they depended mainly on social allowances (benefits and pensions) and regular assistance from other persons. More men than women belonging to national minorities indicated their main personal source of income was income from sole proprietorship activities. The study also reported that more women than men had a certain professional preparedness and it was better than that of men. 43.2% of women and only 29.7% of men respondents had higher education. Subjective reasons for the loss of job differed between men and women belonging to national minorities. The main cause for the loss of job was an unsatisfactory salary for men and not appealing nature of job for women. Such differences in the reasons for the loss of job demonstrate that behaviour of national minorities in the labour market is still heavily influenced by traditional stereotypes according to which a man is the breadwinner for the family and must therefore earn more than a woman. Discrimination on the grounds of nationality in the labour market or in education and vocational training has been suffered by 20.3% of the respondents: 22% of men and 22.9% of women.

340. To reduce social exclusion of rural women and women in vulnerable groups, gender equality has been covered by the National Programme for 2010 as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (hereinafter referred to as the European Year Programme 2010) coordinated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.

341. Lithuania, like other Member States, takes part in the general process of strengthening social security and social inclusion in the European Union, which is organized on the basis of the open method of coordination, thus seeking to achieve the general goals of the EU by taking account of the existing and anticipated demographic, social and economic challenges that have an impact on the situation of both men and women. Lithuania's priorities in the European Year include the fight against child poverty, including poverty passed from generation to generation, and the fight against poverty in families with a higher focus on large families, single parents or single mothers and families with dependents, as well as institutionalized children.

342. Respect of gender equality and non-discrimination principles is one of the key general selection criteria applied for selecting NGO projects dedicated to the European Year Programme 2010.

343. Measures under the European Year Programme 2010 are being implemented by respecting the principle of equality between women and men, with particular focus on possibilities to balance family and work duties of women and men and to promote positive paternity, strengthen corporate social responsibility and promote the development of family-friendly workplaces. Much attention is given to strengthening rural communities and involving them in the process of tackling social problems.

344. By the end of 2010, five community forums have been organized where local situations were analyzed with local communities and possible ways to change them were explored; also, five social dramas-forum theatres were organized with professionals acting as hosts and children from local communities playing roles.

345. A series of meetings were organized with rural communities under the title *Integration of a Child into Community in order to Reduce Exclusion*, inviting poverty-stricken families, related persons and institutions to discuss, present, and examine the current situation in terms of poverty and social exclusion (namely, the situation of low-income rural families and their children), to discuss the best practices of fostering mutual understanding and trust, and the situation and the potential of integrating orphans into local communities.

346. A three-day-long international conference-workshop *How Assistance at Home Helps Overcome Poverty* was organized to examine the role of a family in the modern society and the needs of a family who has a sick member of the family to take care of. With the growth of emigration of people of working age, members of local communities have to carry an increasingly large burden of taking care of elderly people. This applies, in particular, to children (grandchildren) who are left to be attended by their grandparents and who are often not ready to respond to the needs of their close ones. Events organized in rural territories were more actively attended by women than men.

Paragraph 2

347. As part of implementing the National Rural Development Programme for 2006-2008 approved by the Resolution No. 590 of 19 June 2006 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁶⁷, a number of conferences, seminars and other educational events aimed at addressing social problems encountered by rural people were organised. The Lithuanian Women Farmers' Association regularly organised educational and informational events for rural women: as already mentioned, the Lithuanian Women Farmers' Association organized a cycle of seminars *National Cultural — Culinary Heritage* to demonstrate possible alternatives of women employment in rural areas, also a conference *Reduction of Social Exclusion of Rural Women*, and other educational events. Different measures were implemented through active cooperation with many social partners, including the Lithuanian Women Farmers' Association established within the Chamber of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania and the Women in Business Network operating within the Lithuanian Association of Chambers of Industry, Commerce and Crafts.

348. In 2009, the Lithuanian Rural Network was launched under the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013. The Network is financed from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the national budget. The

⁶⁷ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 70-2564, 2006.

Axis IV objective *Technical Assistance for Regional and International Cooperation among Participants in Rural Development* of the Operational Programme of the Lithuanian Rural Network creates the opportunity for members of the Network (rural communities, associations acting in the context of agriculture and rural development (including the Lithuanian Women Farmers' Association), etc., excluding local action groups (LAGs) acting in rural areas) to carry out cooperation projects under which support is provided to finance joint operations, i.e. to organize joint events with project partners, to conduct research, and to prepare publications. As the Lithuanian Women Farmers' Association is a member of the Lithuanian Rural Network and is thus a potential applicant for the above-mentioned projects, this initiative has been included in the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014 approved by Order No. A1-323 of 7 July 2010 of the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania.

Subparagraph (b)

349. In Lithuania, rural women have the same access as urban women to health-care services. Lithuania has a well-developed network of primary health-care institutions. About 700 medical stations operate in rural areas in Lithuania, employing community nurses and regularly visited (1-2 times a week) by family doctors. When needed, women are referred for consultation or treatment to specialist doctors in health-care institutions of district, regional or national level.

Subparagraph (c)

350. Pursuant to the Law on State Social Insurance⁶⁸, farmers and their partners are insured for the basic and supplementary parts of pension and are also covered by sickness and maternity social insurance limited to the entitlement to maternity, paternity and maternity/paternity benefits, as well as health insurance. It should be noted that state social insurance was introduced to farmers only in 2009. By the data of the Board of the State Social Insurance Fund, women farmers covered by insurance accounted for only 25% in 2009 and 2010 (as of October). This trend is associated with the long-standing practice to register farms in the name of the man farmer and with the fact that owing to the mechanization of works on a farm, a larger part of works are performed by men, while women usually have other types of jobs in addition to works on the farm and therefore already have social guarantees.

Subparagraph (d)

351. By the data of the Department of Statistics, 928.1 thousand rural people had acquired formal education as of 2009. The difference in the number of educated rural women and men is very slight (482 thousand women and 446.1 thousand men). More rural men than women have a secondary or a secondary and basic education and a professional qualification (229.2 thousand women and 255.9 thousand men), but more rural women than men have a higher education or an education between secondary and higher (59.7 thousand women and 41 thousand men). Despite this, rural women with higher education have slightly less opportunities to find a job compared to men with a special professional qualification because jobs in rural

⁶⁸ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 17-447, 1991, No. 171-6295, 2004.

areas usually require more professional, technical and specialized knowledge and skills. For this reason, working-age women are increasingly often choosing to work and live in major towns or even outside the Republic of Lithuania.

352. The rapid decline of the number of educational institutions in rural areas leads to the decline of learning motivation and to a higher probability that increasingly many children will not participate in the continual learning process. Moreover, poor supply and inadequate quality of educational services for adults adds to the problem of unemployment of rural population. With support from the European Union's Structural Funds, a project *Establishment and Development of Universal Multifunctional Centres* was launched. The project is aimed at establishing and developing a modern educational network to satisfy the needs of different age-groups as well as at addressing the problem of the inadequate quality, supply and accessibility of educational services in rural areas. A universal multifunctional centre is an institution providing educational, cultural and social services to children and local communities; its activities may include pre-school, pre-primary and non-formal education of children, children day care, non-formal education of adults, educational assistance, special education, distance learning under formal and non-formal educational programmes or modules, leisure, socio-cultural and artistic activities of children and adults, etc. At present, there are 40 universal multifunctional centres in the country, providing a wide range of educational services to respond to the needs of local communities. It is expected that 76 centres will be established in Lithuanian regions and municipalities by 2013.

353. Optimal material, organizational and information-related conditions have been created for rural people to participate in training and retraining processes. The needs of project target groups for training and retraining have been identified in all regions of Lithuania and dissemination of project activities has been insured. The project will organize individual consultations on the issue of starting up and developing a concrete business. The project is expected to contribute to the reduction of the number of the unemployed in rural areas, to the creation of more new jobs, to dissuading rural people from emigration, to increasing consumer purchasing power and thus promoting the improvement of the overall economic situation in Lithuania. The project has also been included in the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014 approved by Order No. A1-323 of 7 July 2010 of the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania. Project outcomes are monitored with a focus on, inter alia, representation of genders in project initiatives (as of today, general project implementation statistics show that out of the total number of 4,954 persons who have participated or still participate in the project, women account for 61% (3,030) and men for 39% (1,924)). The project is financed by the European Social Fund under Measure VP1-1.1-SADM-09-V *Refocusing of Workforce in Rural Areas from Agriculture to Other Activities* of Priority 1 *Quality Employment and Social Inclusion* of the Operational Programme of the Development of Human Resources 2007-2013.

Subparagraphs (e) and (f)

354. The growth of employment in Lithuanian rural areas and the improvement of the quality of rural production are among the tasks of the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013 financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the national budget.

355. Measures under Axis I *Improving the Competitiveness of the Agricultural and Forestry Sector* of the Lithuanian Rural Development Programme 2007-2013, launched in the end of 2007 seek to address problems related to the aging of farmers, lack of cooperation, insufficient training and dissemination of information to farmers, lack of organizational and entrepreneurship skills and innovations. These measures also seek to increase efficiency and improve the quality of products, reduce production costs and ensure adequate return on investment. This is specifically sought by the Measure *Early Retirement from Commercial Agricultural Production*.

356. This Measure helps semi-subsistence farms to become commercially viable farms, encourages young people to take up farming (by harnessing support under Axis I Measure *Setting up of Young Farmers*), as older farmers are less prepared to modernize their farms and lack managerial skills (some owners of semi-subsistence farms give up agriculture and take up alternative activities by using support under Axis III *The Quality of Life in Rural Areas and Diversification of the Rural Economy* of the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013).

357. Measures under Axis I of the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013 also seek to enhance the level of modernization, technology and innovations in the primary agricultural production, processing and forestry sectors, thus seeking to ensure the production of products of higher value added and adequate marketing of Lithuanian products and to increase the level of income of rural people and to improve the standard of living. The primary agricultural production sector is committed to improving farming technologies, enhancing the level of modernization and infrastructure, promoting cooperation among farmers and establishing associations of producers. For the time being, the primary agricultural production sector is labour-intensive but in the future, once modern equipment and technologies have been introduced to respond to the changing needs on the market, less physical labour will be required.

358. Farmers have the possibility to use support to modernize production, increase efficiency, improve the quality of their products, and thus adapt to market needs. Farmers' participation in food quality schemes improve the quality of agricultural food products, diversify the supply of products and increase value added of the products. The improvement of the innovation structure and capacity in Lithuania is highly relevant for companies and research and knowledge organizations; therefore, support is used to organize trainings for staff of research and knowledge institutions and the industry.

359. Measures *Diversification into Non-Agricultural Activities, Support for Business Creation and Development and Encouragement of Rural Tourism Activities* under Axis III *The Quality of Life in Rural Areas and Diversification of the Rural Economy* of the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013 are aimed at improving the quality of life in rural areas by providing the opportunity for rural people to give up agriculture and take up alternative activities or to start and/or develop their own business, thus contributing to the creation of new jobs and the improvement of infrastructure in rural areas.

360. In 2008, 55 projects of local employment initiatives were implemented in 29 municipal territories. As part of these projects, 262 new jobs were created. More than half of all projects were implemented in rural areas (147 jobs were created, accounting for 56% of the total number of new jobs). Most of the projects were

implemented in industry (26), services (24) and construction (5) sectors. Women accounted for 38% of the total number of all persons newly employed.

361. In 2009, 46.9 thousand unemployed, of whom women accounted for 47%, were referred to participate in active labour market policy measures co-financed by the European Union Structural Funds, the Employment Fund and the state budget. About 18 thousand unemployed persons, with woman accounting for 43%, were employed for community works. 41 projects of local employment initiatives were implemented in 26 municipalities, and 162 new jobs were created. More than half of all projects were implemented in rural areas (91 jobs were created, accounting for 56% of the total number of new jobs). By the type of economic activity, most of the projects were implemented in the services sector (20), industry (18) and construction (3). Women accounted for 42% of all persons newly employed.

362. Seeking to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment of all people, including women, the Ministry of the Economy organized, on 27-28 May 2010, a yearly entrepreneurship promotion event *The Entrepreneurial Lithuania* aimed at establishing a dialogue between the state and business and people who want to start their own business, especially young and unemployed people, by presenting and explaining the conditions of creating a small business in Lithuania.

363. Rural women and men are encouraged to engage not only in agriculture but also in alternative activities through the initiative financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and envisaged in the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013 approved by Decision No. C (2007)5076 of 19 October 2007 of the European Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013), specifically through Measures *Diversification into Non-Agricultural Activities* and *Support for Business Creation and Development* under Axis III of the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013, through which people are encouraged to diversify their sources of income and to start or develop their one-person or small businesses in rural areas. This project has also been included in the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Programme of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2010-2014 approved by Order No. A1-323 of 7 July 2010 of the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania⁶⁹.

364. Outcome and output indicators of these measures are monitored with a focus on, inter alia, representation of genders in alternative business projects in rural areas (interim progress evaluation report for the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013 is currently underway; it will reflect the distribution of project applicants and newly employed persons in rural areas by gender).

365. If the total value of projects proposed under Measure *Diversification into Non-Agricultural Activities* under Axis I of the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013 exceeds the availability of support under the Call for Project Applications concerned, the third priority for the purpose of selecting projects for further processing will be given to projects proposed by rural women or by micro-enterprises run by women in rural areas.

366. The Ministry of Agriculture is implementing a project *Promotion of the Refocusing of Workforce in Rural Areas from Agriculture to Other Activities in*

⁶⁹ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 83-4391, 2010.

Lithuania. The project aims at enhancing participation and employment of rural people and encouraging people to engage not only in agriculture that also have other sources of income. The project is exceptional because its training programmes are dedicated to rural population but are not related to agricultural activities. The project encourages rural people to start their own business or start new or additional activities. The project was launched with a view to addressing problems related to unemployment in rural areas and to respond to the need to take account of structural changes in the economy that result in a lower demand for agricultural activities. It is important for Lithuanian rural people to have additional sources of income: to acquire a profession, engage in crafts, start their own business. The project covers the whole territory of the country, and entrepreneurship promotion seminars, trainings leading to the acquisition of new professions, individual business consultations and all other operations under the project are provided free of charge. The goal of the project is to improve possibilities to refocus workforce in rural areas from agriculture to other activities, to facilitate their integration into the labour market, and to promote intensity and diversity of the economic activity in rural areas. The target groups of the project are: agricultural workers (farmers or rural people (women and men) who want to give up agriculture and take up other business or who want to take up a business not directly related with agricultural production in addition to agriculture), other rural people (women and men who wish to engage in non-agricultural businesses or crafts), and members of organizations (local action groups, rural communities, etc.) active in the field of rural development. The benefit of the project: through training, the project will help rural people who want to retire from agriculture to change activities. It provides professional assistance to those who want to create a new business, improve their professional skills, and select a suitable profession and an activity according to needs.

367. As part of implementing measures under the National Programmes of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2005-2009 and 2010-2014 aimed at promoting employment of rural women, counselling is being provided and conferences and other events organised annually to rural women starting up or running an agricultural or alternative business.

368. In 2008-2009, the Lithuanian Women Farmers' Association, which is a member of the Chamber of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania, one of the most important social partners of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the Ministry), organized, as a partner of the Ministry, a conference *Reduction of Social Exclusion of Rural Women*, which was attended by 205 participants (5 men and 200 women). The key topics discussed at the Conference included the situation of rural women, rural youth and children, their employment, violence against women, development of social services centres, the role of rural women in the rural community, the role of rural women in the reduction of social exclusion in the European countries, employment of rural women, the impact of rural educational institutions on rural development; the Association also arranged an exhibition-seminar *Customs, Traditions, Crafts and Cultural Heritage of the Region of Aukštaitija*, which was attended by 56 participants (9 men and 47 women), and a cycle of seminars *National Cultural — Culinary Heritage*. 22 seminars were organized in 20 districts: Kaunas, Radviliškis, Biržai, Panevėžys, Šilute, Varena, Pasvalys, Ukmerge, Plunge, Klaipeda, Kupiškis, Moletai, Šilale, Marijampole, Prienai, Raseiniai, Zarasai, Alytus, Rokiškis, and Anykščiai. The

seminars were attended by 500 participants altogether (476 rural women and 24 rural men).

369. In 2008, the Lithuanian Women Farmers' Association participated in the 4th international conference of rural woman of the Baltic states, *Rural Women Around the Baltics*; the Lithuanian delegation consisted of 30 rural women, members of the Lithuanian Women Farmers' Association. The Association also participated in the European small towns and villages festival in Latvia, represented by a delegation of 40 people (20 rural women and 20 rural men) from different regions of the country, who presented projects and initiatives being implemented in our country to improve the situation in rural areas.

370. The Association also participates in the yearly *AgroBalt* international exhibition, where it presents rural women's and men's entrepreneurship initiatives in rural areas and the traditional crafts. It also participates actively in other international events. In 2009, its participated in two international conferences, in Latvia and Portugal, aimed at promoting engagement of rural women; representatives of the Lithuanian Women Farmers' Association presented its activities and shared information on projects and initiatives carried out in the country to help improve the quality of life in rural areas. Furthermore, the Association organized an educational event *Peculiarities of Crafts and Culinary Heritage of the Lithuanian Nation*, in Germany.

371. In 2008, the Lithuanian Women Farmers' Association prepared and released a publication *A Woman in Rural Development* and contributed to a number of other educational and informational events aimed at promoting entrepreneurship among rural women, discussing the issue of reduction of social exclusion, promoting rural women's entrepreneurship prospects and alternative crafts, improving social partnership and the quality of life in rural areas, and participating in international projects targeted at rural women.

372. The Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013 financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the national budget envisages implementation of Axis IV LEADER-type measures in rural areas in Lithuania, the implementation of which is supported on the principle of establishing local action groups in rural areas.

373. The goals of Axis IV LEADER measures of the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013 are to support partnership of different sectors, promote sustainable regional development, reduce exclusion (urban-rural, men-women), foster tolerant, active and organized rural community.

374. The principles applied to local action groups (hereinafter referred to as LAGs) that implement the LEADER method are highly relevant for the achievement of these goals, as they ensure representation of different sectoral partners in the group (members of local communities, local self-governments and local businesses must be involved in LAG activities), gender equality (a LAG must have at least 40% of any gender as its members), engagement of young people (at least one member of the Board of a LAG must be a person under 25 years of age). A group formed according to these principles adopts collective (joint) decisions, looks for the best ways to ensure the quality of living and to implement community initiatives in rural localities.

375. Today, Lithuania has 51 LAGs covering 99% of the rural territory of Lithuania. The key task of a LAG during the programme implementation period is to develop and implement local development strategies (which are now 50), cooperate with national and foreign partners, involve in actions under the strategies as many rural people as possible, i.e. to promote employment, learning and experience-sharing, to foster and support local initiatives.

Subparagraph (g)

376. In 2009, the Ministry of Agriculture established a Fund of Loans for projects under two measures of Axis I *Improving the Competitiveness of the Agricultural and Forestry Sector* of the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013. The loans are provided from the allocations made available by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the national budget for Measures *Modernization of Agricultural Holdings* and *Processing of Agricultural Products and Increasing of Value Added*. The loans available under measure *Modernization of Agricultural Holdings* range from LTL 52 thou to LTL 1 million per project, and under measure *Processing of Agricultural Products and Increasing of Value Added* from LTL 13.8 million (up to LTL 34.5 million, if the project promotes cooperation in the dairy sector). The loans can be both long-term and short-term (up to 7 years or, in exceptional cases, up to 10 years). As of 20 September 2010, 518 applications for credits in the amount of LTL 200 million have been submitted under measures related to financial engineering.

377. The goal of this initiative is to facilitate modernization of agricultural production and to improve the quality of products for farmers, cooperatives and enterprises engaged in agriculture, which may choose either to make use of a loan and/or investment support under the above-mentioned measures or, in the shortfall of their own financial resources, just a loan alone.

Subparagraph (h)

378. As reported by the income and living conditions survey conducted by the Department of Statistics, 16.9% of women and 17.6% of men lived in housings without flush toilets, 15.7% of women and 16.1% of men did not have a bathroom or shower, and 8.6% of women and 9% of men lived in poorly-lit housings. Thus, the situation of women and men was essentially analogical. The situation of women and men in rural areas in terms of the quality of housing is poorer than in urban areas. In towns, 5.8% of women and 5.2% of men lived in housings without flush toilets, 6.2% of women and 5.5% of men did not have a bathroom or shower, and 7.8% of women and 7.6% of men lived in poorly-lit housings, whereas in villages 40.8% of women and 40.9% of men lived in housings without flush toilets, 36.2% of women and 36% of men did not have a bathroom or shower, and 10.4% of women and 11.6% of men lived in poorly-lit housings. The gap between women's and men's situation is in principle very narrow both in town and in village, but by certain parameters housing conditions differ significantly between rural and urban population.

379. Therefore, efforts were continued in 2008-2010 to achieve the main targets set in the Lithuanian Housing Strategy, with a significant focus on expanding the choice of housing for all social groups, particularly on facilitating the acquisition or rent of housing for low- and medium-income families.

380. Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on State Support for the Acquisition or Rent of Housing and for the Renewal (Modernization) of Blocks of Flats, the state supported the improvement of conditions for low- and medium-income families and families with children to acquire (buy or build) their own housing:

(a) By covering 20% of housing loan for large families (with three or more children);

(b) By covering 10% of housing loan for young families (with one or two children);

(c) By letting social housing financed by the state of municipalities, to low income families.

381. The limit on state-supported housing loans was set at LTL 160 million in 2008, LTL 160 million in 2009, and LTL 160 million in 2010.

382. State budget allocations for the development of social housing amounted to LTL 70 million in 2008, LTL 14 million in 2009, and LTL 14 million in 2010.

383. In 2009-2010, allocations for the development of social housing and possibilities to rent social housing were affected by the economic recession.

384. Women and men have equal access to water supply and sewerage systems. The systems are being improved on an ongoing basis. As part of implementing the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Drinking Water Supply and Wastewater Management and to ensure the development of water services, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved, in 2008, by Resolution No. 832, a Drinking Water Supply and Wastewater Management Development Strategy 2008-2015. The main goal of the Strategy is to define areas of state regulation in the field of drinking water supply and wastewater management services to ensure that drinking water supply and wastewater management services are provided in accordance with the applicable requirements and demands and that drinking water supplied and wastewater management services provided to the public throughout the country satisfy health, environmental and quality requirements laid down in laws and other legal acts as well as to ensure that as many people and other potential uses as possible (95% of population) have access, on optimal conditions and prices, to public supply of drinking water and wastewater management services by 31 December 2014.

385. To speed up the connection of households to water supply infrastructure, the Ministry of Environment has eased, by Order No. D1-14 of 28 January 2010, the requirements of the Construction Technical Regulation STR 1.01.07:2002 "Simple Structures (Including Temporary Structures)" for households intending to connect to the existing water supply or waste water networks.

386. The development of water supply services is planned and organized by municipalities in line with applicable legislation. For the purpose of planning the development of these services, municipalities prepare water supply and wastewater management infrastructure development plans broken down to stages, setting implementation deadlines, and giving estimates of the required investment.

387. Lists of projects for the development of water supply services are being formed and approved by order of the Minister of Environment. To form such lists of projects, municipalities are invited to submit applications for priority projects which

they believe should be financed from the EU support funds. By taking account of the proposals received from municipalities, Lists of Projects No. 1 and No. 2 and a Reserve List of Projects No. 3 were drawn up; about LTL 1 billion from the European Union's structural financial assistance allocations for 2017-2013 were distributed among these projects in accordance with Project Financing Conditions approved by Order No. D1-401 of 29 July 2008 of the Minister of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania in relation to Measure *Renovation and Development of Water Supply and Wastewater Management Systems*.

388. Building on the experience gained through the implementation of projects in the 2000-2006 financial programming period and seeking to ensure efficient implementation of water management projects and to plan the connection of households, the Ministry of Environment tightened the conditions for awarding the European Union's support for water management development in 2007-2013: water costs may not exceed 4% of the average income of the household concerned; the applicant must ensure that drinking water supply and/or wastewater management services are provided to all new users as planned in the application within 24 months of the end of the project implementation period. The project implementer who has failed to connect households to water supply and wastewater systems within established deadlines is liable to pay back the funds allocated for the project; project implementer has to start providing wastewater treatment or water supply services to households and to start including project costs into the price charged from the user and to apply it no later than after a lapse of one year since the completion of the project. In the case of failure to satisfy this requirement, a financial correction of 20% of the relevant works contract value is applied.

389. Implementation of water management projects and the development of water supply services help to reduce social exclusion and to ensure gradually the accessibility (affordability) of water services to people, to reduce environmental pollution with wastewater, and to contribute to a healthier environment for the present and future generations.

390. Water networks and other water supply systems supplied water to 73% of the Lithuanian population in 2007, 74% in 2008, 78% in 2009, and 78 percent in 2010. Accessibility to water services is projected to grow to 80% in 2011 and 95% in 2015.

391. Electricity is supplied equally to women and men and Lithuania. Still, about 80 homesteads in Lithuania (35 of which are owned by women, by the data of public registers) have not been electrified yet as they are located far from power distribution networks. The Rules and Conditions for Connecting Electricity Users and Manufacturers' Power Objects (Networks, Equipment, Systems) to the Existing Power Companies' Objects (Networks, Equipment, Systems) approved by Order No. 1-246 of 9 December 2009 of the Minister of Energy defines a non-electrified homestead as a homestead built before 11 March 1990 and registered with the Registry of Real Property, which is not and has not been connected to power distribution networks and which electricity is not supplied to.

392. With the emergence of the possibility to receive financing from the EU Structural Funds, an Electrification of Non-Electrified Rural Homesteads Project was initiated. The project is financed from multiple sources: the state budget (funds for design works are allocated by order of the Minister of Energy), funds of companies (VST and RST) running power distribution networks (60% of the costs

of construction of power networks), and the EU Structural Funds (40% of the costs of construction of power networks).

393. On 7 October 2009, the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania published, in the supplement *Informational Releases* (No. 79 (1)) of the Official Gazette *Valstybės žinios*, a Call for Applications for the financing of the development of projects to connect remote users (i.e. non-electrified homesteads) to power networks, under the Measure *The Development of Projects Connecting Non-Electrified Homesteads to Power Networks* of the National Energy Strategy (hereinafter referred to as the NES). Legal acts governing the application procedure contain no discriminatory provisions on the grounds of sex. It should be noted that 34 out of the total of 80 applications were filed by women.

394. By the data of VST (Western Power Distribution Company), technical designs concerning connection to power distribution networks were developed and approved for all non-electrified homesteads in 2009. Electrification of one homestead will be financed from VST's own funds, not from the funds allocated for the implementation of the NES, because the applicant missed the deadline for the submission of applications.

395. District municipalities of the territory covered by RST (Eastern Power Distribution Company) have prepared lists of eligible non-electrified homesteads and submitted them to RST, while RST has developed 50 technical designs for the electrification of non-electrified homesteads and obtained permits for the laying of power lines for the connection thereof. It should be noted that RST prepared technical designs for those homesteads only which satisfied the requirements of Annex 22 of the Rules of Administration of the Ministry of the Economy's Programme Funds Allocated for Project Activities and Capital Formation approved by Order No. 4-433 of 24 September 2008 of the Minister of the Economy.

396. On 5 May 2010, the Lithuanian Business Support Agency announced a Call for Applications No. 2 for the implementation of Measure *Modernization and Development of Power Distribution System* (hereinafter referred to as the Measure) under Priority 4 *Basic Economic Infrastructure* of the Operational Programme for Economic Growth 2007-2013.

397. In summer 2010, RST and VST prepared and submitted an application to the Lithuanian Business Support Agency for support under this Measure. The Lithuanian Business Support Agency has already completed the evaluation procedure in relation to VST and RST applications.

398. After the Lithuanian business support agency informs the applicants of the decision to award support under the application and after VST and RST selects contractors for the construction of power networks, the two companies will start connecting non-electrified homesteads to the distribution network, by following the Rules and Conditions for Connecting Electricity Users and Manufacturers' Power Objects (Networks, Equipment, Systems) to the Existing Power Companies' Objects (Networks, Equipment, Systems) approved by Order No. 1-246 of 9 December 2009 of the Minister of Energy.

399. Activities in the area of transport, electronic communications and postal services are governed by relevant laws and secondary legislation adopted by the Government and/or the Minister of Transport and Communications. The Law on Transport Privileges governs eligibility for privileged use of transport services, i.e.

travelling by scheduled buses and trains at a discount. The statutory right to use transport services is absolutely equal for women and men without any discrimination on the grounds of sex.

400. The most popular services are scheduled local (urban and suburban) passenger transport. Seeking to improve the quality of living in rural areas, 1,080 kilometres of gravel roads were asphalted in 2005-2009, with another 165 kilometres planned in 2010.

401. Electronic communication services are available throughout the country irrespective of gender. By the data of Eurostat, 60% of households had Internet access in Lithuania in 2009.

402. By the data of the Communications Regulatory Authority as of the end of the 1st quarter of 2010, the authorization to engage in electronic communications business has been issued to 61 economic entities to engage in public fixed telephony network and/or services, 23 economic entities to engage in public mobile telephony network and/or services, 16 economic entities to engage in the provision of dedicated lines, and 2 economic entities to engage in satellite communication network and/or services.

403. In the 1st quarter of 2010, 48 economic entities were engaged in the provision of cable TV services and 4 in the provision of microwave multichannel television services. As of 31 March 2010, cable TV had 399.4 thousand subscribers, and microwave multichannel TV had 20.9 thousand subscribers. 30% of households in Lithuania are connected either to cable or microwave multichannel television networks. About 86% of households have technical capacities to be connected to these systems.

404. The Rural Area Information Technologies Broadband Network (hereinafter referred to as the RAIN) project has created infrastructure to be subsequently used by local operators to provide broadband Internet access services to all people of the region, public administration institutions and businesses.

405. As of September 2009, 'last mile' services to rural people were provided through the RAIN network by 22 retail operators, and the number of subscribers, by preliminary data, has reached about 130 thousand. The RAIN project has demonstrated that the 'last mile' problem is being solved quite successfully. Making advantage of the possibilities provided by the RAIN network, private operators have already invested about LTL 20 million and plan to invest another LTL 10 to 15 million in the future. When the possibility of electronic declaration of agricultural holdings and crops was introduced, e-Government services were started to be used more actively in rural localities.

406. The RAIN infrastructure has in principle provided the possibility to feed and send the data online. In order to achieve a real breakthrough and to reach the EU average per capita in the area of the use of broadband communication in the next several years, the possibility to grant state subsidies to households which cannot afford broadband communication is being considered. The RAIN project is already on the second stage of implementation in rural areas. Once it is completed, broadband communications services will be accessible to 98% of the rural territory of the country.

407. The legal base governing postal activities requires that all users have access on equal conditions to uninterrupted provision of universal postal services throughout the country on every working day and at least five days a week, except when this is impossible due to force majeure, and that one collection and one delivery of postal items from/to the place of residence of recipients of postal services be insured.

408. As of 31 December 2009, the public limited company Lithuanian Post (hereinafter referred to as the Company) ran a network of 880 outlets of universal postal services (hereinafter referred to as UPS) consisting of 736 stationary post offices (222 in urban and 514 in rural areas), 10 postal units (7 in urban and 3 in rural areas), and 134 mobile UPS points in rural areas (28 movable post offices). In 2009, 74 UPS points were closed and 54 stationary rural post offices were transformed into 12 mobile UPS points.

409. In addition to the Company, postal and/or courier postal services are provided by other entities authorized by the Communications Regulatory Authority for postal and/or courier activities. As of 30 June 2010, 73 natural or legal persons were providing postal and courier services. 12 persons (11 of which provided courier and postal services) had the right to provide postal services. For the purpose of promoting competition among providers of postal services and creating favourable conditions to make postal services accessible to all people and to improve their quality, the Seimas passed, on 22 December 2009, amendments to the Postal Law (Articles 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 were amended and/or supplemented) to remove the requirement for providers of postal services to hold authorizations. Also, the adoption of a Postal Sector Development Strategy 2015 is envisaged.

410. Year 2009 saw the start of implementation of Measure *Village Renewal and Development* of the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania for 2007-2013. This Measure is being implemented by the following two methods: by planning (where applicants are municipal administrations of rural areas together with partners — rural communities, community organizations, etc.) and by using the LEADER approach (where responsibility for project evaluation and administration lies on LAGs acting in rural areas, and applicants are rural communities, municipalities, public and private legal persons).

411. Under this Measure, support is made available for maintenance of public infrastructure, for renewal of buildings of relevance to the rural locality concerned and for adapting them to the needs of the public, for maintenance of sites of cultural heritage and religion, for improvement of the quality of drinking water, for wastewater management systems, etc. The goal is to improve the quality of life in rural areas by upgrading and adapting the living environment and the infrastructure necessary for rural communities.

412. The Measure is financed from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the national budget. As of 2009, 49 out of 50 rural municipalities have submitted several project proposals, each. The majority of the proposals were made for the installation and/or upgrading of water management systems.

Article 15

Paragraph 1

413. Article 1 of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men specifies that the purpose of the Law is to ensure the implementation of equal rights for women and men guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, and to prohibit any type of discrimination on the grounds of sex, by reference in particular to marital or family status.

414. On 17 June 2008, the Law on Equal Treatment was reworded (Law No. X-1602⁷⁰). Article 1 of the Law states that the purpose of this Law is to ensure the implementation of the provisions of Article 29 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania enshrining the equality of persons and prohibiting any restrictions of human rights or extensions of privileges on the grounds of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, beliefs, convictions or views, as well as the implementation of the provisions of legal acts of the European Union referred to in the Annex to the Law (Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, and Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation) and other international legal acts.

Paragraph 2

415. Information on the implementation of Article 15 (2) of the Convention in Lithuania has been given in the previous reports. No changes were introduced in 2008-2010 in the legal acts in this field.

Paragraph 3

416. Information on the implementation of Article 15 (3) of the Convention in Lithuania has been given in the previous reports. No changes were introduced in 2008-2010 in the legal acts in this field.

Paragraph 4

417. Information on the implementation of Article 15 (4) of the Convention in Lithuania has been given in the Fourth Report. No changes were introduced in 2008-2010 in the legal acts in this field.

Article 16

Paragraph 1

418. Information on the implementation of Article 16 (1) of the Convention in Lithuania has been given in the previous reports. No changes were introduced in 2008-2010 in the legal acts in this field.

⁷⁰ *Valstybės žinios* (Official Gazette) No. 76-2998, 2008.

Paragraph 2

419. The legal age of consent to marriage has been raised by one year (Law No. XI-937 of 22 June 2010), setting that at the request of a person who intends to marry before the age of 18, the court may, in a summary procedure, reduce for him or her the legal age of consent to marriage, but by no more than two years (Article 3.14 (2) of the Civil Code). The above-mentioned Law has also increased the legal age of consent to marriage in the case of pregnancy, setting that the court may allow the person to marry before the age of 16 (Article 3.14 (3) of the Civil Code). Article 3.18 of the Civil Code sets that persons intending to marry must file an application to register marriage in the procedure specified in Article 3.299 of the Civil Code. Article 3.299 (1) of the Civil Code requires that future spouses file an application of a standard format with the registration office of the place of residence of one of them or, at their own discretion, of that of their parents. The application for the registration of marriage shall be cancelled if at least one of the applicants fail to appear to register marriage at the set time or withdraws his or her application.
