



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports submitted by Lithuania under article 44 of the Convention, due in 2019^{*}, ^{**}

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The annex to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



Abbreviations

The following abbreviations of the titles have been used in the Report:

Law on Protection against Domestic Violence of the Republic of Lithuania – LPDV

Law on Legal Protection of Personal Data of the Republic of Lithuania – LLPPD

Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania – CC

Code of Criminal Procedure of the Republic of Lithuania – CCP

Law on Registration of Acts of Civil Status of the Republic of Lithuania – LRCSA

Code of Civil Procedure of the Republic of Lithuania – Code of Civil Procedure

Civil Code of the Republic of Lithuania – Civil Code

Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania – LC

Law on Benefits for Children of the Republic of Lithuania – LBC

Law on Criminal Intelligence of the Republic of Lithuania – LCI

Law on Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Lithuania – LEO

Law on Mediation of the Republic of Lithuania – LM

Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Republic of Lithuania – LEOWM

Law on Social Integration of the Disabled of the Republic of Lithuania – LSID

Law on the Rights of Patients and Compensation of the Damage to their Health of the Republic of Lithuania – LRPCDH

Law on Probation of the Republic of Lithuania – LP

Law on Vocational Education of the Republic of Lithuania – LVE

Law on Social Services of the Republic of Lithuania – LSS

Law on the Enforcement of Pre-trial Detention of the Republic of Lithuania – LEPD

Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania – LE

Law on the Legal Status of Aliens of the Republic of Lithuania – LLSA

Law on Minimum and Medium Child Care of the Republic of Lithuania – LMMCC

Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania – LFPRC

Law on Child Maintenance Benefits of the Republic of Lithuania – LCMB

Law on State-Guaranteed Legal Aid of the Republic of Lithuania – LSGLA

Register of Suspects, Accused and Convicts – RSAC

Social Protection Information System – SPIS

Department of Investigation of Organized Crime and Corruption of the Prosecutor General's Office – DIOCC

Information Technology and Communications Department under the Ministry of the Interior – ITCD

Compulsory Health Insurance Fund – CHIF

State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour – the CP Service

Training and counselling programme for foster parents (custodians), professional foster parents, adoptive parents, the staff members of the Community based Children Care Homes – GIMK Programme

Non-governmental organisations – NGOs

Early rehabilitation of children’s developmental disorders – ERCDD Services

Concluding Observations on the 3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania – CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

2nd–3rd Joint Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania – 2nd–3rd Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention

3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania – 3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention.

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter – the Convention) was ratified by the Law No. I-983 of 3 July 1995 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. In accordance with the Article 44 of the Convention and the Resolution No. 1540 of 18 December 2001 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania “On the Approval of the Procedure for the Preparation and Submission of Reports according to the United Nations Human Rights’ Protection Conventions, the member of which the Republic of Lithuania is, and the Establishment of Commissions”, the Republic of Lithuania submits the 5th–6th Joint Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter – the Report).
2. The Report presents the information on the measures taken by the State in 2013–2018 in order to implement the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to ensure a proper protection of the children’s rights.
3. The Annex “Statistical and Thematic Reviews” providing the statistics and additional data in relation to the implementation of individual articles of the Convention is attached to the Report. The Annex is comprised of two parts – statistical information and thematic information.
4. The Report has been prepared in accordance with the “Treaty-specific guidelines regarding the form and content of periodic reports to be submitted by States parties under Article 44(1)(b), of the Convention on the Rights of the Child” of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter – the Committee) (CRC/C/58/Rev.3). The concluding observations of the Committee on the 3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania (CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4) have also been taken into account. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, the National Centre for Special Needs Education and Psychology, the Prosecutor General’s Office, the National Courts Administration, the Refugee Reception Centre, the Lithuanian Institute of Law, the Department of National Minorities under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, and the Police Department under the Ministry of the Interior have contributed to the preparation of the Report.
5. This Report was approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on the 4th of December, 2019.

Demographic situation

6. The number of children according to their age, gender, place of residence and share of the total population of Lithuania is presented in the Annex to this Report (part I, tables 1–3).
7. At the beginning of 2013 there were 2 971 905 residents in Lithuania, 543,8 thousand (18.3 per cent of all residents) of them children (0–17 years of age), and at the beginning of 2019, there were 2 794 184 residents in Lithuania, 499,6 thousand (17.9 per cent of all residents) of them children (0–17 years of age).
8. 29,9 thousand babies were born in Lithuania in 2013. The number of births rose slightly in 2014–2015 (the birth rate in 2014 was higher by 1.6 per cent compared to 2013, and in 2015 higher by 3.6 per cent compared to 2014); however, the number began to decline again in 2016. 28,1 thousand babies were born in Lithuania in 2018. The crude birth rate in 2013 was 1.59, and in 2017 and 2018 – 1.63. 8 825 children were born in 2013 to the parents in consensual union, and in 2018 – 7 434 children. Statistical data in relation to the birth rate is provided in the Annex to this Report (part I, tables 4–6).

II. General measures of implementation of the convention

A. Legislation

9. Protection of the rights of the child in Lithuania is a priority issue. The country has taken a number of initiatives in this area, including changes to the legislation and implementation of a reform of the system of protection of the rights of the child. The key result that was achieved was a revised LFPRC; the amendments to this law were adopted implementing the principles and provisions of the Convention which establish the status of a child as a right-holder (e.g. the LFPRC introduced a complete prohibition of corporal punishments of children as well as in a family; child neglect has been recognised as one of the forms of violence; a clear procedure for responding to possible violations of children's rights has been introduced; a case management has been established in order to provide integrated assistance to families facing risk factors more efficiently; mobile specialists teams have been established to provide intensive assistance to families in crisis, etc.). This corresponds to clauses 9 and 11 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

10. In order to establish a permanently functioning system for the protection of the rights of the child, which would ensure the uniform formation and application of the practice in the state when protecting and defending the rights and legitimate interests of a child, timely response to the violations of the rights of a child and prompt adoption of decisions, management and coordination of the child rights protection system was centralised. Until 1 July 2018, the State has been performing the function of protecting the rights of a child transferred to the municipalities (municipal child rights protection units). Since 1 July 2018 the function of protecting the rights of a child has been delegated to the CP Service. The CP Service has become the central institution of the Republic of Lithuania implementing the child rights protection policy, has been mandated to ensure the coordination of the actions in relation to the rights of a child in all sectors at national, municipal and local levels (this corresponds to clause 13 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4).

11. The Code of the Civil Procedure has been supplemented with the article establishing the obligation of the court to initiate proceedings concerning the establishment of the child's permanent foster care or custody, the appointment of a child's foster parents or custodian, and the preparation for the examination of the court-initiated case. Since 1 July 2018, after the new legal regulation of the child rights protection came into force, decisions to remove the child from his/her representatives under the law are made by the court (legalisation of the removing of the child). If the CP Service has identified a threat to the safety of the child and has placed the child in a safe place, it shall apply to the court within 3 business days for permission to remove the child from his/her representatives under the law.

12. The following amendments have been made to the laws and other legislation related to the juvenile justice, child witnesses, or child victims of crime:

(a) amendments to the CC, CCP and LCI have been adopted, implementing Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography as well as the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. The amendments to the laws have made it possible to combat sexual offenses against children more effectively, to define the offenses against minors more clearly, and to increase penalties;

(b) in order to properly protect the rights and legitimate interests of the minor victim, the CCP has been supplemented with the provision stipulating that in criminal proceedings concerning offences against human health, liberty, freedom of sexual choice and integrity, child and family or morality, where a minor has been a victim of such offences, as well as in other cases where the rights and legitimate interests of the minor victim would not be adequately defended without the assistance of an authorised representative, the pre-trial officer, the prosecutor and the court are obliged to give a reasoned decision that the minor victim needs an authorised representative in criminal proceedings. Article 12 of the LSGLA has also been supplemented, stipulating that the secondary legal aid is granted to minor

children irrespective of their assets and income, where the presence of an authorised representative is required in the specified cases;

(c) the CCP establishes the obligation of the investigator of the pre-trial investigation or the prosecutor to assess, at the latest at the time of the first questioning, whether victims of crime have any special protection needs in order to protect them from mental trauma, impact of the criminal offence or other adverse effects;

(d) the amendments of the LEPD ensure that the arrested persons (both minors and parents) are not restricted in making telephone calls and seeing their relatives, unless the prosecutor or the court decides on the necessity of such a restriction;

(e) the provisions of the CCP on the compulsory involvement of a psychologist in the questioning of minors (witness, victim, suspect) have come into force from 1 July 2018.

13. Amendments to the LM have been adopted in order to better safeguard the best interests of the child in the mediation process.

14. Amendments were made to the Rules of Registration of Acts of Civil Status and the Rules of Changing a Name and Surname of a Person, which made changes in the field of giving and changing the name of a child.

15. The authority, responsible for carrying out the functions of the central authority according to the Council Regulation (EC) No 4/2009 on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and cooperation in matters relating to maintenance, obligations and according to the Hague Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance has been identified.

B. Policy and strategy on child rights

16. Lithuania does not have a common plan or strategy on child rights. Various individual programmes and action plans have been adopted to ensure the proper implementation and protection of the child rights:

(a) Child Welfare Programme for 2013–2018;

(b) Child Welfare Action Plan for 2016–2018;

(c) Action Plan for the Transition from Institutional Care to Family- and Community-based Services for Disabled Persons and Children Without Parental Care for 2014–2020;

(d) Public Security Development Programme for 2015–2025, and the interinstitutional action plan for implementation thereof, including measures related to the protection of children;

(e) Action Plan for Combating Human Trafficking for 2017–2019, which also includes measures to prevent child trafficking, provide assistance to these children and protect their rights;

(f) Programme of the Seventeenth Government of the Republic of Lithuania which contains the main strategic objectives related to the creation of a family-friendly environment and reconciling work and family responsibilities; the solution of the child foster care and adoption problems; the support to NGOs and communities providing services to families; violence management; competent and effective assistance to the child and the family; effective protection of children's health (including suicide prevention), etc.;

(g) Strategic Action Plan of the Prosecutor General's Office for 2018–2020, where one of the priority areas of activities is the strengthening of prosecution, not only for offenses related to the sexual exploitation of children, but also for other violent offenses involving children. The implementation of this priority activity aims at intensifying pre-trial investigation activities, minimising the deadline for the collection of the material required for the examination and its appointment, the implementation of the principle of one-time questioning of a child, and reducing the duration of pre-trial investigations;

(h) one of the priorities stipulated in the long-term Strategic Action Plan of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Lithuania for 2013–2023 is the effective prosecution for sexual exploitation of children. When carrying out such activities the aim is to maximise the number of investigated offenses per prosecutor together with the prosecution staff, and to minimise the average length of pre-trial investigation;

(i) prosecution for sexual exploitation of children is also stipulated as a priority area of activities in the Strategic Action Plan of the Prosecutor General's Office (for 2013–2015; for 2014–2016; for 2015–2017; for 2016–2018; for 2017–2019; for 2018–2020).

17. Various recommendations on the safeguarding the child rights were adopted or updated by the order of the Prosecutor General in 2015–2018:

(a) Recommendations on Prosecutors' Specialisation in Criminal Proceedings and Distribution of Pre-trial Investigations, Criminal Cases and Complaints Examined in Court to Prosecutors have been approved. Prosecutors have been found to specialise, *inter alia*, in cases involving offenses against human life and health, other violent offenses, offenses against human sexual freedom and integrity, offenses against a child and family, human trafficking, exploitation for forced labour or services, engaging in prostitution and profiting from prostitution of others, juvenile justice, domestic violence;

(b) Recommendations on the Questioning of a Minor Witness and Victim have been recast. Certain provisions have been amended, new provisions related to the assessment of the special needs of minors and the presence of an accompanying person as a special protection measure have been introduced. Cases where a child must necessarily be appointed an authorised representative have been established. The recommendations have also been harmonised with the amendments of the CCP, which have come into force since 1 July 2018, related to the questioning of minors;

(c) Recommendations on the Assessment of the Special Protection Needs of Victims establish the provision that, in the event of a minor being victimised by a criminal offense, special protection measures are mandatory during the pre-trial investigation;

(d) Recommendations on the Organization and Conduct of Pre-trial Investigation have been amended by supplementing them with a provision that the prosecutor of a higher level shall be informed and shall inspect the justification of the decree to terminate the pre-trial investigation regarding the criminal offenses, except for the ones established in Article 178 of the CC (Thefts), that have resulted in the minor being a victim, regardless of whether or not he/she has been identified as a victim;

(e) Regulations on the Competence of Prosecution Service and Prosecutors have been amended, strengthening the control of the most complex pre-trial investigations, including pre-trial investigations related to juvenile justice, stipulated in the Strategic Action Plan of the Prosecutor General's Office for 2017–2019;

(f) A cooperation agreement between the Prosecutor General's Office, the Police Department, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, the CP Service and the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children Rights was concluded on 28 June 2018 in order to ensure closer interinstitutional cooperation and improve the protection of the child rights in criminal proceedings;

(g) Inspections of the criminal cases regarding the offences against children are regularly carried out in the Prosecutor General's Office in order to identify the shortcomings in pre-trial investigations and respond to them.

C. Funds

18. Budget appropriations for the child rights protection were increased – EUR 8 139 000 were allocated to the CP Service in 2018. Additional amount of EUR 6 912 thousand was allocated for the activities of the CP Service from 1 July, 2018 (following the reform of the child rights protection and the transfer of the function of the child rights protection to the CP Service) to 31 December, 2018. This corresponds to clause 13 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

19. EUR 11 648 thousand were allocated for the project of the reform of the child rights protection system in 2018. The aim of the project is to ensure that the CP Service are provided with the necessary human, material and financial resources.

20. EUR 18 548,8 thousand in total were allocated for the implementation of the measures stipulated in the Child Welfare Action Plan for 2016–2018. EUR 42 141,0 are planned to be allocated for the implementation of the measures stipulated in the Child Welfare Action Plan for 2019–2021.

21. EUR 10.3 million were allocated for the project “Development of the Conditions for the Sustainable Transition from Institutional Care to the System of Family- and Community-based Services”; EUR 11.16 million were allocated for ensuring the activities of Foster Care Centres and the mobile specialists teams of the CP Service; EUR 17.4 million – for provision of community-based social services; EUR 14 million – for children, and EUR 24.5 million – for persons with disabilities.

22. The number of the child rights protection specialists has been increasing – from 414 employees in 2013 to 644 positions in 2018. The number of social workers (posts) for work with families in municipalities has also been increasing from 634,5 posts in 2013 (EUR 5,726 thousand were allocated from the state budget for special targeted grants to municipal budgets to finance the posts) to 1 214 posts in 2018 (EUR 15,313 thousand were allocated).

23. On 1 January 2014 the State transferred the following functions to the municipalities: to perform health care as well as health promotion and monitoring of pupils studying under the pre-school, pre-primary, primary, basic and secondary education programmes in pre-school, general education schools and vocational education institutions in the territory of the municipality. The special targeted grant to the municipal public health offices for the implementation of the mentioned functions was significantly increased in 2019. EUR 24,023 million were allocated in 2019, EUR 14,573 million of which were allocated to finance the public health care of pupils.

D. International Commitments

24. Lithuania ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Lanzarote Convention) in 2013.

25. The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment was ratified on 3 December, 2013.

26. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on Individual Petitions was signed on 30 September, 2015. Actions of the institutions are stipulated in order to ratify the Protocol. Clauses 25–27 of the Report correspond or partially correspond to clause 54 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

27. However, Lithuania is not ready to accede to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. In Lithuania, migrant workers and members of their families are guaranteed certain rights under national and European Union law as well as the United Nations legislation on human rights protection legally binding Lithuania; however, there is currently no provision for extending them to the extent required by this Convention, and as far as the application of the principle of equal treatment in the areas of education, housing, social services, health services is concerned.

E. Independent Human Rights Institutions

28. EUR 395,6 thousand were allocated for the activities of the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children Rights of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – IOCR) in 2013, and EUR 504,0 thousand in 2018. Although the change is apparent, the provision of financial resources for the IOCR is still not sufficient to fully guarantee the institution’s ability to effectively fulfil its mandates and monitor the implementation of the children’s rights established in the Convention. It is also important to ensure better provision of human resources for the IOCR – since the appropriations currently allocated to the institution are not

sufficient for the established number of posts (24); therefore, they have been only partially occupied during the period of 2013–2018 (in 2013 – 22,5 occupied posts, in 2018 – 16,5 occupied posts). It shall be noted that the appropriations of the State budget to the IOCR were allocated in compliance with the maximum limits for appropriations set by the Ministry of Finance and did not meet the institution’s actual needs for appropriations. The appropriations available allow to satisfy only the minimum maintenance needs of the IOCR; therefore, it is essential to change the model of IOCR funding and the applied practise.

F. Dissemination of Information on the Child Rights

29. A great number of trainings for the specialists of different areas was organised in 2013–2017 (for prosecutors, civil servants and employees of the Prosecutor’s Office, pre-trial officers, court representatives, judges, specialists working in a child welfare field, etc.), in order to ensure their awareness of the child rights (see Annex to this Report, part I, clause I.1). This corresponds to clause c of Part A of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4. Also, The CP Service organises various events and other activities to raise awareness for children and adults of child rights and the Convention (part I, clause I.1).

Publication of the Report on the Implementation of the Convention

30. The 2nd–3rd Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention (in Lithuanian and English), the 3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention (in Lithuanian), providing answers to the additional questions of the Committee submitted in 2013 (in Lithuanian and English) are publicly available on the website of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. The Convention Implementation Guide prepared in 2005 is available in the Lithuanian language. This corresponds to clause 57 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

31. The concluding observations (CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4) have been presented to the Child Welfare Council. The plan for addressing the observations has been prepared and discussed with the relevant institutions.

G. Cooperation with the NGOs

32. Various joint activities have been carried out in cooperation with the NGOs (e.g. trainings, projects, etc.). The funding of NGOs activities in the field of the child rights and child welfare from the State budget is ensured through various programmes.

33. There is a National Council of NGOs (it consists of nine representatives of state institutions and establishments, one representative of the Association of Lithuanian Municipalities, and ten representatives of NGOs). The representatives of NGOs also take part in the monitoring group of the Action Plan for the Transition from Institutional Care to Family and Community based Services to Disabled Persons and Children Without Parental Care for 2014–2020. More information is available in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.1).

34. Interdepartmental Council for Child Welfare under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – the Council) was established on 4 September 2018. The Council consists of 18 members, appointed from the ministries, state and municipal institutions and NGOs as well as the representatives of pupils. Such Council was also active in 2013–2017 under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. More information about the Council is available in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.1).

35. The representatives of NGOs participated in the preparations and activities aimed at amending the LFPRC and related secondary legislation.

H. Collection of Statistical Data

36. Lithuania has SPIS and one of its modules is “Child Rights Protection”. Data on the measures taken to ensure the rights and legitimate interests of the child have been collected in this module since 2005. The collected data is grouped according to the municipalities, age

groups (0–3, 4–6, 7–9, 10–14, 15–17), gender, rural or urban areas. Data on families (children as well), who receive state social support (social benefits, free meals, etc.) is also collected in the SPIS. Information on the data collected in the SPIS is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.2).

37. The Information System of Dropouts and Children not in Education (NEMIS) was developed and established. It helps regularly monitor the statistics on children not in education and the dropouts, to identify the reasons for children not being in education and dropping out; to look for children and bring them back to school, etc. This corresponds to part a of clause 46 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

38. The joint Child Health Monitoring Information System has been established, where data on health status provided in the Lithuanian children's health certificates on children's teeth and jaw conditions, morbidity rates, recommendations on children's participation in education, children's visits to public health professionals, children's health indicators, and physical education groups is stored centrally. The Compulsory Health Insurance Information System SVEIDRA is available since 1999, where data on health care services provided to children (inpatient, primary level, specialised outpatient, admission-emergency), paid from the CHIF, is stored. This system also contains information on all children's illnesses registered when providing these services. The Institute of Hygiene has been carrying out surveys on the lifestyle of children every four years since 2016, collecting municipal data on the subjective health assessment and happiness; health behaviours determined by the social, cultural and physical environment in which a person lives, external factors (physical activity, passive leisure, eating habits, oral hygiene); risky behaviours that increase the likelihood of illnesses, injuries and mortality (use of psychoactive substance, road safety, traumas, bullying).

I. Multilateral and Humanitarian Activities

39. Based on the experience of Iceland, Lithuania has established an institution under the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism Programme "Children and Youth at Risk" providing services to children who have been sexually abused ("Užuovėja" / Barnahus). The development of children's day care centres and their material base has also been financed, the development of open youth centres, training of staff and volunteers at day care centres and youth centres have been enhanced.

40. Participation in international events to adopt the best practices in the field of the child rights protection was ensured too. For example, a more extensive access to the Latvian child rights protection system and the best practice in this field was received in 2017. Also there was an active participation in the international labour groups and etc., e.g. in the activities of the Expert Group on Cooperation on Children at Risk of the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

41. Following the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014 Programme No. LT11 "Public Health Initiatives", the objective of which is to improve the public health and reduce health inequalities, the care, enhancement and monitoring of the health of children and young people have been facilitated.

III. Review of the implementation of the rights of the child according to articles of the convention

A. Definition of the child

Article 1. Definition of the child

42. The definition of the child in the Lithuanian law corresponds to the one established in the Convention; i.e. a child is considered to be each person under 18 years of age. If the person's age is unknown and there is reason to believe that he/she is a minor, such person shall be considered a child until the contrary is established.

43. The CCP has been supplemented with a new article providing the definition of a minor person as well as establishing the presumption of his/her minority in cases of doubts regarding his/her age. This provision shall be applied to the minor victims as well as witnesses and suspects (accused).

44. In accordance with the provisions of the Civil Code, marriage can be concluded only by persons who have reached the age of 18. At the request of a person who wishes to marry, but is under 18 years of age, the court may, by simplified procedure, reduce such person's marriage age up to a maximum of two years, except for the cases when there are important reasons. For example in case of pregnancy, the court may allow a person to marry under the age of 16. When deciding on the reduction of the marital age, the court shall also hear the opinion of the parents, foster parents (custodians) of the person, intending to marry, in a court hearing, shall assess the person's mental and psychological state, financial situation and important reasons for marriage. The state child rights protection institution shall provide a conclusion regarding the expediency of reducing the marital age and the interests of the minor. The statistics on marriages concluded by minors according to age and gender are provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, table 7).

B. General principles

Article 2. Principle of non-discrimination

Legislation

45. The principle of non-discrimination has been established in the laws of the Republic of Lithuania and other legislation. The implementation of it ensures that all children have equal rights and that no child is discriminated on the basis of gender, race, nationality, citizenship, language, origin, social status, beliefs or views, age, health status, religion, ethnicity or other circumstances of the child, his/her parents or his/her other representatives under the law. The main laws establishing the principle of non-discrimination are provided in the Annex to this Report (part II, clause II.3).

46. The Office of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson prepares annual activity reports each year. According to the data of the latest report of the Office of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson (2017), 98 persons (13 per cent of all referrals) applied to the Office of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson regarding the potential discrimination on grounds of age; however, the proportion (if any) of discriminated children was not excluded.

47. Article 2 of the LSS was amended on 1 July, 2018, the concept "family of social risk" was abolished. The description of the procedure for accounting social risk families with children in the municipal child rights protection service (unit) was abolished. The concept of the social risk family and the children growing up in them is no longer available as well as their list is no longer being drawn up. This measure allows to ensure that children are not discriminated on grounds of the social status and would not experience social exclusion. This corresponds to clause 17 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

48. More information on measures and projects in this field is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.3).

Article 3. Best interests of the child

Legislation

49. The concept of the best interests of the child was established in Article 4(1) of the LFPRC. It is stated that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in any decision or action which relates to the child. Depending on a particular situation of the child, the principle of the best interest of the child shall be applied and what is best for the child now and in the future shall be determined. The LFPRC establishes that the child shall be provided with such protection which is required for his/her welfare, providing all possible coordinated integrated assistance. This corresponds to clause 19 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

50. The Civil Code provides that the legal regulation of family relations in the Republic of Lithuania is based, inter alia, on the principle of priority protection and defence of the rights and interests of children.

51. When examining the cases involving the interests of minor children, the courts rely on the interpretations of the European Court of Human Rights on the best interests of the child and the circumstances that fall within the concept of the “best interests of the child”. Case-law shows that court decisions are in the best interests of the child.

52. Other amendments to the legislation have been adopted, activities (e.g. training) which aim at consolidating and appropriately defining the best interests of the child in juvenile justice, education and other fields have been carried out (part II, clause II.4). This corresponds to clause 19 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

Article 6. Right to life and growth

Morbidity of Children

53. Children’s morbidity rates have changed quite moderately in the period of 2013–2017: in 2013 there were 877,1 cases of newly ill children per 1 000 residents, in 2017 – 829,6 cases per 1 000 residents. The major part of newly ill children suffer from acute upper respiratory disease and influenza (66.8% in 2017). The prevalence indicators are respectively 884,3 cases and 889,5 cases per 1 000 residents. Statistical data on the morbidity of children is provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, table 8).

Infant Mortality

54. The infant mortality rate increased in 2014–2016, and in 2016 it was 4,5 infant deaths per 1 000 live births. The infant mortality rate decreased in 2017 (85 infants died, i.e. 54 (38.8%) less than in 2016), and it increased in 2018 (96 infants died, i.e. 12.9% more than in 2017). The infant mortality rate in 2018 – 3,4 infant deaths per 1 000 live births (in 2013 – 3,7 / 1 000). The most common causes of infant death in 2018 were the diseases of the perinatal period (43.8% of all infant deaths) and congenital malformations (36.5%).

55. The description of the procedure for perinatal and neonatal health care services were updated. The established quality indicators of service providers are adjusted; e.g. the number of caesarean sections that can be performed is reduced, regulated in-service training of health care professionals providing perinatal and neonatal health care services, the appointment of a full-time health professional(-s), who will organise regular assessment of compliance with the diagnostic and treatment methods and protocols regulating obstetric and neonatological work, is intended. Until now, all pregnant women have been tested for blood sugar; however, a glucose tolerance test will be performed according to international guidelines in order to diagnose diabetes mellitus or gestational diabetes as early as possible. Pregnant women have also began to be inspected for hepatitis B. The costs of the abovementioned examinations will be compensated from the funds of the CHIF budget since 2019.

Mortality of children aged 1–4

56. Approximately 27,3 children aged 1–4 die each year since 2013. The mortality rate in 2013–2018 – 22,7 death cases per 10 000 residents.

57. Statistical data on the mortality of infants and children aged 1–4 are provided in the Annex to this Report (part I, table 9, and pics. 1–4).

Preventive health checks of children

58. The health of children shall be prophylactically examined in accordance with the Procedure for Children Health Examination, clearly identifying the age at which children shall be examined, the frequency of health examination and preventive health checks, the health care professional(-s) responsible for the health care, and the list of actions and (or) tests that are required to be performed. If the health of the child is examined at the registered health care facility, there is no charge for the services.

59. In order to ensure early detection of a child's development disorder, the design and implementation of a rehabilitation program and family assistance plan for optimal child development and integration, the preventive health examination procedure for children were revised: the mandatory requirements for preventive health examination of children were reviewed, and the requirements as well as the procedure for the examination of the psychomotor development of children of early age (up to 4 years) were approved for the first time (the development of the child shall be examined from the age of 3 months), measures were specified, tasks were identified, skills, assessment criteria and the procedure for recording findings in medical records were described.

60. An infant born at the hospital shall be examined and his/her health condition shall be assessed by a neonatologist and (or) pediatric doctor. Hearing and vision shall be examined of all newborns, full-term newborns shall be screened for critical congenital heart defects and tested for (one drop of blood): phenylketonuria, congenital thyroid failure, galactosemia, and adrenogenital syndrome. A newborn shall be vaccinated at the hospital (in case of no contraindications) against tuberculosis and hepatitis B.

61. In order to reduce the incidence of communicable diseases in children, vaccination against pneumococcal infection has been included in the schedule for the preventive vaccination of children of the Republic of Lithuania since 2014, vaccination of girls against human papillomavirus – since 2016, and vaccines against the rotavirus and vaccines against type B meningococcus – since 2018.

Suicide prevention

62. The statistics on children suicides are provided in the Annex to this Report (part I, table 10).

63. In order to coordinate suicide prevention and strengthen the interinstitutional cooperation, the Suicide Prevention Bureau was established at the State Mental Health Centre in 2015, the activities of which include: implementation of the suicide prevention policy, coordination of the systematic assistance to those who intend to commit suicide, attempted suicide, to their families and to their bereaved relatives, provision of methodological assistance, and organisation of information campaigns.

64. The priority activities of the police officers in preventing suicide among children and adolescents is training in order to acquire knowledge of children in suicide crisis and first-aid psychological response to events. More information is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.5).

65. More information on suicide prevention measures is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.5). More information related to children's right to life and growth is provided in clauses 155–190 of the Report.

Article 12. Respect for the freedom of expression of the child's wishes and views

66. Hearing the voice of the child is established in the LFPRC. It provides that the child, capable of formulating his/her views, shall be heard on all matters concerning him/her, and the views of the child, taking into account his/her age and maturity, shall be taken into consideration, unless this is contrary to the best interests of the child. The child shall be heard directly, and in case it is not possible – through the child's representative under the law or through the persons specified by the law. The right of the child to be heard shall be guaranteed by law, by providing an environment which enables the child to exercise this right, providing the necessary information, advice, taking into account his/her age and maturity, and wherever possible with the assistance of persons with special knowledge, where appropriate (Article 11 of the LFPRC).

Matters related to the life of the child

67. The Civil Code ensures the participation of the minor child in the implementation of his/her rights (3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention, clauses 77–78). An expert psychologist may be called upon to determine whether the child is capable of expressing an opinion and to clarify the child's point of view. If a child considers that his/her

parents are violating his/her rights, he/she shall have the right to apply to the state child protection institution independently and, from the age of 14 – to court as well.

68. The LFPRC established the obligation to hear a child's view; therefore, when the CP Service receives the notification on a possible violation of the child rights and starts examining it, the specialists shall appoint a meeting with a child. The CP Service shall ensure that it is possible to communicate with the child without restriction, where appropriate, without the presence of the child's representatives under the law, and, taking into account the child's age and maturity, hear the child's views on the possible violation of his/her rights in a way that is acceptable to him/her (Article 36(1) of the LFPRC). The law also stipulates that the CP Service shall organise the public education on issues of the child rights protection, including the implementation of the right of the child to be heard and the principle of the best interests of the child.

Education system

69. The principle of respect is established in the Code of Ethics for Educators. Following this principle the pedagogue acknowledges that communication with pupils, their parents (foster parents, custodians), other family and institutional community members, shall be based on the recognition of the dignity and worth of the individual as well as trust, thus creating a safe, open atmosphere encouraging self-esteem and creativity. The views of the child shall be heard, and the violation of the principle shall imply liability in the manner prescribed by law. Pedagogues shall also, following the principles of ethics for educators, encourage self-expression of each pupil and his/her active participation in pupils' self-government.

70. A new LMMCC was adopted in 2016, expanding the list of minimum care measures for the child, stipulating assistance and services to parents, reinforcing parental responsibility, clarifying the functions of the municipal child welfare commissions, legitimising the role of a coordinator of interinstitutional cooperation, and revising the procedure for the provision of the medium care measures for the child. The Description of the Procedure for Coordinated Educational Assistance, Social and Health Services was approved in 2017, stipulating the procedure for organisation of the coordinated services, the coordinator of the interinstitutional cooperation between municipalities, and the functions of case managers. The principles of individualisation, the best interests of the child and well-being, equality and non-discrimination and other principles shall be followed when providing the coordinated services.

71. The Lithuanian Pupils' Parliament was active until 2016 uniting the representatives of 60 municipalities. The Lithuanian National Union of Pupils is currently active – the only organisation representing the interests of Lithuanian pupils and uniting the councils of Lithuanian pupils. The Union has 32 divisions in Lithuanian municipalities, where over 1 000 volunteers are working; the organisation unites over 500 Lithuanian school pupils' councils. In order to further strengthen pupils' self-governance, it is necessary to improve the competences of the members of the pupils' councils, and to encourage the initiatives strengthening the representation of pupils.

72. Various projects encouraging the pupils to show initiative in the pupils' council are being organised. On the initiative of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania the project "Pupils to the Government" has been carried out since 2009, enabling 30 pupils to see and participate in the day-to-day work of the Office of the Government and 14 ministries for the whole week. In schools, pupils participate in school board activities, other institutions of the school's community and pupils' council, etc.

Service planning and provision

73. The LFPRC establishes that the child's opinion (if he/she participates) shall be heard in the family and child case management process or that the child's opinion shall be provided by the CP Service.

Right to be heard in court proceedings

74. The main amendments related to the right to be heard of the child witness, child victim or accused minor and ensuring appropriate conditions for hearing the opinion are listed in clauses 13(e), 18(b), 75, 94 of this Report.

75. The amendments to the CCP establish that there is a general provision applicable in all cases obliging the pre-trial investigation bodies, the prosecutor or the court to ascertain in the shortest possible time during the criminal proceedings whether the participants of the criminal proceedings are proficient in the Lithuanian language, and whether a certain participant of the proceedings requires the assistance of an interpreter in order to understand the ongoing criminal proceedings. In case of determination that the participant of the criminal proceedings does not know the language used in the proceedings, he/she shall be immediately guaranteed the right to use the services of an interpreter and the right to require the translation of the case documents.

76. 65 child questioning rooms were established in police stations, video and audio equipment was acquired. Specialised police officers are assigned to the police stations to conduct pre-trial investigations involving minors. The qualification improvement programme “Tactical Aspects of Juvenile Interrogation with the Psychologist Involved in the Questioning” has been prepared and approved, according to which the officers at the Lithuanian Police School, who organise the questionings of minors, are trained. The package of relevant information (Schemes for the Actions of an Officer at the Scene of the Incident and the Response to Possible Violations of the Child Rights, Contacts of the Territorial Divisions of the CP Service) was prepared, which was distributed to the police stations and uploaded on the police intranet.

77. The Civil Code stipulates that the court shall hear the child capable of expressing his/her views (directly or through a representative), and ascertain the child’s wishes when settling disputes concerning children. For example, the court shall resolve disputes concerning the determination of the child’s place of residence taking into account the best interests of the child and the child’s wishes. The wish of the child may be disregarded only if it is not in his/her best interests. The case-law is based on the Civil Code and the Convention. Due to immaturity, gaps in parenting, etc. the child’s wishes and interests do not always coincide; therefore, it is necessary to ascertain whether the child’s wishes are in the best interests of the child in each case. The child’s opinion may be expressed orally, in writing or in other ways chosen by the child. The analysis of the case-law has established that, in the course of resolving disputes concerning minor children, the child rights protection specialists also communicate with the child in the absence of the parents, who record his/her opinion when submitting a conclusion on the dispute to the court.

78. When interviewing a minor asylum seeker, his/her legal representative or representative shall be present, and his/her right to state-guaranteed legal aid shall be ensured.

79. However, studies carried out by NGOs show that children and young people feel that their opinion is less valued than that of the adults. The majority of surveyed children believe that children do not have sufficient opportunity to express their views on issues of concern to them, especially when it comes to politicians and decision-makers. Children also believe that these individuals should be more active, ask children and young people for opinions before making decisions that are important to them. The involvement of children in decision-making is often formal and the proper conditions for such participation are not ensured, e.g. by providing children with information on the issues concerned, which would enable them to play an active role.

C. Civil rights and freedoms

Article 7. Right to a name, nationality and parental care

80. The new versions of the LRCSA, the Rules of Registration of Acts of Civil Status and the Rules of Changing a Name and Surname of a Person came into force on 1 January 2017. These amendments clarified the conditions for changing the child’s name and surname. More information is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.6).

Article 8. Preservation of identity

81. Recommendations for interinstitutional cooperation after a child is found in a health care facility or in a facility where a so-called “safe haven baby box” is established, define the confidential surrender of a child and the interinstitutional cooperation in the event of a confidential surrender of a child. The term “safe haven baby box” shall be understood as an established safe place where a newborn can be left in order to implement the child’s inalienable right to life established in the Convention and other legislation. Recommendations set out the actions of relevant institutions to be taken in case a child whose parents are unknown or a child whose origin can be determined is found. Thus, in one case children, whose parents cannot be identified, may be left anonymously, while in another case, data on the mother, child’s health, and year of birth may be left with the newborn surrendered in the safe haven baby box. Currently there are 10 safe haven baby boxes in Lithuania. 54 children in total were found in safe haven baby boxes in 2009–2017, almost all of which were adopted. Safe haven baby boxes were established after anonymous birth was abolished. The child’s right to life should be considered as a priority over the right to know his/her origin and parents and should be understood as complying with the best interests of the child. Regardless of this contradiction, it is not appropriate at this time to phase out the possibility of surrendering children in the safe haven baby boxes until an alternative to anonymous birth is established.

82. Services for pregnant women, including those facing various risks, are being developed to reduce the number of babies left behind (see Annex to the Report, part II, clause II.10 and II.11). This partially corresponds to clause 23 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

83. The Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania provides that if both parents of a child who have acquired the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania by naturalisation lose their citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania, the child under the age of 18 who acquired the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania by virtue of reasons other than birth shall lose the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania, except for the cases when a child losing the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania would become stateless. A child between the ages of 14 and 18 may lose the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania only with his/her consent, except in cases where a child losing the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania would become stateless. If one of the parents of a child who has acquired the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania by naturalisation loses his/her citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania, and the other parent is not a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania or unknown, the child under the age of 18 who acquired the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania by virtue of reasons other than birth shall lose the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania, except for the cases when a child losing the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania would become stateless. A child between the ages of 14 and 18 may lose the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania only with his/her consent, except in cases where a child losing the citizenship of the Republic of Lithuania would become stateless.

Article 13. Right to freedom of expression

84. The information is provided in clauses 96–97 of the 2nd–3rd Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention.

Article 14. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

85. The right to learn and choose the subject of moral education – religion or ethics – is established in the LE as well as the general curriculum of primary and secondary education for the school years 2017–2018 and 2018–2019. Ethics or religion are chosen by the parents (foster parents, custodians) for the pupil under 14, and from the age of 14 the pupil makes such a choice himself/herself. In general programmes moral education consists of equally valued subjects: ethics and religion (religion of traditional religious communities in Lithuania).

86. The law prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, also on the grounds of faith, views or belief, religion. More information is provided in clause 46 of the Report and the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.3).

87. Foreigners in Lithuania shall have the rights and freedoms set forth in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, international treaties, laws of the Republic of Lithuania and legal acts of the European Union; foreigners in Lithuania shall be equal under the law, irrespective of their gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, views or beliefs.

Article 15. Freedom of associations and peaceful assembly

88. In accordance with the LE, schools provide opportunities for pupils to participate in pupils' and youth organisations; the activities of the youth over the age of 14 are financed from the funds allocated to projects through the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. Educational projects and activities are supported by funds allocated to projects selected through a competitive tendering procedure by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

89. Children and young people can join youth organisations and take part in the activities of pupils' and students' councils. Youth organisations and their members can represent their positions through the councils of the youth organisations of municipalities (at local level), and through the Lithuanian Youth Council (at national level). Young people can participate in the activities of the municipal youth councils and contribute to the planning and implementation of their municipal youth policy.

Article 16. Protection of private life

90. Since 25 May 2018, the child's right to the protection of personal data is guaranteed in accordance with the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and the LLPPD. This legislation also contains additional provisions ensuring the protection of the child rights (e.g. consent to the proposed information society services may be given by a child over 14 years of age; information and messages where the data processing is child-centred should be formulated in a child-friendly, simple language).

91. The amended provisions of the Civil Code and the Code of Civil Procedure establish the distinction between cases concerning the restriction of parental authority and the appointment of a foster parent (custodian) for a child. These amendments to the legal framework enable the protection of the data of prospective adoptive parents and ensure the confidentiality of a future adoption, while safeguarding the best interests of the child. It is also established that, after making a decision to restrict parental authority, the court shall, by the same decision, determine the child's place of residence until the court judgment on the foster care (custody) of the child becomes effective and award maintenance to the child. Cases concerning the establishment of foster care (custody) of a child shall be dealt with separately. Cases concerning the establishment of a permanent foster care or custody of a child and (or) the appointment of a foster parent or custodian shall be examined in oral proceedings in closed court hearing. In order to ensure the confidentiality of the data of the possible future adoptive parents, the Code of Civil Procedure was supplemented with the provision that in cases concerning determination of child's foster care (custody), the operative part of the court decision regarding the appointment of a custodian or foster parent shall not be made public; therefore, analogous regulation is established as in adoption cases. Adoption cases shall be examined without exception and court decisions in such cases shall be announced in closed court hearings.

92. Disputes arising out of family legal relationships shall be resolved in closed court hearing at the request of at least one of the parties to the proceedings.

93. The amendments to the CCP, relating to the protection of minor victims in criminal proceedings, have come into force – the list of circumstances in which a closed court hearing may be held was expanded. Non-public examination shall be permitted during the trial only of such criminal offenses, where minors are accused of them or acknowledged as victims as well as the cases concerning the crimes and offenses against human sexual freedom and integrity and other cases, when efforts are made to prevent the publication of the private life of participants involved in the proceedings or when non-public examination is necessary in order to ensure the special protection needs of a victim, and when anonymous witnesses or

victims are questioned. Moreover, the provision is established by law that minor victims or witnesses who have been injured shall not be summoned to the trial, and their testimony given to the judge of the pre-trial investigation shall be read in court. The provisions establish a requirement on compulsory audio and video recordings, both during pre-trial investigation and in court. If a child is summoned to a hearing, he/she shall be provided with a possibility not to be in the same room with other participants involved in the proceedings and shall be interviewed using audio and video recording equipment. If, in exceptional cases, it is necessary to question a minor witness or victim in court, he/she shall be interviewed in another room access to which is given only to the psychologist assisting the child in questioning and (or) the minor's representative. The participation of a psychologist in the questioning of minors is mandatory. A representative of the CP Service is also invited to the children's interviews, who works in another room and monitors whether the rights of a minor witness or victim are not violated. Amendments to the CCP which ensure that in the course of criminal proceedings the rights and legitimate interests of victims, who during the criminal proceedings may suffer mental trauma or other serious consequences, will be better protected and chances for their secondary victimization will be reduced also came into force.

94. The CCP establishes that pre-trial data shall not be published. This provision also establishes an absolute prohibition on publishing data on minor suspects or victims. The participants involved in the proceedings, when exercising their right of access to the material of the pre-trial investigation, shall be prohibited from making copies of the case file if it contains data on minor suspects and victims, as well as on the private life of a person, etc.

Article 17. Right to use relevant information

95. Different activities were implemented in this field related to safe internet, accessibility of counselling and information services for children and youth in the public e-space, changes in child rights protection system. These activities are described in detail in the Annex to this Report (part II, clause II.26).

D. Violence against children

Article 19. Protection from abuse, neglect or negligent treatment

96. Violence against children in the LFPRC is defined as direct or indirect intentional physical, psychological or sexual impact of a child whether by action or inactivity, that results in death, impairment of health or normal development of a child, pain or danger to life, health, normal development, or degrading of the child. Child abuse is also considered neglect of the child. Actions which involve the use of physical force against a child and cause the child physical or mental pain when such actions are intended to prevent a greater risk to the physical or mental safety, health or life of the child and such prevention cannot be achieved by other means shall not be considered as violence.

97. The protection of a child from any forms of abuse (physical, psychological, sexual, etc.), exploitation or negligent treatment is established in the CC. Respectively, criminal liability for the physical violence against a child of varying degrees is enshrined in Chapter XVIII of the CC (Crimes against human health); for the sexual violence against a child of varying degrees – in Chapter XXI of the CC (Crimes against human sexual freedom and integrity); for the psychological violence against a child of varying degrees, including illegal restriction of the freedom of a child – in Chapter XIX of the CC (Crimes endangering human health and life) and Chapter XX of the CC (Crimes against human liberty); for neglect and improper treatment of a child, evasion of a child's maintenance and any form of criminal exploitation of a child – in Chapter XXIII of the CC (Crimes and misdemeanours against a child and a family).

98. Since 1 July 2018 the CP Service reacts to the reports on possible violations of the child rights 24/7. When the CP Service receives a notification on a possible violation of the child rights, it examines it in accordance with the Description of the Procedure for the Establishment of the Criteria of the Levels of Threat to the Child and Determination of the Level of Threat to the Child.

99. More measures are provided in the Annex to this Report (part II, clause II.7).

Physical violence, including corporal punishment

100. Amendments to the LFPRC were adopted in 2017, prohibiting corporal punishment of children. Corporal punishment is defined as the disciplining of a child when the physical act is used to inflict physical pain, even minor, on the child or to physically torture the child or damage the child's honour and (or) dignity. Penalties and other lawful sanctions imposed by law on minors shall not be regarded as corporal punishment. This amendment corresponds to clauses 24–25 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

Bullying

101. Given that bullying, especially in the educational environment, is still one of the most pressing issues in Lithuania, amendments to the LE on bullying and violence prevention in educational institutions were adopted; Recommendations on the Implementation of Violence Prevention in Schools were approved. The number of preventive programmes offered to schools was increased, the assessment of their implementation was carried out, targeted funds of the ESF were allocated to finance the preventive programmes. Providers of preventive programmes in schools are not able to implement the preventive programmes in all schools at the same time; therefore, such programmes are being introduced gradually and will be implemented in all Lithuanian schools by 2021. The content of these activities is described in more detail in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.7). This corresponds to part d of clause 46 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

Domestic violence

102. The forms of domestic violence are established in the LPDV. The CC does not distinguish domestic violence as a separate type of crime, but it establishes the conditions for the commencement of a pre-trial investigation into separate criminal acts if the signs of domestic violence were established. The CCP also stipulates that in case the offenses show signs of domestic violence, the pre-trial investigation shall be open, whether or not there is a complaint of the victim or a statement of his/her legal representative. The pre-trial investigation shall be a priority in cases where the suspects are arrested as well as in cases where the suspects or victims are minors. The broad definition of domestic violence includes not only the abovementioned crimes but also other crimes committed in the immediate environment causing physical, material or non-pecuniary damage.

103. Various trainings are organised to increase the competence of professionals in different fields such as prevention, identification of domestic violence and provision of assistance. Specific topics of the trainings and more measures related to domestic violence are listed in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.7 and II.8).

Hate crimes

104. 12 police officers improved their qualification in 2017 when participating in the in-service training programme “Actions of the Officers in Cases of Hate Crimes”, (in 2018 the number of participating officers was 25). Training of instructors (24 participants) and managers (13 participants) was carried out when implementing the said programme in 2015. The programme was prepared and implemented in accordance with the methodology “Training Against Hate Crimes for Law Enforcement (TAHCLE)”. The officers are trained to identify the hate crimes and target groups, to respond to the crimes of such type, to carry out investigations properly, to cooperate with the NGOs in order to defend the minority rights as well as to carry out preventive activities, stopping the hate crimes.

105. In 2015 a single training of law enforcement officers (instructors) on hate crimes (TAHCLE) was carried out (24 participants), and a single training of law enforcement officers (managers) on hate crimes (TAHCLE) was carried out (13 participants).

Missing children

106. The search of 979 children was reported in 2018. The statistics on children who have run away from home, special education and other care institutions are provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, table 11).

107. The Ministry of the Interior, the Police Department under the Ministry of the Interior, the Missing Persons' Families Support Centre and the leaders of the social network Facebook joined their forces and were able to reach a successful agreement to launch the missing children search tool "AMBER Alert Facebook" in Lithuania. This system was launched in the middle of March of 2018. This search tool enables a much faster share of information on a missing child, indicating a specific Lithuanian territory he/she disappeared in, – it allows the officers to respond to the situation more promptly and prevent a disaster. This system functions in such a way that the users of the social network in Lithuania see reports of special cases of missing children in their news stream; therefore, residents who have information about missing children can immediately share it with the police using the contacts specified in the report.

108. Hotline 116000 started its operation in 2014. Vilnius Emergency Response Centre (hereinafter –ERC) branch began responding to calls on hotline 116000 using the information and communication technology infrastructure of the ERC, and responding to incoming messages by transmitting information to the police and the Missing Persons' Families Support Centre. Uninterrupted operation and availability of the hotline 116000 24 hours a day, seven days a week is ensured. It is a free service and support available to the parents, guardians, relatives of the missing child; lost or abducted children or those who ran away; members of society having information on the missing child. The hotline 116000 for the reports on missing children received 1 759 calls in 2018.

Article 34. Child protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

109. The amendment to the LFPRC was adopted, implementing the provisions of the Lanzarote Convention and Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography. It was established that persons found guilty of offenses against human sexual freedom and integrity shall be prohibited from working or volunteering in the institutions, companies and organisations providing children related social, educational, sports and health care services as well as from engaging in individual activities. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania has approved the list of works, activities and services that are prohibited to be performed, carried out or provided by persons convicted of sexual offenses against children.

110. The amendments to the CC were adopted, stipulating the criminal liability of a Lithuanian citizen or other person permanently residing in Lithuania for acts related to the sexual exploitation or abuse of children committed in a foreign state (even if the law of that country does not provide for liability for such acts); criminal liability for acts related to the sexual exploitation or abuse of children, which have not been criminalised before, has been established (e.g. committed via the Internet). Acquisition of access to child pornography through the use of information and communication technologies is punishable. There is also a liability for the seduction of a child under the age of 16. The criminal liability for participating in a pornographic event involving a child was legalised. The penalties for child pornography and sexual pleasure in violation of a minor's sexual freedom were increased. The liability of legal persons for the abovementioned criminal acts was established. This corresponds to part c of clause 30 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

111. The composition of the offense of the child exploitation for pornography was expanded; the composition of the offense of profiting from another person's prostitution, perpetuating other forms of exploitation of a child for prostitution purposes was expanded. The composition of the criminal offense of involving in prostitution is supplemented with a new highly qualifying feature, the essence of which is the criminal liability for recruitment, forcing or any other form of involvement of a minor in prostitution. These offenses, as well as the possession of pornographic material when the offense is committed against a child, are

also subject to increased penalties. This corresponds to part c of clause 30 and clause 49 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

112. Trainings were organised to prevent sexual crimes against children. The topics of the trainings and more measures related to child protection from sexual exploitation and abuse are specified in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.9). This corresponds to part a of clause 30 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

113. More information is provided in the clauses 13(a), 17(g), (h) and (i), 121 of the Report. The statistics on the children who are victims of different forms of violence and offences are provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, tables 12–13).

Article 37 (a), article 28 (2). Protection against torture, cruel, inhumane treatment and punishment

114. Description of the requirements applicable to vocational training contracts and the procedure for registration of these contracts was updated, which specifies that vocational training institutions shall provide a safe environment for pupils, preventing bullying, violence and harmful habits.

115. The LE establishes that the head of an educational institution may impose disciplinary measures, stipulated in the LFPRC, in respect of a pupil in case he/she violates the rules of conduct of pupils. However, the LFPRC prohibits the imposition of any punishments, including physical, on children in any environment (home, education, alternative care and juvenile justice).

116. The school may, in its learning agreements, rules of procedure, rules of conduct of pupils and other documents establishing the internal rules of the school, stipulate appropriate provisions (which are not contrary to the applicable legislation) concerning the conduct of pupils and their disciplining.

117. Recommendations on the application of disciplinary sanctions to improperly behaved pupils were developed for schools. The aim of the recommendations is to help the employees of the schools to respond effectively to extreme cases of pupils misconduct and emerging threats to ensure the physical and psychological safety of school community members and (or) other persons.

Article 39. Assistance to child victims

118. Amendments to the CCP related to the protection of minors in criminal proceedings were adopted. These amendments establish that the participation of a psychologist and child rights protection specialist in the interviews of minor victims or witnesses is mandatory. The psychologist and the child rights protection specialist shall also participate in interviews of minor victims and witnesses regarding crimes against human life, health, liberty, sexual freedom and integrity, child and family, profit from or involvement of a minor in prostitution. At the request of the participants involved in the proceedings or on the initiative of a pre-trial investigation officer, a prosecutor or judge of a pre-trial investigation, a psychologist and a child rights protection specialist shall be present at the interview of minor victims and witnesses regarding other offenses as well. A clear separation of functions of a psychologist and a child rights protection specialist is ensured. It is established that the interviews of child victims and witnesses shall take place in premises suitable for child interviews in all cases. In order to prevent possible adverse effects of other interviewees on a minor victim or witness, it is established that except for the child, only the psychologist and the child's representative may be present in the interview room provided that the protection of the minor from adverse effects is ensured in advance. The practical challenges that arise in this case are that not all courts and police stations have adequate child interview rooms, and that not all courts have the high quality equipment needed to conduct interviews with children. There is a lack of psychologists in courts to help interview children. As of 1 July 2018, after the amendments to the CCP came into force, the Description of the Procedure for the Maintenance of the List of Psychologists, Willing to Assist in Questioning Persons in Criminal Proceedings and Payment for the Services thereof was approved by the Resolution No. 338 of 9 April 2018 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania as well as a list of psychologists who can assist

in interviewing children was drawn up. However, not all the psychologists have enough ability and competence to interview children.

119. In addition, the major problem of forensic psychological and forensic psychiatric examinations is that there are very few experts in the field. For this reason forensic psychological and forensic psychiatric examinations of children take too long (5–7 months), which leads to long pre-trial investigations and insufficient efficiency. The IOCR has repeatedly drawn the attention of the Ministry of Health and the State Forensic Psychiatry Service to the unreasonably long waiting periods for forensic psychological and forensic psychiatric examinations of children and adolescents and findings thereof, which violate the rights and legitimate interests of the child. It was stressed that long duration of expert examination cannot be justified by the excessive workload, lack of resources (financial, human) and it was indicated that measures should be taken to solve the problem.

120. In cooperation with the Icelandic State Child Rights Protection Agency, the Support Centre for Sexually Abused Children (Barnahus) was opened in Vilnius on 3 June 2016. Every child who has been sexually abused and his/her relatives is guaranteed access to the necessary integrated assistance in a child-friendly environment (psychological, social, legal, medical, psychological assessment of a child, interviews, medical examination). This corresponds to part b of clause 30 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

121. More information is provided in the Annex to this Report (part II, clause II.4 and II.18) and clause 94 of the Report.

122. The distribution of cases of possible child abuse shows that psychological violence is most commonly used against children. Children who have witnessed possible violence and who have grown up in an environment of potential violence (there has been violence) are classified as children who have been subjected to psychological violence; therefore, the number of children who have possibly experienced psychological violence is particularly high. However, it is difficult to prove psychological violence because the signs of it are not always obvious. If the perpetrator is a family member, there are a number of difficulties in ensuring the child's safety and providing appropriate assistance. According to child rights protection specialists, assistance should be coordinated and provided on a long-term and systematic basis according to the needs of the victim not only to the victim of the violence, but also to the whole family of the child victim and his/her close environment. It is also important to provide targeted assistance to the perpetrator in a timely manner in order to prevent repeated acts of violence. There is little help from a psychologist, psychotherapist or psychiatrist, especially in the peripheral regions. The services for perpetrators are underdeveloped. The availability of child support is particularly limited during the summer or other holiday seasons, when pedagogical psychological services and educational institutions are closed. As a result, there is a significant number of children who have suffered from repeated violence.

Article 24 (3). harmful practices

123. There are no major changes.

E. Family environment and alternative care

Article 5. Parental authority

124. According to the applicable provisions of the Civil Code, the rights and obligations of a father and a mother with respect to their children are equal, irrespective of whether the child was born to married or unmarried parents, after the divorce, annulment or legal separation of the parents, irrespective of the fact that the child's place of residence is determined by a court decision with one of the parents. The child shall have the right to live together with his/her parents, to be educated and provided for in the family of his/her parents, to communicate with the parents, whether they live together or separately, to communicate with relatives, provided that this does not harm the best interests of the child. A father or mother who is not living with the child shall have the right and obligation to communicate with the child and to participate in his/her upbringing. A child whose parents are separated shall have the right to

have continuous and direct contact with both parents wherever the parents live. Where the parents fail to agree on the participation of a separated parent in the upbringing and communication with the child, the procedure for communication and participation in the upbringing of the child shall be determined by the court. The father or mother with whom the child lives and (or) with whom the child's place of residence was determined by a court decision shall not prevent the other parent from communicating with the child and from participating in the upbringing of the child. Failure to fulfil this obligation shall be deemed to constitute the abuse of parental authority, subject to father's (mother's) liability in accordance with the procedure established by laws.

Article 18. Parental responsibility and child care

125. The CP Service has 12 mobile specialists teams, with three specialists working in each of them (psychologist, social worker, a specialist having knowledge of and (or) experience working with persons with addictions). The mobile specialists team of the CP Service provides intensive assistance for 14 days (except weekends and public holidays) starting from the day the child is taken from his/her representatives under the law, carries out the assessment of safety and risk factors in the family as well as the strengths and the need of the family for intensive support which is necessary to help family members adjust their behaviour, create and maintain a safe environment for the child to grow up and develop, prepares recommendations on the organisation of further work with the family for the case manager.

126. The activities of the children's day care centres are financed by the state funds; the development of them is encouraged and new children's day care centres are being established.

127. Different services aiming at helping families properly care for their children are financed. Some of the services are listed in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.10). This corresponds to clause 32 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

128. However, there are practical challenges in this area. The information collected during the meetings with practitioners, data of inquiries and seminars showed the lack of the following services for families: child care services (e.g. kindergartens, occupation services); psychologist consultations; mediation services; open work with the youth; work with the youth on the street; mobile work with the youth; services of children's day care centres; socio-cultural services for families; occupation and care services for children with disabilities; individual training, consultation to parents in the event of the birth of a disabled child.

Article 9. Separation from parents

129. In order to harmonise the practice of the preparation of the reasoned conclusions of the child rights protection specialists for submission to the court when the need to determine the child's place of residence with one of the parents in the State arises, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour together with the CP Service developed a questionnaire on the opportunities and abilities of parents to meet their child's needs in 2013 (revised in 2014).

130. Until 1 July 2018 a legal regulation was applicable, according to which a child was taken from the family in the Republic of Lithuania by a sole decision of the child rights protection unit of the municipality administration. This regulation did not comply with the provisions of the Convention establishing that the decision on the separation of the child from the parents should be taken by a competent authority, subject to judicial review and adopted by law and without prejudice to procedures. The new regulation, which came into force on 1 July 2018, provides for the involvement of a judicial institution in the process of taking a child from the family; i.e. if the CP Service determines that a child's safety, health or life is at risk, it shall remove the child from the representative under the law, place him/her in a safe environment and apply to the court within 3 business days for permission to take the child from his/her parents or other child's representatives under the law. In case of refusal of the court to give the permission to take the child from his/her parents or other representatives under the law, the CP Service shall immediately organise the return of the child to his/her parents or other representatives under the law. This corresponds to part c of clause 34 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4. The statistics on children who lost the parental care are provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, table 14).

131. The definition of the right of a child whose parents live separately to see both parents, the responsibility of both parents for the child and his/her upbringing are clearly established. Amendments to the Civil Code have come into force since 2017, according to which the court, upon dissolution of marriage, shall determine the place of residence of the minor children of the spouses, their participation in the upbringing thereof and the communication of the minor children with their separated father (mother), taking into account the interests of the child, as well as decide on the issue of the maintenance of the minor children of the spouses and other property issues. Both the father and the mother of the child can apply to the court for the determination of the procedure of communication and participation in the child's upbringing. Minimal communication can only be established when constant maximum communication is detrimental to the best interests of the child. In the event of a change of circumstances, the father or mother may bring a new action to establish the procedure of communication with the child and participation in his/her upbringing. More information is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.11).

132. The number of children who are growing up in detention facilities together with their mothers is specified in the Annex to the Report (part I, table 15).

133. More information related to children separation from parents in justice system is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.11).

Article 11. Illicit transfer and non-return

134. The CP Service receives notifications on the aspirations of other states to accede to the Hague Convention and provides their opinion to the competent authorities regarding the (non)agreement of Lithuania with this accession. Upon the agreement of Lithuania to the accession of the states, the provisions of the Hague Convention came into force between Lithuania and Romania, El Salvador, Andorra, Gabon, Morocco, Russian Federation, Seychelles, Singapore, and the Republic of Korea in 2013; in 2014 – between Lithuania and Japan as well as Belarus; in 2016 – between Lithuania and South Africa; in 2017 – between Lithuania and Kazakhstan, and in 2018 – between Lithuania and Ecuador.

135. In 2013 the CP Service received 41 applications regarding the return of children illegally removed from Lithuania to foreign countries, and regarding the return of children illegally brought to Lithuania from foreign countries submitted under the Hague Convention and mediated the processing thereof. In 2014, it mediated in processing 37 applications, in 2015 – 64, in 2016 – 55, in 2017 – 61, and in 2018 (before 1 of July) – 25 applications.

136. The amendments to the Civil Code establish that the parent, with whom the child's place of residence is established, shall have the right to bring the minor child whose permanent place of residence is in the Republic of Lithuania to a foreign state to live permanently only with the written consent of the other parent. If the other parent refuses to give such consent, the dispute shall be settled by court.

Article 10. Family reunification

137. The CP Service performs the functions of the Central Authority of the Republic of Lithuania under the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (hereinafter – Hague Convention). During 2013, it received 6 applications regarding the ensuring of the right to see children living in foreign countries or in Lithuania submitted under the Hague Convention and mediated in processing thereof (in 2014 the number of such applications was 10, in 2015 – 17, in 2016 – 15, in 2017 – 11 and in 2018 (before 1 of July) – 5).

138. Information on the right to obtain a residence permit in the Republic of Lithuania for a minor child whose parents are foreigners and who has been granted asylum as well as other related issues is provided in clauses 138–141 of the 3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention.

139. The time-limit for processing an application for a temporary residence permit for a minor alien in the Republic of Lithuania (no later than within four months from the date of submission of the application to the relevant institution) and an application to change the

temporary residence permit (no later than within one month from the date of submission of the application to the relevant institution) was shortened.

Article 27 (4). Ensuring child maintenance

140. The LCMB establishes the State's obligation to guarantee the child maintenance of a set amount. This law shall apply to persons under the age of 18 as well as to the incapacitated persons over the age of 18 who have been diagnosed with a disability before the age of 18, and to one of the parents with whom the child's place of residence has been determined by a court decision or the agreement of the parents, or to the foster parent (custodian) who applies for benefits and who satisfies the set conditions, as well as to persons who are obliged to pay child maintenance by a court decision or under the child maintenance agreement approved by the court but who fail to comply with the court decision or do not pay the full amount awarded by the decision. The benefit per child per month shall not exceed 1.8 times the amount of the basic social benefit valid on the month for which the benefit is paid.

141. The functions of payment of child maintenance benefits have been transferred to the State Social Insurance Fund Board under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour since 1 January 2018.

Article 20. Children deprived of their family environment

142. In order to ensure that the establishment of a child's foster care (custody) in a child care institution is a last resort and in the best interest of the child, amendments to the Civil Code came into force on 1 January 2017 establishing that the temporary foster care (custody) of a child shall not exceed twelve months, and that the foster care of a child under three years in a child care institution shall be established in accordance with the procedures provided by laws only in exceptional cases, and shall not exceed three months.

143. As from 2018 the Civil Code stipulates that the CP Service shall be the representative under the law of a child taken from the parents or other legal representatives on the grounds established by laws until such child is assigned a foster parent (custodian). The CP Service is also authorised to keep centralised records of children in foster care (custody) and foster parents (custodians).

144. The foster parent of a minor, in certain circumstances, may be dismissed or removed from his/her duties as a foster parent. During 2013 there were 22 cases when the foster care (custody) in a family ended due to the fact that the foster parent was removed from his/her duties, in 2014 there were 23 such cases, in 2015 – 18 cases, in 2016 – 25, and in 2017 – 49. In 2017 one family was removed since it failed to fulfil its duties properly. It should be noted that in recent years the number of cases of removal of foster parents (custodians) has increased by about 50%. It can be assumed that such a change demonstrates the ability of responsible authorities and persons to identify inappropriate fulfilment of duties as a foster parent and (or) a significant increase in intolerance to violations of child rights.

145. The legal status of professional foster parent and Foster Care Centre is legalised in the legislation.

146. Foster Care Centres have been in operation since 1 January, 2018. The purpose of the Foster Care Centre is to ensure that all adopted children, children in foster care (custody), and cared for by the professional foster parents as well as professional foster parents, foster parents (custodians), adoptive parents or persons intending to become professional foster parents, foster parents (custodians) or adoptive parents have access to the necessary counselling, psychosocial, legal and other assistance in order to ensure proper education and upbringing of a fostered child or adoptive child in a family environment.

147. In 2013–2018 child's foster care (custody) and adoption were promoted by implementing social-information campaigns and other activities. More information is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.12). The statistics on the establishment of the child care are provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, table 16).

148. More measures aimed at ensuring quality care of children left without parental care that also correspond to parts a, b and e of clause 34 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4 are provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, table 16).

Article 25. Periodic assessment of the environment

149. Until 1 July 2018 the child's foster care (custody) was supervised by municipal child rights protection units. From 1 July 2018, the child's foster care (custody) in a foster care family, foster care household, Foster Care Centre, child care institution is supervised by the CP Service (territorial divisions of the CP Service in municipalities), which cooperates with the municipality administration, Foster Care Centre, other state and municipal institutions and establishments, NGOs. In case of a temporary child's foster care (custody), the CP Service visits the child in foster care (custody) for the first time no later than after one month from the date of establishment of the temporary foster care (custody), and later on as required, but not less than two times a year from the date on which the child is placed in temporary foster care (custody). The permanent foster care (custody) of a child is supervised by the CP Service, which ensures that the child in foster care (custody) is visited for the first time no later than after three months from the establishment of the permanent foster care (custody), and later on as required, but not less than two times within the first year of the permanent foster care (custody), and during the second and later years of the child's permanent foster care (custody) – no less than once a year.

150. The supervision of the child's temporary and permanent foster care (custody) shall be organised in line with the procedure established by the Regulations on the Organisation of Child's Foster Care (Custody) and the Provisions for the Temporary Care (Custody) of the Child. As of 1 July 2018 the supervision of the temporary foster care (custody) of a child is carried out during the meetings concerning the case management. The CP Service shall participate in the reviews of the temporary foster care (custody) of a child carried out in the meetings concerning the case management and present the changes in the behaviour of the child's parents or other representatives under the law, changes in the child's situation as established in the acts of visitation of the child in foster care (custody), the child's opinion on his/her care (custody).

Article 21. International and national adoption

151. From 2013 to 2018 national adoption decreased by 15% and international adoption – decreased by 42%; however, it is important to mention that it was also due to the decrease in the number of children eligible for adoption, which was influenced by the development of the social services network during the reporting period, the establishment of NGOs working with families and their minor children. The statistics on the adopted children are provided in the Annex to this Report (part I, clause I.2).

152. In order to promote adoption, facilitate and simplify the procedures, provide additional social guarantees for adoptive families, the amendments to the Civil Code, the Code of Civil Procedure, the LC and the LBC were adopted in 2017. These amendments are described in more detail in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.13). This corresponds to clause 36 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

153. The process of the child's care (custody) and adoption during the period of 2013–2017 showed that there were cases when the temporary foster care (custody) of a child lasted for more than 12 months, and in some cases the temporary foster care (custody) continued even up to several years, no measures were taken to limit the parental authority over the child, as a result, a child deprived of parental care had no clear status for a long period of time and could not be adopted or placed in permanent care (custody). This has particularly negatively affected children under the age of 3 who may have been adopted. Taking into account these facts, the amendment to the Civil Code was adopted in 2017. It established the provision that if a child is placed in the temporary foster care (custody), the CP Service shall, no later than within 60 calendar days after the child is placed in the temporary foster care (custody), apply to the court for limitation of parental (father or mother) authority, except for the cases when after the placement of a child in the temporary foster care (custody), the parents (father or mother) try to change their behaviour or there are other reasons why the CP Service reasonably believes that there is a real possibility to return the child to the family. The Civil Code also establishes that the child's temporary foster care (custody) shall last for no longer than 12 months, and only in the presence of reasonable evidence that the parents are trying to change their behaviour, the temporary foster care (custody) of a child may be extended for up to 6 months.

F. Disability, health protection and welfare

Article 6 (2). Right of a child to life and growth

154. The norm of midwifery medicine, regulating the competences of midwives, their ability to accept spontaneous deliveries independently, in the absence of a high-risk pregnancy factor, was supplemented.

155. The Law on Nursing Practice and Midwifery Practice of the Republic of Lithuania established the additional right of a midwife to provide maternity care at home in the absence of a high-risk pregnancy factor. This provision entered into force on 1 January 2019, secondary legislation is currently being drafted.

156. The statistics related to the children's vaccinations and breastfeeding is provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, table 17, pics. 5–6 and clause I.3).

Article 23. Children with disabilities

Health protection

157. A list of Medical Criteria (Diseases and (or) Related Health Disorders) was prepared, according to which social and health care services are provided for children in the institutions for infants with developmental disabilities.

158. Child and adolescent psychiatry services are available to children who have or who may have mental and behavioural disorders. For the treatment of mental disorders in children and adolescents, non-medical treatment methods and measures are commonly used. Treatment and psychosocial rehabilitation methods are applied not only to children, but also to their parents or other representatives under the law, and the family and the immediate circle of people (teachers, carers) are also involved in the treatment process. More information on other services and measures for children with disabilities is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.14).

Education

159. Measures specified in clauses 161–163 of this Report as well as in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.14, II.27) correspond to the measures listed in clause 38 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

160. The Action Plan for the Inclusion of Children in Learning Process and Diverse Education for 2017–2022 was approved. The Action Plan, inter alia, aims at the promotion of the inclusion of children with special educational needs in education system.

161. More and more pupils with special educational needs are learning with all other pupils. The aim of the National Education Strategy for 2013–2022 is to ensure access to and equal opportunities in education by maximising the scope of education of children and young people, to provide pupils, students and youth with the most favourable conditions for revealing their individual skills and meeting the special educational and study needs. It was stipulated that the number (percentage) of pupils learning in special schools will be reduced from 1.1% (2012) to 0.5% (2022). Interim rate – 0.8% (2017).

162. The number of children with special educational needs learning together with all other children in pre-school and pre-primary education groups is increasing (in 2014 – 89.6%, in 2017 – 92.2%). Nine out of ten pupils with special educational needs were educated with their peers in general education schools in 2017.

163. More measures are provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.14).

Article 24. Right of a child to health protection

164. In order to improve the accessibility and quality of public health care services for children, various measures were funded from the European Union funds in 2007–2013. Development of psychiatry day care centres, public health bureaus and mental health services

was ensured too. More information on all these measures is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.15).

Availability of specialists

165. Professional qualification requirements for art therapists were established; art therapy services are provided in the framework of other psychosocial rehabilitation services provided.

166. The standard for the number of population served by one medical psychologist in institutions providing primary mental health care services was reduced from 40 thousand to 20 thousand in 2016, and from 2018 the standard for the number of population served by each team member, working in the mental health care centre, was reduced to 17 thousand residents. Additional 45,5 posts of medical psychologists were established in personal health care institutions. Patients and their relatives were given the opportunity to consult a medical psychologist under the same conditions as if they were consulting any other specialist of the mental health care centre providing primary outpatient mental health care without the need for a referral. New services were introduced such as group and individual psychotherapy, psychosocial assessment, etc.

Promoting healthy lifestyle among children

167. The aim is to form appropriate attitudes of children and young people towards health and healthy lifestyle through the implementation of the measures to monitor children's and young people's health, to raise public awareness of healthy lifestyle, and the measures to develop safe behavioural skills (promoting physical activity, prevention of illness, suicide, trauma, drowning, poisoning etc.). The implemented measures are described in more detail in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.16).

168. The State Foundation for the Promotion of Public Health has been operating since 2016, which aims to finance health promotion projects, social campaign and research. Most of the projects are aimed at strengthening the mental health of children and young people, and developing a healthy lifestyle. The foundation is fed by receipts from the excise tax on alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and gambling tax.

Funds

169. The total number of children has been gradually decreasing and the CHIF budget expenditure on health care services for children has been steadily increasing. Information on the CHIF budget expenditure in relation to the child health care of 2013–2017 is provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, table 18).

170. During the period of 2010–2016 the CHIF budget expenditure on active treatment services for children and adolescent in psychiatric day care and psychiatric inpatient facilities increased the most. More information is provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, table 19).

171. The CHIF budget expenditure on personal health care services, provided as a result of mental health care, is increasing annually (in 2016 it amounted to EUR 57.5 million).

Article 33. Protection of children from drug and psychotropic substance abuse

172. Complementary education programmes are being implemented in Lithuanian general education schools, such as alcohol, tobacco and other psychoactive substance abuse prevention programme, health and sexual education as well as the general family education programme, other programmes, 21 prevention programmes were accredited.

173. Over 430 schools in the country were recognised as health-promoting schools. They are engaged in consistent long-term health promotion activities in their communities, including prevention of psychoactive substances as well.

174. More information on health-promoting schools as well as on other measures is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.17).

175. Legislative changes reduce alcohol availability by reducing the time for alcohol marketing, increasing the age at which alcohol can be bought and consumed (from the age of

21), setting the age limit for working with alcoholic beverages, tightening up the trade in alcoholic beverages in the open air, and legalising the prohibition of alcohol advertising, defining as the concept of ‘alcohol advertising’.

176. Psychosocial rehabilitation services were launched not only in mental health centres but also in psychiatric inpatient units.

177. As of 1 November 2017, after the reorganisation of the addiction centres in the regions, the Republican Centre for Addictive Disorders was established, which ensures the provision of services to children throughout the territory of Lithuania. Children and Youth Rehabilitation Unit has started its operation at Vilnius Centre for Addictive Disorders since 2016.

Article 18 (3), article 26. Child care services and facilities, social welfare

178. The number of children participating in a pre-school education programme increased by 7% in 2013–2017.

179. The project of modernisation of pre-school educational institutions is being carried out – 50 kindergartens are planned to be modernised and 2 thousand new places for children are planned to be created.

180. Hygiene requirements were simplified by setting up pre-school education groups not only in kindergartens, but also in schools, multifunctional centres or private homes.

181. In order to enable children from different social, economic, linguistic, cultural and other settings to prepare for successful schooling, a compulsory one-year pre-school education has been introduced since 1 September 2016.

182. As of 1 September 2018, parents (foster parents) have been offered a possibility to take their 5-year-old child to an institution providing education according to a pre-school education programme without the recommendation of the pedagogical-psychological service (assessment of child maturity).

183. In order to ensure equal access to education, social, health care and cultural services for all children, an all-day school model is being introduced in Lithuania. 40 selected Lithuanian schools provided all-day occupation and education of pupils during the school year 2018/2019. The further development of the all-day school would require a significant amount of additional appropriations, but the test results should be evaluated first.

184. According to the measure “Integrated Services for Families” of the Operational Programme for European Union Funds’ Investments for 2014–2020, child care services for up to four hours a day for all parents (adoptive parents, foster parents) raising children (adopted children, foster children) from the age of three until they start attending general education institution (6 AM to 10 PM) are being financed.

185. Activities of child day care centres providing non-residential day care social services for children and families were expanded in 2016–2018 by financing projects ensuring the continuous activities of child day care centres and newly established child day care centres. However, when organising the competition for financing the child day care centres in 2019, information that municipal administrations make little financial contribution to the operation, development and maintenance of child day care centres was confirmed. Non-governmental child day care centres are mostly supported by the funds from sponsors and project competition organised by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. Project funding does not ensure the continuous funding of child day care centres and the continuity of their services, which affects the quality of services, availability and retention of competent staff in child day care centres.

Article 27 (1) to (3). Living conditions

186. Given that, according to the LBC, as of 1 January 2012 a targeted supplementary care benefit amounting to 4 basic social benefits (hereinafter – BSB) (EUR 152) is paid in respect of a child, whose foster care (custody) has been established in a foster family, in order to ensure the child care (custody) provided by a foster family, a targeted supplementary care benefit amounting to 1 BSB (EUR 38) since 1 January 2016 and 4 BSB (EUR 152) since 1

January 2017, was started to be paid to a foster parent (custodian) in respect of a child whose foster care (custody) has been established in a family from 1 January 2016 in order to promote child care (custody) in a family and reduce the number of children in institutional care as well to provide more effective financial assistance to a foster family.

187. Amendments to the LBC entered into force on 1 January 2017, introducing two new types of benefits – benefit for the child care of a learning or studying individual (4 BSB (EUR 152) before 31 December 2017, and 6 BSB (EUR 228) per month from 1 January 2018), and the benefit in case of giving birth to more than one child at the same time (4 BSB (EUR 152) per month).

188. In order to reduce child poverty and income inequality as well as provide financial support to all families with children, universal, i.e. flat-rate, child benefit for all children payable from birth until the age of 18, and older in case they are studying under the general education programme but no longer that until they are 21 years of age, was introduced on 1 January 2018, and amounted to 0.79 BSB (EUR 30.02) per month in respect of each child. Additional child benefit is granted and paid to poor families raising and (or) caring for one or two children, and to families raising and (or) caring for three or more children, without taking into account the family income. In addition, in order to promote child adoption and legalise financial support for adoptive families, a new type of benefit of 8 BSB (EUR 304) per month was introduced on 1 January 2018, which is payable on adoption for 24 months, but no longer until the child reaches the age of 18.

189. In order to continue the financial support of families with children and ensure a consistent increase in the amount of the child benefit, the Seimas adopted the amendments to the LBS on 6 December, 2018, which increased the amount of the universal child benefit from 0.79 BSB (EUR 30.02) to 1.32 BSB (EUR 50.16) per month as of 1 January 2019, and the benefit to the disabled children – up to 1.84 BSB (EUR 69.92), paying the benefit to all children from birth until the age of 18, and older in case they are studying under the general education programme but no longer that until they are 21 years of age. Also the flat-rate (irrespective of the age of children) of the supplementary child benefit of 0.53 BSB (EUR 20.14) per month was established, leaving the existing legal regulation in place. The increase of the universal child benefit from EUR 30.02 to EUR 50.16 is projected to reduce the rate of the risk of poverty among children in the age group 0–17 by 4.3 percentage points, and among families with both parents raising three or more children – by 9.2 percentage points.

G. Education, leisure and culture

Article 28. Education including vocational training and orientation

190. Laws oblige institutions, other education providers as well as research and study institutions to provide equal opportunities in the education system to all individuals regardless of gender, race, nationality, citizenship, language, origin, social status, faith, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity and religion, to prevent discrimination or harassment on the grounds listed above, to ensure free education in a state and municipal school under the pre-school, primary, basic, secondary education programmes and vocational training programmes, free textbooks for pupils who study under the primary, basic, secondary education programmes, and partially free textbooks for students studying under the formal vocational training programmes (free textbooks can be provided after the assessment of the social status of parents (guardians) and the pupil). This corresponds to part b of clause 46 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

191. Activities carried out to improve the teacher training and the competences of existing teachers as well as more measures related to education system are described in Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.27).

Ensuring access to education for minors in prison

192. The Description of the Procedure for Organisation of General Education and Vocational Training of the Detained and Convicted was approved in 2016. This Description and the Procedure for the Organisation of Vocational Training of Convicted Persons regulate

the organisation of education of the detained and convicted, held in remand prisons, correctional facilities and detention facilities, under the formal education programmes in general education schools established in penitentiary institutions as well as the organisation of vocational training of the detained in remand prisons, correctional facilities and the state enterprise “Mūsų amatai” (Our Crafts) which carry out the activities of vocational training institutions.

193. Kaunas “Aitvaras” (Kite) School was established to educate juvenile prisoners in Kaunas Juvenile Remand Prison and Correctional Facility, with an average of 4 to 10 imprisoned students under the age of 16 and about 30 to 60 imprisoned students aged 16 and over are studying each year.

194. The general education of prisoners under the age of 16 shall be organised regardless of their number. Prisoners over 16 years of age (except those under arrest) who wish to attend school shall submit a written request to the head of the school. The school, in implementation of the general education programmes, shall operate under the general curricula, the general programmes and the descriptions of the primary, basic and secondary education programmes approved by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport. General education in correctional institutions shall be free of charge, and the necessary education supplies shall be provided by the administration of the correctional institution. Correctional institutions also organise various educational events, quizzes and other activities that are of interest to the minors. The education of prisoners shall be subject to the mandatory requirements for the separate detention (isolation) and security of prisoners, established in the LEPD and the Penal Code. This corresponds to part c of clause 46 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

Article 29. Educational goals

195. The update of the pre-school and pre-primary curriculum in 2014 was based on the Convention, which emphasises the child-centred approach, namely that each child is considered to be a unique personality with a distinctive view of the world. It is emphasised that it is extremely important to uphold the dignity of the child, his/her right to choose, decide, negotiate, and recognise the child’s opinion.

196. Surveys were conducted (and are being conducted) to find out the causes of non-learning and early school leaving, opportunities and conditions for returning non-learners and early school leavers to school. The outcome of such surveys is described in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.19).

Article 30. Children belonging to minorities or indigenous groups

197. Various activities continue to be actively developed and implemented to ensure the integration of the Roma both in education and in other areas of society. However, the objective of ensuring basic education for all Roma children has not yet been achieved.

198. Measures for Roma children and other minorities are provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.20) too.

199. In the implementation of the Plan for Non-Discrimination Promotion for 2017–2019, measures to strengthen the education of children of ethnic minorities and migrant families were implemented. EUR 139 thousand were dedicated for the implementation of these measures in 2017. Conferences, trainings and assistance to the schools of ethnic minorities were also organised. These activities are described in more detail in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.20).

Article 31. Leisure, recreation and cultural activities

200. The Lithuanian Pupils’ Olympic Games have been held since 2015. Their aim is to engage pupils in civic and national education through the sports movement, to encourage pupils to exercise systematically, to take care of their health and physical development consciously, to combine learning and recreation with physical activity, to promote the pupils’ principles of honourable fight and noble conduct, to promote the dissemination of new forms of physical activity and sporting achievements amongst pupils, to find, train and prepare highly gifted children for national, international competitions. 99%–100% of municipalities,

over 200 thousand pupils and over 100 general education schools participate in these competitions every year.

201. A competition of Lithuanian pupils, teachers and public health specialists “Sveikuolių sveikuoliai” (Healthies) takes place every second year, with 80% of Lithuanian schools participating there.

202. The Cultural Passport was introduced in September 2018, which enables the pupils to access cultural and art services free of charge (in 2018 such passport was available to – pupils of 1–4 grade, from 2019 – to all of them).

203. Children participate in artistic and technical creative circles at school and municipal cultural institutions, national and international cultural projects, competitions, festivals. Pupils from all schools in the country can take part in the Lithuanian song and dance competition for children and pupils “Dainų dainelė” (Song of the Songs). The Pupils Song Festival takes place in Lithuania every four years, with over 22 000 of pupils participating there.

204. The basket of non-formal education of children (hereinafter – NEC) introduced in the country since 2015 created equal opportunities for all children to participate in NEC activities financed from the State budget. Municipalities were recommended to prioritise the participation of children with fewer opportunities (disabled, receiving social support, etc.) in these activities. One of the NEC quality indicators in the municipality is the provision of opportunities for all children, the adaptation of the curriculum and environment to all children as needed.

H. Special protection measures

Article 22. Children seeking asylum

205. Until 2014, the reception and accommodation of unaccompanied minors, who did not apply for an asylum, were not regulated in detail, therefore, the reception and accommodation practices of this group of minors differed. Since 2014, after approval of the Description of the Procedure for Determining the Age, Accommodation and Other Procedural Actions and Services of Unaccompanied Minor Aliens in the Republic of Lithuania, who are not asylum seekers, the management of the Register of Unaccompanied Minor Aliens in the Republic of Lithuania, who are not asylum seekers, has been started. The description, laws and other legislations clearly regulate the special reception procedures, legal situation, accommodation, age determination methods and etc. used in respect of the unaccompanied minors, who are not asylum seekers. In 2016 the Resolution “On the Approval of the Description of the Procedure for Providing State Support for the Integration of Asylum Seekers” was adopted, and later, in 2018, the Order of the Director of the Refugee Reception Centre “On the Description of the Procedure for Identifying Unaccompanied Minors and Minors Who Have Experienced Sexual Exploitation or Have Been Sexually Abused” was adopted.

206. In 2014, the CP Service received information on 65 identified unaccompanied minor aliens, in 2015 – on 32, in 2016 – on 22, in 2017 – on 13 and until the 1 July, 2018 – on 4. Statistics on the unaccompanied minors, accommodated at the Refugee Reception Centre and on the asylum applications received from minors are provided in the Annex to the Report (part I, clause I.4 and table 20).

207. Other provisions remain unchanged and are in line with the clauses 412–416, 418–420, 426–427, 432–434 of the 3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention.

208. The professional development of the persons working with the unaccompanied minors is ensured. The special training module programme “Control Functions of the Migration Processes” is supplemented with a new module “Unaccompanied Minor Aliens”. The employees of the Asylum Division of the Migration Department are participating in trainings organised by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, where the issues concerning the unaccompanied minors are discussed separately. Special training modules, intended for the unaccompanied minors, are on the list of trainings organised by the European

Asylum Support Office, the employees of the aforementioned division attend these trainings as well.

Article 32. Protection from economic exploitation and child labour

209. Shorter working time for children of 14–16 years of age, engaged in work that is light to do outside the school year, when working for at least a week, was established. They are allowed to work for up to 6 hours per day, 30 hours per week (7 and 35 hours respectively). It was also established, that the working time for children of 14–16 years of age between six and seven o'clock in the morning before school is forbidden, the annual leave or unpaid leave during school holidays shall be granted upon their request, they shall be granted at least fourteen consecutive calendar days of annual leave or unpaid leave during the summer holidays, children of 16 years of age shall be granted at least fourteen consecutive calendar days of annual leave or unpaid leave during the summer holidays provided that they are on full-time summer vacation for that year.

210. The list of light work permitted for children of 14–16 years of age was abolished and children between the ages of 14 and 16 are allowed to do light work, when the nature of the particular tasks and conditions of performance do not jeopardize children's safety, health, development, school attendance and education under compulsory education training programmes, access to educational assistance. The employer shall employ a child of 14–16 years of age, if he/she has received a written consent regarding the labour of the child, from one of the parents or another representative of the child under the law, a medical certificate issued by a personal health care authority stating that the child is fit for the relevant work, and during the school year, the school, which the child attends, has given a written consent for the child to work.

211. Further information on the appropriate penalties or other sanctions, on the economic exploitation and any other labour, which may be hazardous to the child's health or hinder the child's education, may adversely affect his/her health and physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, as well as information on the minimum age for employment is given in clauses 561–562, 581 of the 3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention.

Article 35. Child abduction, sale and trafficking

Legal protection

212. The number of registered criminal offenses related to human trafficking, when the victims were minors, was as follows: in 2018, under Article 147 of the CC (Human Trafficking) – 1, under Article 157 of the CC (Purchase and Sale of a Child) – 2; in 2017, under Article 147 of the CC – 0 (no registered criminal offenses, when victims were minors), and under Article 157 of the CC – 12; in 2016, under Article 147 of the CC – 0 (no registered criminal offenses, when victims were minors), and under Article 157 of the CC – 10; in 2015 – respectively 2 and 25, in 2015 – respectively 6 and 3, and in 2013 – respectively 1 and 5.

213. The Code of Administrative Offenses establishes administrative liability for the use of prostitution services in exchange for payment. No administrative prosecution has been brought against a person providing sexual services who was involved in prostitution being materially, by service or otherwise dependent, or in prostitution, by physical or mental coercion or deception, or in any way involved in prostitution as a minor, and (or) trafficking in human beings and is recognized as a victim of criminal proceedings.

214. More information on the subject is provided in clauses 512–513 of the 3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention and in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause I.21).

215. Competences in this field were also improved by organising training on combating human trafficking for special prosecutors, police officers, municipal employees. More information on the training is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.22).

Article 36. Other forms of exploitation

216. One of the measures included in the 2019 action plan for the implementation of the National Programme for Social Integration of Persons with Disabilities for 2013–2019 is to prepare recommendations on the prevention of violence and sexual abuse against disabled children and adults to be implemented in social care institutions.

217. Chapter 23 of the CC lays down crimes and criminal offenses against a child and a family and establishes liability of a person for the abduction or exchange of a minor child, purchase and sale of a child, desertion, involvement of a child in a criminal act, incitement to use medications, other intoxicating agents or substances indicated in the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Control of Certain Doping Substances, incitement to drink, pornographic exploitation or abuse of the rights and duties of parents, guardian (custodian) or other legal representatives of the child, evasion of a child's maintenance (Articles 156–164 of the CC).

Article 40. Juveniles in criminal proceedings

218. In 2013, six children's socialisation centres were operating in the country, with around 206 pupils placed there. In 2018 the number of these closed type institutions decreased to three children's socialisation centres with around 80 pupils. The modernisation of the buildings of these institutions (improvement of living conditions and learning environment), purchasing of the latest training measures and the further training of the staff is foreseen up until 2020.

219. The LMMCC adopted on 1 September, 2017 provides that persons shall be directed to the children's socialisation centres under the judicial authorisation in exceptional cases for the shortest period available, therefore, a much smaller number of children has been placed at the socialisation centres in the last years. The law obliges municipalities to provide coordinated assistance to the child as close to the home as possible. However, in Lithuania, the quality, effective assistance is almost inaccessible to children of delinquent behaviour, having behavioural and emotional disorders, the availability of the necessary services is not ensured.

220. According to the CCP, the participation of the defender in the case is mandatory, when examining cases regarding the acts, of which the minor is suspected or accused. Optional waiver of defence by a juvenile is not mandatory for the pre-trial officer, prosecutor and court. The representative of the suspected, accused, convicted or the victim may, by law, participate in the proceedings and defend the interests of the participants in the proceedings, if they are minors or legally incapacitated, unless this is contrary to the interests of the minor or the incapacitated person. The prosecutor, supporting the prosecution, must bring a civil action before the court, if it is not brought, in cases where the offense involves harm to the state or a person who, due to his/her minority, illness, dependency on the accused or otherwise, is unable to defend his/her legitimate interests.

221. Detailed information on minors, criminal liability and detention is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.23).

222. The further training of judges in the field of juvenile justice is ensured. More information is given in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.23). This corresponds to part b of clause 51 of CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4.

Article 37 (b), (d). Children deprived of their liberty and imposition of punishment

223. 787 minors were taken into custody by the police in 2013 (974 – in 2014, 905 – in 2015, 797 – in 2016, 769 – in 2017 and 699 – in 2018).

224. The provisions of the LEPD ensure that minors are isolated from other persons and have longer walks in fresh air (two hours per day are due); in addition they ensure accommodation and living conditions for the arrested in compliance with the hygiene norms of the Republic of Lithuania. Improved accommodation and living conditions are created for pregnant women, minors, disabled and patients. The principle of isolation of minors from adults is set out in the Instructions for Protection and Maintenance of Police Custody Premises. This clause was added in accordance with the provisions of Directive (EU)

2016/800 of 11 May, 2016 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the procedural safeguards for children who are suspects or accused persons in criminal proceedings.

225. More measures are provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.25).

Article 38. Children in armed conflicts

Training of children for military actions

226. More information is provided in clauses 437–439, 443–446 and 448 of the 3rd–4th Joint Report on the Implementation of the Convention, also, a part of information is given in clause 447 (until the campaign intended for the children of Afghanistan).

227. Military training of young riflemen's for military actions in the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union (hereinafter – the LRU) is not carried out. Young riflemen (from age 11 to 18) cannot be appointed to carry out the riflemen's service to the LRU combat units, cannot be appointed to carry out the riflemen's service. It is also forbidden to carry out the military training of the young riflemen for military actions. When carrying out the riflemen's service, only adult riflemen, who have passed the exams of the knowledge of rules on the use of firearms and special measures, have the right to use firearms and other special measures, except when there is a case of self-defence. When a multi-stage training of young riflemen is carried out, the military training is not executed.

228. More information is provided in the Annex to the Report (part II, clause II.24).
