



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

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## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

### Seventy-fourth session

21 October–8 November 2019

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

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

## List of issues and questions in relation to the sixth periodic report of Lithuania\*

### Visibility and dissemination of the Convention

1. Please provide updated information on measures taken to implement the Committee's previous recommendations on raising awareness of the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's general recommendations, as well as its views and recommendations on individual communications and inquiries (CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5, para. 9 (a) and (b)), in addition to the efforts described in paragraph 5 of the report (CEDAW/C/LTU/6).<sup>1</sup> Apart from the training programmes organized in the period 2014–2016 (para. 5), please indicate whether training activities on the Convention are regularly provided to judges, prosecutors, lawyers and other law enforcement professionals. Please provide information on the frequency and content of such activities, indicating whether any evaluation of them has been undertaken. Please also provide information on measures taken to raise awareness of the Convention among women facing intersecting forms of discrimination.

### Definition of discrimination against women

2. In accordance with the State party's obligations under articles 1 and 2 of the Convention, and in line with target 5.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, please provide information on the legal definition of discrimination against women, including direct and indirect discrimination in the private and public spheres and intersecting forms of discrimination (para. 15). Please clarify how the definitions of discrimination in the Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Lithuania Act and the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Republic of Lithuania Act ensure the effective protection

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\* Adopted by the pre-sessional working group on 15 March 2019.

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, paragraph numbers refer to the sixth periodic report of the State party.



of women from intersecting forms of discrimination. Please elaborate on the legal standards and compensation programmes for women who are victims of intersecting forms of discrimination, in particular women and girls in rural areas, migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee women and girls, and women and girls with disabilities (paras. 15, 16, 17 and 21).

### **Legislative and policy framework**

3. Please provide updated information on the key features of the national programme of equal opportunities for women and men for 2015–2021 and its action plan (paras. 24, 45, 101 and 126), including the human, technical and financial resources allocated for its implementation, indicating the steps taken to monitor and coordinate its implementation in all regions of the State party. Please also indicate how a gender perspective is integrated into all stages, including in the development and implementation of laws, policies and programmes (para. 26). Please elaborate on the specific measures taken to ensure that women’s empowerment, as well as equality of opportunities for women and men, is integrated, with specific objectives and results, into strategic planning documents of State institutions, including strategic action plans of municipal authorities (para. 7).

### **Access to justice and legal complaint mechanisms**

4. Please indicate how the State party is increasing the awareness and knowledge of women, in particular those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, such as women in rural areas and Roma, migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee women, of the possibility of bringing complaints alleging sex- or gender-based discrimination, as well as of the legal complaint mechanisms available to them under the Convention and related national legislation, with a view to ensuring their access to justice. Please also indicate how women who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination can effectively bring their claims before the administrative or judicial authorities.

5. Please provide updated data on the regional distribution and outcome of complaints of gender-based discrimination filed with the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson since 2014, in addition to the information provided on the number of complaints (annexes 2–4), indicating whether any redress was provided to victims in cases in which a violation was found. In the light of the Committee’s previous concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5](#), para. 13 (d)), please provide updated information on the financial and human resources of the Office of the Ombudsman for Equal Opportunities and indicate whether the State party envisages establishing decentralized branches at the regional and local levels to facilitate access by women to such a complaint mechanism. Please also provide information on the amendments made in 2016 to the procedures for investigating complaints by the Office and their impact on the accessibility and affordability of the complaint procedures for women facing discrimination (para. 10).

### **National machinery for the advancement of women**

6. With regard to the Committee’s previous recommendations ([CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5](#), para. 15), please provide updated information on any efforts undertaken by the State party aimed at strengthening the mandate, authority and transparency of the Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, as well as the level of representation of line ministries and all stakeholders therein, in addition to the efforts outlined in the State party’s report on follow-up to the concluding observations of the Committee ([CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5/Add.1](#), paras. 3–6). Please indicate any measures taken to strengthen the resources, mandate and authority of the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson. Please also indicate whether any training has been

provided to the gender focal points within each ministry since 2014. Please provide information on the progress made in the implementation of the national programme of equal opportunities for women and men in all regions by each ministry (*ibid.*, paras. 8–15).

#### **Temporary special measures**

7. In its report, the State party indicates that there are no legal instruments to increase the number of women in politics or decision-making in other organizations, including businesses (para. 44). Please provide information on any temporary special measures, including quotas, taken or envisaged by the State party to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality between women and men, leading to gender parity across sectors in all the areas covered by the Convention ([CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5](#), paras. 19, 29, 33 and 35). It is indicated in the report that amendments to the Equal Opportunities Act were drafted in 2018 to simplify the adoption of temporary special measures (para. 44). Please specify the content and the status of the amendments. Please also provide information on the efforts that have been made to raise awareness of the concept of temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures.

#### **Discriminatory gender stereotypes and harmful practices**

8. With regard to the Committee's previous recommendation ([CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5](#), para. 21), please provide information on activities undertaken since 2014, including awareness-raising and educational campaigns, to address discriminatory gender stereotypes towards women and girls, including those experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination relating to ethnicity, age, disability or other characteristics, in addition to the efforts described in paragraphs 45 to 50 of the report. Please also provide information on the scale and content of such activities, including those undertaken by the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, indicating whether any evaluation has been made regarding their impact. Please explain how the need to eliminate discriminatory gender stereotypes towards women and girls, including those experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, is integrated into the national programme of equal opportunities for women and men for the period 2015–2021. Please provide information on efforts to project positive and non-sexualized images of women and eliminate stereotypical images and attitudes regarding the roles of women and men in the mass media, the family and society.

#### **Gender-based violence against women**

9. Please provide updated information on the legislative and policy-related measures taken since 2014 to combat all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls, including: (a) the steps taken to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence; (b) the measures taken to implement the Protection against Domestic Violence Act (paras. 22 and 76); and (c) whether marital rape is specifically listed as a criminal offence in the Criminal Code. With regard to the Committee's previous recommendations ([CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5](#), para. 23 (b)), please elaborate on specific measures that are aimed at comprehensively eliminating gender-based violence against women and girls in all its forms in public and private life, taken under the national programme for the prevention of domestic violence and provision of assistance to victims for 2014–2020. Please also provide information on whether there is a mechanism to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the programme in all regions (*ibid.*, para. 23 (b)).

10. With regard to the Committee's previous recommendations (*ibid.*, para. 23 (d) and (e)), please provide information on the measures taken to provide assistance to women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence, including by providing shelters. Please provide information on: (a) the range of services provided by specialized assistance centres and other centres and shelters; (b) their human and financial resources and geographical distribution; (c) the number of women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence to whom the shelters provide services; and (d) whether the services are accessible to all women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence, in particular women belonging to ethnic minority groups, migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee women, women in rural areas and women with disabilities (paras. 68–71), without discrimination. Please indicate whether the State party has provided training in the Protection against Domestic Violence Act to law enforcement personnel, prosecutors and members of the judiciary.

11. With regard to the Committee's previous recommendations ([CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5](#), para. 25 (b)–(d)), please provide updated data on: (a) the number of protection orders issued per year since 2014 to protect women and girls who are victims of domestic violence; (b) the number of complaints about domestic violence filed during the period under review, in addition to the number of prosecutions, convictions and sentences imposed, indicating the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim; and (c) the number of cases in which the reconciliation procedure provided for in article 38 of the Criminal Code was used to settle cases of domestic violence (paras. 69 and 76–77).

#### **Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution**

12. Please provide updated information on the measures taken since 2014 to combat trafficking in persons, in addition to the legislative measures mentioned in the report (para. 54 and annex 9), including: (a) specific measures taken to implement the action plan on combating trafficking in persons in 2017–2019 (para. 57), including activities relating to prevention and victim assistance; (b) related measures taken to implement the inter-institutional action plan for the implementation of the programme for the development of public security for the period 2015–2025 (para. 57); (c) the activities of the Commission for the Coordination of Trafficking in Human Beings (para. 58); and (d) related measures taken by municipalities in addition to those mentioned in paragraph 59 of the report. Please provide information on the scale, frequency and content of training activities provided to officials and professionals who may have to interact with women and girls who are victims of trafficking (paras. 56 and 62).

13. Please provide data, disaggregated by sex, age, nationality and ethnicity, on the number of reported cases of trafficking in persons, prosecutions, convictions and sentences imposed on perpetrators since 2014 in which women and girls were victims of trafficking. It is indicated in the report that the provisions of the Criminal Code were amended to prohibit the selling, buying, otherwise transferring or acquiring, recruiting, transporting or keeping of a person or a child in captivity for slavery, or under conditions similar to those of slavery, prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation (para. 78). Please provide updated information on: (a) the applicable legislative and policy framework currently in place to prevent the exploitation of women and girls in prostitution; (b) existing mechanisms for their protection; and (c) existing measures, in all regions, to support women who wish to leave prostitution and pursue alternative means of livelihood. Please provide information on measures taken to raise awareness of the health and safety risks of prostitution and discourage male demand for it ([CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5](#), para. 27).

**Participation in political and public life**

14. In the light of the information provided in the report (para. 79 and annexes 14–15) that women remain underrepresented in political and public life, in particular in ministerial positions, Parliament, the European Parliament and mayoral positions (CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5, para. 29), please elaborate on specific measures taken to ensure substantive equality between women and men in political and public life, including the public service (paras. 79 and 84) and the foreign service (paras. 86–87 and annex 16). Please indicate whether the State party envisages adopting temporary special measures to increase the representation of women in appointed and elected positions, in particular in leadership and decision-making positions. Please also provide data on the representation of women in the judiciary.

**Education**

15. Please provide information on the implementation of the guidance on ensuring equal opportunities in Lithuanian research and higher education institutions (para. 91), indicating specific measures taken to strengthen the position of women in leadership roles in academic institutions (CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5, para. 33). Please also provide information on measures taken to: (a) ensure the delivery of age-appropriate education in sexual and reproductive health and rights; (b) eliminate discriminatory gender stereotypes in all textbooks; (c) promote human rights education in schools, including a focus on the Convention and the empowerment of girls; (d) encourage women and men to choose non-traditional fields of training and education, including by promoting access by girls to training and education in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Please also provide data on the enrolment and dropout rates of Roma girls at the primary and secondary educational levels and on the participation of Roma women and girls in higher education, indicating measures taken to increase the inclusion of Roma girls in the regular educational process, including in the action plan for Roma integration into Lithuanian society in 2015–2020 (paras. 96–97).

**Employment**

16. Please provide information on the implementation of the Labour Relations and Legal-Administrative Model of the State Social Insurance law package (para. 99) and the action plan for the national programme of equal opportunities for women and men for the period 2015–2021 (para. 101), indicating the steps taken since 2014 to address the persistent horizontal and vertical occupational segregation in the labour market and the gender pay gap (annex 25). Please also indicate the priorities that have been defined in the plan designed to ensure an environment favourable to the employment of women that fosters gender equality at work. There is a reference in the report to inspections on the implementation of the equal rights of women and men under the scope of labour law regulations (para. 101). Please provide information on the outcome of such inspections, elaborating on the sanctions imposed on employers who do not guarantee equal pay for work of equal value. Please also provide data on cases filed since 2014 relating to discrimination against women in the workplace, including wage discrimination and sexual harassment, and the outcome of such cases.

17. Please provide updated data on the percentage of men making use of paternity leave, childcare leave and flexible work arrangements since 2014, indicating whether the State party has developed incentives to encourage men to avail themselves of parental leave and whether steps have been taken to increase the number of childcare facilities available in the State party (CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5, para. 35). Please also indicate any steps taken to ensure the effective participation of migrant women, Roma women, single mothers, older women and women with disabilities in the labour

market, in addition to the specific measures concerning the integration of Roma women into the labour market (paras. 102–104).

### **Health**

18. Please indicate any measures taken to improve access to safe and legal abortion and modern contraceptives, including by women belonging to the most disadvantaged groups, including women in rural areas (CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5, para. 37). It is indicated in the report that the decrease in the number of abortions requested by women can also be considered an indirect indicator of an increase in commonly used methods of contraception (para. 116). Please provide information on the outcome of the study conducted in 2016 on awareness and the availability of contraceptives (para. 117).

### **Marriage and family relations**

19. Please provide information on the steps taken by the State party to give effect to the Committee's recommendation (CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5, para. 41 (a)), in order to ensure that non-traditional families, including same-sex couples and de facto unions, are fully encompassed in the notion of family used in all State laws, policies, programmes and strategies, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 21 (1994) on equality in marriage and family relations and No. 29 (2013) on the economic consequences of marriage, family relations and their dissolution. Please elaborate on the constitutional provision concerning the comprehensive protection of maternity, paternity and childhood and the Strengthening Families Act (paras. 48–49), indicating whether an assessment has been conducted of their impact on the rights of women, their freedom of choice and different forms of families.

20. Please provide information on the steps taken by the State party to give effect to the Committee's recommendation (CEDAW/C/LTU/CO/5, para. 41 (b)) to repeal the amendment to the Civil Code that grants courts discretion to lower the legal age of consent to marriage. Please provide data, disaggregated by sex, age and ethnicity, on cases in which courts have reduced the legal age of consent and allowed persons to marry before the age of 16 years in cases of pregnancy.

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