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**Lithuania\***


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## I. Introduction

1. This document is the revised Common Core Document of the Republic of Lithuania. The first Common Core Document of the Republic of Lithuania was submitted to the UN on 1 October 1998. The Common Core Document is drafted in accordance with the requirements of “Harmonized Guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a core document and treaty-specific documents”, as well as taking into account the UN General Assembly Resolution 68/268 of 9 April 2014, on the strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system.
2. The Common Core Document was prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Ministry of Justice, the Lithuanian Department of Statistics (hereinafter – Statistics Lithuania). The document, including statistical data, is based on the most up-to-date information as of January 2020.
3. The first part of the Common Core Document includes information on the demographic, economic, social and cultural indicators of the State. The second part provides information on the general framework for the protection and promotion of human rights in Lithuania. The third part describes measures taken by Lithuania for the elimination of discrimination and for the promotion of gender equality, as well as informs about the available domestic remedies to a person.

## II. General information about Lithuania

### General information

4. The Republic of Lithuania (Lithuanian: *Lietuvos Respublika*) is located in the Baltic Region of Europe and is situated along the southeastern shore of the Baltic Sea. Sharing land borders with Latvia to the north, Belarus to the east and south, Poland to the south, and Kaliningrad Oblast (exclave of the Russian Federation) to the southwest, Lithuania covers an area of 65 286 square kilometres. The capital of Lithuania is Vilnius. Other major cities are Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai and Panevėžys. In 2019, Lithuania’s estimated population was around 2.8 million people, with the density of 43 persons per square kilometre.
5. The official language, Lithuanian, is one of only two living languages (along with Latvian) in the Baltic branch of the Indo-European language family, and is one of the oldest languages in the world.
6. According to the data of the Department of Statistics of Lithuania the ethnic composition of the population of Lithuania at the beginning of 2019 was the following: 86.4 per cent Lithuanians, Poles – 5.7, Russians – 4.5, Belarusians – 1.5, Ukrainians – 1.0, Jews – 0.1, other – 0.8 per cent of the country’s resident population.
7. According to the Census of 2011 data, the majority of the population (77%) is Roman Catholic; the other most numerous religious communities are Russian Orthodox (4.11%), Old Believers (0.77%), Evangelical Lutheran (0.60%), Evangelical Reformed (0.22%), Pagans (0.17%). There are numerous other religious minorities, including Evangelical Protestant churches, Jehovah Witnesses, Suni Muslims, Jewish, etc. 6.14% of the population indicated no religious affiliation.
8. Lithuania participates in the activities of approximately 50 international intergovernmental organisations, including the United Nations and its agencies, in this way contributing to the international peace and security, through international law and co-operation.
9. In 2001, Lithuania has issued a standing invitation to all special procedures to evaluate human rights situation in Lithuania.

10. Lithuania and its representatives have been repeatedly elected to the governing bodies of various international organisations, and have been chairing them. In 2007, the representative of Lithuania chaired one of the most important UN bodies – the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). On the 17 October 2013, Lithuania was elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the year 2014–2015. In November 2015, Lithuania was elected to serve on the UNESCO’s Executive Board for the 2015–2019 period and was also elected as a Vice-Chair of this governing body for the 2015–2017 period.

11. Lithuania also actively participates in regional organisations, this way contributing to promotion of rules-based multilateral system. Lithuania became a member of the Council of Europe in 1993 and in 2001–2002 chaired the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. In 2009–2010, Lithuania chaired the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), and in 2012 chaired and coordinated the work of the Baltic Sea regional formats, such as the Baltic Council of Ministers and the Nordic-Baltic 8 (NB8). In 2011, Lithuania successfully chaired the Organisation of Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

12. Lithuania became a full-fledged member of the European Union on 1 May 2004. In 2007, Lithuania joined the Schengen zone, and in 2015 acceded the Euro zone, changing its currency to Euro. In 2013, Lithuania presided the Council of the European Union.

13. Lithuania has recognised as compulsory the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice in 2012.

14. Lithuania is one of the leading countries in Europe with the highest graduation rate per capita from tertiary education in science and technology with approximately 58 per cent of 30–34-year-olds population having university or college degrees. In Lithuania ranked 5th in the world for the number of inhabitants aged 25–34 with higher degrees.

15. According to the Eurostat survey, in Lithuania at least 9 out of every 10 adults of working-age reported that they know at least one foreign language.

16. Lithuania has competitive economy and attractive investment environment. In 2019, Lithuania was in the 29th position in the World Competitiveness report compiled by the Swiss International Institute for Management Development.

17. Lithuania remains the leading country in laser industry with 10 percent of global laser market and an 11 percent growth of high-tech export in 2018. In 2018, according to the World Bank, Lithuania ranked 14th among 190 economies in the ease of doing business. Moreover, in 2019, The Heritage Foundation and The Wall Street Journal listed Lithuania in 21st place in economic freedom rank.

## Historical background

18. Lithuania’s name has been known in the world for over a thousand years, since it was first recorded in 1009 in the Annals of Quedlinburg. Established in the 13th century, Lithuania was known as the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (Magnus Ducatus Lithuaniae) – a successful, multicultural and one of the largest states in Europe in the 15th century. It is generally accepted that the state of Lithuania found its way into the world maps, following the coronation of Mindaugas, ruler of the consolidated Lithuania, on 6 July 1253. The Papal Bull granted the State with the highest title of the monarchy, which meant that Lithuania was recognized by and accepted into the family of the Western Europe as an equal member of the political system. With the official adoption of Christianity in 1387, Lithuania chose to follow the Western path of development: the following period saw the spread of the written language, schools were opened, Lithuanian students travelled to study to European universities. In 1579, the Jesuit Academy founded Vilnius University, which was one of the first universities in Eastern Europe. After forming a dynastic union with Poland, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was established. In 1791, the parliament of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (the Great Sejm) adopted the constitution for the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which was the very first written constitution in Europe, and the world’s second constitution. This Polish-Lithuanian union lasted until 1795, and afterwards Lithuania lived forcibly under the rule of Russian Empire until the very 20th century.

19. After the outbreak of the First World War, Germany occupied Lithuania in 1915 and the occupation lasted until the beginning of 1919. On 16 February 1918, the 20-member Council of Lithuania signed Lithuania's Declaration of Independence, which proclaimed the restoration of an independent Lithuanian state. Vilnius was declared the country's capital city. The founding Seimas (Parliament) adopted a progressive constitution that guaranteed the most important concepts underpinning the new juridical state. Lithuania was one of the first countries in Europe, which provided voting rights for women. During the 20 years of independence, Lithuania attained significant results in the spheres of economy and culture. The Lithuanian State was recognized at the international level and became a member of the League of Nations. In 1921, Lithuania signed the Protocol of the Permanent Court of International Justice. In 1922, Lithuania recognised the jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice as compulsory.

20. On 23 August 1939 when Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed the Treaty of Non-aggression (the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact), with additional secret protocols under which Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union divided the spheres of influence. As Lithuania was assigned to the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union, this pact consequently led to an ultimatum later issued to Lithuania on 14 June 1940, following with an occupation the day after. In June 1941 the Soviet Union as an occupying power began a campaign of forced mass deportations of Lithuanian residents to Gulags in Siberia.

21. On June 22, 1941, Lithuania, occupied by the Soviet Union, was invaded by the Nazi German army. It remained under the power of Nazi Germany until the summer of 1944, when the Soviet Red Army re-occupied the territory. During the Soviet regime, in 1941 and 1945–1953 at least 130–140 thousand people (Lithuanian, Poles, Jewish), 70% of them women and children, were deported to labour and prison camps (Gulags) in Siberia.

22. To restore independence of Lithuania and resist Soviet occupation, Lithuanian partisans waged guerrilla warfare in 1944, which continued for almost ten years, and during which about 20 thousand Lithuanian partisans and their supporters were killed. The period of partisan fights is one of the most dramatic and tragic events in Lithuania's history.

23. Until the restoration of independence of Lithuania in 1990, all political, economic and cultural life in Lithuania was under tight control of Soviet repressive regime. Any opposition or other views were severely persecuted, censored and banned. People were not able to exercise their political rights freely; critics of the Soviet regime were persecuted and imprisoned. Promotion of national identity and religion or belief was suppressed and severely persecuted.

24. Most of democratic states never recognized Lithuania's incorporation into the Soviet Union and many Lithuanian diplomatic missions continued activities abroad up until 1991. During the first democratic elections in 1989, the Reform Movement of Lithuania (called "Sąjūdis") defeated the Communist Party. On 23 August 1989, population of three Baltic States formed a human chain stretching 650 kilometres across Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn to mark the 50th anniversary of Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as a result of which three Baltic States lost their independence. The Baltic Way was a symbolic action that separated the Baltic States from the Soviet Union and by which people expressed their will to be free.

25. In early 1990, candidates backed by this Reform Movement won the first free Lithuanian parliamentary elections and on 11 March 1990, the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic proclaimed the Act of the Re-Establishment of the State of Lithuania. The Soviet Union then imposed an economic blockade that lasted for 74 days and subsequently attempted to re-impose their control by force, which was used on January 13th, 1991, leading to the deaths of 14 unarmed civilians. The Soviet troops withdrew from Lithuania only on 31 August 1993.

26. Following the reestablishment of its statehood, Lithuania became the participant of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (now Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, hereinafter – the OSCE). It was the first international organization that Lithuania joined after the restoration of independence. Lithuania chaired the OSCE from 1 January until 31 December 2011. During its chairmanship, Lithuania continued meaningful steps implementing the vision of free, democratic, united and undivided Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian community of security. Lithuania significantly contributed to the

OSCE goals in resolution of prolonged conflicts (for the first time after five years the official 5+2 negotiations regarding the conflict in Moldova were renewed), strengthening of the OSCE in the fight against transnational threats, among them the ones coming from territory of Afghanistan. Lithuania consistently followed and propagated organization's values – assurance of human rights and freedoms, the necessity of democratic societies, protection of freedom of media and safety of journalists.

27. On 17 September 1991, Lithuania joined the United Nations alongside with Estonia and Latvia. On the 17th October 2013 Lithuania was unanimously elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (187 votes) for the term 2014–2015. During its membership in UN Security Council, Lithuania has focused on the rule of law, protection of civilians in armed conflict, illegal annexation of Crimea and aggression against Ukraine, issues of accountability, illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and their impact on civilian populations, protection of civilians and journalists in conflicts, combatting terrorism, and improving sanctions effectiveness.

28. In March 1993, Lithuania was admitted to the Council of Europe (hereinafter – CoE). Lithuania chaired the Committee of the Ministers of the CoE from November 2001 until May 2002. During the chairmanship Lithuania promoted stability and unity in Europe on the basis of common values of pluralistic democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

29. On 25 October 1992, the citizens of Lithuania adopted in the referendum the new Constitution. In 1995, Lithuania signed the Association Agreement with the European Union.

30. In 1997, Lithuania joined the Standby Arrangements System for the UN peacekeeping operations and placed its civilian police officers and military under the UN standby arrangement system. Lithuanian military officers have also served in the operational headquarters of UN-mandated EU military operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina (operation ALTHEA) and Chad/Central African Republic (EUFOR Tchad/RCA).

31. In 2004, Lithuania joined the European Union and NATO, both memberships having been a major foreign policy goal since the Independence. Lithuania's presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2013 was one of the country's most important contributions to the EU policymaking and implementation.

32. Since renewed independence in 1991 and transition from a centrally planned to a market economy, Lithuania has substantially raised well-being of its citizens, developed competitive economy and created attractive investment environment. Subsequently, in 2018 Lithuania became a member of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

## A. Demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics

### Demographic characteristics

33. Total resident population (2014–2019):

<i>Beginning of the year</i>	<i>Total</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
2014	2 943 472	1 355 995	1 587 477
2015	2 921 262	1 346 257	1 575 005
2016	2 888 558	1 329 607	1 558 951
2017	2 847 904	1 312 186	1 535 718
2018	2 808 901	1 297 293	1 511 608
2019	2 794 184	1 295 591	1 498 593

34. In 2018, life expectancy in Lithuania was – 70.9 for men and – 80.6 for women.

## 35. Resident population in urban and rural areas (2014–2019):

Year	Population in rural areas	Population in urban areas	Compared to the total resident	
			Urban areas	Rural areas
2014	968 892	1 974 580	67,1	32,9
2015	958 649	1 962 613	67,2	32,8
2016	945 330	1 943 228	67,3	32,7
2017	936 836	1 911 068	67,1	32,9
2018	924 179	1 884 722	67,1	32,9
2019	918 814	1 875 370	67,1	32,9

## 36. Resident population change (2014–2019):

Year	Resident population at the beginning of the year	Resident population change	
		In persons	In per cent
2014	2 943 472	-22 210	-0.75
2015	2 921 262	-32 704	-1.12
2016	2 888 558	-40 654	-1.41
2017	2 847 904	-39 003	-1.37
2018	2 808 901	-14 717	-0.53
2019	2 794 184	-	-

## 37. Average household size (2013–2017):

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Average household size (persons)	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1
Proportion of single-parent households (per cent)	7.1	6.6	7.2	7.8	7.2

## 38. Live births by sex, crude birth rate, total fertility rate (2013–2018):

Year	Live births			Crude birth rate (per 1 000 population)	Total fertility rate
	Total	Males	Females		
2013	29 885	15 221	14 664	10.1	1.59
2014	30 369	15 565	14 804	10.3	1.63
2015	31 475	16 201	15 274	10.8	1.70
2016	30 623	15 847	14 776	10.7	1.69
2017	28 696	14 775	13 921	10.1	1.63
2018	28 149	14 362	13 787	10.0	1.63

## 39. Deaths and crude death rates by sex (2013–2018):

Year	Deaths			Crude death rate (per 1 000 population)		
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
2013	41 511	20 789	20 722	14.0	15.3	13.0
2014	40 252	20 110	20 142	13.7	14.9	12.7

Year	Deaths			Crude death rate (per 1 000 population)		
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
2015	41 776	20 529	21 247	14.4	15.3	13.6
2016	41 106	20 328	20 778	14.3	15.4	13.4
2017	40 142	19 286	20 856	14.2	14.8	13.7
2018	39 574	19 024	20 550	14.1	14.7	13.7

## 40. Major causes of death (Males and females in urban and rural areas):

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total by causes of death</b>	<b>40 252</b>	<b>41 776</b>	<b>41 106</b>	<b>40 142</b>	<b>39 574</b>
Certain infectious and parasitic diseases	677	735	800	633	613
Malignant neoplasms	8 028	8 348	8 197	7 996	8 028
Diseases of the circulatory system	22 524	23 588	23 103	22 511	21 922
Diseases of the respiratory system	1 180	1 357	1 292	1 344	1 389
Diseases of the digestive system	2 090	2 098	2 165	1 993	1 900
External causes of death	3 338	3 208	3 062	2 810	2 618
Transport accidents	325	307	246	250	224
Falls	352	394	401	424	451
Accidental drowning and submersion	229	146	190	142	155
Accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol	242	253	193	193	157
Intentional self-harm (suicides)	930	896	823	748	683
Assault, homicides	112	121	100	78	72
Other causes of death	2 415	2 442	2 487	2 855	3 104

## 41. Major causes of deaths (female deaths in urban and rural areas):

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total by causes of death</b>	<b>20 142</b>	<b>21 247</b>	<b>20 778</b>	<b>20 856</b>	<b>20 550</b>
Certain infectious and parasitic diseases	271	307	352	297	293
Malignant neoplasms	3 503	3 708	3 672	3 607	3 604
Diseases of the circulatory system	13 073	13 835	13 386	13 225	12 928
Diseases of the respiratory system	359	466	456	477	479
Diseases of the digestive system	959	978	942	956	880
External causes of death	767	806	744	773	740
Transport accidents	84	86	61	71	63
Falls	122	139	150	197	214
Accidental drowning and submersion	40	37	34	35	38
Accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol	50	62	52	38	36

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Intentional self-harm (suicides)	161	169	129	153	140
Assault, homicides	30	40	30	22	12
Other causes of death	1 210	1 147	1 226	1 521	1 626

## 42. Major causes of deaths (males deaths in urban and rural areas):

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total by causes of death</b>	<b>20 110</b>	<b>20 529</b>	<b>20 328</b>	<b>19 286</b>	<b>19 024</b>
Certain infectious and parasitic diseases	406	428	448	336	320
Malignant neoplasms	4 525	4 640	4 525	4 389	4 424
Diseases of the circulatory system	9 451	9 753	9 717	9 286	8 994
Diseases of the respiratory system	821	891	836	867	910
Diseases of the digestive system	1 131	1 120	1 223	1 037	1 020
External causes of death	2 571	2 402	2 318	2 037	1 878
Transport accidents	241	221	185	179	161
Falls	230	255	251	227	237
Accidental drowning and submersion	189	109	156	107	117
Accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol	192	191	141	155	121
Intentional self-harm (suicides)	769	727	694	595	543
Assault, homicides	82	81	70	56	60
Other causes of death	1 205	1 295	1 261	1 334	1 478

43. Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births): in 2014 – infant mortality rate was 3,9 ‰, in 2015 – 4,2‰, in 2016 – 4,5‰, in 2017 – 2,9‰, in 2018 – 3,4‰.

## 44. Number of cases of communicable diseases per 100 000 population (2013–2018):

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Salmonella infection	35.9	32.8	37.3	37.5	35.5	28.4
Bacillary dysentery	1.1	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.7
Scarlet fever	66.1	99.2	68.4	52.2	56.4	43.0
Lyme disease	86.8	77	77.5	101.6	99.9	81.8
Tick-born viral encephalitis	16.9	12	11.6	22.1	16.8	13.7
Chickenpox	498.3	760.9	526.5	474.3	565.9	564.4
Viral hepatitis	7.8	4.6	4	4.5	5.9	4.1
Acute hepatitis B	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.1	0.5	0.5
Malaria	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2
Ascariasis	7.4	8	7.3	6.6	6.3	6.9
Enterbius Vermicularis	50.3	58.1	49.1	39.5	33.7	28.5
Pediculosis	45.1	40.9	33.4	33.1	27.6	18.3
Scabies	62	56.4	43.8	38.1	33.6	22.9



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Acute upper respiratory	25 367.1	23 903.7	25 704.1	26 559.8	29 765.8	31 554.8
Influenza	1 691	127.1	564.7	1 226.6	1 063.8	2 134.3

45. Number of cases of AIDS per 100 000 population at the end of the year (2013 – 2018): in 2013 – 12,8%, in 2014 – 14,2%, in 2015–15,6%, in 2016 – 17,5%, in 2017 – 19,7%, in 2018 – 21,1%.

46. Population density (2014–2018):

<i>Beginning of the year</i>	<i>Resident population per 1 km<sup>2</sup></i>
2014	45.1
2015	44.7
2016	44.2
2017	43.6
2018	43.0
2019	42.8

47. Resident population by ethnicity (Beginning of the year. Estimates made based on the data of the Population Register):

<i>Ethnicity</i>	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Total, thousand</b>	<b>2 943.5</b>	<b>2 921.3</b>	<b>2 888.6</b>	<b>2 847.9</b>	<b>2 808.9</b>	<b>2 794.2</b>
Lithuanians	2 539.4	2 531.8	2 512.7	2 476.2	2 439.5	2 414.6
Russians	147.8	139.5	134.6	131.0	127.8	125.7
Poles	164.8	163.9	162.3	159.5	157.7	157.9
Belarusians	42.4	39.2	34.9	35.1	38.0	42.7
Ukrainians	21.3	20.2	17.7	18.0	21.0	27.8
Jews	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1
Latvians	3.2	3.1	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.5
Tatars	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.0
Germans	3.2	2.8	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.6
Romany	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.0
Other	14.3	13.7	13.5	15.4	12.8	13.2
Not indicated	0.1	0.6	0.7	1.3	0.8	1.1
<b>Percent</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Lithuanians	86.3	86.7	87.0	86.9	86.8	86.4
Russians	5.0	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.5
Poles	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.7
Belarusians	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.5
Ukrainians	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.7	1.0
Jews	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Latvians	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Tatars	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Germans	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Romany	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Other	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>
Not indicated	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0

48. Resident population by sex and main age group (Beginning of the year, (2014–2019)):

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Resident population</i>			<i>Per cent</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
<b>2014</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 943 472</b>	<b>1 355 995</b>	<b>1 587 477</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
0–14	430 088	220 423	209 665	14.6	16.2	13.2
15–64	1 970 645	953 155	1 017 490	67.0	70.3	64.1
≥ 65	542 739	182 417	360 322	18.4	13.5	22.7
<b>2015</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 921 262</b>	<b>1 346 257</b>	<b>1 575 005</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
0–14	425 462	217 942	207 520	14.6	16.2	13.2
15–64	1 948 685	944 381	1 004 304	66.7	70.1	63.8
≥ 65	547 115	183 934	363 181	18.7	13.7	23.0
<b>2016</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 888 558</b>	<b>1 329 607</b>	<b>1 558 951</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
0–14	423 747	217 110	206 637	14.7	16.3	13.3
15–64	1 916 284	927 968	988 316	66.3	69.8	63.4
≥ 65	548 527	184 529	363 998	19.0	13.9	23.3
<b>2017</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 847 904</b>	<b>1 312 186</b>	<b>1 535 718</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
0–14	422 122	216 461	205 661	14.8	16.5	13.4
15–64	1 875 585	910 623	964 962	65.9	69.4	62.8
≥ 65	550 197	185 102	365 095	19.3	14.1	23.8
<b>2018</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 808 901</b>	<b>1 297 293</b>	<b>1 511 608</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
0–14	421 437	216 089	205 348	15.0	16.7	13.6
15–64	1 835 667	895 352	940 315	65.4	69.0	62.2
≥ 65	551 797	185 852	365 945	19.6	14.3	24.2
<b>2019</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 794 184</b>	<b>1 295 591</b>	<b>1 498 593</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
0–14	421 857	216 112	205 745	15.1	16.7	13.7
15–64	1 819 954	893 157	926 797	65.1	68.9	61.9
≥ 65	552 373	186 322	366 051	19.8	14.4	24.4

49. Dependency ratios<sup>1</sup> (beginning of the year)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total age dependency ratio</i>	<i>Young-age dependency ratio</i>	<i>Old-age dependency ratio</i>
2014	50	22	28
2015	50	22	28
2016	51	22	29
2017	52	23	29
2018	53	23	30
2019	53	23	30

**Social, economic and cultural indicators**

## 50. Poverty rate, Gini coefficient, unemployment and labour force activity rates (2013–2018):

	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Proportion of population below the national poverty line, per cent						
below national absolute poverty line	...	...	...	15.8	13.8	11.1
below the at-risk-of-poverty line equal to 60 % of median disposable income	20.6	19.1	22.2	21.9	22.9	22.9
Gini coefficient (relating to distribution of disposable income)	0.346	0.350	0.379	0.370	0.376	0.369
Unemployment rate, per cent	11.8	10.7	9.1	7.9	7.1	6.1
Labour force activity rate (aged 15 and older), per cent	58.0	58.9	59.2	60.3	60.6	61.5

## 51. Total debt of General Government (including all debt liabilities) (Millions of EUR at the end of the year):

	<i>Domestic creditor</i>	<i>External creditor</i>
2012	3 860.33	11 086.38
2013	4 736.66	10 691.13
2014	4 893.60	12 010.94
2015	5 515.82	11 954.11
2016	5 576.70	11 713.91
2017	5 264.27	13 042.09
2018	4 997.06	12 179.53

<sup>1</sup> Total age dependency ratio is the number of children under 15 and elderly persons (aged 65 and older) per 100 population aged 15–64.

Young-age dependency ratio is the number of children under 15 per 100 population aged 15–64.

Old-age dependency ratio is the number of elderly persons (aged 65 and older) per 100 population aged 15–64.

## 52. Gross domestic product (GDP), annual growth rate and Gross National Income:

<i>Millions Euro</i>	<i>2011**</i>	<i>2012**</i>	<i>2013**</i>	<i>2014**</i>	<i>2015**</i>	<i>2016**</i>	<i>2017**</i>	<i>2018**</i>
GDP	31 275.3	33 348.5	34 959.6	36 568.3	37 433.9	38 849.4	42 190.8*	45 113.8*
Annual growth rate	106.0	103.8	103.5	103.5	102.0	102.4	104.1*	103.5*
Balance of primary incomes, gross (GNI)	30 127.3	32 342.3	34 050.0	36 093.5	35 909.9	37 277.3	40 500.8	43 579.6

\* – Provisional data

\*\* – Revised data

## 53. General government expenditure (millions of EUR):

	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Health	2 014.1	2 161.2	2 256.7	2 385.4	2 677.1
Recreation, culture and religion	327.0	351.3	397.1	453.8	503.8
Education	1 841.8	1 894.3	1 858.4	1 920.6	2 067.2
Social protection	4 203.8	4 175.8	4 360.7	4 742.9	5 455.1
<b>Total general government expenditure</b>	<b>12 693.1</b>	<b>13 104.6</b>	<b>13 294.5</b>	<b>14 020.4</b>	<b>15 412.3</b>
GDP	36 544.8	37 321.8	38 893.4	42 269.4	45 264.4
In per cent from general government expenditure:					
	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Health	15.9	16.5	17.0	17.0	17.4
Recreation, culture and religion	2.6	2.7	3.0	3.2	3.3
Education	14.5	14.5	14.0	13.7	13.4
Social protection	33.1	31.9	32.8	33.8	35.4
In per cent from GDP:					
	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Health	5.5	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.9
Recreation, culture and religion	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.1
Education	5.0	5.1	4.8	4.5	4.6
Social protection	11.5	11.2	11.2	11.2	12.1

## 54. Lithuanian net enrolment ratio in primary and secondary education, per cent:

	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Males and females						
Primary education (ISCED 1)	99.2	99.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Secondary education (ISCED 2 and ISCED 3)	97.6	97.5	97.5	98.4	99.1	99.7
Lower secondary education (ISCED 2)	96.8	97.4	98.3	99.1	100.0	100.0
Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)	85.8	85.9	85.2	87.0	88.1	88.7

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Males</b>						
Primary education (ISCED 1)	99.4	99.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.
Secondary education (ISCED 2 and ISCED 3)	97.6	97.6	97.6	98.5	99.0	99.6
Lower secondary education (ISCED 2)	97.1	97.8	98.5	99.4	100	100.0
Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)	84.7	85.0	84.6	86.2	87.3	87.8
<b>Females</b>						
Primary education (ISCED 1)	98.9	99.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Secondary education (ISCED 2 and ISCED 3)	97.6	97.4	97.4	98.4	99.2	99.8
Lower secondary education (ISCED 2)	96.5	97.0	98.0	98.8	100.0	100.0
Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)	86.9	86.8	85.8	87.9	89.1	89.6

55. Minimum Wage: The Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – the Labour Code) guarantees minimum wage (the minimum hourly rate or the minimum monthly wage). The minimum wage fixing system includes all paid employees in all types of companies, institutions and organizations. Minimum wage (the minimum hourly rate or the minimum monthly wage) is the lowest permissible amount to be paid to an employee for unqualified work for one hour or for the full standard working hours of a calendar month, respectively. Unqualified work is considered the type of work that does not require any special qualification skills or professional expertise. The minimum hourly rate and the minimum monthly wage are approved by the Lithuanian Government upon recommendation of the Lithuanian Tripartite Council and are based on the indicators and trends of development of the national economy. The Tripartite Council presents its conclusion to the Government annually (by 15 June or another date as requested by the Government). Currently (since 1 January 2020), the minimum monthly wage is 607 euros before taxes.

56. Gross minimum and average monthly wage:

Year	MMW minimum monthly wage	AMW average monthly wage	%
2013-01-01	289.6	646.3	44.8
Average 2013	Average 289.6	Average 646.3	Average 44.8
2014-10-01	299.8	677.4	44.3
Average 2014	Average 292.2	Average 677.4	Average 43.1
2015-01-01	300	714.1	42.0
2015-07-01	325	714.1	45.5
Average 2015	Average 312.5	Average 714.1	Average 43.8
2016-01-01	350	774.0	45.2
2016-07-01	380	774.0	49.1
Average 2016	Average 365	Average 774.0	Average 47.2
2017-01-01	380	840.4	45.2
Average 2017	Average 380	Average 840,4	Average 45,2
2018-01-01	400	924,1	43,3
Average 2018	Average 400	Average 924,1	Average 43,3

<i>Year</i>	<i>MMW minimum monthly wage</i>	<i>AMW average monthly wage</i>	<i>%</i>
2019-01-01		not published	
	555 (430*)	Average forecast 1290.0**	~43
2020-01-01	607	not published	

\* Before tax reform

\*\* Data source – the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania.

#### 57. Net minimum monthly and average wage:

<i>Year</i>	<i>MMW minimum monthly wage</i>	<i>AMW average monthly wage</i>	<i>%</i>
2013-01-01	238.8	501.1	47.7
Average 2013	Average 238.8	Average 501.1	Average 47.7
2014-10-01	252.2	527.2	47.8
Average 2014	Average 246.7	Average 527.2	Average 46.8
2015-01-01	252.5	553.9	45.6
2015-07-01	270.5	553.9	48.7
Average 2015	Average 261.5	Average 553.9	Average 47.2
2016-01-01	296	602.3	49.1
2016-07-01	317.3	602.3	52.7
Average 2016	Average 306.6	Average 602.3	Average 50.9
2017-01-01	335.3	660.2	50.8
Average 2017	Average 335.3	Average 660.2	Average 50.8
2018-01-01	361	720.0	50.1
Average 2018	Average 361	Average 720.0	Average 50.1
2019-01-01		not published	
	395.8	Average forecast 818.4*	~48
2020-01-01	437.2	not published	

\* Data source – the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania.

## Indicators on crime and the administration of justice

#### 58. Number of courts in Lithuania:

	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
The Supreme Court of Lithuania	1	1	1	1	1
The Court of Appeal of Lithuania	1	1	1	1	1
Regional courts	5	5	5	5	5
District courts	49	49	49	49	12
The Supreme Administrative Court of Lithuania	1	1	1	1	1
Regional administrative courts	5	5	5	5	2

#### 59. Number of cases received by the courts:

	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Courts of First Criminal cases	21 146	18 358	16 774	20 178	19 746

			2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
general jurisdiction, total	instance	Civil cases	198 639	206 127	206 498	194 497	170 891
		Cases of administrative law	79 134	88 663	77 492	21 518	19 323
		Criminal cases	10 521	10 172	6 533	5 573	5 361
	Appellate instance	Civil cases	14 687	14 992	14 605	13 943	12 498
		Cases of administrative law	4 826	4 813	3 989	2 567	1 961
		Criminal cases	687	568	539	537	451
		Civil cases	719	574	576	502	451
	Under cassation	Cases of administrative law	90	95	88	69	57

60. Number of criminal offences (2014–2018)<sup>2</sup>

		<i>Urban and rural areas</i>	<i>Urban areas</i>	<i>Rural areas</i>
Number of criminal offences registered   number	2018	57 830	43 473	14 357
	2017	63 846	47 699	16 147
	2016	59 075	44 834	14 241
	2015	72 343	52 592	19 751
	2014	82 872	59 183	23 689

61. Number of recorded crimes and misdemeanours in Lithuania(2014–2018)<sup>3,4,5</sup>

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Criminal offences	82 872	72 343	59 075	63 846	57 830
Crimes	74 581	68 240	55 948	60 363	53 651
Misdemeanours	8 291	4 103	3 127	3 483	4 179

<sup>2</sup> (Since 2016, data on criminal offences recorded are registered as of the date of commencement of pre-trial investigation into those offences, on criminal offences investigated – as of the date of adoption of a procedural decision on the end of pre-trial investigation. According to the previously applied procedure for the compilation of statistical indicators, data on criminal offences recorded and investigated were registered as of the date of entry thereof into the Database of the Departmental Register of Criminal Offences. Data on criminal offences recorded and investigated in 2016 are not comparable with those for the respective period of the previous year.)

<sup>3</sup> Since 2004, the number of recorded homicides includes intentional homicides (excluding attempts) (Criminal Code, articles 129–131), before 2004 – intentional and unintentional homicides.

<sup>4</sup> Drug trafficking – includes crimes relating to possession and smuggling of narcotic or psychotropic substances. Unlawful possession of narcotic or psychotropic substances for the purpose other than distribution is excluded.

<sup>5</sup> Since 2016, data on criminal offences recorded are registered as of the date of commencement of pre-trial investigation into those offences, on criminal offences investigated – as of the date of adoption of a procedural decision on the end of pre-trial investigation. According to the previously applied procedure for the compilation of statistical indicators, data on criminal offences recorded and investigated were registered as of the date of entry thereof into the Database of the Departmental Register of Criminal Offences. Data on criminal offences recorded and investigated in 2016 are not comparable with those for the respective period of the previous year.

62. Number of persons suspected (charged with) crimes and misdemeanours (2014–2018):

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Crimes	Males and females	27 512	24 983	19 791	25 726	22 110
	Males	24 535	22 409	17 670	23 022	19 801
	Females	2 977	2 574	2 121	2 704	2 309
Misdemeanours	Males and females	3 140	1 842	1 303	2 012	1 965
	Males	2 563	1 609	1 135	1 772	1 783
	Females	577	233	168	240	182

63. Number of persons convicted by courts (2014–2018):

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Males and females	For criminal offences	20 358	17 273	15 508	18 058	19 779
	For crimes	19 087	16 429	14 851	17 194	18 786
	For misdemeanours	1 271	844	657	864	993
Males	For criminal offences	18 220	15 604	14 057	16 542	18 174
	For crimes	17 165	14 877	13 473	15 790	17 267
	For misdemeanours	1 055	727	584	752	907
Females	For criminal offences	2 138	1 669	1 451	1 516	1 605
	For crimes	1 922	1 552	1 378	1 404	1 519
	For misdemeanours	216	117	73	112	86

64. Number of incarcerated persons in imprisonment institutions at the end of the year (2014–2018):

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Incarcerated persons, total	Males and females	8 636	7 355	6 815	6 599	6 485
	Males	8 256	7 059	6 493	6 268	6 181
	Females	380	296	322	331	304
Persons taken into custody	Males and females	868	712	602	611	606
	Males	829	683	573	584	575
	Females	39	29	29	27	31
Convicts	Males and females	7 768	6 643	6 213	5 988	5 879
	Males	7 427	6 376	5 920	5 684	5 606
	Females	341	267	293	304	273

65. Number of dead convicts in imprisonment institutions (2014–2018):

		Dead convicts	Suicides	Other causes
Number of dead convicts in imprisonment	2018	26	2	24
	2017	26	2	24
	2016	33	13	20



		<i>Dead convicts</i>	<i>Suicides</i>	<i>Other causes</i>
institutions   persons	2015	35	8	27
	2014	35	10	25

66. Number of convicts discharged from imprisonment institutions (2014–2018):

	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
<b>Total convicts discharged from imprisonment institutions</b>	<b>5 367</b>	<b>5 408</b>	<b>4 665</b>	<b>4 535</b>	<b>4 870</b>
After the execution of punishment	4 316	4 196	3 812	3 863	4 371
Released from custodial sentence on parole	-	-	-	-	-
Released from the place of confinement on parole	1 020	1 082	826	629	449
Having been granted pardon	6	1	-	-	-
Due to illness	6	8	3	3	5
Having amended the judgement by the way of appeal or cassation procedure	13	113	20	33	40
Suspended sentence for juveniles	6	8	4	7	5

67. Number of police officers per 100 000 population (2014–2018):

	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
Police officers	325	309	294	293	294

68. Number of prosecutors at the end of the year (2014–2018):

		<i>Males and females</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Number of prosecutors at the end of the year	2018	666	332	334
	2017	672	333	339
	2016	696	344	352
	2015	709	352	357
	2014	720	366	354

## B. Constitutional, political and legal structure of the State

### Constitution

69. The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – The Constitution) was adopted at a popular referendum on 25 October 1992.

70. According to the Constitution, the powers of the State are exercised by the Seimas (Parliament), the President of the Republic, the Government, and the judiciary.

71. Lithuania has universal suffrage. The Constitution establishes that citizens, who, on the day of the election, are at least 18 years of age, shall have the electoral right. The right

to vote is guaranteed, as set out in the Law on Elections to Seimas, the Law on Elections of the President, the Law on Elections to the European Parliament and the Law on Elections to Municipal Councils. These laws establish equal right to vote, i.e. each citizen has one vote in the elections and these votes are equivalent. Only citizens deprived of their legal capacity and declared by the court as legally incapacitated shall not participate in elections. National laws prohibit any direct or indirect restrictions on the right of citizens of Lithuania to vote, linked to their origin, political views, social and property status, nationality, gender, education, language, relationship with religion, type of activity and nature.

72. According to Article 6, the Constitution is a directly applicable law. This means that every person may protect their rights in a court simply by invoking the provisions of the Constitution.

### **Legislative branch**

73. The Seimas is the legislative institution in Lithuania, consisting of representatives of the people – 141 members of Seimas are elected for a four-year term based on universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. 71 out of the 141 Seimas members are elected in single member constituencies while the others are elected in a nationwide vote by proportional representation.

74. Ordinary elections to the Seimas take place on the second Sunday of October every four years. To be eligible for election, candidates must be at least 25 years old on the election day, not under allegiance to a foreign state and permanently reside in Lithuania. Persons serving or due to serve a sentence imposed by the court 65 days before the election are not eligible. In addition, judges, citizens performing military service, members of professional military service and officials of statutory institutions and establishments may not stand for election.

75. A party must receive at least 5% and coalitions – at least 7% of the national votes to be eligible to enter the Seimas. After the restoration of independence, 7 elections to the Seimas took place so far.

76. The Seimas considers and adopts amendments to the Constitution, passes laws, adopts resolutions concerning referendums, announces presidential elections as well as local elections; establishes State institutions provided by laws, appoints and dismisses their chief officers; approves or rejects the candidature of the prime minister proposed by the President; considers the program of the Government and decides whether to approve it or not; supervises the activities of the Government; imposes direct administration, martial law or states of emergency, announces mobilization and adopts decisions to use the armed forces.

77. Every member of the Seimas has the right to initiate legislation in Lithuania, as have the Government and the President. Citizens also have the right of legislative initiative, and the Seimas must consider a draft law submitted to it by at least 50,000 Lithuanian citizens who have the electoral right.

78. Legislation adopted by the Seimas must be consistent with the Constitution, including the case law of the Constitutional Court, the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and, since Lithuania's accession to the EU, with European legislation, including the case law of the European Court of Justice.

### **The President**

79. The President of the Republic is the head of the State. The President represents the State of Lithuania. The citizens of the Republic of Lithuania elect the President of the Republic for a five-year term in office based on universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

80. Elections take place on the last Sunday no more than two months before the end of the current presidential term. To be eligible for the election, candidates must be at least 40 years old on the election day and reside in Lithuania for at least three years, in addition to satisfying the eligibility criteria for a member of the Parliament. President cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.

81. The President of the Republic decides the main foreign policy issues and conducts foreign policy together with the Government. With approval of the Seimas, the President appoints and dismisses the prime minister, as well as authorizes him to form the Government and endorses its composition. The President signs international treaties and submits them to the Seimas for ratification. The President accepts resignations from the Government and ministers. After the prime minister's proposal, the President appoints and dismisses ministers; according to the established procedure, the President appoints and dismisses State officers provided by law. In case of an armed attack, which threatens the sovereignty of the State or territorial integrity, the President adopts decisions concerning defence against armed aggression and has the power to impose martial law, declare mobilization, and submits these decisions to the next sitting of the Seimas for its approval. The President declares state of emergency according to the procedure and cases established by law and submits this decision to the next sitting of the Seimas for its approval. The President signs and promulgates laws adopted by the Seimas or refers them back to the Seimas. In executing, the powers entrusted to him, the President of the Republic issues acts decrees.

82. The President appoints and recalls, after the submission of the Government, diplomatic representatives of the Republic of Lithuania to foreign states and international organizations. The President receives letters of credence from the diplomatic representatives of foreign states; confers the highest diplomatic ranks and special titles.

### **The Government**

83. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania, consisting of the Prime Minister and 14 government ministers, exercises the executive power in Lithuania. The Prime Minister is appointed and dismissed by the President with the approval of the Seimas. Within 15 days from his/her appointment, the Prime Minister presents his/her Government to the Seimas and submits its programme for consideration. The new Government is empowered to act after its programme has been approved by the majority of the Seimas' members participating in the Seimas session.

84. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania administers the affairs of the country, protects the inviolability of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania, ensures State security and public order; implements laws and resolutions of the Seimas on the implementation of laws, as well as the decrees of the President; coordinates the activities of ministries and other governmental institutions; prepares drafts of the national budget and submits it to the Seimas; implements the national budget, submits statements of the budget performance to the Seimas; prepares draft laws and presents them to the Seimas for consideration; establishes diplomatic relations and maintains relations with foreign States and international organizations; fulfils other duties entrusted by the Constitution and other laws.

85. The list of 14 Ministries in Lithuania: Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Culture; Ministry of Economy and Innovations; Ministry of Education, Science and Sports; Ministry of Energy; Ministry of Environment; Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Health; Ministry of the Interior; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of National Defence; Ministry of Social Security and Labour; Ministry of Transport and Communications.

### **Judicial branch**

86. The system of courts, their competence, the system of court organization, activity, administration, and the status of judges, their appointment, career, liability and other issues related to the judicial activities are regulated by the Constitution of Lithuania, the Law on Courts of Lithuania and other legal acts.

87. According to the Lithuanian Constitution, justice shall be administered solely by the courts. While administering justice, the judge and courts shall be independent. While considering cases, judges shall obey only the law.

88. The Constitutional Court is a separate court in the system of Lithuanian courts. The Constitutional Court shall decide whether the laws and other acts of the Seimas (the Parliament) are not in conflict with the Constitution and whether acts of the President and

the Government are not in conflict with the Constitution or laws. As of 1 September 2019, individual constitutional complaints can be filed with the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania. Every natural or legal person may apply to the Constitutional Court if he or she believes that the laws or acts of the Seimas, the President of the Republic, or the Government on the basis of which a decision violating his or her constitutional rights or freedoms was adopted are in conflict with the Constitution, and the person has exhausted all legal remedies. The Law on Constitutional Court establishes the status of the Constitutional Court and the procedure for the execution of powers thereof.

89. According to the Constitution, the courts of the general jurisdiction (general competence) are the Supreme Court of Lithuania, The Court of Appeal of Lithuania, regional (5 courts) and district (12 courts) courts. The Law on Courts establishes the formation and competence of courts.

90. A district court is the first instance for criminal, civil cases assigned to its jurisdiction by law and cases of administrative offences, as well as cases relating to the enforcement of decisions and sentences. Judges of a district court also perform the functions of a pre-trial judge, an enforcement judge, as well as other functions assigned to a district court by law.

91. A regional court is the first instance for criminal, civil cases assigned to its jurisdiction by law and an appeal instance for judgements, decisions, rulings and orders of district courts. Regional courts also perform other functions assigned to a regional court by law.

92. The Court of Appeal of Lithuania is an appeal instance for cases heard by regional courts as courts of the first instance. It also hears requests for the recognition of decisions of foreign or international courts and foreign or international arbitration awards and their enforcement in the Republic of Lithuania, as well as performs other functions assigned to the jurisdiction of this court by law.

93. The Supreme Court of Lithuania is the only court of cassation instance for reviewing effective judgements, decisions, rulings and orders of the courts of general jurisdiction (except for orders in cases of administrative offences). The Supreme Court of Lithuania also hears requests for the renewal of process in completed cases of administrative offences. The Supreme Court of Lithuania develops a uniform practice of the courts of general competence in the interpretation and application of laws and other legal acts.

94. For the consideration of administrative, labour, family and other categories of cases, specialized courts (courts of special jurisdiction) may be established according to law. According to the Law on the Establishment of Administrative Courts, the Supreme Administrative Court and regional administrative courts (2 courts) are of special jurisdiction hearing disputes arising from administrative legal relations. A regional administrative court is of special jurisdiction established for hearing complaints (petitions) in respect of administrative acts and acts of commission or omission (failure to perform duties) by entities of public and internal administration. Regional administrative courts hear disputes in the field of public administration, deal with issues relating to the lawfulness of regulatory administrative acts, tax disputes, etc. The Supreme Administrative Court of Lithuania is the first and the final instance administrative cases assigned to its jurisdiction by law. It is an appeal instance for cases concerning decisions, rulings and orders of regional administrative courts. The Supreme Administrative Court develops a uniform practice of administrative courts in the interpretation and application of laws and other legal acts.

### **Administrative divisions**

95. Lithuania has a two-tier territorial administrative division: 10 counties – higher administrative units, whose management is organized by the Government, and 60 local single-tier level bodies – municipalities, which are lower administrative units, having the right of self-government. This right is implemented through appropriate elected municipal councils.

96. Members of municipal councils are elected for a four-year term by universal and equal suffrage, in a secret ballot at direct elections under the mixed electoral system. A municipal council consists of municipal councillors. One of those municipal councillors is the mayor, which is elected directly by the majority of residents of particular municipality since 2015. The municipal administration is managed by the director of administration, appointed by the municipal council upon proposal by the mayor. The procedure of the organization and activities of self-government municipal institutions are established by the law.

97. Since 2004, citizens of Lithuania as well as citizens of the other Member States of the European Union, permanently residing in Lithuania, have the right to vote and run for European Parliament and municipal elections. Persons who may vote or stand as candidates in Lithuania and any other Member State of the European Union must choose and vote whether to stand as a candidate only in one Member State.

### **Non-governmental organizations**

98. Non-governmental organizations (hereinafter – NGOs), as well as all other legal entities in Lithuania, are registered in the Register of Legal Entities, which, as a principal database for this matter set by the state, keeps record of the legal persons and stores their data thereof (Article 2.62 of the Civil Code of the Republic of Lithuania).

99. In 2013, Seimas adopted the Law on the Governmental Organizations' Development (hereinafter – the NGOs Development Law), aimed at building favourable environment for NGOs, ensuring appropriate conditions for their operation and development as an important element of civil society. The NGOs Development Law, sets out the principles of formation and implementation of the development policy of NGOs, the conditions of cooperation between state and municipal institutions and agencies and NGOs, as well as other conditions for NGOs' activities which promote their development. In June of 2019 new draft of the NGOs Development Law was submitted to the Government and is due to be sent to the Parliament after three years of preparations. The new Law aims at creating a new sustainable financial mechanism (NGO fund) which would continuously support institutional capacity building of organizations. New law also aims to clarify legal definition of NGO and to create transparency mechanism – National NGO database, based on information that legal bodies provide to the Register of Legal Entities.

100. The NGO according to the NGOs Development Law is a public legal entity, independent from state and municipal institutions and agencies, acting on a voluntary basis for the benefit of society or its group, and which does not have the aim to seek political power or purely religious goals.

101. Under the provisions of the NGOs Development Law, the national NGOs' Council was established and is acting as an collegial advisory body ensuring NGOs involvement in identifying, formulating and implementing NGO-related policy. The NGOs' Council has two years term and is acting on a voluntary basis. The NGOs' Council is composed of twenty members: 9 representatives of state institutions and agencies (President's Office, Office of the Government, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Social Security, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania), one representative of the Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania and 10 representatives of NGOs, delegated to the Council by national umbrella NGO associations through mutual agreement. Representatives of NGOs are nominated by joint agreement between national umbrella NGOs. Associations of national umbrella NGOs delegate by joint agreement no more than 8 representatives of associations of NGOs and no less than two representatives of other national level non-governmental organisations to the NGOs' Council. In municipalities, municipal NGOs' councils are formed on principle that not more than half of its members may be representatives from municipal institutions or agencies and not less than half of its members must be representatives from local NGOs.

102. Since 2014, the NGOs Council has taken active efforts to raise NGOs issues. To achieve close and constructive cooperation between non-governmental and public sectors, the NGOs' Council initiates meetings with representatives of government institutions,

makes written proposals and holds consultations on internal state governance, inter-alia, socio-economic and human rights issues.

103. NGOs are financed through the tendering procedure from the state budget and from various EU funds.

104. Government actively involves and closely cooperates with NGOs during the reporting process to the UN human rights treaty bodies.

105. Since 2018 State institutions, ombudspersons' offices, the Parliament, Human rights coalition (uniting NGOs working in human rights field), universities initiated yearly National human rights forum, the platform that provides opportunity for dialogue among politicians, human rights defenders, representatives from state institution and ombudspersons' offices, academicians, business community, journalists, diplomats on various topical human rights issues, with the aim to seek ways to implement international human rights standards and principles.

### **III. General framework for the protection and promotion of human rights**

#### **A. Acceptance of International Human Right Norms**

106. In accordance with the existing laws, all citizens of Lithuania or other States and persons without citizenship (unless the laws of the Republic of Lithuania provide otherwise) have the right to legal defence against attacks on their life and health, personal freedom, property, honour and dignity and other rights and freedoms guaranteed to them by the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Lithuania. This includes legal defence against the actions or inaction of the State and government institutions and officials. Therefore, according to the laws of the Republic of Lithuania, every person has the right to appeal to a court according to the procedure established by law in order to defend a right or a legitimate interest, which was violated or disputed.

107. Lithuania has acceded to the main UN human rights instruments, and regularly submits reports to the mechanisms monitoring the implementation of these instruments. All international treaties ratified by Lithuania are translated into Lithuanian language and can be found publicly in the database of the national legislation as well as on the webpage of the Ministry that is directly responsible for the implementation of the international treaty. All reports regarding the implementation of the international treaties and concluding observations made by the human rights committees are translated and made public on the web. National reports and implementation of the recommendations made by the committees are discussed with non-governmental organizations and civil society.

108. Main international human rights conventions and protocols ratified by the Republic of Lithuania (dates of ratification/accession):

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), acceded to in 1991.
  - Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR-OP1), acceded to in 1991.
  - Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming to the abolition of the death penalty (CCPR-OP2-DP), ratified in 2002.
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), acceded to in 1991.
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), acceded to in 1992.
  - Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict (CRC-OP-AC), ratified in 2003.

- Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography(CRC-OP-SC), acceded to in 2004.
  - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), acceded to in 1994.
    - Optional Protocol to CEDAW, concerning individual complaints and inquiry procedures (OP-CEDAW), acceded to in 1999.
  - Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), acceded to in 1996.
    - Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture (CAT-OP), acceded to in 2014.
  - International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), ratified in 1998.
  - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional protocol, ratified in 2010.
109. Other United Nations human Rights and related Conventions:
- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; came into force in Lithuania in 1996.
  - Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and its Protocol (1967); came into force in Lithuania in 1997.
  - Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (1954); came into force in Lithuania in 1997.
  - Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (1961); ratified in 2013, came into force in Lithuania in 2013.
  - Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998); signed in 1998 and came into force in 2003.
  - United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), signed in 2000 and came into force in 2003; and its Protocols: Protocol against the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air, which was signed in 2002 and came into force in 2004, and Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, which was signed in 2002 and came into force in 2003.
110. Conventions of the International Labour Organization ratified by the Republic of Lithuania:
- Fundamental Conventions:
    - Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), ratified in 1994.
    - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) ratified in 1994.
    - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98) ratified in 1994.
    - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) ratified in 1994.
    - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105) ratified in 1994.
    - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) ratified in 1994.
    - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) ratified in 1998.
    - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), ratified in 2003;
  - Governance (Priority) Conventions.
    - Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) ratified in 1994.

- Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122) ratified in 2004.
- Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144) ratified in 1994.
- Technical Conventions:
  - Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1) ratified in 1931.
  - Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 6) ratified in 1931.
  - Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11) ratified in 1994.
  - Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14) ratified in 1931.
  - Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925 (No. 19) ratified in 1934.
  - Sickness Insurance (Industry) Convention, 1927 (No. 24) ratified in 1931.
  - Marking of Weight (Packages Transported by Vessels) Convention, 1929 (No. 27) ratified in 1934.
  - Forty-Hour Week Convention, 1935 (No. 47) ratified in 1994.
  - Night Work of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention, 1946 (No. 79) ratified in 1994.
  - Final Articles Revision Convention, 1946 (No. 80) ratified in 1994.
  - Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88) ratified in 1994.
  - Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1948 (No. 90) ratified in 1994.
  - Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108) ratified in 1997.
  - Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115) ratified in 2013.
  - Final Articles Revision Convention, 1961 (No. 116) ratified in 1994.
  - Maximum Weight Convention, 1967 (No. 127) ratified in 1994.
  - Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131) ratified in 1994.
  - Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135) ratified in 1994.
  - Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142) ratified in 1994.
  - Nursing Personnel Convention, 1977 (No. 149) ratified in 2007.
  - Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154) ratified in 1994.
  - Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) ratified in 2004.
  - Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159) ratified in 1994.
  - Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160) ratified in 1999.
  - Night Work Convention, 1990 (No. 171) ratified in 1994.
  - Protection of Workers' Claims (Employer's Insolvency) Convention, 1992 (No. 173) ratified in 1994.
  - Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181) ratified in 2004.
  - Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) ratified in 2003;
  - MLC, 2006 – Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006) ratified in 2013.



- C188 – Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188), ratified in 2016.

111. Geneva Conventions and other treaties on international humanitarian law:

- Geneva Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (1949), came into force in 1997.
- Geneva Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea (1949), came into force in 1997.
- Geneva Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (1949), came into force in 1997.
- Geneva Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (1949), came into force in 1997.
- Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), (1977)
- Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August (1949), and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), (1977), came into force in 2001.

112. Lithuania is a party to more than 90 CoE conventions, with common standards for all CoE countries in the areas of human rights, justice, education, social and health care and others, among them:

- Statute of the Council of Europe
- Convention of the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
- European Cultural Convention
- European Social Charter (revised)
- European Charter of Local Self-Government
- Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
- Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
- Convention on Cybercrime
- European Convention on Extradition
- European convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters
- European Convention on the Transfer of Proceedings in Criminal Matters
- Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime (8 November 1990)
- Civil Law Convention on Corruption
- Criminal Law Convention on Corruption
- European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism
- Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region
- European Convention on the Equivalence of Diplomas leading to Admission to Universities
- European Convention on Trans-frontier Television
- Convention on the Elaboration of European Pharmacopoeia.

## **B. Legal Framework for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights at the national level**

### **Implementation of the human rights in the legal system**

113. With reference to the implementation of the norms established in legal documents, it should be noted first of all that the system of coordination between international and domestic law which has been chosen by the Republic of Lithuania is based on the principle that international treaties are transformed in the State's legal system, i.e. are incorporated into it. The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (Article 138) stipulates that the international treaties ratified by the Seimas are a constituent part of the domestic legal system. In accordance with the laws of Lithuania, the act of ratification grants a particular international legal document a status superior to that of the laws of Lithuania<sup>6</sup>. However, as international treaties do not usually define ways of implementing rights, legal responsibility for violations, the terms of reference of appropriate national institutions, etc., and national laws are applied in order to implement the human rights established in the ratified treaties.

114. Regarding the direct applicability, there are no obstacles to directly apply the provisions of international treaties in the courts of Lithuania and other legal institutions.

115. International human rights instruments to which Lithuania is a party are translated into the Lithuanian language and published. When ratified by the Seimas, they acquire the power of law and their observance is guaranteed by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

### **Provisions of the Constitution**

116. All basic human rights are established in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania: chapters II ("The Individual and the State"), III, IV and XIII and the Preamble. All persons within the jurisdiction of the Republic of Lithuania acquire basic rights and freedoms defined in the provisions of the Constitution.

117. According to the Constitution of Lithuania, human rights and freedoms are innate, and the right to life being is protected by law. The Constitution provides that all persons and their liberties are inviolable; no one may be arbitrarily apprehended or detained; no one may be deprived of his liberty otherwise than on the grounds and according to the procedures established by the law.

118. According to the Constitution human dignity is protected by law; no one can be subjected to torture or injuries, it prohibited to degrade persons' dignity, subject them to cruel treatment, or to establish such punishments. No one may be subjected to scientific or medical experimentation without his or her knowledge and free consent.

119. Constitution protects the person's rights to private life, which is inviolable. Personal correspondence, telephone conversations, telegraph messages, and other communications are likewise inviolable. The collection of information concerning the person's private life is permitted only by a justified court decision and only according to the law. The law and the courts protect everyone from arbitrary or unlawful interference with their private and family life, as well as from attempts to violate their honour and dignity.

120. The property is also inviolable according to the Constitution; the law protects the rights of ownership; property may be taken only for the needs of society according to the procedure established by law and shall be justly compensated for. The home of a person is inviolable, thus without the consent of the resident, it is not permitted to enter his/her home otherwise than by a court decision or according to the procedure established by law when this is necessary to guarantee public order, apprehend a criminal, or save person's life, health, or property.

121. Constitution guarantees that everyone must have the right to convictions and freely express them. The Constitution declares that no one may be hindered from seeking,

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<sup>6</sup> In such case a law on ratification of the particular international agreement is adopted.

receiving, or imparting information and ideas. The freedom to express convictions, as well as to receive and impart information, may not be limited otherwise than by law when this is necessary to protect person's health, honour or dignity, private life, morals, or to defend the constitutional order. Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion cannot be restricted and everyone shall have the right to freely choose any religion or belief and, either alone or with others, in private or in public, to profess their religion, perform religious ceremonies, practice and teach their belief. According to the Lithuanian Constitution, no one may compel another person or be compelled to choose or profess any religion or belief; the freedom to profess and spread religion or belief may not be limited otherwise than by law and only when this is necessary to guarantee the security of society, public order, the health or morals of people, or other basic rights or freedoms of the person.

122. Freedom of movement is also protected by the Constitution as the citizens may move and choose their place of residence in Lithuania freely and may leave Lithuania freely; these rights may not be restricted otherwise than by law when it is necessary for the national security or the health of people, or for the administration of justice.

123. Citizens have the right to participate in the governance of Lithuania both directly and through their democratically elected representatives and the right to enter on equal terms the State Service of the Republic of Lithuania. The Constitution guarantees that citizens have the right to criticize the work of state institutions or their officials and to appeal against their decisions, while persecution for criticism is prohibited. The right of petition for the citizens is guaranteed by the Constitution, while the procedure for the implementation of this right is established in laws.

124. Citizens who, on the day of the election, are 18 years of age, shall have the electoral right, as it is set in the Constitution. Citizens shall be guaranteed the right to freely form societies, political parties, and associations if the aims and activities thereof are not contrary to the Constitution and laws; no one may be compelled to belong to any society, political party, or association. Citizens may not be prohibited or hindered from assembling unarmed in peaceful meetings; this right may not be limited otherwise than by law and only when this is necessary to protect the security of the State or society, public order, the health or morals of people, or the rights or freedoms of other persons. Citizens belonging to ethnic communities shall have the right to foster their language, culture, and customs.

125. While implementing their rights and exercising their freedoms, everyone must observe the Constitution and laws of Lithuania and must not restrict the rights and freedoms of other people.

126. Article 145 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania stipulates that during martial law or a state of emergency the rights and freedoms connected to a person's private life, property, inviolability of the dwelling, freedom of conviction, movement, association and meetings may be temporarily restricted.

#### **Individual constitutional complaint**

127. As of 1 September 2019, individual constitutional complaints can be filed with the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania. An individual constitutional complaint grants every person the right to directly contest a law or another legal act violating his or her constitutional rights or freedoms before the Constitutional Court once the person believes that decisions adopted by the highest state authorities have violated these rights or freedoms.

#### **Civil proceedings**

128. The implementation of human rights is regulated and set in details in the Civil Code of Lithuania and other laws. Article 30 of the Constitution sets out that a person whose constitutional rights or freedoms are violated shall have the right to apply to a court. According to Article 5 of the Code of Civil Procedure, every person concerned shall have the right to appeal to court following the laws to defend their violated or contested right or interest protected by laws; waiver to appeal to court is not valid.

129. In civil cases, an alternative dispute resolution is also available. Arbitration procedure is regulated by the Lithuanian Law on Arbitration; Mediation procedure is regulated by the Law on Mediation.

### **Legal aid**

130. Persons requiring legal assistance defending their violated or disputed rights and interests have a right to apply for a state-guaranteed legal aid under the Law on State-guaranteed Legal Aid. State-guaranteed legal aid consists of primary legal aid, secondary legal aid and conciliatory mediation. Primary legal aid includes the provision of legal information and legal advice. It is ensured free of charge to all residents of Lithuania without means or merits test. Secondary legal aid covers drafting of procedural documents, defence or representation in court or preliminary extrajudicial institution. Secondary legal aid is granted to persons who do not have financial means to cover legal aid costs and to persons belonging to special categories without means tests. Conciliatory mediation is directed to an amicable dispute resolution and is provided if at least one party of a dispute has a right to secondary legal aid.

### **Compensation**

131. Compensation for material and moral damage inflicted upon a person shall be established by law.

132. The Civil Code regulates civil liability, compensation of damages, as well as of non-pecuniary damage. According to the Civil Code, civil rights shall be protected by the court acting within its competence and according to the procedure established by laws. The ways of protecting civil rights are the following: 1) acknowledgement of rights; 2) restoration of the situation that existed before the right was violated; 3) prevention of unlawful actions or prohibition to perform actions that pose reasonable threat of the occurrence of damage (preventive action); 4) judgement to perform an obligation in kind; 5) interruption or modification of a legal relationship; 6) recovery of pecuniary or non-pecuniary damage from the person who infringes the law and, in cases established by the law or contract, recovery of a penalty (fine, interest); 7) declaration as voidable of unlawful acts of the state or those of the institutions of local governments or the officials thereof in the cases established in paragraph 4 Article 1.3 of this Code; 8) other ways provided by laws.

133. The Fund for Crime Victims, which is administrated by the Fund's Administrator – the Ministry of Justice, is established by the Law on Compensation for Damage Caused by Violent Crimes. This Fund is used by the State to compensate for material and/or non-material damage resulting from violent crimes committed after 1 July 2005. Material and/or non-material damage may be covered by prepaid compensation in the course of criminal proceedings or after a procedural decision of the court, acknowledging that a violent crime has been committed becomes enforceable.

134. The Lithuanian Law on Compensation for Damage Caused by Violent Crimes sets three mandatory pre-conditions for the compensation of damage from violent crimes:

- The violent crime has been committed within the territory of Lithuania or on-board the ships or aircrafts flying the flag or displaying marks of registry of the State of Lithuania.
- The damage caused by violent crime and awarded by a judicial decision or the damage caused by violent crime and specified in the agreement approved by the court has not been compensated.
- An application to compensate for violent crime damage has been filed before the expiry of a ten-year period after the court's decision awarding the damage caused by a violent crime or approving the agreement on its compensation has become enforceable, except when such time limit has been exceeded due to important reasons.

135. According to the currently effective wording of the above mentioned Law, the only institution, which can state the fact of commission of the crime, is the court, which awards

(by its decision or judgment) compensation for such damage from the offender or the person liable for the offender's act.

### **Criminal proceedings**

136. According to the Law on Compensation for Damage Caused by Violent Crimes, violence is understood as any actions that harm or can harm physical, sexual or psychological health or inflict suffering. A violent crime is defined as an act, which has the elements of a criminal offence defined in the Criminal Code of Lithuania and which has intentionally killed a person, severely or non-severely impaired his or her health; which has the elements of a less serious, serious or grave crime against human liberty, freedom of a person's sexual self-determination and inviolability.

137. According to the Criminal Code, a less serious crime is a crime punishable by a custodial sentence of the maximum duration in excess of three years, but not exceeding six years of imprisonment; a serious crime is a crime punishable by a custodial sentence of the duration in excess of six years, but not exceeding ten years of imprisonment; a grave crime is a premeditated crime punishable, under the criminal law, by a custodial sentence of the maximum duration in excess of ten years.

### **National Human Rights Institution (NHRI)**

138. On March 23, 2017, in line with the Paris Principles of the United Nations Resolution, the Seimas Ombudsperson's Office was accredited as the National Human Rights Institution (and got an A status); The amendments of the Law on Seimas Ombudsperson granting the status of the National Human Rights Institution to the Seimas Ombudsperson's Office came into force on 1 January, 2018.

139. According to the Law on Seimas Ombudsperson, one of the objectives of the Seimas Ombudsperson is to promote respect for human rights and freedoms while exercising the functions of the National Human Rights Institution. The new amendments to this abovementioned law provide for the duty of the state and municipal authorities to cooperate with the Seimas Ombudsperson's Office in providing information to the institution about the human rights situation in the country. As well as initiating and conducting investigations on fundamental human rights issues.

140. Main goals of the NHRI are to raise various human rights issues and, in cooperation with the public, raise the urgent issues of human rights, to carry out other core functions of the NHRI as defined by the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly.

141. The NHRI also investigates of complaints from individual applicants and national prevention of torture are attributable to the functions of the NHRI. The Seimas Ombudsperson, in accordance with the Constitution of Lithuania and the Law on the Seimas Ombudsperson, investigates complaints regarding the abuse of office by and the bureaucracy of the officials or other violations of human rights and freedoms in the public administration sphere and carry out national prevention of torture; therefore, these functions are an integral part of the activities of the Seimas Ombudsperson's Office accredited as the National Human Rights Institution.

142. Main functions of the NHRI, formulated in the Paris Principles, are: (a) monitoring of human rights; (b) advice to authorities on human rights issues; (c) education and information of the public on human rights, dissemination of information on human rights; (d) presentation of the assessment of the human rights situation at international organizations; (e) preparation of national reports on human rights; (f) seeking harmonization of national legislation regulations and practices with the international human rights instruments.

143. At the international level, NHRI has been involved in the work of the UN and the relevant regional human rights organizations in Europe, e.g. the Council of Europe and other international organizations. It prepares and submits alternative reports, opinions on various human rights issues for international organizations, provides them with information, takes care of transposing international human rights standards, calls the state

to fulfil international obligations in the field of human rights, and promotes respect for human rights in the country.

### **European Court of Human Rights**

144. Lithuania ratified the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in 1995.

145. The European Court of Human Rights (hereinafter – the ECHR) dealt with 470 applications concerning Lithuania in 2018, of which 429 were declared inadmissible or struck out. In 2017 ECHR dealt with 484 applications concerning Lithuania, of which 451 were declared inadmissible or struck out.

146. In 2018 there were 42 new cases communicated to the Government (the issues raised by the applicants vary considerably – prison conditions, fair trial guarantees, property rights, police brutality, improper investigation of crimes, restrictions of private and family life and other), currently there are 79 cases pending before the ECHR in which the Government was requested to submit its position concerning admissibility and merits of the case. In 2018, the ECHR delivered 31 judgment (concerning 40 applications), 23 of which found at least one violation of the European Convention of the Human Rights. In 9 cases there were no violations of the Convention found. In 22 cases there were friendly settlements concluded (21 of those cases concerned improper conditions). Violations of the Convention found in the relevant cases were related to the following: property restitution processes, prisoners' complaints, the right to liberty, fair trial guarantees, and the asylum procedure, freedom of expression.

### **Independent Human Rights Bodies:**

147. The Seimas Ombudsperson's Office (as abovementioned – the NHRI institution) has three mandates: to investigate complaints about abuses of office or other violations of human rights involving public administration; to implement the national prevention of torture mechanism under the UN's Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture; and already mentioned above – to serve as an accredited national human rights institution (NHRI). As an NHRI the parliamentary ombudsman is responsible for reporting on and monitoring human rights problems, cooperating with international and domestic human rights organizations, and promoting human rights awareness and education.

148. The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson is a national equality body, which performs a quasi-judicial function by investigating individual complaints on alleged instances of discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, nationality, citizenship, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin or religion under the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and the Law on Equal Treatment. In the Lithuanian legal system discrimination on the identified grounds is prohibited in the fields of employment and occupation, provision of goods and services, education, membership in organizations (associations), social security, and all actions by public authorities. The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson also investigates into the instances of alleged harassment and sexual harassment in the fields of employment, occupation and education. As of 1 January 2017, the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson also performs preventive and educational activities and dissemination of equal opportunities (e.g. awareness raising campaigns). Therefore, the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson is a mixed-type national equality body, combining tribunal-type and promotional-type functions.

149. The Ombudsperson of Equal Opportunities examines individual complaints on the alleged instances of discrimination, conducts independent investigations relating to discrimination cases, carries out independent situation reviews in respect of discrimination, publishes independent reports, issues conclusions and recommendations on any discrimination-related matters, submits proposals to state and municipal institutions and agencies on the improvement of legal acts and policy priorities for implementing equal treatment, carries out preventive and educational activities and dissemination of information about the ensuring of equal treatment. As of 1 July 2018, the Ombudsperson of

Equal Opportunities independently monitors the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

150. The Ombudsperson for Children Rights is a state official exercising supervision and control of the implementation of legal acts regulating protection of the rights and interests of children, investigating the cases of violation of the rights and interests of children, promoting children's rights, also, cooperation between natural and legal persons and the society and seeking to improve the situation of children in Lithuania.

151. The Ombudsperson for Children Rights is empowered to investigate complaints and to initiate investigations on his/her own. Ombudsperson for Children Rights performs investigations concerning the acts or omissions of persons, as a result of which child's rights are violated, allegedly violated or could be violated; misuse of powers of officials or bureaucracy in child's rights protection sphere and, in accordance with the procedure prescribed by laws, concerning the acts or omissions of prosecutors or pre-trial investigation officers that (allegedly) violate child's rights. It should be mentioned, that, the Ombudsperson for Children Rights has the right to investigate complaints concerning child's rights violation in private life. Every child may apply to the Ombudsperson for Children Rights on his/her own. Requirements for a child complaint are not applied. Office of the Ombudsperson for Children Rights, also, has a free phone line that can be used by children to call and inform about child's rights violations anywhere in the country.

152. The decisions of the Ombudsperson for Children Rights are recommendatory, however, provisions of the Law provides that the decision must be considered by the persons to whom the decision is addressed and he has to inform the Ombudsperson for Children Rights about the results of the consideration and execution of the decision.

153. In performing his/her duties, the Ombudsperson for Children Rights has the right to start investigations; to request to immediately submit the information, explanations and any other documents required for the performance of the functions; at any time freely to enter premises, freely see and to talk to the people present in the premises as well as familiarise with activities of agencies, institutions and organisations; to use technical means during the investigations; freely and directly communicate with children; to attend the sittings and meetings organised by the President of the Republic, the Seimas, the Government, other state and municipal agencies, enterprises, organisations and other persons and take part in the activities of various commissions and working groups; to apply to the administrative court with a request to investigate whether an administrative regulatory enactment (or a part thereof) conforms to a law or resolution of the Government, and also to investigate whether a general act adopted by a specific public organisation, society, political party, political organisation or association is lawful; to inform the President of the Republic, the Seimas, the Government or the municipal council of an appropriate municipality and other agencies, enterprises or organisations about violations of legal acts or any shortcomings, contradictions or gaps in legal (administrative) acts and etc.

154. The Ombudsperson for Children Rights submits (complementary) reports to the UN Committee on the Right of the Child on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols.

155. The Inspector of Journalist Ethics is responsible to ensure that public information is respectful of human rights and freedoms, to develop civil society's critical approach to the public information processes, to raise public legal awareness of human rights, to foster sustainable relationship between the public information producers and disseminators and the general public and to promote the public information producers' and disseminators' responsibility.

156. The main function of the Inspector of Journalist Ethics is to investigate complaints of stakeholders on the violations of their honour and dignity in mass media, and their right to the protection of privacy. According to the legal regulation in force in Lithuania, the function of the personal data processing supervision authority is also assigned to the Inspector of Journalist Ethics. Following the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation throughout the European Union from 25 May 2018 (the Regulation), the Inspector of Journalist Ethics has become one of the supervisory authorities of the

implementation of this Regulation in Lithuania when personal data are processed for journalistic purposes and for academic, artistic or literary expression purposes.

### **C. Reporting process at the national level**

157. In accordance with the Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania No. 1540 “Regarding the reports on the implementation of the conventions of United Nations and the national procedure for the preparation of reports to the United Nations Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review”, adopted on 18 December 2001, provides the list of the ministries that are mandated and responsible for certain reports on the implementation of the UN human rights treaties (hereinafter – Mandated institution).

158. According to the abovementioned resolution, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania is mandated to coordinate reports to the UN bodies, engage with them and provide requested information to the UN Secretariat.

159. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also responsible for submitting reports on the implementation of the 1965 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), as well as reports on the implementation of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

160. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour is mandated to prepare national reports on the implementation of the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the 1979 UN Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and implementation of the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

161. The Ministry of Justice is mandated to prepare reports on the implementation of the 1984 UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT), the 2006 International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED), as well as the report to the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

162. When drafting the national reports, the mandated institution takes into account the requirements of the relevant UN guidelines for the content and form of the report. Information on the implementation of a specific UN convention in Lithuania is compiled in close cooperation with the responsible sectoral institutions.

163. According to the abovementioned resolution by the Government, a commission is formed, consisting of representatives from all relevant sectoral institutions, and chaired by the representative of the Mandated institution. The composition of the commission is approved by the minister of the Mandated institution.

164. The Mandated institution is responsible for ensuring the translation of the national report into one of the UN official working languages.

165. The national report on the implementation of the UN human rights treaties is submitted to the UN by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

166. NGOs, ombudspersons and specialized committees are involved in the preparation of national reports, their comments are reflected in the text of the national report. In addition, NGOs are informed about the possibility of submitting an alternative report.



## **IV. Information on non-discrimination and equality and effective remedies**

### **Non-discrimination and equality**

167. Article 29 of the Constitution of Lithuania establishes the principle of equality, stating that all persons are equal before the law, courts, and other state institutions and officials. Human rights may not be restricted and no one may be granted any privileges on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions, or views.

168. The Law on Equal Treatment defines the principle of equal treatment as implementation of human rights, which are laid down in international documents on human and citizens' rights and in the laws of the Republic of Lithuania, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, language, origin, social status, faith, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic affiliation, religion. The abovementioned law forbids any direct or indirect discrimination, sets the obligation for the state and local government institutions and agencies to implement the principle of equal treatment.

169. The Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania enshrines the obligation for the employer to implement the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination on other grounds. This means that in employer's relations with employees, any direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment or instruction to discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic affiliation, political affiliation, religion, faith, convictions or views shall be prohibited. This is with the exception of cases concerning a person's professed religion, faith or convictions for those working in religious communities, societies or centres, provided that the requirement for the employee regarding his or her professed religion, faith or convictions, in view of the ethos of the religious community, society or centre, is normal, lawful and justifiable, or intention to have a child/children, or due to circumstances unrelated to the employees' professional qualities or on other grounds established by law

170. Implementation of the provisions establishing the principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunities is ensured by the Action Plan for the Promotion of Non-discrimination for 2017–2019, which implementation is coordinated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania. The Plan includes 21 measures aimed at reducing discrimination, improving legal regulation, ensuring equal opportunities in the framework established by the Law on Equal Treatment, as well as the promoting of non-discrimination and tolerance.

### **Gender equality**

171. Equal rights and opportunities for women and men are enshrined in the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men that forbids any discrimination (direct and indirect) harassment, and sexual harassment on the grounds of sex. This law sets out preconditions for gender mainstreaming. All state and municipal institutions and agencies must ensure that equal rights for women and men are set out in all the legal acts drafted and enacted by them, must draw up and implement programs and measures aimed at protecting equal opportunities for women and men and, in the manner prescribed by laws, must support the programs of public establishments, associations and charitable foundations which assist in implementing equal opportunities for women and men.

172. To continue solving gender equality issues in a complex and systematic manner, the National Program for Equal Opportunities of Men and Women 2015–2021 has been implemented in Lithuania. The goals of the program include the following: promoting equal opportunities of men and women in the field of employment and labour; pursuing a balanced participation of men and women in decision-making and holding top posts; increasing efficiency of institutional mechanisms of equality of women and men; promoting integration of the gender aspect in various areas: education and science, culture, health, environment, national defence, access to justice; and implementing European Union and

international commitments in the field of equality of women and men. The Action Plan 2018–2021 was drafted for implementing program goals and tasks.

### **Non-discrimination of persons with disabilities**

173. The Law on Social Integration of the Persons with Disabilities of the Republic of Lithuania ensures the equal rights and opportunities of persons with disabilities in society, determines the principles of social integration of the persons with disabilities, defines the system of social integration and its preconditions and conditions, institutions for the social integration of people with disabilities, the establishment of the level of disability and the level of capacity for work, provision of vocational rehabilitation services, identification and satisfaction.

### **Freedom of Association and the Right to Organize**

174. The Constitution guarantees citizens the right to freely form societies or associations if the aims and activities thereof are not contrary to the Constitution and laws. Article 50 of the Constitution stipulates that trade unions are freely established and function independently. They defend the professional, economic and social rights and interests of employees.

175. In accordance with Article 10 of the Republic of Lithuania Law on Trade Unions (hereinafter referred to as the ‘Law on Trade Unions’), the employer (or his/her authorized representative) shall be prohibited from making employment or retention of job conditional upon the employee’s consent to refrain from joining or to withdraw from a trade union. The employer (or his/her authorized representative) shall be prohibited from organizing and financing organizations seeking to hinder or control the activities of trade unions.

176. In accordance with Article 17 of the Law on Trade Unions, trade unions shall have the right to exercise control over the employer’s compliance with and implementation of the provisions of labour, economic and social laws, collective agreements and other agreements related to the rights and interests of their members. For this purpose, trade unions may have inspectorates, legal assistance services and other institutions. Trade unions and/or their inspectorates shall forward information on the failure to comply with regulatory provisions of labour laws, other regulatory legal acts and collective agreements to the territorial office of the State Labour Inspectorate no later than within 3 working days from committing a violation or learning about a committed violation.

177. According to the Labour Code of Lithuania, in order to establish a trade union operating at the level of the employer, it must have 20 founders or at least one-tenth but no less than three of all of the employer’s employees must be founders. Trade unions shall also have the right to establish and join trade union organizations operating at the sectoral or territorial level if they consist of at least five employer-level trade unions.

178. Employers shall have the right, without any restrictions, to establish organizations whose activities are based on the Labour Code, the Republic of Lithuania Law on Associations, and by-laws/statutes of the employers of the organizations, and to join these organizations. An association established and operating according to the Law on Associations shall be recognized as employers’ organizations if, under its by-laws/statutes, it represent the rights and interests of their members (employers) in a social partnership. Employers’ organizations shall have the right to join higher-level employers’ organizations (associations, federations, confederations, unions, etc.) information.

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