



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**
Ninety-second session

Summary record of the 2184th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 5 February 2026, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Haidar

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States Parties under article 18 of the Convention *(continued)*

Seventh periodic report of Lithuania (CEDAW/C/LTU/7; CEDAW/C/LTU/Q/7; CEDAW/C/LTU/RQ/7)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Lithuania joined the meeting.*
2. **The Chair**, welcoming the delegation of Lithuania to the meeting, explained that the other members of the delegation would be participating via video link.
3. **A representative of Lithuania**, introducing her country's seventh periodic report (CEDAW/C/LTU/7), said that, in recent years, the Government had introduced a wide range of measures to ensure that the principle of equal opportunities was effectively applied in all areas of policy. In its efforts to strengthen the protection of women's rights, the Government worked in partnership with national human rights institutions, civil society and local government bodies and took account of the Committee's recommendations.
4. Protecting the human rights of women and girls was a priority in the Government's foreign policy. In response to the growing backlash against gender equality, the Government engaged in negotiations with like-minded partners and supported women's empowerment initiatives and relevant documents of the Human Rights Council, the Third Committee and other multilateral forums.
5. Against a backdrop of conflict and crisis, the Government advocated protecting the rights of survivors and holding perpetrators of sexual violence to account. It called for the safe and meaningful participation of women in peace processes, reconstruction and decision-making. The number of women migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees in Lithuania had increased significantly in recent years. The Government provided ongoing assistance to refugee women and girls and supported their access to legal assistance, psychosocial support, health, education, employment and language-learning services. It also strengthened the prevention of gender-based violence, assisted victims and promoted their sustainable integration into the labour market.
6. Following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia, the Government had implemented projects in 24 municipalities to help refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine. The municipalities had allocated €227,000 to targeted services for women with a view to promoting gender equality, preventing violence and fostering women's skills and entrepreneurship. Since 2025, services to facilitate long-term integration had been provided in the municipalities, with over €11 million being granted from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund to around 9,800 people. The reception and accommodation system for foreign nationals had been reorganized as a single institution – the Reception and Integration Agency – that reported to the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, facilitating the application of uniform reception standards, promoting human rights and responding to the needs of vulnerable persons.
7. The Government supported the women and peace and security agenda. In close cooperation with non-government organizations (NGOs), it had approved the relevant third national action plan for the period 2025–2029, which included measures to empower women in the field of defence and security, including by establishing a women mediators network, organizing training, removing barriers to careers and promoting equal opportunities in international missions. In 2025, Lithuania had ranked fifteenth out of 181 countries in the Global Women, Peace and Security Index of the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security.
8. Over the previous five years, the Government had significantly expanded gender statistics to include indicators on employment, social protection, health, education and crime, broken down by gender. The annual survey on equality would provide for a wide range of indicators every year from 2027, including indicators related to decision-making and intersectional discrimination, providing a reliable basis on which to shape equality-based policies and tailor public services to different groups in society.

9. The principles of gender equality and non-discrimination had been incorporated into the Strategic Governance Law and the principle of equal opportunities for all into the National Progress Plan for 2021–2030. Accordingly, the principle of equal opportunities would be applied in all areas of public policy. The Action Plan for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for 2023–2025 promoted equality in a comprehensive manner, addressing economic empowerment, the prevention of violence and interinstitutional cooperation. The implementation of the Plan had already yielded tangible results. A total of 650 women had participated in events and training courses aimed at promoting women’s entrepreneurship and over 2,000 police officers had been trained to prevent and respond more effectively to domestic and gender-based violence.

10. Consistent efforts had been made to strengthen the capacity of civil society. NGOs working in the area of equal opportunities had been granted around €350,000 through calls for tender. As a result of those efforts, Lithuania had risen from seventeenth place, in 2023, to fourteenth place, in 2024, in the Gender Equality Index of the European Institute for Gender Equality.

11. The draft amendments to the Law on Equal Opportunities, which involved the transposition of the relevant European Union equality and anti-discrimination directives, were aimed at establishing clear definitions of intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination that would allow for more accurate assessments in cases of discrimination and more effective protection of the rights of victims. Complaints of discrimination would be handled in a clearer and more consistent manner and the burden of proof would fall on the defendant in cases relating to discrimination.

12. The role of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman in protecting persons against discrimination would be strengthened and the definitions of sexual harassment set out in the Law on Equal Opportunities and the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men had been harmonized. Employers would be required to protect employees from any discrimination relating to their right to take paternity or parental leave.

13. The institutional capacity of the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman had been strengthened to make it more independent and efficient and to enhance public confidence in its decisions. Special temporary measures had been defined in law to expedite the establishment of de facto equality and the removal of structural barriers to equality. The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men established that large companies must strive to ensure that no fewer than 33% and no more than 49% of management, board and supervisory positions were occupied by the underrepresented sex. Over 80 large companies had achieved that target.

14. Reproductive and mental health services were adequately funded to ensure that women received the necessary assistance in a timely manner. Preventive check-ups, diagnoses and treatments were covered by the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund. Assisted reproduction services were available and healthcare for pregnant women, new mothers and newborns was provided.

15. Abortion services were covered by the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund and women and girls aged between 15 and 20 years were reimbursed for contraceptives. All women who had given birth were informed about postpartum depression. A home visit service had been established for families and early rehabilitation services were provided for children with developmental disorders.

16. Municipal public health offices provided mental health services, organizing practical activities to help people manage their emotions, stress and conflicts. Free mental health services had been provided to almost 10,000 women in 2020 and over 21,000 women in 2025.

17. Although domestic violence remained a structural problem, data from the previous six years showed that public attitudes towards the offence were changing for the better. Since 2019, there had been a decline in the tendency to blame women for acts of violence committed against them. An interinstitutional working group had been established to assess the criminal and procedural framework applicable to sexual harassment and violence and the assistance provided to victims. In that connection, proposals for amendments to the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence were being prepared.

18. Measures were taken to promote understanding of voluntary and freely given consent to sexual acts. Protection orders for cases of domestic violence had been introduced in 2023 to strengthen emergency protection against domestic violence and to combat impunity for the offence. A national centre for information on sexual violence had been established to raise awareness of the problem of sexual violence.

19. Lithuania had introduced a sociocultural integration programme to support newcomers. A model for implementing policies on equal opportunities, gender equality and protection against domestic violence at the local level had been developed. Currently, 55 out of the country's 60 municipalities had issued equal opportunities action plans, which represented a dramatic increase over the previous years. The Government was increasingly working with NGOs to ensure their active involvement in the development and implementation of policies on women's rights, equal opportunities and protection against domestic violence.

20. Plans were in place to hold regular meetings with specialized assistance providers and to establish a national congress of women's rights organizations. Over €3.8 million of annual funding would be allocated to projects and services run by NGOs with a view to strengthening violence prevention and gender equality. A public awareness campaign aimed at increasing women's political participation and combating gender stereotypes, implemented in partnership with NGOs, had reached over 800,000 people. In 2026, the Government had put out to competitive tender another project to encourage young women and girls to become involved in politics.

21. Lithuania had one of the most generous and flexible childcare leave systems in Europe, allowing for up to three years of leave, with non-transferable entitlements for both parents. Between 2023 and 2025, around 16,000 men had taken advantage of their non-transferable entitlements. Around 15,000 men received paternity benefits every year. A project to change public attitudes to unpaid care work had been implemented.

22. Under the amendments made to the Framework Law on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which had entered into force in 2024, more targeted assistance was provided to persons with disabilities through integrated support services. Since 2024, over 6,000 individual assistance plans had been drawn up for women and girls with disabilities and their right to receive information in an accessible format had been established.

23. In rural areas, women's leadership was supported by the "LEADER" (Links between actions for the development of the rural economy) and "Smart Villages" initiatives. Women made up about 53% of the management bodies of the community-led local development groups and 13 out of the 22 "Smart Villages" strategies were led by women. The unemployment rate among women had fallen and increasing numbers of Ukrainian and Roma women were finding stable employment. The employment rate for Ukrainian women had increased by 31% since 2023. The number of women employed in the administrative and service sectors had increased significantly and a growing number of women were employed in skilled and highly skilled positions. One in seven working Ukrainian women held a highly skilled position and the number of women specialists had doubled over the previous three years.

24. The employment rate among Roma women had stabilized and the quality of the employment that they obtained had improved significantly. In 2025, as a result of the Government's engagement with employers and social partners, 75 Roma women had been hired on a permanent basis and 13 on a fixed-term basis. Legal services were made available to Roma communities, with the majority of the beneficiaries being women. In 2024, the first court ruling on discrimination against Roma had been issued, in a case involving three Roma

women who had been refused service at a food and drink establishment. The ruling established an important precedent by treating the refusal of service on grounds of ethnicity, and the degrading treatment involved, not merely as an administrative offence but as a criminal one.

25. A social and economic empowerment initiative for single mothers, known as the “1,000 Women” project, was being implemented to strengthen single mothers’ financial literacy, emotional resilience and practical skills. A mentoring scheme to promote women’s independence, self-confidence and participation in economic and social life was being implemented. As a result of measures taken to strengthen adult learning, around 15,000 people had obtained qualifications between the second quarter of 2023 and March 2025. Over 80% of those people had been women.

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26. **Ms. Mikko** said that she would welcome information on any plans being made to close legislative gaps, in particular by explicitly protecting women from intersecting forms of discrimination and establishing legal definitions of the concepts of gender and sex. She wished to know what measures had been taken to raise women’s awareness of the remedies available to them if their rights under the Convention were violated. She wondered what monitoring or accountability mechanisms were in place to ensure the consistent implementation of the Convention across the justice system and what progress had been made towards amending the Civil Code with a view to abolishing the concept of full legal incapacity. She would like to know what progress had been made towards ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).

27. **A representative of Lithuania** said that, in 2021, an electronic system had been established to allow members of the public to file complaints of discrimination. In 2022, measures had been taken to enhance the protection afforded to persons who filed complaints of discrimination, participated in cases involving discrimination or witnessed discrimination.

28. In 2023, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman had been granted the authority to carry out investigations into alleged violations of public or private interests by civil servants. Amendments would be introduced to broaden the grounds on which complaints of discrimination could be brought. The funding allocated to the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman would be increased significantly over the next three years.

29. **A representative of Lithuania** said that, in the fourth quarter of 2026, legislative measures would be taken to strengthen the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. The Civil Code would be amended to ensure that surgical interventions could not be carried out on any person without the person’s consent. Victims of sexual violence had the right to State-funded legal assistance. In 2025, such assistance had been granted in over 250 cases.

30. **A representative of Lithuania** said that community assistance was being strengthened so that persons with disabilities could lead full lives. Specialists were employed to help persons with psychosocial disabilities make decisions and live in the community on an equal basis with others. Since 2024, such specialists had provided assistance to over 640 persons, around half of whom had been women. Specialists were working to restore people’s legal capacity or to prevent them from losing it. In 2025, legal capacity had been restored in seven cases. The Government had drafted recommendations for lawyers who provided State-funded legal aid to persons with disabilities. Measures were being taken to develop sheltered housing and provide persons with disabilities with community-based living arrangements and services to allow them to lead more independent lives.

31. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the decisions relating to the ratification of international treaties were taken by Parliament and that the Government had limited influence over such decisions. One of the most efficient ways of implementing an international instrument, such as the Istanbul Convention, was to incorporate its provisions into national law.

32. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the Government supported educational activities aimed at challenging stereotypes and had allocated €1.9 million to such activities

between 2020 and 2026. Studies showed that young people rejected violent relationships and were moving towards violence-free partnerships. In recent years, campaigns to prevent young men and boys from becoming radicalized had been carried out. As a result, the ranking of Lithuania in the Gender Equality Index of the European Institute for Gender Equality had improved.

33. **A representative of Lithuania** said that a project to support children living in vulnerable family situations had been launched in 2024 and had benefited around 4,000 children. Food, transport and cultural and educational activities were subsidized for vulnerable families.

34. The Government planned to incorporate the principle of equal opportunities in educational programmes and to promote non-sexist vocational education. Efforts were made to encourage women to work in areas traditionally considered to be the preserve of men. A career service established in 2025 had conducted over 800 consultations in that year. Since September 2023, the general curricula for schools had included subjects such as human rights, equal opportunities for men and women, respectful relationships and conflict resolution.

35. **A representative of Lithuania** said that specialized comprehensive assistance was provided to victims of domestic violence. A system for monitoring domestic violence at the national level had been developed and a council made up of representatives of the main State agencies and NGOs had been set up to discuss the problem.

36. Each of the country's 60 municipalities had established a committee on the prevention of domestic violence and had appointed a coordinator responsible for tackling the problem and promoting equal opportunities and gender equality. The majority of municipalities had developed plans on the prevention of domestic violence. All strategic documents were assessed in advance for compliance with the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination. Of the 191 legal instruments assessed, 92 had been found to include measures relating to equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

37. **Ms. Mikko** said that she wished to know whether any lawyers in Lithuania specialized in the application of the Convention and how the State Party guaranteed the quality and adequacy of State-funded legal assistance. It would be useful to learn about any measures being taken to combat discrimination against women in the digital sphere.

38. **A representative of Lithuania** said that over 70 legal aid lawyers who worked with victims of trafficking in persons and domestic violence had undergone specialized training. Of those lawyers, 22 represented minors.

39. **A representative of Lithuania** said that plans were in place to transpose the European Union directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence into national law, thereby establishing aspects of digital violence and domestic violence as criminal offences.

40. **Ms. Schläppi** said that she wished to know how the State Party assessed the impact of the various plans implemented to promote gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men. She wondered what gaps would be addressed in the Government's next action plan on equal opportunities for women and men. It would be useful to know how the State Party ensured that the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman had the competence, capacities and resources to address issues surrounding gender equality, beyond dealing with individual complaints, and whether it was empowered to monitor State actions and advise policymakers.

41. She would be grateful for information on the expected outcome of the recent amendments made to the Law on Equal Opportunities. She would like to know whether the funding and recruitment of staff for the independent Ombudsman's Office were in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).

42. Now that the principle of gender equality had been established in national law, she wondered what plans were in place to mainstream that principle in practice. She would be interested to learn how the State Party guaranteed adequate funding for women's rights

organizations and what it did to ensure that such organizations were heard and could participate in the assessment, design and implementation of policies on gender equality. She would be grateful to know how the State Party would analyse the disaggregated data on gender equality that it planned to collect and how it would ensure that data on intersecting forms of discrimination were collected.

43. **Ms. Stott Despoja** said that she would be grateful for information on the State Party's plans to apply gender quotas to administrative and political decision-making bodies and to ensure that the results of that process would be measurable. Information on the time frames applicable to the introduction of such quotas would be welcome. It would be useful to know whether the State Party would consider applying gender quotas to lists of candidates standing in parliamentary and other elections.

44. It would be interesting to learn whether any time frames had been established for the implementation of gender quotas by larger companies, whether the Ombudsman would receive the support required to monitor the implementation of such quotas and what funding was provided for that process. She wondered whether the supervisory and management boards of State-owned companies and publicly controlled bodies were subject to temporary special measures relating to quotas and whether there were clear timelines and targets for achieving gender balance on corporate boards. Would the State Party be able to fulfil its obligations under the Convention without using temporary special measures?

45. **A representative of Lithuania** said that efforts to expand and improve data collection would take the principle of intersectionality into account. The Government was developing a national strategy on equality-related data that would form the basis of measures to strengthen data collection and identify the reasons for structural inequality.

46. NGOs were important partners that received support from the Government and were involved in decision-making. Representatives of NGOs participated in the Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, which proposed amendments to legislation on a number of priority areas, including the prevention of gender-based violence.

47. All the funding provided by the Government to improve equal opportunities and tackle stereotypes was regulated by law and could be allocated by means of public procurement procedures. Funding was allocated to women's organizations every year. The funding provided to the specialized comprehensive assistance centres that supported victims of domestic violence was being increased in order to improve the services that they offered. The Government encouraged women's organizations to submit proposals to it and to participate in public procurement procedures at the local level. Efforts were made to increase the funding provided to women's organizations every year.

48. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the implementation of European Union directives would result in amendments to national law that would define the new competencies of the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman. Under the amendments, the number of complaints handled by the Office would increase, its competencies would be broadened and its funding would be increased. The Office was empowered to carry out investigations into the various intersecting forms of inequality in society and had recently published a study of the digital exclusion of older persons.

49. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the Government had issued three strategic documents that set out short-term objectives and measures for promoting equal opportunities for women and men. The outcome of those measures was monitored. An increasing number of State agencies and NGOs were involved in monitoring the implementation of plans relating to equal opportunities. A new action plan for 2026–2028 addressed priority areas such as the equitable distribution of unpaid work, the comprehensive incorporation of the principle of equal opportunities into all policy areas, gender stereotypes and women's participation in decision-making and senior positions.

50. **A representative of Lithuania** said that, in 2021, a statistical study of personal security had been carried out and new indicators relating to violations of personal security in the workplace and the home had been incorporated into the statistical system.

51. **Ms. Schläppi** said that she would welcome information on any measures taken to mainstream gender equality in budgeting processes.

52. **Ms. Stott Despoja** said that she would be grateful for confirmation that, as part of the State Party's review of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, it would consider implementing temporary special measures in any area of policy where they might be appropriate or useful. She wondered whether a time frame had been established for the review and whether temporary special measures relating to the introduction of quotas might be applied in parliamentary and other elections.

53. **A representative of Lithuania** said that, in 2021, the Government had conducted a feasibility study on gender-sensitive budgeting. Depending on the outcome of further analyses, the Government might consider implementing gender-sensitive budgeting at the national and municipal levels on a pilot basis.

54. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the political party with the largest representation in Parliament had introduced gender quotas on a voluntary basis. Notwithstanding that initiative, the proposed amendments to the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men would not provide for quotas. The proportion of elected officials who were women was lower at the municipal level than at the national level. In view of that situation, measures would be taken to encourage women to stand as candidates in municipal elections.

55. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the proposed amendments to the Law on Equal Opportunities, if adopted, would lead to the introduction of temporary special measures to expedite the establishment of equal opportunities.

56. **Ms. Rana** said that she would like to know whether the State Party would consider revising its laws to ensure that sexual violence was defined based on the absence of freely given consent and that all survivors of such violence received protection regardless of whether they chose to file a criminal complaint. It would be helpful to learn what would be done to strengthen protection measures and the authorities' obligations in that area. The delegation might indicate whether the State Party would be prepared to reform the system for the accreditation of specialized comprehensive assistance centres for persons affected by domestic violence with a view to ensuring that it was effective, transparent and survivor-centred and eliminating the undue administrative barriers faced by organizations with significant experience in helping such persons. Information on any mandatory training programmes for police officers, prosecutors and judges on handling sexual and domestic violence would be welcome.

57. She would be grateful for a description of any awareness-raising and behavioural change programmes, in particular those targeting men and boys, that were being implemented to challenge the patriarchal norms that were said to remain deeply entrenched in the State Party and to perpetuate stereotypical views of women. What was the State Party doing to address stereotypes in the media?

58. **Mr. Safarov** said that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) had reported that migrants in the State Party were increasingly falling victim to trafficking in persons. Accordingly, he would be interested to learn what steps were being taken to ensure that the authorities made proactive efforts to identify potential cases of trafficking, in particular when dealing with migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls and other vulnerable groups. It would be helpful if the delegation could provide data on cases of trafficking in the State Party, including trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation. He wished to know whether the State Party planned to increase the number of shelters available for victims of trafficking, in particular by supporting the creation of shelters run by NGOs, and whether NGOs working on the prevention of trafficking had access to dedicated funding. He was curious to learn how cases of online and technology-facilitated trafficking in persons were investigated in practice, given the lack of specific laws on such trafficking. The delegation might comment on reports that women who were exploited for prostitution were not recognized as victims of sexual violence and exploitation and provide information on the steps taken to reduce demand for prostitution and reform exit programmes for women in prostitution.

59. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the Government was currently reviewing the Criminal Code to assess its compliance with the European Union directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence. As part of that review, steps would be taken

to determine whether new legal provisions needed to be established to provide for the criminalization of certain acts or whether the existing provisions of the Criminal Code could simply be amended to cover all the crimes listed in the directive, which included female genital mutilation, the non-consensual sharing of intimate or manipulated material and various cybercrimes.

60. All persons with disabilities, regardless of their income, were entitled to State-guaranteed legal aid. Access to such aid was also granted to individuals belonging to other groups, provided that they met certain eligibility requirements. The provision of legal aid to foreign nationals was guaranteed under the Law on State-Guaranteed Legal Aid.

61. **A representative of Lithuania** said that support for victims of trafficking in persons was provided in cooperation with NGOs that had extensive experience in that area. An annual budget of €300,000 was earmarked to fund the activities of those NGOs, which supported victims regardless of whether they had filed a complaint. Victims were granted access to healthcare, social services, round-the-clock legal assistance and schemes to facilitate their integration into the labour market. The Government had recently invited tenders for a project through which a number of NGOs had been selected to receive additional funding to provide assistance to third-country nationals who had fallen victim to trafficking. In 2025, support had been provided to 244 people, 115 of whom were women. Those who requested assistance tended to be victims of sham marriages or exploitation for prostitution or the purposes of begging or domestic work. Efforts were being made to establish short-term accommodation facilities for trafficking victims and ensure that the premises of all organizations for such victims were accessible for persons with disabilities.

62. **A representative of Lithuania** said that changes to the accreditation system for the specialized comprehensive assistance centres had been introduced in response to the findings of various audits. Organizations wishing to gain accreditation must have the capacity to provide confidential and tailored expert support in all municipalities and offer specialized assistance for persons with disabilities. Twenty-three organizations had been accredited by and were receiving support from the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.

63. **A representative of Lithuania** said that content on human rights and violence against women formed part of the police training curriculum. Between 2023 and 2025, around 830 student police officers had participated in courses on topics such as human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rights of victims of violence. In the previous five years, more than 6,000 police officers had followed courses on topics relating to domestic violence. Specific training on responding to reports of domestic violence had been delivered to more than 2,500 officers in 2023. The organization of such training had led to tangible progress; officers were better able to identify individuals who were at risk of domestic violence, the quality of their initial responses to such violence had improved and they dealt with victims in a more sensitive manner. A study conducted in 2024 showed that 83% of women trusted the police.

64. **A representative of Lithuania** said that judges were required to dedicate a certain number of hours to ongoing training, which was funded through the State budget. A system had recently been developed to enable judges to register for training online. Recent training programmes had covered topics including mediation in cases of domestic violence, trafficking in persons, international criminal procedure, protection against violence and the prevention of violence against women.

65. **A representative of Lithuania** said that, in recent years, the Prosecutor General's Office had run 23 training courses on domestic violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, the protection of victims and gender equality, which had been attended by more than 400 prosecutors and other employees. Some 180 prosecutors had also participated in training programmes run by international bodies, with a view to ensuring that the Office's practices were in line with international human rights standards and the relevant European Union directives.

66. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the Government was aware of the challenge presented by hate speech and was in the process of developing a system to detect hate speech and discriminatory rhetoric online. It was hoped that the system, which should support efforts to eliminate those phenomena, would enter into operation in 2026.

67. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the Ministry of the Interior headed an interministerial committee responsible for coordinating efforts to detect and tackle trafficking in persons. Training in recognizing the signs of trafficking would be provided to border and customs officials, police officers and staff from the Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service under the 2023–2026 action plan on the prevention of trafficking in persons. An annual budget of €10,000 had been earmarked for the funding of programmes designed to prevent Lithuanians abroad from falling victim to trafficking.

68. **A representative of Lithuania** said that, each year, the police organized approximately 650 community events to disseminate information designed to raise awareness of trafficking. The police recognized that Ukrainian women fleeing the war in their country were particularly vulnerable to trafficking and had thus established a working group to protect them from falling victim to it. The working group carried out regular monitoring activities and worked with the migration authorities to draw up lists of Ukrainian refugees and distribute those lists to local police departments. Police officers had held meetings with around 9,000 Ukrainian women and informed them of where to seek any necessary help. Efforts in those areas had been strengthened by the recruitment of Ukrainian police officers.

69. **A representative of Lithuania** said that Lithuanian law made a distinction between prostitution and trafficking in persons for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Individuals who engaged in trafficking in persons were prosecuted under the Criminal Code, whereas involvement in prostitution was considered an administrative offence. In recent years, most victims of trafficking had been trafficked for the purposes of labour exploitation. Victims of that type of trafficking tended to be men. Officials were provided with training to ensure that they could identify potential cases.

70. **A representative of Lithuania** said that two female victims of trafficking in persons had been identified in 2025. The rise in reports of sexual violence against women and girls and the online dissemination of explicit images reflected the fact that an increasing proportion of victims trusted the authorities and were thus willing to file complaints. Nonetheless, the Government was aware of the need to take preventive measures and develop training programmes to tackle the increase in the number of minors who had been affected by the sharing of explicit content.

71. **A representative of Lithuania** said that buyers and sellers of sex services were liable to the same administrative penalties unless the seller was found to be a minor or a victim of trafficking or forced prostitution, in which case the person would face no punishment. Centres had been set up to help women leave prostitution. Any decision regarding the decriminalization of prostitution must reflect public attitudes towards that issue.

72. **A representative of Lithuania** said that persons being housed in asylum centres had access to psychological support and were regularly provided with information on the services available to them. The Reception and Integration Agency had worked with the specialized comprehensive assistance centres to develop guidance for asylum-seekers who were at risk of or were victims of domestic violence. In 2025, the Agency had launched an application providing foreign nationals with information on living in Lithuania, their human rights and the support available to victims of violence. The information in the application was available in accessible formats and had been translated into more than 20 languages.

73. **Ms. Mikko** said that she would like to know whether violence against women and domestic violence had been criminalized under the Criminal Code and whether the recent legal amendments introduced by the State Party provided for the explicit recognition of such violence as a systemic human rights violation that was rooted in structural inequality. It would be helpful to learn whether the State Party planned to offer police officers, prosecutors and court officials the opportunity to specialize in dealing with cases of violence against women and trafficking in persons, with a view to ensuring that such cases were handled with a victim-centred approach.

74. **Ms. Rana** said that she was curious to know what was being done to tackle the intersectional stereotypes prevalent within institutions that provided healthcare, protection and legal services to women with disabilities, migrant women and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women and what was being done to address the absence of legal provisions explicitly prohibiting the use of conversion therapy.

75. **Ms. Hacker** said that she would be interested to hear whether the State Party would consider extending beyond 15 days the duration of the orders issued to protect potential victims of domestic violence and whether it had plans to introduce the use of electronic bracelets to ensure compliance with such orders.

76. **Mr. Safarov** said that it would be helpful if the delegation could indicate whether the State Party intended to review the legal provisions governing liability for engaging in prostitution. An explanation of the State Party's stance towards the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs would also be welcome.

77. **A representative of Lithuania** said that there were no plans to review the legal provisions concerning prostitution.

78. **A representative of Lithuania** said that police officers responding to reports of domestic violence were first required to assess whether there were signs that a criminal act had been committed. If they found such signs, criminal proceedings would be initiated. Protection orders, in contrast, were preventive measures that were issued in cases in which a risk of domestic violence had been identified. Police officers monitored compliance with such orders, and individuals who violated them were subject to penalties. The authorities recognized that there was a need to step up that monitoring and had thus established a working group to examine measures to strengthen the protection system. Individuals who were the subject of repeated protection orders were referred to the relevant support services.

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79. **Ms. Stott Despoja** said that she was curious to know whether the State Party would consider introducing quotas and financial incentives to encourage political parties to ensure a gender balance among their leaders and electoral candidates and imposing sanctions on parties that failed to do so. The delegation might provide information on the programmes being run to encourage women and girls to participate in political life and the steps being taken to assess the effectiveness of measures in that area; identify the challenges and threats faced by female electoral candidates and politicians; and increase the number of women with disabilities and women from disadvantaged groups who held elected positions.

80. She would be grateful for specific examples of the work done by the network set up to promote equal opportunities for women in international missions and wished to know whether the State Party planned to introduce gender parity targets for ambassadorial appointments and senior diplomatic posts. It would be helpful to learn, too, what would be done to ensure that the criteria for the selection and promotion of members of the diplomatic corps were transparent and gender-sensitive. She wondered what steps were being taken to promote engagement with civil society within the framework of the third national action plan on women and peace and security and increase the number of women in leadership roles in that area. The delegation might indicate whether the State Party would consider collecting and publishing data on the representation of women in diplomatic, political and economic decision-making positions.

81. **Ms. Pia-Comella** said that, in view of the absence of a specific statelessness determination procedure, she would like to know how the State Party's authorities established whether an individual was stateless and what steps were taken to collect, analyse and publish demographic data on the stateless population.

82. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the only way to make changes to the funding available to political parties was to amend the Electoral Code, which could not be done without a broad consensus in Parliament. It would probably be more effective, therefore, to encourage political parties to achieve gender balance by engaging them in dialogue on that matter. Some political parties did not have formal gender quotas but had taken other measures to foster inclusiveness, which had led them to submit electoral lists containing a reasonable number of female candidates. A parliamentary working group had been established to put forward legislative amendments designed to prevent the repeat of a situation in which a female parliamentarian had allegedly been sexually harassed by a colleague. Representatives of ethnic minorities belonged to parties from across the political spectrum. It was his understanding that no members of the Roma community held political office.

83. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the Roma community, which accounted for just 0.08% of the population, was mostly made up of women and children. The Government had implemented five action plans to promote the integration of members of that community and worked with the European Union to run projects to increase their participation in public and cultural life. Those initiatives had also focused on improving the self-confidence and social skills of Roma women, encouraging their participation in the labour market and tackling discrimination against them. Mediators working with the Roma community had established groups through which Roma women could provide each other with assistance and ran regular training sessions geared towards building their skills and knowledge. Roma women had attended vocational, language and driving courses, thereby increasing the employment opportunities open to them. They had established their own NGO, accounted for the majority of members of other Roma-led organizations and were represented on a committee that advised on issues concerning ethnic minorities. Of the committee's 24 members, 15 were women.

84. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the Ministry of Social Security and Labour ran various programmes designed to promote the leadership of migrant women and facilitate their integration into local communities. Steps were taken to ensure that women with children who wished to participate in such programmes had access to childcare. The Ministry had invited civil society organizations such as the Refugee Council of Lithuania to participate in decision-making processes and the formulation of measures affecting migrants. Initiatives were being run to encourage the involvement of specific groups of women, such as those from Ukraine.

85. **A representative of Lithuania** said that the Action Plan for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for 2023–2025 set out the requirement for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to determine how many women formed part of the diplomatic corps. The Ministry had established that, while women were well represented at lower and mid-level diplomatic positions, most senior leadership positions continued to be occupied by men. It had also determined that women accounted for approximately one third of all ambassadors. In view of those findings, the Ministry had introduced the requirement for both male and female candidates to be put forward to fill any vacant ambassadorial posts. In 2024, the professional network of female diplomats had been established to help those women develop their leadership skills, advance gender equality and ensure fair working conditions. Female diplomats could participate in a dedicated mentoring programme, and the Ministry was in the process of drafting guidelines aimed at ensuring equal opportunities and gender equality in the diplomatic corps.

86. **A representative of Lithuania** said that close to 45% of all police officers were women. Three women had recently been recruited to occupy the highest-ranking leadership positions, all of which had previously been held by men. Over the previous five years, the percentage of other police leadership positions occupied by women had increased by an annual average of 1.5% to reach 29.4%.

87. **A representative of Lithuania** said that women accounted for 67% of judges. Female court presidents outnumbered their male counterparts. Both the President of the Supreme Court and, for the first time ever, the Prosecutor General were women.

88. **A representative of Lithuania** said that steps to determine whether an individual was stateless were taken as part of the asylum procedure. The determination was made based on the information provided by the individual concerned. As of January 2026, almost 900 stateless women and girls held valid Lithuanian residency permits. Lithuanian nationality was granted to persons who had legally and continuously resided in Lithuania for 10 years, had permanent residency in the country, had passed a Lithuanian language exam and had a legal source of income. Some of those requirements did not apply to applicants under the age of 18.

89. **Ms. Stott Despoja** said that she would be grateful for more concrete information on the outcomes of the various programmes and initiatives mentioned by the delegation during the dialogue.

90. **The Chair** said that she wondered whether capacity-building efforts aimed at women candidates for judgeships and diplomatic positions risked implying that women needed extra support to reach the same level as men, while male candidates were not offered equivalent support.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.