

**Gender Equality in Lithuania**  
*Focus on implementation: mechanisms,  
actions and partnership*

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**Lithuania is extremely pleased to  
welcome European Gender Equality  
Institute in Vilnius**

**Lithuania highly values establishment of the European Gender Equality Institute.**

**We are sure, that all stakeholders EU institutions, Politicians, national governments, researches and scientists, social partners, women's NGOs would benefit from the activities of European Gender Equality Institute.**

# History

- **1529 - Women's rights to an inheritance and to attend meetings** were confirmed in the First Lithuanian Statute. The Statute also contained separate provision on **protecting women against violence.**
- **1905 - The first women's organisation** "Union of Lithuanian women for the protection of women's rights" has been founded in Vilnius
- **1907- The first Congress of Lithuanian Women** took place in Kaunas and discussed questions dealing with women's problems and equality

## History (2)

- **1920** Lithuanian women took part in the elections of the Founding Seimas (Parliament). 10 of 112 delegates were women )
- **1920** – A provisional Constitution of Lithuania declared equal rights for women and men
- **1922** – 5 women were elected to the First Seimas (Parliament) of Lithuania
- **1922** - Women's right to vote and gender equality by the Law were confirmed in Lithuanian State Constitution

# Today

- Gender equality issues remain a priority in Lithuania.

Activities in this field include improvement of legislation, rapid development of institutional mechanisms, tools and methods, adoption and implementation of programmes and projects

Implementation of gender equality is carried out through the gender mainstreamed programmes, projects, other measures and activities, so contributing to visibility of gender equality, gender sensitive environment, including permanent attention to these issues both in the society and mass media, positive approach of governmental institutions and politicians, encouragement of social partners.

Active and effective work and collaboration among different structures of the national machinery and public sector, especially numerous and active women NGO's, capacity building and partnership determines positive quantitative and qualitative results in the gender equality field.

# Method in use

Widely known dual approach – gender mainstreaming and specific measures -proves to be effective and acquires recognition.

Gender mainstreaming is not something unknown in Lithuania. It was established by the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in 1998.

Methodology of impact assessment of draft decisions, adopted in 2003 requires an assessment of the impact of the draft decision to women and men.

# Legislation (1)

- Lithuania has been the first acceding country, which adopted the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in 1998.
- The Law obliged all state institutions to deal with gender issues in all relevant areas, forbade discrimination by sex in employment and education areas, forbade sexual harassment and discriminatory advertisements.
- Since 2002 this Law regulates also equality between women and men in access to and supply of goods and services.



## Legislation (2)

Accession to the EU gave a powerful impetus to further improve legislation, to harmonise them with the EU *acquis* on gender equality.

The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men was further improved:

Definition of discrimination was specified introducing definitions of direct and indirect discrimination,

Harassment on the grounds of sex and instruction to discriminate was forbidden.

Provision on the burden of proof has been introduced.

# Legislation (3)

EU directives on Equality between Women and Men (Employment, Equal Pay, Social Security matters, Protection of pregnant women etc.) have been transposed to the number of other relevant Laws (Labour Code, Law on Safety of Workers, Social Insurance)

Gender Equality principle is also enshrined in a number of other laws: Civil code, Laws on Education and Higher Education, Law on Vocational training, Law on Science and Studies, Law on Elections, Law on Referendum, Law on Civil Service, Law on Local Self-Government and others.

## **Institutional machinery (1)**

Well-developed national gender equality machinery today covers all levels and works in close partnership with non-governmental women's organisations, social partners, scientists and researchers on gender issues

## **Institutional machinery (2)**

- **1. Parliamentary level**
- **Human rights Committee** – Initiates and considers laws related to discrimination on all grounds, including sex.
- **Parliamentary Commission for Family and Child** - initiates and considers laws, legal acts on gender equality, women's rights, rights of the child, family policy.
- **Women's Parliamentary Group** - consists of all women parliamentarians from all parties. The aim of the group is to discuss women's and gender equality issues so facilitating and promoting gender equality, networking with active players of the society, first of all numerous and active women's NGO's .

## **Institutional machinery (3)**

- **2. Governmental level:**
- **Adviser to the Prime Minister on Social policy issues including Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities** - provides advises to the the Prime Minister on family, children, youth, gender equality, relevant NGOs.
- **Minister of Social Security and Labour** - overall responsibility for coordination of gender equality issues in all spheres, actually acting as a Gender Equality Minister.
- **Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Gender Equality division** - gender equality in the areas of employment and social security, gender mainstreaming, violence against women, development of tools and methods, trainings, awareness raising, relevant international and EU issues.
- **All other ministries** – responsible for gender issues within areas of their respective competences

## **Institutional machinery (4)**

- **Inter-Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men** - primarily structure for gender mainstreaming, established in 2000. Consists of representatives of all ministries and Statistics department. The Commission coordinates implementation of gender equality programmes and other women and gender-related measures. It submits proposals, recommendations concerning gender equality to the Government. The Commission works in close cooperation with other components of gender equality machinery: Equal Opportunities Ombudswomen, Advisor to the Prime Minister, researches, women's NGO's. This structure apart of gender mainstreaming is important point for networking of all components of national machinery, including public and private sector. The Commission annually provides report on gender equality activities to the Government.

## **Institutional machinery (5)**

- **Ombudsperson for Equal Opportunities (established in 1999)** - supervision of implementation of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. The Ombudsman investigates individual complaints on discrimination and sexual harassment; submits recommendations to the Parliament, Governmental institutions on amendments to relevant legislation; refers the materials to investigative bodies; addresses an appropriate person or institution with recommendation to discontinue discriminatory actions; imposes administrative sanctions, etc.. Every year Ombudsperson submits report to the Parliament.

## Institutional machinery (6)

- **Local level – not developed yet.** Municipality of the capital -Vilnius city municipality was the first, who appointed person responsible for gender equality issues in 2001.
- **Private sector -Social Partners.** A majority of biggest trade unions has *Women's councils*. Women's councils play important role in promoting gender equality in employment and deal with a broad range with different aspects, ensure information and awareness raising Employers associations are still not so active.
- **6. Public sector.** There are more that 130 active Women's non-governmental organizations, which draw society's attention to the needs and problems of women. Carrying out projects on gender issues in such fields as employment, education, politics and decision making, protecting women,s human rights, combating violence against women and trafficking in women, health, including reproductive health, protection of environment, Women's NGOs positively influence development of gender-equal society.



## **Institutional machinery (6)**

- **Gender research sector:**
- **Gender studies centres (4) at the biggest Lithuanian Universities as a base for interdisciplinary research on women and gender, provide gender competence, expertise, advocacy, mediation, consultations, gender trainings, perform gender researches on variety of subjects, influence further development of gender-sensitive scientific research environment. Gender Studies Centre at one of the oldest in Europe Vilnius University, was established in 1992 was the first of its kind in the Baltics.**

# Actions (1)

- Second National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, adopted by the Government on September 26, 2005
- Method - Gender mainstreaming, Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes so, that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages by the actors, normally involved in policy making.

# Actions (1)

Second National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

## **Objectives:**

- to tackle gender inequalities and promote gender equality in all areas in a consistent, integrated and systematic way,
- to foster gender mainstreaming,
- to highlight and solve specific problems of women and men.

# **Actions (1)**

Second National Programme on Equal Opportunities for  
Women and Men

## **Scope**

Employment, education and science, decision making,  
women's human rights, health protection and environment  
protection, development of mechanisms and methods

# Actions (1)

## Second National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

- **Tasks in employment area:**
- to eliminate gender stereotypes,
- to promote reconciliation of family and work responsibilities, promotion of paternity leave
- to improve employment opportunities for women returning to the labour market after a long break and for elderly women,
- to promote women's business and encourage economic activity of women,
- to promote equal pay for work of equal value,
- to encourage social partnership and develop social dialogue

# **Actions (1)**

Second National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

## **Tasks in Education and Science**

- to integrate gender equality in both formal and information education systems,
- to provide more favourable conditions for women to seek career in science,
- to pursue educational attainment and to improve professional skills.

# **Actions (1)**

Second National Programme on Equal Opportunities for  
Women and Men

## **Tasks in politics and decision making**

- to encourage women to take an active part in public and political life,
- to raise women's motivation to participate in the decision making
- to increase women's opportunities to occupy highest positions in economic and political decision making.

# **Actions (1)**

## **Second National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men**

### **Tasks in Human rights field**

- trainings for lawyers, law enforcement authorities on different aspects of gender equality,
- awareness raising of the society on gender equality
- improvement of legislation to combat violence against women, especially related to separation of the perpetrator from the family
- support to NGO projects ensuring complex assistance (social, legal, psychological) to victims of domestic violence and work with perpetrators
- Support, monitoring and assessment of implementation of EU and international commitments on gender equality



# **Actions (1)**

Second National Programme on Equal Opportunities for  
Women and Men

## **Tasks in Health and Environment Protection**

- to pay particular attention to specific issues of women's and men's health,
- to put forth efforts to increase men's life expectancy, so reducing the high difference between men's and women's average life expectancy,
- to increase awareness on family planning and reproduction health issues, in particular in rural areas.
- To mainstream gender perspective in environment protection .

# Actions (1)

## Second National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

- **Tasks in improvement of mechanisms and methods**
- to encourage dialogue and cooperation of state authorities, municipalities, educational and academic institutions, social partners and women's NGOs
- to reinforce institutional gender equality mechanisms by local level,
- to build capacities of social partners and civil servants in gender equality through trainings
- to improve qualifications of pedagogues, law enforcement officials and environmental specialists (trainings)
- to further improve collection of statistical data disaggregated by sex,
- to further develop gender impact assessment

# Actions (1)

Second National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men  
Implementation:

Resources – State budget, European Social Fund, EU programme Equal where appropriate.

Responsibility - Every Ministry is individually responsible for implementation of concrete measures within the terms established

Coordination - Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men monitors and coordinates implementation.

Reporting– The Minister of Social Security presents annual report on implementation to the Government, on the basis of the reports from all ministries.

Publicity – Every Ministry has the responsibility to inform the public and, if necessary, other institutions about implementation of relevant measures.

## Actions (2)

Gender equality measures are included into number of programmes.

- Strategy to promote small and medium-sized business,
- Strategy on rural development
- Strategy on demography
- Strategy on ageing population

Several programmes were successfully gender mainstreamed:

- National Programme on implementation of Lisbon Strategy
- National Strategy on Social Inclusion
- Single Programming Document
- Programme on Social responsibility of Enterprises

## **Actions (2)**

- Programmes aimed to solve specific gender equality problems:
- National Programme on the prevention and control of trafficking in human beings and prostitution (first – for 2002-2004, second – 2005-2008)
- National strategy to combat violence against women and it's implementation measures, 2006-2015

# Results

Measures implemented within different programmes, number successful projects resulted visible achievements:

- In 2006 women's employment rate reached 61 percent (exceeded Lisbon target for 2010)
- Gap between men's and women's employment rate decreased: 7,6 percent in 2005 to 5,3 percent in 2006.
- Women's unemployment rate (8,3 percent) in 2005 was almost equal to men's (8,2 percent). In 2006 women's unemployment rate (5,4 percent) became lower as of men (5,8 percent)

# Results

- Women's education level for a years remains higher of men.
- Women for a long time comprise more as 60 percent of students in all types of educational institutions, including 15 higher education schools, universities and academies, and almost half of the scientists.
- The number of women prevails in most higher education sectors, except technical, agricultural and military spheres.
- In 2004 the first women absolvent group has graduated the Military Academy.

# Results

Gender pay gap remains like EU average. this gap is smaller in the private sector – about 83 percent

In few areas like education and science, construction, social insurance, women's earnings in average are equal or significantly higher as of men, as for instance in social insurance field – 100,3 percent, in education – 121,2 percent.



# Results

Women managers – almost 43 percent

In diplomatic corps women make up 45 percent

5 women (38,5%) and 8 men were elected to the European Parliament

Number of women doubled in Lithuanian Parliament. 31 women were elected to the Parliament in 2004 (22 %), while 4 years ago in the year 2000 only 15 women (10,6%) were elected.

2 women and 3 men were candidates in the Presidential elections in 2004. First time in Lithuania 1 woman and 1 man came to the second tour of the elections.

# Challenging issues

- Complexity of reconciliation of work and family life
- Family friendly enterprises
- Flexible working arrangements
- Child care facilities
- Care for dependant family members
- Division of “unpaid work” in families
- Involvement of men, promotion of paternity leave.

# Challenging issues

- Gender stereotypes
- Women in political decision making positions
- Women in highest positions in science
- Deep horizontal segregation in the labour market (between occupations and between sectors)
- Violence against women

# Challenging issues

- Well developed national machinery covering all necessary structures presuppose turn to good governance, including clear mandates of structures, competences and knowledge both in gender equality matters and public administration and management, effective coordination of activities of different levels, monitoring and assessment of impact and reporting process. Balanced participation and involvement of men - not least in that list.

Thank you very much