

Statement of Mrs. Eglė Radišauskienė Vice-minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania

During the plenary sitting discussion on the ILO's Director-General's Report, June 6th, 2018, Geneva, Switzerland

Dear President of the Conference,
Director General,
Distinguished delegates,

The state emblem of Lithuania is Vytis, an armoured knight on a white horse holding silver sword in his right hand, and it means the ruler who can defend the country. We are all the knights carrying ILO Initiative on Woman at Work fighting against violence and harassment.

ILO indicated that „Women who enter the labour market are now generally highly educated, but still have a difficult time finding work. When they do, they are generally segregated in poorly-paid, insecure, home-based or informal work.

First of all, **equal pay for equal value** principle should be respected and promoted further in the context of current and future challenges and opportunities. To achieve this - we need effective policy measures. The most important one for diminishing gender pay gap is pay transparency, which makes companies acknowledge the extent of their gender pay gap.

Aiming to reduce pay inequality, Lithuania strengthened its anti-discrimination legislation. The new Labour Code foresees the obligation of ensuring equal pay for the same work of equal value. We have established the obligation for the employer to adopt measures for supervision and enforcement of the equal opportunities policies. Furthermore, the employer who has an average number of employees of more than 20 must, upon the request of the work council, provide depersonalised data by occupational group and gender on the average remuneration of employees.

Secondly, taking into account the demographic shifts, we have to put more efforts on ensuring decent and paid employment in the **care economy**. As most of the workers

in this sector are women, they face major obstacles in this regard. Proper value setting of the care work would bring more improvements to women's working lives and attract more men to those occupations. Equally important is for men to pursue careers in nursing as for women in STEM.

As regards the digitalisation and technological changes, we have to use these changes to reduce the occupational gender segregation. New **flexible work arrangements** give workers greater freedom on working time. Therefore, policies that help to balance work and family commitments are essential. While ensuring that all – women and men – enjoy the right to working hours, which correspond to their individual needs. On the other hand, not only women but also men need to be protected from long working hours, so that they could spend more time with their families and housework.

When fulfilling the gender equality, women's **participation in the decision-making** process at all levels also needs to be one of the main priorities. Both women and men must be involved in decision-making process, and interests of both genders must be equally represented. Therefore main priorities of a new Action Plan on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for 2018-2021 are to promote equal employment opportunities, balance the participation in decision-making and promote gender mainstreaming. Several new activities supporting NGO's initiatives on work-life balance, prevention of sexual harassment, multiple discrimination, as well as strengthening of men's role are included into this Plan. Other important actions, such as analysis of income gaps, development of good examples of gender impact assessments, training on equality tools in a working place are also foreseen.

Coincidentally, Lithuania today is hosting the Women Political Leaders Global Forum. This Forum is initiated by Mrs Dalia Grybauskaitė, the President of the Republic of Lithuania, and co-hosted by the Lithuanian Parliament in cooperation with the Council of Women World Leaders. The Forum is called "It's about time! 100 reasons to act" and it highlights the importance of women's empowerment and potential in all countries around the world.

Dear colleagues,

This year, on the eve of the ILO centenary, Lithuania celebrates 100 years of independence and 100 years of women's voting rights, so we can bravely say – our life can be different, we always have a choice to change everything and, here, it's also the time to push towards equality together.

Thank you.

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY