

Facts and Figures on Gender Equality Lithuania

CONTACTS:

Government:

**Labour Market and Equal
Opportunities Division
Ministry of Social Security and
Labour**

Head: Mr. Albertas Šlekys
Phone: + 370 2664 2579511
E-mail: ASlekys@socmin.lt

**Office of Equal Opportunities
Ombudsman**

Ombudsman: Ms. Ausrine Burneikiene

Advisor: Ms. Laima Vaičiūnienė
E-mail: lavaic@lrs.lt

Phone: +370 5 261 26 60
Fax: +370 5 261 27 25
E-mail: mvlgk@lrs.lt

Workers' organizations:

**Lithuanian Trade Union
Confederation (LPSK)**

Chair - Irena Petraitiene
LPSK Women's Centre
Phone: +370 5 249 69 21, 249 72 56
Fax: +370 5 249 80 78
E-mail: women@lpsk.lt

Lithuanian Trade Union Solidarumas

Executive secretary: Ms. Kristina
Krupaviciene
Phone: +370 5 262 17 43
Fax: +370 5 213 32 95
Phone: +370 5 262 1743 2612858
E-mail: lds@centras.lt

**Lithuanian Labour Federation (LDF)
Women Committee**

Chairperson: Ms. Daiva Pagiryte
Phone: +370 5 278 02 65
fax.: +370 5 275 07 23
E-mail: d.pagiryte@vpb.lt

NGOs:

Women's Issues Information Center:

Chairwoman: Jurgita Peciuriene
E-mail: jurgita@lygus.lt
Board Member: Jurate Seduikiene
E-mail: jurate@lygus.lt
Phone: +370 5 262 90 03
Fax: +370 5 262 90 50
E-mail: mic@lygus.lt
Website: www.lygus.lt

International organizations:

UNDP

Gender and human sustainable
development focal point
Mr. Mathieu Ryckewaert
Phone: +370 5 210 74 06
E-mail: mathieu.ryckewaert@undp.org

LEGAL FRAMEWORK:

ILO Conventions ratified:

No.100 and 111 – ratified in 1994

No.156 – ratified in 2004

No. 183 – ratified in 2003

No.103 – not ratified¹

National legislation:

In 1999, Lithuania was the first country in the region to pass an *Act on Equal Opportunities* concerning equal rights for women and men. The Act, which was amended in June 2002, defines and prohibits direct and indirect discrimination as well as sexual harassment. Moreover, the employer is obliged to guarantee equal rights for women and men at work and discriminatory employment practices such as discriminatory advertisement is forbidden. The Act also confirms the principle of equal pay for equal value, which is further stated in several acts

such as the *Act on Wages*. Non-discrimination in employment is further guaranteed by the *Act on Employment Contracts* and in the new *Labour Code* from June 2002.

The newest law on **Equal Treatment was adopted in November 2003**. It aims at ensuring the implementation of human rights laid down in the Constitution and at prohibiting any direct or indirect discrimination based upon age, sexual orientation, disability, racial or ethnic origin, religion or beliefs. Also aims at ensuring the application of the legal acts of the European Union. Article 5 deals with duty of employer to implement equal treatment at work and article 7 with acts of employer violating equal treatment. The **date of entry into force** is 2005-01-01².

¹ ILO/Ilolex

² ILO/Natlex

GENDER EQUALITY MACHINERY:

The *Minister of Social Security and Labour* has an overall responsibility to coordinate and implement gender equality issues in all spheres and is hence to function as a Gender Equality Minister. The *Division for Labour Market and Equal Opportunities* is located within the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. The functions of the Division are to implement the government policies on gender equality within the competence of the ministry and to coordinate activities on gender equality in other fields. Moreover, the *Inter-ministerial Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men*, with representatives from all the

ministries, has had an overall responsibility for gender equality to be taken into account in all issue areas.

Lithuania also has an *Office of Equal Opportunity Ombudsperson*, which is an independent institution accountable to the Seima (the Parliament), currently with seven employees. Individuals can appeal if they have been discriminated against, in employment or education, due to their sex. The Office can also initiate investigations. Moreover, the Ombudsperson supervises the implementation of the Act on Equal Opportunities. (No changes)

SOME BASIC INDICATORS:

Female/Male activity rate and unemployment: In 2003, the total activity rate was 44.0% for women and 51.6% for men, while the unemployment rate was 12.2% for women and 12.7% for men³.

Wage gap: In 2003, the average women's earnings constituted 80.95% of men's⁴.

Female/Male part-time work: In 2001, 11.4% of total female employment and 8.1% of total male employment was part-time⁵.

Sex distribution by employment sector: In 2001, women comprised 38% of total employees in the agricultural sector, 38% in the industrial sector and 60% in the service sector⁶. In 2003 women made up 64.2% of total employees in the public sector and 43.7% in the private sector⁷.

University graduates: In 2001, 61% of all university graduates were women⁸.

Composition of main national tripartite body: The Tripartite Council

of the Republic of Lithuania had 4 female and 11 male members in 2002⁹.

Retirement age: The retirement age is increasing with 4 months per year for women and 2 months per year for men, until it reaches 60 years for women and 62.5 years for men in 2009. (No changes¹⁰)

Maternity and child-care leave: Maternity benefit is provided 70 days before and 56 days after expected childbirth. Moreover, either parent may take official leave from employment for up to 1 year to care for the new baby and receive child-care benefit equal to 60% of wages. Further child-care leave can be taken until the child is 3 years old¹¹. (No changes)

³ ILO/Laborsta

⁴ Statistics Lithuania

⁵ UNECE

⁶ UNECE

⁷ Statistics Lithuania

⁸ UNECE

⁹ ILO Work Paper 2003

¹⁰ UNECE Paper, Geneva 2004

¹¹ ISSA

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ILO Natlex - National legislation database <http://natlex.ilo.org/>

http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.country?p_lang=en&p_country=LTU

ILO Ilolex - <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/ratifce.pl?Lithuania>

Lithuanian government web site <http://www.lrv.lt>

Statistics Lithuania <http://www.std.lt/web/main.php>,

<http://www.std.lt/web/main.php?parent=843>

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<http://www.unece.org/stats/gender/web/database.htm>

UNECE - Gender aspect of social security and pensions in the UNECE region, Progress and Challenges, Paper for Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 10-year review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, Geneva 2004

UNIFEM/KARAT Database on National Women's Machinery, November 2004, bratislava.unifem@undp.org

Websites of Lithuanian NGOs and Trade Unions

KARAT Website www.karat.org