



**LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS NUOLATINĖ ATSTOVYBĖ
PRIE JUNGTINIŲ TAUTŲ BIURO
IR KITŲ TARPTAUTINIŲ ORGANIZACIJŲ ŽENEVOJE**

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA**

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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Lithuania to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to transmit the responses of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania to the Questionnaire on 'Women's Human Rights in the Changing World of Work' in support of drafting the thematic report of the Working Group on the Issue of Discrimination of Women in Law and Practice to the 44th session of the Human Rights Council in June 2020.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Lithuania to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

ENCLOSURE. 3 pages.



Geneva, 21 August 2019

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
GENEVA

Women's Human Rights in the Changing World of Work

Republic of Lithuania laws guarantee human rights in the world of work equally for both women and men. Article 26(1) of the Labor Code (hereinafter - LC) establishes **the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination** on other grounds. It implies that in any employer's relationship with employees, direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, instruction to discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, membership of a political party, or in association with religion, belief, faith or convictions, except in the case of religious beliefs, faith or convictions of a person in religious communities, societies or centres where the demand to the employee for a confession of religion, faith or conviction, taking into account the ethos of the religious community, society or center, is normal, legitimate and justified, on the grounds of the intention to have a child (children), due to circumstances not related to the professional characteristics of employee or other grounds established by law, are prohibited. Article 26(6) of the LC obliges employers having an average number of employees of more than fifty, to adopt and publish, in the normal ways in the workplace, the measures implementing and enforcing the principles of equal opportunities policy.

The recent amendments of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – LEOWM) ensure more effective protection of individuals from discrimination. It was clarified that discrimination includes discrimination against women due to pregnancy and maternity, and that not only sexual, but other forms of harassment are also prohibited at work. On 11 May 2017, the amendments to the Law on Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Lithuania and the LEOWM were adopted, obliging the employer to ensure **protection against sexual harassment** not only to term-contract employees, and to civil servants, but also to job seekers. The acts of an employer shall be deemed as violating equal treatment if, due to a person's age, sexual orientation, disability, racial or ethnic origin, religion or beliefs, less (more) favourable conditions of employment or recruitment to public service are applied; if a different pay is applied for equal work or work of equal value; if, in organising work or public service, worse (better) conditions of work, service, qualification or vocational training, retraining and work experience acquisition for an employee or public servant are created; if the employer imposes a sanction on an employee or public servant, changes working, or public service conditions, transfers him/her to other work, position terminates the employment contract or dismisses from the public service; persecutes the employee or public servant, who has filed a complaint regarding discrimination, fails to take measures, to protect the employee or public servant from hostile behaviour or negative consequences.

LC also establishes the **principle of respect for the employee's family obligations**. The employer must take measures to help the employee to fulfil his or her family obligations. Employee requests related to the fulfilment of family obligations must be considered and given a motivated written response by the employer. An employee's behaviour and actions at work should be evaluated by the employer in an effort to practically and comprehensively implement the principle of work-life balance.

To facilitate the implementation of the **principle of work-life balance** new, more flexible work arrangements have been introduced. The LC has enshrined the following types of working-time arrangements: fixed duration of workdays/shifts and number of working days per week; annualised

hours, when the standard working hours for the entire reference period are fulfilled during the reference period; a flexible work schedule where an employee is required to be present at the workplace for certain hours of the workday/shift, but can work the other hours of the workday/shift before or after the required hours; split shift working-time arrangements, when work is done on the same day/shift with a break to rest and eat that is longer than the established maximum length of breaks to rest and eat and individualised working-time arrangements.

The LC allows employees to agree with their employer on a part-time basis, but most importantly, gives the employee the opportunity to return to full-time employment. The employer must accept the request of an employee on a part-time job if the employee's request is based on a medical opinion that the employee is in a state of health, disability or need to care for a family member, including a pregnant woman, a woman who has recently given birth, a breastfeeding woman, one parent raising a child under fourteen or a disabled child under the age of eighteen. If the employer cannot prove that it would cause excessive costs due to production necessity or the specifics of work organisation, the employer must satisfy an employee's request to work at least one-fifth of standard working hours remotely when said is requested by an employee who is pregnant, who recently gave birth, or who is breast feeding, an employee who is raising a child under the age of three, or an employee who is a single parent raising a child under the age of 14 or a disabled child under the age of 18. **The right to free time off for family needs** - during the workday/shift, unpaid time off may be granted at the employee's request and with the employer's consent for the employee to take care of personal matters. The parties to an employment contract may agree to move working time to another workday/shift, as long as the maximum working time and minimum rest period requirements are not infringed upon.

In the implementation of the LC and the Law on Safety and Health at Work of the Republic of Lithuania, the Description of the labour conditions of women before and after pregnancy and breastfeeding women was drawn up and approved that came into effect from 1 July 2017.

According to the Law on Employment of the Republic of Lithuania, pregnant women, the child's mother (adoptive mother), the child's guardian, caretaker and persons who actually raise a child (adoptive child) under the age of 8 years or a disabled child (adoptive child) under the age of 18, and persons caring for the sick or disabled family members who have been established with the need for regular care or nursing, victims of human trafficking who have completed psychological social and/or vocational rehabilitation programmes are assigned to the group of individuals receiving additional support. These target groups could be subject to active labour market policy measures: employment subsidies, work rotation, public works, support for self-employment, vocational training. The Law on Employment provides that these groups of people may be trained in employment promotion programmes.

The Action Plan for the Implementation of the **National Programme of Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for 2015-2021** for the period of 2018-2021 establishes the goals to reduce sectoral and occupational segregation by gender, to increase women's, especially in rural areas, business opportunities and development, to encourage women's motivation and ability to participate in decision-making, to create women's career friendly environment, to encourage girls and boys to choose "unconventional women and men" fields of study, professions. To achieve these goals it is envisaged to support initiatives to reduce gender segregation and its causes and effects; to identify

the reasons why students are still gender-segregated in technology lessons and make suggestions to teachers on measures to help them tackle gender issues in technology lessons; to disseminate information on equal opportunities at work to social partners through channels available to the State Labour Inspectorate; to implement regional initiatives to increase women's entrepreneurship, financial literacy and other competences; to encourage women to start their own businesses; to encourage low-skilled women to obtain qualifications or competences needed in the labour market; to support initiatives for work-life balance.

In 2016, the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, in co-operation with the Association of Municipalities of Lithuania and the Lithuanian Women's Lobbying Organisation, has started to implement the project "**Municipal Success Code — Gender Equality**", initiated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, and financed by the European Structural Funds. The purpose of the project is to systematically seek to reduce the gender gap in municipalities by raising public awareness of gender equality issues, identifying the factors determining the equality of women and men and developing and implementing targeted measures to ensure equal opportunities. The project provides for performing gender analysis in municipalities, developing practical recommendations for municipalities on targeted measures, and organisation of trainings for representatives of municipal administrations and enterprises subordinate to municipal administrations on the integration of equal opportunities, planning of targeted measures, implementation and monitoring of the effects. In order to assess the situation of women and men in municipalities, a list of gender equality indicators in municipalities was prepared in 2017, on the basis of which an electronic map would be developed to identify gender gaps and define the need for appropriate targeted measures in 9 areas: demography, knowledge, participation in the labour market, access to social services, economic power (resources), authorities and decision-making, health and health services, domestic violence and time. The project will continue until December 2019.

To address occupational segregation and increase women participation in high-income sectors that are traditionally occupied by men, Lithuania has introduced „**Women go tech**“ programme. Women Go Tech is an initiative by Global Shapers Vilnius Hub with the goal to attract more women to the ICT (Information Technology Sector) through mentorship from top industry leaders. The mentorship programme has attracted highly influential tech companies to become official Women Go Tech partners: leading ICT association in Lithuania, INFOBALT, and partners known in Lithuania and across Europe including Barclays, TransferGo, WIX, and Telia. The mentorship programme has a cycle of six months through which selected young women who successfully pass interviews and a background check are paired with successful C-level professionals who can guide them through the many possibilities and opportunities in the technology sector. Tête-à-tête meetings between the mentor and mentee are accompanied by monthly Women Go Tech community gatherings and events where women can network, learn new skills and share insights in the primarily man-dominated tech sector.