# INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SR VAWG'S REPORT ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND PROSTITUTION

Prepared by Lithuanian NGOs:

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*Alytus City Women's Crisis Center*

*Center for Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation*

*Klaipėda Social and Psychological Support Center*

*Missing Persons' Families Support Center*

*Men‘s Crisis Center.*

*Women Action Innovation Center*

1. ADDRESS THE DEMAND & PROSECUTE PERPETATORS – Lithuania should develop national strategies against demand for prostitution services and fully implement legal provisions against whose, who exploit human beings for prostitution or who purchased sex. Measures to address demand should involve cross-border cooperation and coordination at European and global levels.
2. DECRIMINALISE PERSONS IN PROSTITUTION - Lithuania should initiate a draft amendment to Article 487 of the Administrative Offences Code of the Republic of Lithuania, abolishing the administrative liability for prostitution as foreseen by the Resolution of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (16 December 2014, No. XII-1464).
3. STRENGTHEN SUPPORT TO VICTIMS & LISTEN TO SURVIVORS - Lithuania should develop exit programmes, including social, psychological, legal counselling and personal debt management have to be created to help victims to find an alternative way of living outside the prostitution. Recognise the experiences of women in prostitution as a meaningful and necessary assumption for the development of a legal base, the formation of an infrastructure for social help and entrenchment of a deeper understanding of this issue in society. To protect the most vulnerable persons – women and girls exploited in prostitution must be the duty of the state. All anti-trafficking interventions, including those of municipal administrations and their partners actions, should be designed in a human rights-based approach, thus ensuring that all efforts are made to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings and that the victims of trafficking be protected, assisted and compensated for the harm suffered.
4. STRENGTHEN FUNDINGS TO ORGANISATION SUPPORTING WOMEN. Lithuania should increase its financial supports to organisation providing services to women victims of sexual exploitation.
5. STRENGTHEN PREVENTION - Lithuania should include appropriate prevention and intervention measures in the curricula of members of the school community, such as teachers and other professionals working with children and young people, and pupils, to raise awareness aimed at changing attitudes of children and young people on the purchase/sale of a person, pornography, and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls in both the ordinary and the cyber space.
6. SUPPORT TO VICTIMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE - Lithuania should provide unconditionally and in a way that respects victims of violence rights, i.e., the availability of support, protection and assistance should not be conditional on the willingness or ability of victims to cooperate with law enforcement during investigations.
7. RECOGNITION AS VICTIMS OF A CRIME - In the case of gender-based violence, in accordance with Directive 2012/29/EU, which establishes essential standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, regardless of whether or not there are minor children present, first of all, all persons present in the environment (who may not necessarily have been directly involved at the time of the incident) have to be considered victims of violence, i.e., to be recognised as victims of a crime, thus ensuring their human rights.
8. A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH - All interventions in the field of domestic and non-domestic violence and the actions of the representatives of the institutions implementing the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence in Lithuania should be planned in accordance with a human rights-based approach.
9. CASE MANAGEMENT TO THE SPECIALISTS OF THE SPECIALISED COMPLEX SUPPORT CENTRES - In the case of gender-based violence, case management should be assigned to the specialists of the Specialised Complex Support Centres in Lithuania, with the participation of specialists required by other services.
10. CHANGES OF THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN CASES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE – Lithuania should change the legal framework in cases of sexual violence to include the absence of will (active consent).
11. A SPECIALISED SUPPORT MECHANISM - Lithuania should establish a specialised support mechanism (accessibility, trained professionals and tools (e.g., rape kits), one-stop-principle) for victims of sexual violence. Safe spaces for women to retreat for should be established as well.
12. AMEND OR SUPPLEMENT AN ARTICLE 145 OF THE CRIMINAL CODE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA - Lithuania should amend or supplement an Article 145 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania to include the term "systematic persecution of a person for the purpose of controlling him". It should identify the methods of psychological violence and acts of persecution, the impact on the victim, and the 'unwanted behaviour' as defined by law, measured in terms of frequency, duration and intensity.
13. SANCTIONS FOR THE PERSONS SUSPECTED OF PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE AND STALKING – Lithuania should provide the possibility of imposing a restriction of freedom on persons suspected of psychological violence and stalking (specifying the acts of stalking, the victim's assessment of the perpetrator's actions or of the circumstances of the event), thus ensuring assistance to those who have been subjected to stalking or victimised.