

# WOMEN'S ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS IN REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

Independent Report for the thirty-second Session  
of the Committee on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)

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WOMEN'S ISSUES  
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LITHUANIAN COALITION OF NON – GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR PROTECTION  
OF WOMEN'S HUMANS RIGHTS

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## KEY ISSUES AFFECTING WOMEN'S ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN LITHUANIA

*The report was prepared on the basis of information received from the questionnaire and consultation with women's groups at the grassroots level (unemployed and socially disadvantaged women) and in co-operation with informal **Lithuanian Coalition for Protection of Women's Human Rights** which unites 64 NGOs. We also have used the information and statistical data publicised in the publications: "**Women and Men in Lithuania**", Statistics Lithuania, 2003; "**Human Rights in Lithuania. Situation assessment**", publication supported by UNDP in Lithuania, 2002; "**Violence against women in Lithuania**", Women's Issues Information Centre, publication supported by UNDP in Lithuania, 1999; "**Trafficking in women: problems and decisions**" International Organization for Migration, Institute for Social Research, 2004"; "**Women in Lithuanian Society**" (G.Purvaneckiene, A.Purvaneckas, 2000).*

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### INTRODUCTION

This report concerns the article 3 of the CESCRR which declares that the States Parties undertake to ensure the equal rights of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the present Covenant.

During the last several years, the governmental steps to fulfil the obligations to implement the CESCRR (Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) to ensure the equal rights for men and women are favourable. Much has been done in the fields of legislation and development of the national machinery. However, a strategy, mechanisms, programs and funds *were not enough developed*. According to CESCRR philosophy we are now in the stage of the declaration of equal opportunities, but equal access and equal results need to be promoted more forcefully.

The Law on Equal Opportunities was adopted in 1999, but the system of implementation of the legislation and mechanism of protecting women's human rights are not sufficient enough to achieve optimal results. The main responsibility for policy making on gender equality to ensure implementation and coordination of equal opportunities for men and women since 2000 lies within the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. Respectively only one staff member in the Division of Labour Market and Equal Opportunities at the Ministry of Social Security and Labour have been appointed responsible for coordinating the implementation of the state policy on equal opportunities for women and men.

We would like to suggest consolidating and strengthening the existing governmental national mechanisms for gender equality, including through the provision of financial and human resources to carry out effectively their mandates. The existing group for promoting of gender equality in the Ministry of Social Security and Labour is small and it is difficult to achieve good results with these limited resources.

We suggest the creation of a special department on gender equality affairs under the direct responsibility of the Prime Minister Cabinet, with the status of Ministry. Perhaps this effort could be an interim measure to promote the adoption of gender equality.

Very important step forward the implementation of gender equality in Lithuania was done by Government in 2003 by adopting the "**National program for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2003-2004**". Unfortunately, the financial support for this program is very low, and there is no any continuation of the Program for years after 2004. That is why this document looks more like a "paper" document rather than the strategic document. The involvement of NGOs in implementing this program is also very low and is organised not in the general strategic basis, but occasionally.

**Inter-Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men** was established in year 2000 to coordinate the implementation of the gender mainstreaming policy. Representatives from all the 14 Ministries and two Departments are appointed to the members of the Commission. The objective of the Commission is to coordinate the activities of state institutions in the sphere of implementation the principle of equal rights and opportunities for men and women and to monitor the implementation of the creation of the National Program for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. The goal of the Commission establishment is also to analyse the situation of women and men, processes, programs, draw conclusions, remarks, notes and etc. and report to the Government. The Commission is accountable to the Minister of Social Security and Labour. Unfortunately, the role and involvement of social partners and NGOs in work of this Committee is not sufficient. The social partner and NGOs are only on advisory position and are invited occasionally; they are not constantly involved to the work of the Commission, that is why the social dialog is quite weak and it is not enough democratic space for NGOs to give their opinion and to influence public policy on gender equality issues.

### **NGO INVOLVEMENT AND FUNDING**

Lithuanian NGOs concern the insufficient funding of NGOs, including women's NGOs, which makes it difficult for them to build their capacities in order to fulfill their various roles and functions in supporting human rights of women and men in Lithuania.

In year 2000 the UN CEDAW Committee has recommended to Lithuanian Government "to develop clear criteria for rendering and ensuring governmental financial support on the national and local level for the work of women's NGOs". It also recommends that the "Government increase awareness among individuals and corporations regarding possible donations to women's organizations". Unfortunately, until now we do not have in Lithuania clear developed system of funding of NGOs. The Coalition of the Lithuanian NGOs for protection of women's human rights (Coalition unites 64 NGOs) has applied few time with the Declarations to Lithuanian Parliament and Government with concrete suggestion and requests to prepare the strategy for funding of women's NGOs, but we did not receive any reaction on this issues.

The necessity of providing assistance to NGOs working on gender equality issues in the manner prescribed by the law is clearly declared in the article 3 "Duty of State Government and Administration Institutions to Implement Equal Rights for Women and Men" on the Law of Equal Opportunities. That is why we can state that the Law of Equal Opportunity is not fully implemented in Lithuania and the role of social partners (NGOs) is not prospectively recognised at the Governmental level.

The democratic space for women's NGOs is very limited because no enough funds are available at the national, regional and local levels of the government to promote women's human rights and to implement "National Program for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2003-2004". There is very low practice of sponsoring or philanthropy in our country. The existing legislation is not conducive for the private sector to give to charity or to fund NGOs. Very many women's NGOs are at risk of cancelling their activities because of lack of funding. Although officials claim to fund approximately 50% of NGO activities, this figure is misleading. The existing legislation does not distinguish between pure NGOs working in the civil society and founded by the citizen's initiative and not-for-profit organisations, such as hospitals and nursing homes. Both of these are described as NGOs in governmental statistics for funding. However, the non-for-profit organisations mentioned above are founded by the government or municipalities and are fully supported by them. The civil NGOs receive minimal to no support from the government or municipalities. The statistics do not reflect this disparity and, therefore, "hide" the fact that civil NGOs are not supported by the government. Our investigation shows that funding of women's NGOs from the national or local government is around 5-7% of the required annual budget of the NGOs. The most of the funding is coming from the International or European projects.

## SOME FACTS FROM THE SOCIOLOGICAL SURVEY “HUMAN RIGHTS IN LITHUANIA”

Source “Human Rights in Lithuania: Situation Assessment”, Vilnius 2002

The respondents were asked to assess the extent to which human rights in Lithuania are violated.

	%
Violated occasionally	52
Violated systematically	39
Practically no violations	3
Don't know / difficult to answer	6

**A significant proportion of the respondents - 39% indicated that in Lithuania human rights are systematically violated**, another 52% indicated that they are violated occasionally. Only 3% stated that there are practically no or not any violations. Such results may cause serious concern.

Also, the respondents were asked to name five fields of human rights in which the most numerous problems are caused in Lithuania.

	%
The right to work and choice of employment	56.8
The right to timely and professional medical care	32.1
The right to fair pay for work	27.9
The right to free education	25.1
The right to social security	20.8

The right to work was mentioned most frequently – 56.8%. The high priority of the issue has been echoed in many sociologic researches. The Statistics Lithuania has also ascertained the relevance of the problem.

As for the rights of pregnant /raising young children women, **41.9%** of the respondents indicates that the protection of this right is poor and very poor (good and very good – 13.2%).

Institution's work, as regards ensuring the human rights in Lithuania, is evaluated similarly to a general population's trust in these institutions: the media is evaluated most favorably (58.4% - good), the NGOs (24.4% - good) , while the Parliament – most unfavorably (5% - good). The work of Government and courts was evaluated very low, as well (good - 8.1% and 10.1% accordingly).

In the research we can see that the opinion of the people on Lithuania's policy in human rights is clearly negative. This is confirmed by the results presented in the table below:

Do you agree or disagree with the statements on the human rights policy in Lithuania?	Agree, %	Disagree, %
The present human rights policy is better compared to the Soviet time	26.0	45.4
The present human rights policy meets requirements of European Union	6.7	43.2
The present human rights policy is better compared too the other Baltic states (Latvia and Estonia)	7.7	23.0
I am satisfied with the present Lithuania's human rights policy	9.3	55.5

People mostly disagreed with the first statement, especially – pre-retirement age people (55.1%), lower educated (50.8%), rural inhabitants (50.6%) living in district centers (50.5%), workers (51.5%), unemployed (59.4%).

**SOME GENERAL FACTS ON GENDER EQUALITY FOR WOMEN AND MEN IN 2002**  
*Women and Men in Lithuania”, Statistics Lithuania, 2003*

**Population and families**

- The number of women in Lithuania exceeds the number of men, i.e. there are **114** women per **100** men.
- Men aged 60 and older amount to **16%**, where as women aged 60 and older make up **24%**.
- The average life expectancy **78** years for women and **66** years for men.
- Divorced, widowed and single women make **up 48%** of all women, men - **39%**. The proportion of women without spouse is not diminishing.
- After divorces about 10 thousand children remained without one of parents (mostly with mother).
- National increase of population is minus for last ten years and is - **4732** for women and - **6326** for men in year 2002

**Educations**

- The number of women students in higher schools exceeds that of men students. There are **60%** of women students and **40%** of men students in higher schools. But among scientists **37%** are women and among doctors habillis just - **15%**.
- Distribution of students by gender is very diverse in different modules of education. Women students make up **75%** of those studying social services and services for individual persons, **79%** of those studying pedagogic and **79%** - health care. In transport and security services, though, men students make up **87%**, engineering - **81%**, computing - **76%**.
- The majority (**86%**) of pedagogues of general schools are women.

**Employment and Labour market**

- Economic activity of women is lower than that of men. Activity indicator of men is **74%**, while that of women - **66%**.
- Unemployment rate of men (15%) is higher than that of women (13%). Women have limited possibilities to combine family life with participation in economic activity. 86 thousand women or **14%** of all working women have part-time work (10% of men).
- The number of men and women by economic activity is rather varied. The majority of those working in **health care are women as well as in social work and education**, while men predominate in construction, electricity, gas and water supply.
- Managing positions in all economic activities are mainly occupied by men. For example, women constitute **86%** of secondary school pedagogues, though directors of these schools are primarily men (**62%**).
- Women's earning as percentage of men's is **81.2%**, in public sector 74.9% and in private sector- 85%.

**Violence and crime**

- Crime indicators among men are higher than among women. Among those accused as ones having committed a crime women make up **9%**, among imprisoned convicts - **4%**.

**Participation in administration and decision- taking**

- The number of women in the Seimas (Parliament) (**11%**) is markedly lower than that of men, in the Government (ministers vice-ministers and minister's advisers) - **28%**, in Municipality Councils - **21%**.
- More men than women have their own business. About **40%** of women have their own small and medium size enterprises.

## WOMEN IN POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE

Women make up 53.3% of the population, but their involvement in political life and public administration is very low. The statistics show that since independence the number of women in Parliament (Seimas) has not been more than 20% and is decreasing since last elections.

<b>Results of elections to the Parliament of Republic of Lithuania</b>	<b>Women, %</b>	<b>Men, %</b>
VII Parliament (1992)	7.1	92.9
VIII Parliament (1996)	18.0	82.0
IX Parliament (2000)	10.6	89.4

The results of the election to the municipal councils are also not very optimistic.

<b>Results of election to the Municipal Councils</b>	<b>Women, %</b>	<b>Men, %</b>
1995 03 25	19	81
1997 03 23	22	78
2000 03 19	18	82
2002 12 22	21	79

There have been 15 women Members of Parliament (Seimas) out of a total 141 (that makes up 10.6%) since the elections of the year 2000. All women MPs renewed Women's Parliamentary Group. This informal group was created in 1997. This group has no special budget but is responsible in principle for legislative initiatives and parliamentary procedures. At present there is no woman as a Head of any Parliament Committees out of the 14 Committees, and there are 6 women out of 15 who are Chairpersons in the Parliament Commissions (43%). There is still no equal women representation in political decision-making processes. Last elections (held in 2000) resulted in only 11% women MP's and 18% women Municipality Council members. There are political initiatives (mainly social democratic) to establish gender quotas in the elections. Now public discussions on that have been going on, but there seems to be lack of the political support to the idea.

There are 3 women ministers (Social Security and Labour, Finance, Culture) out of total of 13, which makes up 23%. 2 of the Prime Minister's advisers out of 8 are women (25%).

The Government of the Republic of Lithuania authorised the Statistics Lithuania to collect, analyze and publish gender-disaggregated data. The Statistics Lithuania is regularly publishing information on gender based data.

In the highest level of Officials (Level A-decision makers), only **33.4%** are women.

### **Recommendations:**

- Change the laws of elections (to Parliament and to Municipalities) by implementing quotas (suggestions at least 40% of candidates could be one gender).
- Implement a quota for governmental Officials (Level A) of 40% or 50% of one gender.
- Promote implementation of quotas in political parties (only the Social Democrats Party currently has a quota).
- Promote via mass media a positive image of women in politics and public administration.

## EDUCATION

In Lithuania, education is one of the spheres in which women's accomplishments have been tremendous. In fact, more women than men are seeking to advance their educations. It is notable that women put much effort into acquiring the highest level of education as possible, even more than men.

### Women and men by education attainment, %

Aged 10 years and older

	Women	Men
Higher	13.5	11.5
Higher non university	20.9	17.5
Secondary	26.1	28.4
Basic	12.5	17.9
Primary	21.3	20.3
Not finished primary	5.2	3.9
Not indicated	0.5	0.5

*2001 Population and Housing Census data*

In the 2002-2003 academic year, female students constituted **51%** of high school students, **59.8%** of college students and **61%** of university students.

Although these numbers are promising, there still remain barriers to full equality in this sphere.

1. The prior problem is still the school nonattendance. The law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania (2003 m. Nr. IX-1630) states that and State guarantees the education and education is compulsory till 16 years of age according to the general program of primary and secondary education. Children of this age, no attending school Lithuanian citizens and foreigners having permanent or temporary permit to live in the Republic of Lithuania are treated as no attending school. It is too complicated and almost impossible task for today's system of education administration to count all no attending school schoolchildren. In comparison with census figures of adequate kids' age, in spring of 2001, 1.2% of children were not attending schools. More than a half (60%) no attending school children were boys. 60% of non attendees were in cities and 40%- in country side.
2. In Lithuania still there is gender-segregated education system and the following statistic shows this statement.  
The bias in choice of subjects is common throughout vocational schools, colleges and universities. These choices are undoubtedly influenced by social stereotypes concerning "female" versus "male" interests and occupations. Men tend to study subjects that lead to higher-paying careers and stay away from fields such as education. There are few incentives, such as exemption from military service, for men to choose lower-paying vocations.

### The number of graduates from professional colleges, 2002

Fields of education (ISCED 1997)	Sex distribution, %	
	Women	Men
Teacher training and education science	88.7	11.3
Architecture and building	29.4	71.6
Health care	90.6	9.4
Social services	94.6	5.4
Personal services	82.3	17.7

### Number of students in colleges by fields of education

At the beginning of the 2002-2003 academic year

Fields of education (ISCED 1997)	Women, %	Men, %
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>37</b>
Education	90	10
Humanities and Arts	72	28
Social sciences, Business and Law	71	29
Science, Mathematics and Computing	20	80
Engineering Manufacturing and Construction	18	82
Agriculture and Veterinary	45	55
Health care and Welfare	89	11
Services	20	80

### Number of graduates from universities, 2002

Bachelor and professional programmes

Fields of education (ISCED 1997)	Women, %	Men, %
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>38</b>
Education	81	19
Humanities and Arts	75	25
Social sciences, Business and Law	60	40
Science, Mathematics and Computing	49	51
Engineering Manufacturing and Construction	36	64
Agriculture and Veterinary	50	50
Health care and Welfare	88	12
Services	54	46

3. There are more women with higher education in society; however, they have lower job positions and salaries. It is also related to the number of women in academic careers: Universities are not in a hurry to encourage women to seek academic careers.

### Scientists employment in R&D, their scientific degrees and academic titles, 2002

Without business sector

	Women, %	Men, %
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Doctors Habilis</b>	15	85
of which were with the title of:		
Professor	11	89
Docent	26	74
<b>Doctors</b>	41	59
of which were with the title of:		
Professor	16	84
Docent	35	65
<b>Professors (without scientific degree)</b>	12	88
<b>Docents (without scientific degree)</b>	30	70

4. Although more women are engaged in teaching and education, it is not women who determine the educational policy. Ministers of Education and Universities Rectors have been men. Headmasters and heads of education departments have mostly been men.

## Teachers by type of Schools

At the beginning of the 2002-2003 academic year

	Women, %	Men, %
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>22</b>
General schools	86	14
Vocational schools	66	34
Professional colleges	69	31
Colleges	73	27
Universities	43	57

5. There is not adequate support and encouragement for mothers who are returning students. These students require special programs, such as career counseling, to be successful in obtaining their education.

### Recommendations:

- To create a methodology of setting the exact number of non attending school children.
- Establish gender quotas for positions in education administration.
- Include gender equality subject into teachers training and school curricula.
- Development and support formal and non-formal adult education, including NGO activities and continuing education programs.
- Aid women with career counselling to support them in pursuing non-traditional professions.

### DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN LABOUR MARKET

The social, economic and political reforms of the postsocialist period have shaped important changes in public life. Additionally, these reforms created a new, open-market structure. Previously it was difficult to accurately assess the economic situation of women due to concealed unemployment in the "shadow economy" as well as unofficial wage earnings. Women are now free to choose if and in what sector to work and we are able to review social attitudes towards women in the workforce.

The study "Women in Lithuanian Society" (G.Purvaneckiene, A.Purvaneckas, 2000) shows that fewer and fewer women espouse the "asymmetrical" family model. In this model the wife is a homemaker and the husband provides for the family. In 1991 the "balanced" family model - where both parents work and take care of the children - was chosen by the majority of only one age group (30-39). By 1994 the majority of women in all age groups, except for the youngest ones, selected this as the ideal model. In 2000 there was no single age group where the majority of women chose to be a housewife. Men's family model choices have seen a few changes as well. In 1991 men in all age groups preferred the asymmetrical model, in 1994 only two age groups (30-39 and 50-59) chose this model, and by 2000 there was not a majority in any age group that picked the asymmetrical model.

Unemployment is a major problem in our society, especially for women. The official labour exchange data is not relevant to real life. In addition to the official unemployment rate, there is hidden unemployment and informal employment. It is important to note that in Lithuania, the gap between survey data and labour exchange data on unemployment rate is the one of the widest in Europe. The real unemployment rate is at least twice higher than the official rate (approximately 20%). The women's unemployment situation for certain groups is worse than for men. For example, even official statistics shows that more better educated women than men are unemployed.

### Unemployed by education, 2002

	Women, %	Men, %
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Higher and professional colleges	15.0	9.6
Vocational post secondary and techniques	30.8	21.4
Upper secondary	38.9	39.7
Lower secondary	14.7	26.3
Primary	0.6	3.0

For instance, among unemployed women with university and college education make up 15% in compare with 9.6% for men. The main forms of discrimination against women in the labour market include discrimination by age, difference in salary (men's salaries are 1.4 times higher than women's), inequality in management positions, and discrimination against young women returning from maternity leave.

Official statistics do not reflected unemployment level among pregnant women, mothers of young children.

Currently unemployment is the key reason for poverty in Lithuania. Levels of unemployment, long-term unemployment, and youth unemployment are twice higher than the same average figures of the EU. Unemployment prevents people from earning income, but also creates continuous poverty, suppresses wage growth and encourages the most promising among the population to emigrate. Especially high level of emigration is among young specialists or students and it is very serious problem now in Lithuania.

Access to free re-training for the unemployed is limited because of lack of funds for re-training. It creates also the bad practice then the labour exchange office requires in advance a three-part agreement among the labour exchange office, the future employer and an unemployed person who needs training. To have this three-part agreement is not strongly stressed in the law; unfortunately, the labour exchange office very often requires such an agreement in order for the unemployed to join free training courses relevant to the current labour market demands, such as new information technology, accounting, business administration, etc. These existing practices decrease the possibility for re-training especially for long-term unemployed women and women in age. Because of existing age discrimination practices, it is nearly impossible to obtain this agreement in advance. This undemocratic restriction makes access to modern free courses impossible even for unemployed women over 40 years old and those who have been unemployed for a long time (more than two years).

Unemployment benefits are very low (about US\$ 40-60) and only for six months. For very many women, especially those over 45 years of age, single women, and the long-term unemployed, unemployment is not only a psychological problem; it is a matter of physical survival. Unemployment and a poor economic situation lead to poverty, prostitution, depression, and even suicide. The links between unemployment and psychological problems are often raised in discussion with unemployed and socially disadvantaged groups. Labour exchange offices usually organise only vocational training or retraining courses (long-term courses), but there is a great demand of the short and even non-formal courses helping to increase self-esteem and obtain job-seeking skills. In the situation of lack of funds, the short-term courses can increase the access for training, giving chance for employment and will be very effective.

As a consequence of unemployment, many women become active in the black market (informal employment). In this case, they lose their rights to social security and health insurance. All in all, unemployment leads to the feminisation of poverty. We can say that unemployment became a type of social (structural) violence against women. Unfortunately,

we do not have the appropriate research of all kinds of discrimination and violence against women in the labour market.

The national government and municipalities do not pay enough attention to solving the problems of the unemployed.

From 1991-1995 the total number of employed women decreased by 19%. After Lithuania regained independence, many women decided to stop work to become homemakers, a choice which had been impossible in Soviet times. By the end of 1998, however, more women went back to work due to the fiscal crash and the inability of families to survive on one salary. Current economic activity of women (66%) is lower than that of men (73%).

#### **Labour force activity rate, employment rate, unemployment rate, 2002 (ages 15-64)**

	<b>Women, %</b>	<b>Men, %</b>
Activity rate	65.7	73.2
Employment rate	57.1	62.3
Unemployment rate	12.9	14.6

Men are also more active as employers or self-employed.

#### **Employed population by professional status, 2002**

	<b>Women, %</b>	<b>Men, %</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.7</b>	<b>50.3</b>
Employees	51.6	48.4
Employers and self employed	38.3	61.7

Employment rate for women is lower than for men and especially for the age 50-64.

#### **Employment rate by age, 2002**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Women, %</b>	<b>Men, %</b>
<b>15-64</b>	<b>57.1</b>	<b>62.3</b>
15-24	20.6	26.5
25-49	76.5	79.1
50-64	46.7	58.2
65+	2.9	7.3

Women have limited possibilities to combine family life with participation in economic activity. 85.5 thousand women or 12% of all working women have a part-time job (9% of men).

Women are always asked about children and their age when interviewed for a job, while men are never asked such questions.

The economic reforms and the processes of privatization in Lithuania have resulted in an extensive flow from employment in the state sector to the private sector. During 1990 – 2002 the total number of people employed in state enterprises, institutions and organisations decreased from 1,332,900 to 422,700 - a decline of almost 32%. In contrast, the number of people employed in private enterprises almost doubled from 564,700 to 983,100. It should be noted that more than a half (around 64%) employees from the state sector are women, while men are more active in the private sector. (*Women and men in Lithuania 2002, Statistics Lithuania, 2003*)

Women are more employed in the public sector than men are, but the salary of women is lower than for men, so we can say that even in the public sector women are working in low positions, and managing positions are mostly occupied by men.

### Employed population by sector, 2002

	Women, %	Men, %
Public sector	64.3	35.7
Private sector	43.3	56.7

What are the reasons that more women work in the public sector? One of the reasons is that the usual “female” spheres of economy (health care, education, social sector) remained public in the society with patriarchal attitudes, the other – that these are the lowest paid positions and men are not eager to work there. Such distributions make women and men segregation in the labour market even deeper. Fewer women than men work overtime, as the women are traditionally responsible for the childcare, taking children from the kindergarten, school, etc.

We also have a problem with the wage gap and with the position of women in the labour market in general. The following statistics show that the wage gap slowly increased for the last three years and women’s earnings are 81.2% of men’s in year 2002. It is also important to stress that in the public sector this gap is higher than in the private sector.

### Employees by received actual wages and salaries, 2002, EUR

Earnings (in EURO)	Women	Men	Sex distribution, %	
	%	%	Women	Men
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>51.6</b>	<b>48.4</b>
<124	33.4	26.0	57.8	42.2
125-174	24.5	21.5	54.9	45.1
175-290	23.4	30.3	45.2	54.8
291-434	5.4	7.0	45.0	55.0
435-579	1.1	2.0	37.1	62.9
580>	0.9	1.9	33.1	66.9
No answer	11.3	11.3	51.6	48.4

It is very important to stress that more women (**33.4%**) than men (26%) receive very low salary (less than 430 Lt or **124 EURO**) and twice more men than women receive salary more than 2000 Lt or 580 EUR.

Having in mind that women generally receive a better education, it would seem that their prospects in the labour market should be more promising. However, the level of education does not influence the achievements of the employed women and men in the labour market. Like in many other countries, horizontal as well as vertical labour market segmentation according to the gender is characteristic to the Lithuanian labour market. This means that the majority of women work in less prestigious (and lower paid) spheres of economy, as well as working in the same spheres of economy occupies lower positions (or do the job that is lower paid). In the spheres of economy with the lowest wages, the majority of the workers are women. Vertical segmentation according to gender is well illustrated by the average women and men salary comparison in different spheres of economy. The average women’s salary in the public sector made up 75% of men’s salary in the same sector, in the private sector – 85% respectively. The average gross salary of a woman worker made up 81% of a man worker salary in year 2002. The figures show that there isn’t a single sphere of economy where the average wage would exceed the men’s average wage. That does not mean that women get paid less for the same work. This only means that in the same spheres of economy women occupy lower positions. The differences in women and men wages are determined by a lot of

factors, the main of which is the structure of women and men employment, their distribution according to the spheres of economy and worker categories, professional structure (distribution according to the technical and economic profile), the level of competence. The indicated factors are of social and economic character, whereas legal basis determining the wage does not create conditions for women's discrimination in Lithuania.

<b>Employed population by economic activity, 2002</b>	<b>Women, %</b>	<b>Men, %</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.7</b>	<b>50.3</b>
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	39.5	60.5
Industry	49.8	50.2
Electricity, gas and water supply	<b>15.4</b>	<b>84.6</b>
Construction	9.7	90.3
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor-vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods	50.9	49.1
Hotel and restaurants	<b>77.7</b>	<b>22.3</b>
Transport, storage and communication	27.5	72.5
Financial intermediation	60.8	39.2
Real estate, renting and business activities	51.2	48.8
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	49.7	50.3
Education	<b>78.6</b>	<b>21.1</b>
Health and social work	<b>85.1</b>	<b>14.9</b>
Other community, social and personal service activities	58.4	41.6
Activity of private house-holds with paid personnel	48.8	51.2
Extra-territorial organisations and bodies	100	-

#### **Recommended measures:**

- Implement temporary special measures to ensure the free access to re-training for women 45 and older with college and higher education, for single mothers, for young women returning after maternity leave, and for long-term unemployed women. The labour market will receive a well-educated labour force, which will benefit the socio-economic development of the country.
- Make an amendment to the Law of Supporting of Unemployed to increase the period of receiving social benefits for those with special needs (who were mentioned above) and to cancel the obligatory requirement of the three-part employment agreement to enable the unemployed to receive free re-training.
- Initiate independent research in the field of unemployment and define the type of discrimination against woman in the labour market.
- Encourage entrepreneurship among women by making available long-term credits and low interest rates.
- Ensure vocational reintegration, counselling services, and proper work conditions and improve the child-care for women returning from maternity leave. Promote the family-friendly corporations.
- Increase funding for training unemployed women to increase self-esteem, to facilitate women's participation in the labour market, to promote empowerment, to ensure their personal development and active citizenship. Use the NGOs' experience and involve them in offering such non-formal training.
- Increase the number of short-term, concentrated non-formal courses to increase re-training accessibility and enhance employability. Increase NGOs involvement in re-training of unemployed women, especially in providing short-term non-formal courses.

## HEALTH CARE AND FAMILY PLANNING

The difference between life expectancy of women and men in Lithuania is about 10 years. Nevertheless, women do have specific health problems, many of each are related to the reproduction. The problem of anaemia during the pregnancy is described in the governmental report. But it is important to stress that such a high rate of anaemia is most likely associated with insufficient nutrition, which is more the social problem than a medical one, but a serious health problem nonetheless. Another problem is a high rate of abortions. Abortions remain an outstanding problem in Lithuania. In cases of unplanned pregnancies more than a third of all women would use the possibility of having an abortion performed.

### Abortions (per 100 live births)

1995	2000	2001	2002
76.4	48.1	44.0	42.5

We also can mention that population started to decrease in 1995 and has lasted during following five years.

### Births, deaths and natural increase of population

Year	Live births (thousand)		Deaths (thousand)		Natural increase (thousand)	
	Girls	Boys	Women	Men	Women	Men
1990	27.7	29.1	19.2	20.6	8.6	8.5
1995	20.0	21.2	21.0	24.3	-1.0	-3.1
2000	16.5	17.7	18.5	20.4	-2.0	-2.7
2001	15.4	16.1	18.8	21.6	-3.4	-5.4
2002	14.5	15.5	19.3	21.8	-4.7	-6.3

### Natural increase (thousand)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
-3.7	-3.5	-4.8	-8.8	-11

There is also an increasing in divorces in compare with year 1989.

Women and men by marital status 15 years and older, %	1989		2001	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Single (never married)	18.7	24.6	21.1	28.2
Married	58.9	68.1	51.6	60.7
Widowed	15.6	2.7	17.0	3.2
Divorced	<b>6.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>7.8</b>
Not indicated	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1
<b>Total, %</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The single mothers with children – 4.5%, and single fathers with children – 0.3%.

The approach of the Lithuanian people to the family and the gender roles models is modernizing, however, remains pronatalist. The majority of county's inhabitants believe that a woman's life is meaningful only when she gives birth to children. People of Lithuania attach special significance to children. However, the number of people who want to have (more) children is going down, and so does the birth rate. As the reason for their unwillingness to have children, the people of Lithuania pointed out the poor financial situation and financial difficulties. The most important circumstances viewed as sufficient to initiate divorce by the

Lithuanian people are aggressive behaviour of the spouse and alcohol abuse. The people of Lithuania considered work a more important part of their lives. Nevertheless, the opinion that, given the shortage of jobs, employment should primarily be provided to men, is still prevailing. Most Lithuanian men think that in the situation of shortage of jobs, they have priority right to employ. (*"Women in Lithuanian Society"* G.Purvaneckiene, A.Purvaneckas, 2000).

All these statistics shows that the governmental policy regarding young families and even young mothers is not sufficient. The young families do not feel safe to have the children because:

- it is not enough financial help for young families;
- there is no special support for young mothers to integrate them to the labour market after the maternity leave;
- the child care system does not protect the young mothers which has un-defined working day (for example, policewomen, women working in hotel business, in the super-markets, ect.). They do not have the possibility to leave a child in the child-care institution for the case of emergency at work.

That is why many young women do not feel safe at the work place and are afraid for their carrier. So, we can state that the Government has to put more attention for creation of the family-friendly working surroundings and develop the special measures towards the young families.

The Lithuanian NGOs would like to suggest that the family issue has to be one of the most important priorities of the governmental strategy. We propose to prepare the concept of family policy, to create and to support programmes promoting family and work balance and to allot means to implement valuably grounded programmes, involving NGOs as an active social partner and implementer. The developing of the mass media campaign in order to revitalize family values will be highly respected.

#### **ELDERLY WOMEN**

The poor economic situation primary affects the already low social status of elderly women. The low income (including pension) leads the elderly women toward poverty, social exclusion, and even suicide. The governmental support is not sufficient to satisfy even their basic needs; the average pension they receive is US\$ 70 per month. It is usually impossible to exist from this money without additional financial support from the relatives. The women's pensions are often lower then men's because their salaries also were lower. The situation for women over 60 is extremely difficult because usually they are already alone.

The opinion of the women's NGOs is that the government needs to give more attention and financial support to develop the services for elderly people at home. Elderly people, if they receive appropriate help at home, prefer to stay at home then use the governmental houses for elderly people.

The problem of pensions for women with 5 and more children has appeared recently as in Soviet time it was enough to have 15 years working probation to receive the pension, but nowadays the new rules allow increasing of pension only for women who have 20 years working probation. So, the women who have grow up 5 and more children, and have less that 20 years work probation the pensions are not increasing. The Lithuanian's NGOs opinion is that it is a discrimination against these women, because now then we became the members of the EU, pension will grow up constantly and these elderly women with 5 and more children will be out of this process and will lead to their poverty.

The elderly women on age 55-59 have very low work opportunities in Lithuania; by this reason usually they even do not register in the labour office as unemployed. That is why the official statistic for elderly women is not reflecting the real unemployment situation.

We can stress unsafe situation for elderly women especially in rural areas where women live alone in small back-blocks. We have recently few cases of plundering and even killing of elderly women by reason of stealing their money (pension).

It is not very well developed rehabilitation services, social services and care at home for elderly people having chronic or old-age illnesses. They have possibilities to stay at the state nursing house only for 4 months a year, and after this period they have to return home and the main responsibility for their care is on the shoulders of relatives if pension is more than 97.60 EUR (337 LT) . In case if pension is less than 97.60 EURO they can have the social helper twice a week to buying products, cooking, cleaning. But if pension is more than 97.60 EUR (but still very-low) these elderly people have to pay for all these services and these services are not cheap. There is not any day centres, social services at home or static nursing house for the elderly with Alzheimer illness.

It is very low educational possibilities for elderly women to be trained to work with ICT (PC, Internet). It creates their social exclusion and decrease the possibility to get the jobs.

**Recommended measures:**

- Increase governmental support for single women over 60 (increase pension, social benefits, governmental subsidies in transportation and utilities, etc.).
- Create conditions for safe living (for example, increase services at home, to provide free legal consultations, increase the number of hospices).
- Increase the social involvement of elderly women by reintegrating them into society through training and by involving as volunteers with NGO activities, by creating access to new technology, by supporting NGO activities for elderly women, etc.).
- Create the governmental fund to support the activities of NGOs for elderly people.

**RURAL WOMAN**

During the period of transition to the market economy, large collective farms were broken down and many small private farms were created. The small farmers have specific problems and needs, and women have been especially affected by the situation as small farms are not competitive in the market. Women have to work very hard because there is not enough agricultural machinery and low interest loans are not available to them.

There are a growing number of disadvantaged families in the rural areas, and the general population has become older (pensioners) as the younger people leave in search of other opportunities. Rural women pensioners make up 33% of the rural population compared to 17% male pensioners. In the rural population, 38% of women have a very low income (EUR 41-81 per month) compared with 35% of men. Twenty percent of women earn less than EUR 41 per month, compared with 15% of men.

Of the entire population, only 11% of those with higher education live in rural areas as opposed to 89% residing in cities. Of all children who do not attend school, 85% reside in rural areas. Additionally, there is a limited market for agricultural products and handicrafts and there is a lack of information and re-training possibilities to join the modern labour force.

The majority of farmers do not pay social insurance contribution, because small farmers can provide themselves with essential food products, but their incomes are so meagre that they cannot afford to pay voluntary social insurance payment. As a consequence, most will not be eligible for old age pensions and will not receive suitable health care.

**Recommended measures:**

- Create special programs and funds to help rural women to survive and develop their business (for example, rural tourism).
- Develop training, initiate projects to promote small agricultural businesses, assist rural women with credits, and promote the marketing of agricultural products and handcrafts through new technologies and the Internet.
- Establish women resource centres to provide the needed assistance to rural women.

## **POVERTY**

One of the problems in Lithuania is poverty feminisation. The research shows that those families of women and children are one of the poorest resident groups. The level of poverty in such families reaches 26 %. The major part of the income there are usually allowances; a housemother generally doesn't work or receives poor income for the work she does. The children in such families aren't usually provided with sufficient education. Also, there is a possibility that their families will be in great necessity in the future. Therefore, meanwhile there are a lot of debates on poverty feminisation as women's position in labour market is especially important.

## **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

Violence constitutes one of the most actual problems in Lithuania. Most people of Lithuania have suffered from violence at least once in their life. Males usually experience violence in public places, boys in parents' families. Women usually are victims of sexual violence or violence in their own family.

### **Domestic violence**

Violence against women and especially domestic violence is one of the two main biggest problems, which women face in nowadays Lithuania. Unfortunately there is no yet official statistics available on this issue. However victimological survey carried out in 1997 (initiated by the Women's Issues Information Centre was conducted by the company "Baltic Survey, LTD.") revealed that 63,3% of adult women in Lithuania, in the age from 16 and over had experienced at least once either physical, sexual violence or threats, 42.4% of women, who were married or lived together with partners without registration of wedlock, had experienced either physical, sexual violence or threats from their husbands or partners once in the least. According to the data of the survey, initiated by Educational campaign for women "Life free of violence" supported by the UNIFEM in 2002 by the, 82% of women-respondents over 16 years of age had experienced psychological violence or compulsion in the family, 35% - physical abuse. 87% of all respondents stated that violence against women in the family in Lithuania exists (initiated by the Women's Issues Information Centre, conducted by Market research Company "Spinter").

Violence based on gender conflict, such as battering or any other domestic violence, sexual devaluation and abuse, trafficking in women and children, forced prostitution and sexual harassment are incompatible with honour and dignity of a person. Lithuanian legislation provides for sanctions on violence. Punishment for violence against persons in various spheres of life is stipulated in respective articles of the Penal Code of the Republic of Lithuania - for murder, for body damage, for rape or any other physical abuse. Violence in the society is a physical, psychological or sexual abuse that victims suffer in public life, not in the family. But no special norms are set for the responsibility on violence exceptionally in the family, whereas victims of violence in the family in most cases are women. Legislation does not provide for a definition of violence in the family.

There is lack of high-skilled officials, capable to assess situations of domestic conflicts, to find out sources for such behaviour and to assist victims or counsel population in this field; insufficient training for judges, police officials, social teachers and social workers and doctors

capable of dealing with violent men. Police and courts are avoiding the cases of domestic violence unless the victim is severely beaten or killed. All possible police measures against the perpetrator are very restricted and underused to protect the victim of violence.

The network of crisis centres providing support to victims of violence is insufficient. Many crisis centres were established and are operating on the initiative of non-governmental organisations. According to the data gathered by Women's Issues Information Centre, now there are 15 Crisis Centres and 6 Shelters for battered women, but they do not cover whole territory of the country and only 2 of them are supported by Municipalities. Women victims of violence lack information on the assistance available.

Crisis centres providing support to the victims of violence and working with perpetrators should be established following territorial principle with active participation of municipalities. One Men's Crisis and Information Centre is not sufficient.

Multiplex approach towards violence, covering support to violence victims, application of sanctions on perpetrators, awareness raising of public, specialists and violence victims, education and training, law enforcement systems, strengthening the role of legal institutions, health care, is still rather limited. Therefore, it is obvious there is lack of appropriate complex programmes addressing the issues and covering the respective areas including coordination of actions of various public and non-governmental institutions.

#### **Recommended measures:**

- Adopt the Law on Domestic Violence.
- Prepare and adopt Amendments to Laws on Restricting Orders for perpetrator.
- Ensure the run of at least 1 Shelter for victims of domestic violence and trafficking in each Country supported by Municipality.
- Apply multiplex approach of judges, police officials, doctors, social workers, lawyers, NGOs activist in helping victim of domestic violence.

#### **TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN**

Trafficking in women constitutes violation of human rights and infringement of basic principles of the rule of law and democracy. It threatens our common interest in upholding democratic values, human rights and equality. Trafficking in women is a serious gender equality problem and one of the most violent expressions of the suppression of women. According to the experts' estimation, the scale of trafficking in women in Lithuania is the biggest in the Baltic States.

We can state that Lithuania became the country of women's export and transit between Eastern and Central European countries as well. Poverty and unemployment force many women into prostitution. According to the public opinion research conducted by International Organization for Migration, even 75% of Lithuanian people indicate the search of the possibilities to earn money as the reason to leave the country, 45% - no perspectives, 56% of people think women leave because they expect to have quick and large earnings.

Different sources suggest that women from different social-demographical levels are involved in sex-industry, although main part is formed by young girls and women (average age – 24.5 years old) from so called risk groups.

At present, the main way to involve Lithuanian women and girls into foreign sex industry is the deceit and promises. The public opinion poll proved that people know little about the reliable sources of information that could be used while looking for a job abroad: Lithuanians would rather trust recommendations of relatives, friends and acquaintances, and it is one of the most frequent ways used to recruit women for sale.

Speaking about assistance to the victims of trafficking in women, the situation is really problematic: nearly one fourth of Lithuanian people would not know what to do or would not do

anything if their relative or close friend would be abducted to a foreign country to work as a prostitute.

Experts claim that the geography trafficking in women from Lithuania is changing: if earlier it was Israel, Greece, United Arab Emirates, and Turkey, now main flows extend to Germany, Holland, Great Britain, France, Sweden, and Spain. Some countries, for example Germany, are viewed not only as the main destination countries but also as transit countries where victims of trafficking in women are resold to other countries – Italy, Spain, Turkey etc.

One of the problems in dealing with trafficking issues in Lithuania is lack of statistics and reintegration of victims into the society. As a public opinion survey done in 2002 by request of International Organization for Migration (IOM) suggests, up to 53.4% of Lithuanian people think “many” or “very many” girls are trafficked abroad to work as prostitutes by deceit, and 6.7% of people face this phenomenon in their close social environment, i.e. there were attempts made to traffic their close friend, relative, colleague, acquaintance. (*“Trafficking in women: problems and decisions” IOM, Institute for Social Research, 2004*).

It would have been possible to avoid many social problems, including trafficking in women, if the ways for them to appear had been blocked, if broad and purposeful preventive work had been performed. At the moment prevention of trafficking in women is often carried out among potential victims – groups of socially vulnerable young girls and women. But it is also necessary to aim at the reduction of demand, form general negative attitude towards human sale, organise education of the specialists working with the victims and potential victims of trafficking in women.

#### **Recommended measures:**

- Form the Council of state employees, NGO representatives to form sustainable strategy fighting against drugs and trafficking foreseeing financial and other sources.
- Create psychical help and psychosocial rehabilitation system for victims of domestic violence and trafficking and train the specialists.
- Establish the special task force at the crime police office to fight trafficking.
- Establish information and methodology data base (strategic information should be available on sex and trafficking to prevent trafficking in human beings).
- Establish the state search system of missing persons.

## GENERAL REMARKS

1. There is little awareness at the grassroots level about CESCER in Lithuania. Even leaders of well-known women's NGOs do not know about CESCER and the possibilities to use the CESCER for protecting of women's rights. We do not have experts and trainers on the mater. We need more awareness campaigns and seminars on the CESCER for grassroots level to organise the monitoring of the implementation of the CESCER by community.
2. There is no independent research in all kinds of violence and discrimination against women. In order to be able to promote women's rights effectively, it is important to realize what kinds of discrimination exist in Lithuania to establish the priorities to address.
3. Despite having a law on equal opportunities, there is no effective mechanism to make this law work at the grassroots level for women. There are no special funds available in the governmental budget to implement the law in grass-root level. It is necessary to improve the infrastructure to implement this law at all levels (government, county, municipality and NGOs) and to strengthen the social dialog.
4. We also propose to ratify the following articles of the European social charter:  
Article. 23. Right of the old-aged persons for social protection.  
Article 31. Right to have housing. In order to ensure effective implementation the right to have housing the Government will be obligated to take measures to make the price of housing affordable for those who have not enough means.