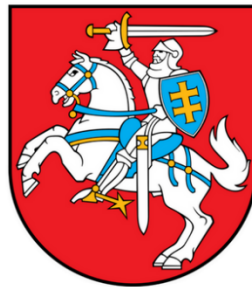


**Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson of the Republic of Lithuania (OEEO)**  
Submitted on 15 July 2021

**Independent Submission of the National Equality Body  
for the Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (3<sup>rd</sup> cycle)  
Lithuania**

*The submission can be freely posted on the OHCHR website for public information purposes*

Submitting Institution:



OFFICE OF THE EQUAL  
OPPORTUNITIES OMBUDSPERSON

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**About the Office**

The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson (hereinafter the Office or the OEEO) is a national equality body established in 1999. The Office performs a quasi-judicial function by investigating individual complaints on alleged instances of discrimination on the grounds covered by the *Law on Equal Treatment*<sup>i</sup> and the *Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men*<sup>ii</sup>. Based on the new edition of the *Law*,<sup>iii</sup> which came into effect on 1 January 2017, the Office also carries out preventive and educational activities and dissemination of equal opportunities (e.g. awareness raising campaigns). In addition, the Office performs independent research, related to discrimination, publishes independent reports, and independent surveys on the situation of discrimination, and provides conclusions and recommendations concerning the improvement of legal acts and priorities in the implementation of equal opportunities policy. The Office is considered a mixed-type national equality body, combining tribunal-type and promotional-type functions.

## **Legislation On Equal Opportunities**

### **Referring to recommendations 100.47, 100.50, 100.78, 100.84, 100.94**

1. The Law on Equal Treatment (LET) prohibits different forms of discrimination on 14 grounds. It lacks clear prohibition of harassment, intersectional discrimination, and precision in setting the duty to ensure reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities in employment and education in line with the UN CRPD. The Law also does not prohibit discrimination on the grounds of family status and gender identity. Moreover, the UN CERD recommended to add the grounds of skin colour and descent.<sup>iv</sup>
2. Many discriminatory situations arise from systematic discrimination. The Venice Principles emphasised the role of Ombud's institutions to challenge the constitutionality of laws after investigation. Such right is ensured to the Seimas Ombudsperson, but not OEOO.
3. The recommendatory decisions by the OEOO are often challenged at the Administrative Disputes' Commission or courts. According to the ECRI, it should be possible to appeal to courts against legally binding final decisions of the equality body. Non-binding recommendations should not be subject to appeal.<sup>v</sup>

### **Recommendations**

Ensure that non-provision of reasonable accommodation in employment and education is recognised as discrimination in line with the UN CRPD and EU directives.

Expand protection from harassment in the field of goods and services and recognise intersectional discrimination.

Include family status, skin colour and gender identity among protected grounds under the LET. Incorporate registered partners in the definition of "family members"<sup>vi</sup>.

Grant the right to the OEOO to challenge the constitutionality of laws and regulations in the Constitutional Court either directly or through the Parliament.

## **Strategic Documents on Human Rights**

### **Referring to recommendations 100.37-39, 100.44, 100.47, 100.55, 100.60, 100.81 100.107**

4. The Government implements several national strategic documents concerning the realisation of equal opportunities.<sup>vii</sup> The Action Plan on the Promotion of Non-discrimination is the key public policy document, however, it lacks financing, clear strategic goals, and effective measures.
5. The Office is concerned that horizontal mainstreaming measures in policy documents would replace the specialised strategic documents<sup>viii</sup> entirely instead of supplementing each other<sup>ix</sup>.

### **Recommendations**

Continue specialised strategic documents together with equal opportunities mainstreaming measures.<sup>x</sup>

Foresee adequate measures for migrant integration, combating and prevention of gender-based violence, ensuring gender equality, protection from discrimination on various grounds, among them – sexual orientation and gender identity.

## **Gender Equality**

### **Referring to recommendation 100.49**

6. In 2020, the unadjusted gender pay gap in Lithuania was 12.1 %.<sup>xi, xii</sup> Decomposition of the gender pay gap reveals that Lithuania has the biggest unexplained gender pay gap (24.2 %) among EU countries, meaning that the most important factors driving the gap cannot be explained by objective factors such as education, occupation, or job experience and thus might be related to subjective circumstances, for instance, negotiating skills, personal abilities, discrimination, etc.<sup>xiii</sup>

### **Recommendations**

Increase pay equity by adopting higher pay transparency standards, e. g. as foreseen in the Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>xiv</sup>.

### **Referring to recommendation 100.48**

7. Serious obstacles to work-life balance complicate women's career development and equal opportunities in the labour market despite the smallest gender employment gap (1.7 %) in the EU.<sup>xv</sup> Also, significantly more women than men are involved in unpaid household and care work.<sup>xvi</sup>
8. The shortage of childcare services affects parents' participation in the labour market which in turn conditions their economic situation, pension, and the standard of living at retirement age.<sup>xvii, xviii</sup>

### **Recommendations**

Introduce the non-transferable period of parental leave encouraging men to share childcare with women and increase accessibility of formal childcare arrangements.<sup>xix</sup>

Grant the right to flexible work benefits for wider groups of employees by improving national legislation.

### **Referring to recommendations 100.15-20, 100.98-102, 100.107**

9. To this day Lithuania has not ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Thus, national legislation or the new draft law lacks specific recognition of gender-based violence against women, prohibition of stalking, specialised support for victims of sexual violence and effective prevention mechanisms.<sup>xx</sup>

### **Recommendations**

Ratify the Istanbul convention and recognise gender-based violence, prohibit stalking, ensure specialised support for victims of sexual violence in the national legislation.

Ensure effective prevention, expand the recognition of coercive control through the school curricula and training programmes for law enforcement officers and child-rights protection specialists.

## **Hate Speech**

**Referring to recommendations 100.52-53, 100.61-62, 100.70, 100.72-74, 100.82**

10. The Office is concerned about the prevalence of hate speech, which is seen as inappropriate by the Lithuanian society, however, mistakenly attributed to freedom of expression.<sup>xxi</sup> Research shows that law-enforcement officials recognise hate speech better than general population but lack knowledge of history, traditions, and symbols of communities that become targets of hate speech<sup>xxii</sup>. Moreover, many supports victim-blaming attitudes<sup>xxiii</sup> and might be reluctant to start investigations of hate speech on their own initiative<sup>xxiv</sup>.
11. The Office congratulates the amendments of Criminal Code prohibiting hate speech, *inter alia*, on the grounds of age and disability but notes that gender identity, skin colour and ethnic origin are missing.

### **Recommendations**

Raise awareness of law enforcement officers on recognition of hate speech and ensure cooperation with affected communities.

Amend the Criminal Code by including gender identity, skin colour and ethnic origin as protected grounds.

## **LGBTI+ Rights**

**Referring to recommendations 100.75, 100.92, 100.94**

12. Lithuanian legislation does not provide for any legal recognition of same-sex relationships. The 2017 or 2021 draft laws on registered partnerships (for different-sex and same-sex couples) were not adopted.<sup>xxv</sup>

**Referring to recommendations 100.77, 100.75, 100.88, 100.90, 100.93-94**

13. In Lithuania, up to this day there is no quick and accessible administrative procedure for legal gender recognition and gender-affirming healthcare: identity documents for transgender persons are changed only through the court proceedings.

**Referring to recommendations 100.75, 100.88, 100.90, 100.91, 100.94**

14. The amendment of the *Law on Protection of Minors from the Detrimental Effects of Public Information* modifying the Article 4.2.16 so it could not be used to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation was registered in 2017, but no legislative procedure was initiated.

### **Recommendations**

Ensure legal protection of family life of same-sex couples.

Adopt a *Law on Recognition of Gender Identity* without requirement of psychiatric diagnosis of 'gender dysphoria', divorce, provide for a quick, accessible, and transparent administrative procedure and ensure the protection of personal data in the provision of all related documents.

Ensure provision of trans-specific healthcare services within the framework of the public healthcare system.

Modify or repeal the Article 4.2.16 of the *Law on Protection of Minors from the Detrimental Effects of Public Information*.

## **Rights of Persons Belonging to National Minorities**

**Referring to recommendations 100.151, 100.153-58**

15. Lithuania has no coherent legal framework that would ensure the protection of persons belonging to national minorities. The latest law on national minorities was terminated in 2010 and has not been renewed since. Moreover, despite multiple attempts to draft and adopt a law on the writing of names and surnames in official documents, the use of authentic names in official documents in Latin alphabet is still decided on a case-by-case basis by courts.<sup>xxvi</sup> A working group, established under the *Department of National Minorities* in 2019, prepared a new draft law on national minorities that yet remains to be adopted.<sup>xxvii</sup>

**Referring to recommendations 100.159, 100.161**

16. It is estimated that children belonging to national minorities have sufficient access to education in minority languages.<sup>xxviii</sup> However, there is a significant lack of textbooks in national minority languages as well as most schools do not have enough qualified instructors. The biggest issue is observed in differences of academic performance between students who are taught in minority languages and those whose language of instruction is Lithuanian.<sup>xxix</sup>

### **Recommendations**

Pay sufficient attention and take systemic measures to strengthen the quality of education in minority languages.

Adopt the law on national minorities that, *inter alia*, would ensure the respect of language rights in accordance with Lithuania's international obligations.

### **Referring to recommendations 100.152, 100.159, 100.162-63**

17. The five-year *National Roma integration strategy* has terminated in 2020. Although the overall success of the strategy can be evaluated positively, the social and economic indicators of Roma persons' well-being, in particular employment rate<sup>xxx</sup>, housing conditions and education level, remain below the country's average<sup>xxxi</sup> with 96,1% of Roma living below the poverty line.<sup>xxxii</sup>
18. In 2020, the segregated Roma settlement in Kirtimai was dismantled, however, lack of relocation aid was observed (social housing, financial support for rent, etc.).<sup>xxxiii</sup> The widespread negative attitudes also hinder the process of Roma relocation and pose a threat to Roma community by increasing the risk of further exclusion.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

### **Recommendations**

Adopt the *National Action Plan of Roma Integration* covering measures in employment, education and housing and allocate sufficient funding for their implementation.

Continue working on strengthening intercultural dialogue, raising public awareness on the issues Roma people face and changing negative public attitudes.

## **Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups Based on Age and Disability**

### **Referring to recommendations 100.138, 100.145-48**

19. According to the OECD<sup>xxxv</sup>, income inequality persists in Lithuania. Relative poverty remains high and is distributed unevenly across population with the elderly (especially women) and people with disabilities being particularly affected<sup>xxxvi</sup>.
20. The Covid-19 crisis may further reinforce social vulnerabilities as unemployment rates of older population and persons with disabilities indicate.<sup>xxxvii, xxxviii</sup>

## **Recommendations**

Expand the reach and benefit levels of social programmes, targeted to older persons and persons with disabilities.

Include older population and persons with disabilities in economic recovery initiatives, removing age caps in job rehabilitation programmes, as well as other income-generating activities.

## **Integration of Persons with Disabilities and Implementation of CRPD**

### **Referring to recommendations 100.144-146, 100.148**

21. Only persons under 21 years who have special educational needs and who are trained under the pre-school, pre-primary, primary, basic, vocational education curricula, and their parents (guardians, curators) can be provided complex educational assistance, social support, healthcare services.<sup>xxxix</sup> Ombudsperson recognised direct discrimination of persons with disabilities in education and found a breach of Article 24 of CRPD<sup>xl</sup>.
22. In the context of Covid-19, people with disabilities and their families/caregivers have limited access to public and private services that deepens socio-economic inequality.

## **Recommendations**

Abolish discrimination on the ground of age and other grounds in access to all levels of education for persons with disabilities.

Ensure persons with disabilities and their caregivers are prioritised in all service provision and access to information is ensured in proper manner.

Extend special assistance programmes for persons with disabilities in service providing at national and municipal level.

## **Independence of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson's Office**

### **Referring to previous cycle recommendations No. 100.32, 100.36**



23. The OEOO has been appointed additional functions: prevention of discrimination and awareness-raising (2016), investigation of complaints on the ground of citizenship (2017), ensure the monitoring of the implementation of the UN CRPD (2019)<sup>xli</sup>, however, no additional funding was ensured for implementation of these functions. In general, the UN CERD paid attention to lack of funding in its' Concluding observations and recommended to allocate sufficient resources.<sup>xlii</sup>
24. Moreover, the Venice Principles emphasise a need to ensure independence of the Ombud's institutions.<sup>xliii</sup>

## Recommendations

Ensure sufficient funding to the OEOO to carry out all the functions regulated by law, among them the quasi-judicial functions, prevention of discrimination, monitoring and provision of independent recommendations.

<sup>i</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos lygių galimybių įstatymas (Eng. *The Law on Equal Treatment of the Republic of Lithuania*), No. IX-1826, 18 November 2003,

<https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/77e54a933db211eabd71c05e81f09716?jfwid=mmceo2jhb>.

<sup>ii</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos moterų ir vyrų lygių galimybių įstatymas (Eng. *The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men<sup>ii</sup> of the Republic of Lithuania*), No. Nr. 112-3100, 1998, <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.69453/asr>.

<sup>iii</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos lygių galimybių įstatymo Nr. IX-1826 pakeitimo įstatymas (Eng. "Law on Amending the Law on Equal Treatment of the Republic of Lithuania No. IX-1826"), No. XII-2768, 8 November 2016, <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/196bcda2a74b11e68987e8320e9a5185?ifwid=i0s9d01kt>.

<sup>iv</sup> In the opinion of the Ombudsperson's Office the ground "kilmė" (in Lithuanian) in the Law on Equal Treatment is equivalent to the ground "descent".

<sup>v</sup> ECRI General policy recommendation No. 2: *Equality Bodies to Combat Racism and Intolerance at National Level*, 2018.

<sup>vi</sup> In 2019, the Constitutional Court ruled that same-sex partners fall under the scope of the constitutional concept of 'family life' and concluded that the exclusion of same-sex spouses for migration purposes is unconstitutional. As a result, in order to harmonise the national anti-discrimination legislation with the constitutional jurisprudence and the EU acquis, it is recommended to extend the definition of "family members" under the Law on Equal Treatment in order to provide effective protection from discrimination on the grounds of citizenship not only to spouses and direct descendants, but also to (registered) partners of the EEA citizens.

<sup>vii</sup> We refer to the following programmes, namely, (1) the National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015-2021 and its Action Plan, (2) National Strategy of Roma Integration to the Lithuanian Society and its Action Plan for 2015-2020, (3) Inter-institutional Action Plan for the Promotion of Non-discrimination for 2017-2020 and 2021-2023, (4) National Programme for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Provision of Assistance to Victims for the Period of 2014–2020 and (5) National Programme for Social Integration of Persons with Disabilities for 2013–2019 and its annual Action Plans; but there are other strategies and action plans partly including prevention of discrimination, e.g. Action Plan on the Implementation of Foreigners Integration Policy.

<sup>viii</sup> The National Programme for Social Integration of Persons with Disabilities is the only policy document, which will be maintaining its strategic status as a specialised document.

<sup>ix</sup> The same approach was presented by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 1997 and by the Council of Europe in their conceptual framework paper in 2004<sup>ix</sup>. The United Nations Economic and Social Council stressed<sup>ix</sup>, that gender mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted, women-specific policies and programmes or positive legislation, nor does it substitute for gender units or focal points. The Council of Europe emphasised that gender mainstreaming cannot replace and render redundant specific equality policy and machineries but should complement it, because they are two different strategies to reach the same goal and must go together at least until there is a real culture and consensus regarding gender equality in the whole society.

<sup>x</sup> In 2021-2030 National Progress Programmes' Development Programmes and their Action Plans

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<sup>xi</sup> The biggest gap of 33.8 % was found in the financial and insurance service sector. In the public sector, the gap was smaller

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than in the private sector (11 % and 15.7 % accordingly).

<sup>xii</sup> The gender pay gap (original: Moterų ir vyrų darbo užmokesčio atotrūkis), Statistics Lithuania, 2021, <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/informaciniai-pranesimai?articleId=8845359>.

<sup>xiii</sup> A decomposition of the unadjusted gender pay gap using Structure of Earnings Survey data, 2018, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-statistical-working-papers/-/ks-tc-18-003>.

<sup>xiv</sup> Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council to strengthen the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women through pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms, 2021,

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/aid\\_development\\_cooperation\\_fundamental\\_rights/com-2021-93\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/aid_development_cooperation_fundamental_rights/com-2021-93_en_0.pdf).

<sup>xv</sup> Gender employment gap, Eurostat, 2020,

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tesem060/default/table?lang=en>.

<sup>xvi</sup> Significantly more women than men are involved in caring for and educating their children or grandchildren, elderly or people with disabilities, every day (accordingly 41.3 % and 24.2 %), doing cooking and/or housework, every day (79.0% and 28.8 %).

Time domain (Lithuania), Gender Equality Index, European Institute for Gender Equality, 2016, <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2020/domain/time/LT>.

<sup>xvii</sup> Living conditions in Europe - Childcare Arrangements, Eurostat, 2019, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Living\\_conditions\\_in\\_Europe\\_-\\_childcare\\_arrangements#Childcare\\_and\\_education\\_arrangements](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Living_conditions_in_Europe_-_childcare_arrangements#Childcare_and_education_arrangements).

<sup>xviii</sup> Piilinkaitė-Sotirovič, V., Kontvainė, V. Modern men and gender equality: incentives and barriers for men to become involved in childcare (original: Šiuolaikiniai vyrai ir lyčių lygybė: paskatos ir kliūtys vyrams įsitraukti į vaiko priežiūrą), 2020, [https://lygybe.lt/data/public/uploads/2021/03/siuolaikiniai\\_vyrai\\_ir\\_lyciu\\_lygybe.pdf](https://lygybe.lt/data/public/uploads/2021/03/siuolaikiniai_vyrai_ir_lyciu_lygybe.pdf)

<sup>xix</sup> Especially for children younger than 3 years old.

<sup>xx</sup> Law on Protection Against Domestic Violence, drafted on 14/06/2021

<sup>xxi</sup> Incitement to Hatred Online (original: Neapykantos kurstymas internete), 2020,

[https://www.lygybe.lt/data/public/uploads/2021/03/neapykantos-kurstymas-internete\\_2020.pdf](https://www.lygybe.lt/data/public/uploads/2021/03/neapykantos-kurstymas-internete_2020.pdf).

<sup>xxii</sup> Report on the survey of police officers and prosecutors (original: Policijos pareigūnų ir prokurorų apklausos ataskaita), 2021, <https://lygybe.lt/data/public/uploads/2021/07/policijos-pareigunu-iu-ir-prokuroru-iu-apklauso-ataskaita-pdf>.

<sup>xxiii</sup> E.g., 49 % of police officers and 35 % of prosecutors agreed with a statement “some vulnerable groups complain unnecessary”

<sup>xxiv</sup> Analysis of target group discussion of prosecutors (original: prokurorų (-ių) tikslinės grupės diskusijos analizė), 2021, <https://lygybe.lt/data/public/uploads/2021/07/prokuroru-tikslines-grupes-diskusijos-analize.pdf>.

<sup>xxv</sup> The Parliament rejected the draft laws at the very first stage of consideration, meaning that the Parliament rejected the possibility to even consider the Draft Laws on Partnership both in 2017 and 2021.

<sup>xxvi</sup> European Foundation of Human Rights, Vilnius City District Court Allows for Original Spelling of Malgorzata,

<https://en.efhr.eu/2019/11/20/vilnius-city-district-court-allows-for-original-spelling-of-malgorzata/>

<sup>xxvii</sup> European Foundation of Human Rights, Draft legislation on national minorities is complete,

<https://en.efhr.eu/2020/07/16/draft-legislation-on-national-minorities-is-complete/>.

<sup>xxviii</sup> National School Assessment Agency, Report on the State of National Minority Education in Lithuania, 2018, <http://www.nmva.smm.lt/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Lietuvos-tautini%C5%B3-ma%C5%BEum%C5%B3-%C5%A1vietimo-b%C5%ABkl%C4%97s-analiz%C4%97-2018-m.1.pdf>

<sup>xxix</sup> For instance, the results of national examinations of the Lithuanian language reveal a great discrepancy between these two student groups. This suggests that students belonging to national minorities still find it difficult to adapt to the unified examination system. The European Foundation of Human Rights, „Minority school students found the unified Lithuanian language exam difficult“, efhr.eu, <https://en.efhr.eu/2018/08/30/minority-school-students-found-the-unified-lithuanian-language-exam-difficult/>.

<sup>xxx</sup> During the period under review, important steps were taken to provide employment counseling to Roma persons. It is essential to continue strategic steps in the sphere of employment as the data from the Roma survey indicates that, compared to 2015, the share of economically active Roma did not change – 11.4% (11.6% in 2020).

<sup>xxxi</sup> Diversity Development Group, Romų tautybės asmenų padėtis 2020 m., [ROMŲ TAUTYBĖS ASMENŲ PADĖTIS 2020 m.](https://romuplatforma.lt) ([romuplatforma.lt](https://romuplatforma.lt))

<sup>xxxii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Human Rights Monitoring Institute, Human Rights in Lithuania 2018-2019, [http://hrmi.lt/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ZmogausTeises\\_170x249mm\\_EN-FINAL.pdf](http://hrmi.lt/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/ZmogausTeises_170x249mm_EN-FINAL.pdf)

<sup>xxxv</sup> OECD (2021), "Income inequality" (indicator), <https://doi.org/10.1787/459aa7f1-en> (accessed on 05 July 2021)

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<sup>xxxvi</sup> OECD (2021), "Income inequality" (indicator), <https://doi.org/10.1787/459aa7f1-en> (accessed on 05 July 2021)

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Compared with March 2019, in March 2021 unemployment rate in Lithuania has increased by 6.1%. While the youth (age 16-29) unemployment rate is decreasing, and in March 2021 is only 6.9%, unemployment of older workers (age over 50) is still extremely high – 18,2%. Reducing poverty and social disparities in Lithuania (OECD Working Paper), 2020, [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/b631de7d-](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/b631de7d-en.pdf?expires=1625468930&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=6F8D2C9DC6C41505A4918705AF0C950E)

[en.pdf?expires=1625468930&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=6F8D2C9DC6C41505A4918705AF0C950E](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/b631de7d-en.pdf?expires=1625468930&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=6F8D2C9DC6C41505A4918705AF0C950E)

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Unemployment rate for persons with disabilities, was at 12.6% in 2020, increased by 5.3% from the previous year. The unemployment rate among persons with disabilities continued to be much higher than the rate for those without a disability. Lithuanian Department of Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/disabl.nr0.htm>

<sup>xxxix</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo įstatymas, <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.1480/asr>

<sup>xl</sup> <https://lygybe.lt/lt/kontroliere-ragina-uztikrinti-lygiaverti-lygiaverti-zmoniu-su-sunkia-negalia-ugdyma-pranesimas>

<sup>xli</sup> Based on the amendments of the Law on Equal Treatment in 2019, an independent Commission on Monitoring the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was established next to the OEOO to provide independent monitoring of the implementation of UN CRPD.

<sup>xlii</sup> Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding observations on the combined ninth and tenth periodic reports of Lithuania, 7 June 2019, No. CERD/C/LTU/CO/9-10, available online:

<https://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d%2fPPRiCAqhKb7yhsu4Y3oyleXJMcfi%2fjd5knlrizFYCa%2b%2bxSue9PUllcjfFnMqvTC4%2b6VhhJlvm6HvJJoahmleyBxcERuZE9s88q4AS0RgOpjjMUGJ2Hser0c0WoTEYT1oQnKOVBK0SQ%3d%3d>.

<sup>xliii</sup> This applies to more institutions than the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson. The Principles stress the importance of financial independence: "Sufficient and independent budgetary resources shall be secured to the Ombudsman institution. The law shall provide that the budgetary allocation of funds to the Ombudsman institution must be adequate to the need to ensure full, independent and effective discharge of its responsibilities and functions."