

Lithuania



Women in decision-making: **0.57/5**
Socio-economic position of women: **2.78/5**
Violence against women: **1.25/5**

UNDERSTANDING LITHUANIA

The election in 2009 of a female Head of State increased the prominence of women in decision-making in Lithuania. However, the drop in the number of women Members of the European Parliament points to the fragility of progress in this area. Only one political party has instituted a quota for women on its lists. In the socio-economic field, Lithuania has a gender pay gap which is below the EU average (14.6%). However, the gap is estimated to be much higher in the private sector, reaching 44% in finance, banking and insurance.

On average, an equal amount of women and men work full-time in Lithuania. Nevertheless, a life-cycle analysis reveals a strong gender gap linked to parenthood. Women aged 25-49 without young children are significantly (11.1%) more likely to be employed than their male counterparts. However, this trend is reversed for parents, with the gender employment gap in favour of men rising to 16.3%. Childcare remains a challenge, with only 13% of infants under 3 and 67% of those between 3 and school-age being in formal care.

At present, there are no specialised state services for victims of violence against women in Lithuania. 48% of Lithuanians know victim of violence against women among their immediate family and friends, the highest proportion in any EU country.¹ While 89% say that violence against women is unacceptable and should always be punishable by law tolerance remains. Lithuania has the highest proportion (26%) of any EU population describing sexual violence as "fairly" rather than "very" serious.

Access to abortion is restricted by religious influence and an overuse of conscientious objection.

TRENDS:



Since May 2009, Lithuania has had a female Head of State, the first in the country's history. In 2012, the number of women in parliament increased by 5%, to reach almost 1 in 5.

For the first time in June 2012, a Lithuanian woman was elected to the UN's Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

In 2011, legislation on domestic violence was passed and a national programme to develop specialised shelters for victims of violence against women was set up.

In 2011, as Chair of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Lithuania hosted a seminar on women's entrepreneurship and a high level conference for the exchange of good practice in gender equality. In March 2012, the Lithuanian parliament amended the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men to promote women's entrepreneurship and strengthen sanctions in cases of discrimination.

In view of its July-December 2013 Presidency of the EU Council of Ministers, Lithuania has set as a priority the effective functioning of institutional mechanisms towards de facto gender equality, as a contribution to the Europe 2020 targets.



The representation of women members of the European Parliament for Lithuania dropped from 38% in the 2004-2009 legislature to 25% in the current 2009-2014 legislature.

Highlights

24%
women in parliament

15%
women on boards of the largest companies

14.6%
gender pay gap

No gender gap in full-time employment rates

13%
of infants under 3 and 67% of those between 3 and school-age in formal childcare

 no shelters places for women victims of violence

¹ Special Eurobarometer 244 - 2010