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## ACTION PLAN FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN OF LITHUANIA

### **Saul Vidrinskait**

On November 8, 1996 the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women of Lithuania (resolution No. 1299). Ministries and other state institutions were instructed to take account of the provisions of the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women of Lithuania in their activities. This programme was prepared by joint efforts of governmental and non-governmental organisations. The 1996-1997 Action Plan for the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women of Lithuania was also approved and a commission for women's issues was formed.

The Action Plan for the Advancement of Women covers the following spheres: protection of women's human rights, socio-economic position of women, women and environmental protection, women's health, family planning, women and education, women in politics and administration, abuse and violence against women and girls, women and the mass media, the statistical system and gender differences. The lines of activities and the main measures of its implementation have been set out in the programme in detail. In order to implement the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women, a national mechanism for the establishment of equal opportunities of men and women has been envisaged.

By Resolution No. 208 of March 8, 1997 the Government of the Republic of Lithuania formed a working group to prepare the 1998-2000 Action Plan for the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women and the report on compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

By Resolution No. 77 of January 21, 1998 the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved the 1998-2000 Action Plan for the implementation of the Lithuanian Women's Progress Programme and instructed the Ministry of Social Protection and Labour to form an inter-institutional commission to monitor the execution of the Lithuanian Women's Progress Programme.

In the sphere of protection of human rights the Action Plan envisaged the adoption of the Law on Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Lithuania and the establishment of the position of Parliamentary Ombudsman for Equal Opportunities by the year 2000. After the adoption of the Law on Equal Opportunities, such an institution was founded on March 1, 1999. The Parliamentary Women's Group, the Parliamentary Family and Child Commission and the Parliamentary Ombudsman's Office are the responsible institutions in this area. The Parliamentary Women's Group and the Women's Issues Information Centre organised a discussion on the draft law with the participation of women's and non-governmental organisations.

In the socio-economic sphere plans are under way to prepare, by the year 2000, the Family Code, the Small Business Programme (including social and health insurance for family members), the Social Programme for Large Families, the Support Programme for Single-parent Families, the Programme for the Year of Elderly People, and the Support Programme for Rural Women and Their Businesses. The Action Plan also includes the improvement of laws regulating the child's share in family property and the mechanism of the recovery of child alimony.

In the sphere of environment protection the Action Plan envisages taking care of the water treatment facilities in major cities of Lithuania and the preparation of the following programmes: the concept of environment-friendly energy; the strategy and the programme of public education on environmental issues; the programme to encourage production and consumption of environment- and people-friendly products; the programme to encourage ecological farming; and the programme to reduce traffic pollution in towns and cities. The Action Plan also includes the improvement of the public transport system and utilisation of domestic and industrial waste. The following ministries, institutions and organisations have been instructed or offered to participate in these programmes: the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Economy, as well as the Commission of Environmental Education and Protection and Public Information, organisations of entrepreneurs and consumers and non-governmental organisations, the Coalition of Women's Organisations, the Women's Issues Information Centre, municipalities of major cities of Lithuania and district administrations.

In the sphere of health care the following actions have been planned: preparation of the programme on ecological food, programme on healthy life style (from childhood) and its promotion; programme on the production of adapted liquid dairy baby food according to scientific recommendations; family planning programme; programme on preventive health examination of women (once a year) for the purposes of health insurance; programme on the provision of dwelling premises to rural medical personnel; and preparation and approval of the list of jobs prohibited and not recommended for expectant women and for women who wish to preserve their maternity functions. Measures will be taken to encourage women's organisations to promote goods and foodstuffs that are not dangerous to the environment and health, to introduce smokers' health insurance, establish schools of motherhood and fatherhood, expand the network of baby-friendly hospitals, and introduce part-time work through labour laws.

In the sphere of education the Government approved measures to improve living and working conditions for teachers in rural areas. The following programmes are also under preparation: the dwelling programme, the schedule of inspection and assessment of the situation in rural libraries; temporary application of positive discrimination of men in admitting to teacher training colleges; supplementing of political science and other courses with gender statistics; and an open competition for the best programme of small- and medium-size business in rural areas.

In the sphere of politics and administration plans are under way to publish gender statistics. Activities of the Women's University have been planned as well as self-education under the Democracy Programme.

On the issues of violence against and abuse of women and girls the following has been planned: improvement of legislation (the Criminal Code); improvement of law application practice; training of law enforcement officers on the issues of violence against women; analysis of prevalence of violence against women – preparation of a social survey programme; establishment of temporary shelter – crisis centres - for women who were exposed to violence; improvement of crime prevention among children and adolescents; preparation of the programme on the prevention of child and forced prostitution; defining sexual harassment in the law and establishment of liability in the Criminal Code; initiation of new inter-state agreements on legal assistance between Lithuania and other states.

In the sphere of public information the following measures have been planned: revision of the journalist training programme which will also include formation of the image of a woman of equal worth; analysis of a woman's image; preparation of the programme on the formation of a fair woman's image; preparation of the "clean broadcast" programme; adoption of laws and by-laws imposing restrictions on age- and gender-related discrimination in employment advertisements (amendments to the Administrative Code) and on advertisements of sexual services.

On the issues of statistics system and gender differences the following measures have been planned: creation of a database, establishment of a division on gender statistics in the Statistics Department, annual publication of gender statistics, publishing of gender statistics in the press, organising of seminars on gender statistics for employers.

In 1997, the first report on the fulfilment of obligations assumed under the Convention was submitted to the United Nations.

## MECHANISMS TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

### LEGISLATION AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

#### **Saul Vidrinskait**

All the fundamental human rights have been established in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania without reservations: in Chapters 2 ("The Individual and the State"), 3, 4 and 13 and the Preamble. All the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania acquire the fundamental rights defined in the constitutional provisions. Upon the introduction of the martial law or state of emergency, individuals may temporarily be subject to restrictions of their rights and freedoms including the inviolability of private life, property and dwelling, freedom of expression, movement, association and assembly. Every citizen can defend his or her rights on the basis of the Constitution. Article 18 of the Constitution states that human rights and freedoms are inherent and inalienable. This means that the state is not a provider of human rights and freedoms; it is held directly responsible for their protection. In 12 March 1991 the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania committed itself to adhere to the principles of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and on the same day, adopted a resolution to accede to the (1966) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the (1966) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Subsequently, the Constitution has been based on the ideas and principles of the above international human rights documents. Moreover, pursuant to Article 138, international agreements ratified by the Seimas have become an integrated part of the legal system of the state.

Today Lithuania is an active participant in many internationally acknowledged human rights organisations. It became a full member of the United Nations (UN) and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation Europe (OSCE) in 1991, and of the Council of Europe in 1993. In 1992 Lithuania, in co-operation with other countries, signed the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities of the United Nations. The national laws and norms with regard to citizenship and the rights of aliens conform to the

spirit of this Declaration. The Declaration also influenced the further development of legislation. In 1995 a Law on Religious Communities and Associations was adopted.

In 1995 the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) were ratified. In 1996, the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984) was also acceded to.

*Lithuania has joined in many international agreements related to human rights, primarily within the framework of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UNESCO. After a 70-year break, in 1991 Lithuania renewed its membership in the ILO and in 1994 and 1997 ratified more than 20 ILO conventions, most of which directly related to fundamental human rights, for example to Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, the Collective Bargaining Convention, the Equal Remuneration Convention, the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention.*

*In 1995, the Seimas adopted the UN statement ‘Concerning the Manifestations of Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Intolerance’, by which it assumed an obligation to accede to relevant multilateral agreements.*

Lithuania has submitted reports to the United Nations on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) and the Convention on the Rights of the Children (1989).

*The accession to the Council of Europe was equally important for Lithuania. When Lithuania became a member of the Council of Europe (CE) in May 1993, it signed the CE Statute. In 1995, Parliament ratified the 1950 European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention) and other Protocols additional to this Convention. In September 1997 the revised European Social Charter was also signed.*

Since March 1995 the Council of Europe has been supervising the fulfilment of human rights obligations in Lithuania. In 1997 the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly approved a statement on Lithuania fulfilling its human rights obligations as a member



state and in essence positively evaluated efforts to comply with the major principles of the Council in defending human rights.

*According to Article 29 of the Lithuanian Constitution all persons are equal before the law, the court and other state institutions or officers. The individual's rights may not be restricted in any way, and no privileges may be granted on the basis of sex, race, nationality, language, descent, social status, religion, convictions, or opinions.*

The Constitution guarantees the fundamental civic and political rights: the right to private property, freedom, inviolability of person and private life, and freedom of expression, the right to profess a religion, to form societies and political organisations, and to participate in public administration.

Much attention is devoted to economic, social and cultural rights. The Constitution guarantees the right to free primary and secondary education, a possibility to freely choose an occupation or business, the right to rest and leisure, health protection, and to social assistance in case of unemployment, illness, widowhood and other cases prescribed by the law. However, not all categories of rights are ensured equal protection and guarantees. Compared to economic rights, more has been achieved in ensuring civic, political and cultural rights. Non-governmental organisations and the media play an exceptional role in promoting and defending the human rights. It is stated in the Constitution that the state, political parties or other institutions or persons may not monopolise the media and that censorship of the media is prohibited.

Provisions of several laws of the Republic of Lithuania are presented below to give a better picture of the legal protection of women's rights and the equality of their rights with those of men.

**The Right to Vote. Article 2 of the Law on Elections to the Seimas, Article 2 of the Law on Elections to Local Government Councils and Article 3 of the Law on Presidential Elections provide for universal suffrage. Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania who on the day of the election are 18 years of age have the**

**right to vote. Persons who have been declared incapable by court cannot participate in elections. Any direct or indirect abridgement of the right to vote of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania on the grounds of their descent, political convictions, social or property status, nationality, sex, education, language, religion or convictions is prohibited.**

Article 2 of the Law on Referendum establishes the general principles of conducting a referendum. Participation in the referendum is free and is based on the democratic principle of the right to vote (universal and equal suffrage, direct elections and secret ballot). All citizens of Lithuania who are 18 years of age have the right to participate in the referendum. Persons who have been declared incapable by court cannot participate in elections. All citizens participate in the referendum on an equal basis. Each citizen has one vote. There is no participation by proxy in the referendum. Citizens participate in person and vote by secret ballot. It is prohibited to control the will of the voters during the referendum. Any direct or indirect restriction of the right to participate in a referendum of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania on the grounds of their descent, political convictions, social or property status, nationality, sex, education, language, religion or convictions is prohibited.

Article 9 of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Equal Opportunities defines **the rights of a person who is being discriminated**. A person who thinks that discriminatory acts specified in this Chapter have been directed against him or that he has become the subject of sexual harassment has the right to appeal to the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman. In addition, Article 6 of the Constitution establishes that the Constitution is both integral and directly applicable act. Every person may defend his rights on the basis of the Constitution. Lithuania is a party to the international legal acts regulating the fundamental human rights that, according to the Constitution, form a constituent part of the legal system of the State.

*The Law on Equal Opportunities defines equal opportunities of men and women, which constitutes an implementation of human rights established in the international legal acts on human and civil rights and in the laws of the Republic of Lithuania. Violation of equal rights for women and men (discrimination) means passive or active conduct expressing humiliation and contempt, also restriction of rights or granting of privileges by reason of the person's sex, except when relating to:*

- 1) special protection of women during pregnancy, childbirth and nursing;*
- 2) compulsory military service prescribed by the law exclusively for men;*
- 3) different pensionable age for women and men;*
- 4) requirements for safety at work applicable to women aimed at protecting the women's health owing to their physiological properties;*
- 5) specific work which can be performed only by a person of a particular sex.*

The Constitution guarantees the right to every person **to freely choose a job** or business, as well as the right to adequate, safe and healthy working conditions, adequate compensation for work, and social security in the event of unemployment.

Paragraph 6 Article 2 of the Law on Employment Contract establishes the principles of legal regulations of labour relations, including equality of all employees, regardless of their sex, race, nationality, citizenship, political convictions, religious beliefs, or any other factors, which do not affect their professional qualifications. Article 19 forbids to refuse employment on the grounds specified in paragraph 6 of Article 2.

*Article 46 of the Law on Safety at Work establishes the conditions of part-time work. The employer must determine the work schedule of a reduced working day or a reduced working week if it is requested by an pregnant woman; by a woman raising a child under 14 or a disabled child under 16; by a single male parent raising a child under 14; by a guardian of a child under 14; by a disabled person; or by a person tending a sick member of the family upon submission of a medical conclusion. Such part-time work does not restrict the employee's rights of employment.*

*Section 2 of the said law regulates the work of women and persons with limited capacity for work. Article 62 regulates the*

*protection of motherhood. A woman has the right to decide whether to work full or reduced working time and to perform the work without harm to her health and the health of her children. By this law, the State ensures labour privileges for women, including pregnant women and women that raise children.*

**Article 63 of the law provides for labour privileges for women including pregnant women and women raising children. Working norms should be reduced for pregnant women, upon submission of a medical conclusion, or they should be transferred to another job without harm to their health, where they should be paid the average remuneration paid in their prior job. If it is impossible to transfer an pregnant woman to another job without harming her health, or until the question of the transfer of an pregnant woman to an easier or less harmful job is resolved, she must be relieved of her job leaving the average pay for all the days when she was released from work. It is prohibited to assign pregnant women and women raising infants under age 3 to work overtime or at night. They may only be assigned to work on weekends and holidays, or to be sent on business trips, with their consent. Women raising children under 12 months of age and because of that unable to work may be transferred, at their own request, to another job, leaving the average pay of their earlier job until the child reaches one and a half years of age. Apart from the general break intended for rest and lunch, they receive at least half-hour breaks to feed their infants at least every three hours. At the mother's request, breaks for feeding infants can be put together, added to the break intended for rest and lunch, or shifted to the end of the working day (shift) by appropriately reducing the working day (shift). These breaks are paid according to the average pay. Women raising children from 3 to 14 years of age or disabled children under 16 can not be assigned to work overtime or be sent on business trips without their consent. Women raising children under 14 have the priority right to choose, where possible, the working shift.**

*Article 64 of the Law provides for the works that may not be assigned to women. It is prohibited to assign to women under 40 works that may affect their maternity functions. Prohibited works and harmful and hazardous factors of the working environment are established by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. Lists of jobs prohibited for pregnant women, women in post-delivery period, and breast-feeding women, and of jobs not*

*recommended for women who wish to preserve their maternity functions, and of harmful and dangerous working environment factors and their application procedures were approved by the order of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.*

Article 5 of the Law on Equal Opportunities establishes the duty of an employer to guarantee equal rights for men and women at work. When implementing equal rights for women and men at workplace the employer must:

- 1) apply equitable recruitment criteria with the exception of the case specified in subparagraph 5 of paragraph 2, Article 2 (that is, when a certain work can be done only by a person of particular gender);*
- 2) provide equal working conditions, opportunities to improve qualification and provide equal benefits;*
- 3) apply equal criteria in assessing the quality of work;*
- 4) provide equal pay for work of equal value;*
- 5) take appropriate means to prevent sexual harassment of the employees;*
- 6) take appropriate means to prevent persecution of an employee who has lodged a complaint on grounds of discrimination.*

*Advertisements of a discriminatory nature shall be punishable as provided for in the Law on Equal Opportunities. It shall be prohibited to specify requirements in job advertisements or education opportunities advertisements, giving priority to one of the sexes, with the exception of the case referred to in subparagraph 5, paragraph 2 of Article 2, and to request information from job seekers about their civil status, private life or family plans.*

**Speaking about women's opportunity to occupy influential posts and participate in decision-making, it should be noted that Article 2 of the Law on Presidential Elections provides for the right to run for presidency. Any person who is a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania by birth, who has lived in Lithuania for at least the past three years, who has reached the age of 40 prior to the election day, and who is eligible for election to the Parliament may be elected President of the Republic. The same individual may be eligible to the office of the President of the Republic for not more than two terms.**

Any citizen of the Republic of Lithuania who on the day of election is 21 years of age or over is eligible to be elected a member of a municipal council. Persons who have not served a court-imposed sentence 65 days prior to the election day, as well as persons who have been declared incapable by court, shall not be eligible to be elected council members. Persons who, on the day of election, are in the national defence service or alternative service, as well as officers, non-commissioned officers, and re-enlistees of the national defence system, the police and the internal affairs service, and other paid officers of the military and security services who have not retired from service 65 days prior to the election day, shall not be eligible to be elected council members. Other direct or indirect abridgements of the right to vote of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania on the grounds of their sex, nationality, language, descent, social status, religion or convictions or attitudes are prohibited.

Any citizen of the Republic of Lithuania who is not connected with a foreign state by oath or pledge, who permanently resides in Lithuania, and who, on the day of elections, is at least 25 years of age, shall be eligible to be elected member of the Parliament. In establishing the fact of residence of a citizen who has arrived to live in Lithuania from another state, the one year term provided in the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Persons Who are Considered to be Permanent Residents of the Republic of Lithuania is not applied. The fact of permanent residence established this way is recognised as valid only according to the Law on Elections to the Parliament. Persons who have not completed a court-imposed sentence 65 days prior to the election day or who have been declared incapable by the court shall not be eligible to be elected to the Parliament. Persons who are in the national defence service or the alternative service, as well as officers, non-commissioned officers and re-enlistees of the national defence system, the police force, and the internal affairs service who have not retired from service, and paid officers of other militarised and security services who have not retired from service 65 days prior to the election day, shall not be eligible to be elected to the Parliament. Other direct or indirect abridgements of the right to vote of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania on the grounds of their descent, political convictions, social or property status, nationality, sex, education, language, religion, or the type or character of their occupation are prohibited.

***The last elections to the Parliament and municipal councils have revealed that representation of women at political and***

*administrative levels is increasing. In 1992, ten women were elected to the Parliament, which accounted for 7.1% of all Parliament members (with the total of 141 member of Parliament). In 1996, 25 women were elected to the Parliament, making up to 18% of Parliament members. After the restoration of Independence, a woman headed the first Cabinet of Ministers. There is one woman in the present Cabinet – the Minister of Social Security and Labour.*

*Out of 1,484 members of local government councils, 326 are women, which makes up to 21.9% of the total membership. Out of 56 mayors, there are 2 women (3.6% of the total number).*

*There were 123 women (36% of 338 total) engaged in diplomatic service. 38 women were engaged in diplomatic work abroad (27% of 139 representatives abroad). 3 women headed diplomatic missions (7% of all 40 heads).*

At the beginning of 1999, women made up to 44% of 503 employees of the judicial system; out of 603 lawyers, women accounted for 38% of the total, out of 192 employees of notary offices, women accounted for 96% of the total. Women made up to 40% of the employees of the public prosecution system with the total number of 794.

*In examining legal qualification of violence against women it is important to note that Article 21 establishes the universal human right of personal inviolability. It is prohibited to torture a human person, cause harm to him or her, humiliate his or her dignity, or to treat him or her in a cruel manner. Violence is a brutal force, a resort to physical force against a person, which causes physical pain or limits the freedom of the victim. Violence against a woman also implies the violation of her rights and fundamental freedoms and should be qualified from the legal point of view.*

Women are exposed to violence in the family and in the society. Alcohol, family traditions and customs are the reasons lying behind the abuse of women in the family. The stereotype belief prevalent in the society that women are the weaker sex can often be cited as the cause of violence against women. Women are attacked on dark streets that are convenient for attackers. Violence against women is a social problem. However, it would not be true to say that Lithuanian laws allow violence, although there are no special legal norms that would establish liability for violence

against women. We would like to discuss several provisions of the Criminal Code that prohibit physical violence.

Blows and cruel torture are punishable by the law (Article 117, Criminal Code). Deliberate blows or any other action involving blows that cause physical pain is punishable by corrective labour of up to one year or by imposing disciplinary measures. Striking a blow deliberately means beating once or repeatedly to cause physical pain, for example, by striking a blow with hand, by kicking or striking with a blunt object, by pressing, pulling or pushing, twisting etc. A systematic (when the offender strikes at least three blows to the same person within a short period of time) or other cruel violent acts are punishable by up to one year of imprisonment. Cruel torture is an extended beating and other actions of violence, which cause great physical suffering to the victim. A perpetrator (a person from 16 years of age) has to understand his actions, foresee consequences and allow for their occurrence willingly or unwillingly. Such actions are qualified as blows only if they did not disturb the normal functioning of the victim's organs and did not leave any visible marks on the body. Therefore an examination is carried out not by medical personnel but by law enforcement institutions. Action is taken only if the victim lodges a complaint. In such cases victims have the right of complaint, and the case has to be closed if the victim reconciles with the accused and if the reconciliation takes place before the jury leave for the conference room.

Malicious minor bodily injury (Article 116, Criminal Code) that has not caused health disorder is punishable by imprisonment of up to 6 months, corrective labour of up to one year, a fine or a disciplinary measure. A bodily injury that has not caused any health disorder means that a bodily injury, whereby only external, and fast healing injuries of bodily tissue have been caused (scratches, bruises, small surface wounds, etc.), or when the victim becomes ill for not longer than 6 days without losing the ability to work. The same actions that cause short-term (not more than 20 days) health disorder or a minor permanent health disorder (loss of general ability to work of up to 10%) is punishable by imprisonment of up to one year or correctional labour of up to one year. In these cases proceedings are instituted only upon the receipt of the victim's complaint.

Malicious medium bodily injury (Article 112, Criminal Code) is that which does not cause the consequences as described in Article 111 of the Criminal Code but causes long-term (more than 3



weeks) disorder in the functioning of an organ or any other long-term health disorder, as well as a marked permanent loss by 1/3 of the general ability to work. This is punishable by imprisonment of up to 4 years or correctional labour of up to 2 years.

Serious bodily injury and cruel torture (111 Article, Criminal Code), when 1/3 of the capacity to work is lost, as well as irreparable mutilation of the face are punished by 2 to 7 years of imprisonment.

*Women are frequently exposed to sexual violence. In 1996, 168 women were raped; in 1997, 166 women were raped; in 1998 – 166 (including attempted rapes). Sexual intercourse by resorting to physical violence or threats, or by taking advantage of the helpless state of the victim incurs punishment (4 to 7 years of imprisonment). In case of rape action is taken only upon the receipt of the victim's complaint, therefore, the summaries of the institutions of internal affairs do not reveal the actual situation. To our knowledge, there have been no court cases of sexual abuse in the family. However, it would be wrong to say that the problem of rape in the family does not exist. The emphasis is usually put on the inviolability of the family and private life (Article 22 of the Constitution of Lithuania stipulates that the private life of an individual is inviolable. The law and the court protect individuals from arbitrary or unlawful interference into their private or family life, and from the encroachment upon their honour and dignity). However, sexual abuse in the family is not a private matter to be solved only within the family.*

**The prosecutor has the right to support the charges in the court if this is necessary in order to protect the rights and lawful interests of citizens. Charges are brought on the basis of the victim's complaint in the procedure established by the law.**

Psychological violence, physical threats imposed on a woman are not considered crimes if they do not constitute *corpus delicti* of another crime. In such cases, if the victim has lodged a complaint, the offender may be charged with malicious encroachment upon a person's honour and dignity (Article 133, Criminal Code) orally, in writing or by actions. This action is punishable by corrective labour of up to twelve months, a fine or disciplinary measures. I should think that in all cases of violence against woman, law and order institutions should restrict as much as possible contacts between the perpetrator and the victim instead of encouraging their reconciliation.

Currently, law and order institutions are not the only ones that deal with women - victims of violence. With the rise of women's public movement that raised openly the problem of violence in the family, centres for the provision of psychological, medical and legal counselling to the abused women have been set up as non-governmental organisations or within the police stations. Such centres called Women's Crisis Centres were established in Vilnius, Vievis, Šiauliai, Panevėžys and Alytus.

The Law on Equal Opportunities provides for the definition of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment – offensive conduct of a sexual nature, verbal or physical, towards a person with whom work, business or other relations of subordination exist. The law prohibits and punishes the coercion of a woman, who is dependant materially or through work, into sexual intercourse or to satisfy sexual passion in any other way (Article 119, Criminal Code). Action is taken upon the receipt of the victim's complaint. In exceptional cases, if the case is of a public significance, or if due to the crimes stipulated in Part 1 Article 118 or Article 119 or the helpless state of the victim, her dependence on the accused or for any other reasons the victim is incapable to defend her own rights or lawful interests, the prosecutor has the right to take action without having received a complaint.

With Lithuania's integration into the global community, crimes of an entirely new type have appeared in the country, namely, women's trafficking and forced prostitution (in Lithuania prostitution is illegal). The Criminal Code only provides for liability for the involvement of children into prostitution. People's trafficking is an international phenomenon. It is an internationally organised criminal activity. A Division to Combat People's Trafficking has been set up with the Organised Crime Investigation Service of the Police Department. It has a three officer staff. Since people's trafficking is a very dangerous social phenomenon that infringes directly the fundamental constitutional human rights and freedoms, it is necessary to prevent it as best as possible. However, with the legal basis currently in existence, it is very difficult to do so. The existing Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania does not correspond to the reality and thus people's trafficking develops further. The laws of Lithuania do not provide for any liability for persons who organise people's trafficking for sexual or commercial exploitation. Therefore, usually criminal proceedings are instituted against young women who produce false documents at the border check points and are thus detained, while persons

who organise their trip remain unknown. If border police officers do not notice that the travel documents have been forged, young women who are brought into a specific foreign country are sold to local pimps according to preliminary agreements.

When speaking about prostitution, one should begin with the fact that legislators have not formulated the concept of this phenomenon, therefore, an institution or an officer who deals with prostitution treat it according to their own understanding.

In Lithuania prostitution is treated as an administrative offence which incurs a fine of LTL 300-500, and a person who is punished for these activities repeatedly is fined LTL 500-1000 or is kept under administrative detention for up to 30 days. Judging from the statistical data of recent years, this activity has been spreading rapidly: 58 persons were imposed an administrative punishment for prostitution in 1994, 165 in 1995, 254 in 1996, and 437 in 1997.

There is no criminal liability for prostitution in Lithuania, thus we can only speak about punishable actions closely related to prostitution:

- 1) directly related to prostitution;
- 2) indirectly related to prostitution;
- 3) committed toward prostitutes;
- 4) predetermined by prostitution.

In the first case, it is crimes stipulated in Article 239 and Part 1 Article 241 of the Criminal Code. Running of dens and procuration are crimes that violate the public order, pose threat to the public security and health. Running a den for depravity means providing premises for sexual relations or for other activities of depravity.

Procreation is a constant bringing together of men and women for sexual relations: persuasion, organising dates, finding partners who agree to enter into sexual relations, providing premises to concrete persons for sexual relations.

Involvement in prostitution means actions that encourage an under-aged girl to engage in prostitution. An under-aged girl can be involved in prostitution by persuasion, promises or coercion. Involvement in prostitution is when the perpetrator helps the under-aged girl to engage in prostitution who has been engaged in this prior to this event.

According to the data of the Ministry of Interior, in Lithuania 16 persons were charged for procuration in 1996, criminal proceedings were instituted on the basis of the fact of procuration in 47 cases in 1997, and in 25 cases during the five months of 1998.

The above provisions of the Criminal Code are in fact “dead” and do not play any role in the fight against prostitution as they are applied on exceptionally rare occasions. In newspapers one can spot advertisements about cool champagne, beautiful women and massage, and in the opinion of experts, it requires enormous efforts to take criminal actions against such “firms”: they have to be monitored continuously, their activities have to be recorded on video tapes, evidence needs to be collected, many people who avoid giving evidence for understandable reasons have to be interviewed. Meanwhile, the final result is rarely noticeable and effective, because the law does not consider these activities to be grievous crimes and thus the punishment is mild.

According to the Ministry of Interior, over 70 firms and about 100 persons provided sex services in Lithuania in 1997. About 2000 women of different age work as prostitutes. This figure does not include those women who are engaged in prostitution only form time to time and for whom it is not the main source of income. It is not only Lithuanian women who are involved in prostitution. There are women from foreign countries as well: Russia, Belarus, the Ukraine and other states. Usually they cross the border illegally by bypassing border check points. A person has to be identified within ten days. This is too short a period for detention centres to receive personal identification documents from other countries (namely, from the CIS) and, thus, 10 days later the woman is obligated to leave Lithuania on her own. Fifty two young women were ordered to leave Lithuania in 1997, and during the last five months of 1998 the same orders were issued to 24 women.

Crimes that have an indirect relation to prostitution are also widespread. They all have one feature in common: they are committed by prostitutes or with their active participation. These crimes are usually personal theft and violations of currency regulations. There is another group of crimes – robbery, theft, overt theft, swindle – that are committed not by prostitutes, but by other persons who are helped by prostitutes to choose victims or to create favourable conditions to perpetrate the crimes. During an anonymous survey, women who regard themselves as professional prostitutes confirmed that all of them have committed or

participated in the perpetration of such crimes. The survey also showed that nearly all the prostitutes were threatened or they paid contributions to the criminal world.

Crimes that are usually committed against prostitutes are as follows: personal theft from flats, extortion of personal property, overt theft and robbery, grievous and medium bodily injuries.

Crimes preconditioned by prostitution are also connected with venereal diseases and AIDS. As a rule these diseases are not spread by professional prostitutes because they take precautionary measures. However, the situation may change and we should have legal instruments ready to solve these problems when they arise.

**Provisions of the Law on the Health System** do not give advantages to any sex, although the law does not contain any special provisions eliminating discrimination of sexes. All persons have equal rights to health care, including, but not limited to, measures provided in family planning centres and state health care institutions.

By guaranteeing women the highest standards of physical and mental health, Article 53 of the Constitution stipulates that citizens of the Republic of Lithuania are entitled to acceptable, accessible and appropriate health care. Article 19 of the Law on Health Care System guarantees free individual health care (supported (free of charge) by local authorities) to pregnant women (Paragraph 2), as well as to mothers until the baby is one year of age (Paragraph 3). Mother and child health care services are accessible to all women. All of them are taken care of by specially trained personnel. Most hospitals joined the “baby friendly hospital” campaign, encouraging breastfeeding and mother and child contact immediately after delivery.

These provisions are being implemented by a number of regulations issued by the Ministry of Health. These regulations enable women to receive medication free of charge and other services by allocating resources for medical treatment from the state, local and social care budgets.

The Government-approved Programme for the Improvement of Nutrition of Babies and Children of up to 3 Years of Age (1995) encourages women to breastfeed and extend the period of breastfeeding. If breastfeeding is not possible, babies receive adapted baby food, that is, food that in its contents and nutritional value is very close to mother’s milk. One of the realistic ways to

supply babies and children with locally produced quality food is to develop its production in Lithuania and to import only diet or curative food. Currently the production of Lithuanian baby food is subsidised by the state. The Ministry of Health formed a commission in 1997 to carry out a feasibility study of production of liquid dairy baby food. The findings of the commission will help the Government to adopt a decision that is rational from the point of view of health.

Reproductive health depends on physical and mental state and sexual health. Equality of rights in sexual relations between men and women and in bearing children calls for mutual respect, consent and responsibility. The right to give life depends on whether the couples or persons recognise the right to free and responsible decision on how many children they want to have and when this should happen. Abortions remain a sore issue. Although termination of pregnancy is not considered a family planning method, nevertheless, it is still practised on a broad scale. In recent years the number of abortions has diminished, although it still remains high.

The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania has already started the execution of the Mother and Child Health Programme. This programme consists of several major projects:

1. The Programme for the Prevention of Perinatal, Neonatal and Congenital Anomalies was launched in Lithuania in 1993. A three-stage Programme on Prenatal Care is offered to pregnant women, women in delivery and new-born babies.
2. A three-year Programme on Healthy Nutrition.
3. Programme on Prevention of Chronic Diseases.
4. Programme on Immunopreventive Medication.
5. Programme on Mental Health of Children.
6. Programme on Healthy Living.
7. Programme on Prevention of Teeth Caries in Children.
8. Family Planning Programme. This programme is aimed at improving and developing of women's reproductive health. The programme focuses on family planning among young couples and the training of family planning personnel.

At present, in Lithuania there are only two programmes that are fully financed from the state budget: the Programme for the Prevention of Perinatal, Neonatal and Congenital Anomalies and the Programme on Immunopreventive Medication.

From the legal point of view, in the sphere of education the discrimination of sexes is abolished. Article 41 of the Constitution provides for a compulsory education of persons under the age of 16. The same article establishes that everyone shall have an equal opportunity to attain higher education to their individual abilities. The implementation of this provision is foreseen in Article 33 of the Law on Science and Studies, that provides for equal opportunities for all members of society to education according to their individual abilities. Article 35 of the same law establishes equality of all sexes in becoming a scholar and participating in various competitions to receive an academic degree.

**Article 38 of the Constitution stipulates that marriage shall be entered into upon the free consent of a man and a woman. Such a right is also guaranteed by Article 4 of the Marriage and Family Code which prohibits any direct or indirect abridgement of rights or providing direct or indirect priorities in concluding marriage and in family relations on the basis of descent, social status, sex, education or other circumstances.**

**The law also guarantees equal rights to freely choose a partner and to enter into marriage on one's free will and upon mutual consent. The main condition for entering into marriage is the consent of both partners who have become of age as established by the law.**

**Equal rights and duties when in marriage and upon its dissolution are regulated by Article 21 of the Marriage and Family Code. The property acquired by spouses in marriage is the joint property and can only be used upon mutual consent. Article 19 of the said code has a straightforward statement that in marriage spouses enjoy equal rights.**

**The dissolution of marriage is possible upon the death of one of the spouses or by a request of one or both of the spouses. According to the Marriage and Family Code, both spouses have equal rights both during marriage and after it is dissolved:**

- 1. To choose or retain the surname before and after marriage (Article 18);**
- 2. To possess and use the joint property (Article 21);**
- 3. To possess and use the property of the spouse if its was improved significantly during marriage (Article 22);**

- 4. To demand the division of property acquired in marriage (Article 23);**
- 5. To demand that the spouse provides material support after the dissolution of marriage (Article 28).**

**The Code of Marriage and Family stipulates that the spouses decide jointly on the issues of upbringing of children and other family matters (Article 19). Article 64 of the Code establishes that after the dissolution of marriage the spouses have equal rights and duties in bringing up their children. Besides, according to Article 57, parents who have not registered their marriage have the same duties. Chapter 20 of the Code provides for equal child alimony duties during marriage and after its dissolution.**

**In case of child adoption, according to Article 110 of the Marriage and Family Code, persons who have reached the age of 18 have equal rights regardless of their sex.**

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The laws of the Republic of Lithuania contain provisions regarding women's legal status and the ways of its implementation. The differences between the real and actual situation of women with respect to the protection of rights should be eliminated not only at the initiative of legislators, but also with the active involvement of women.

If central and local government authorities violate women's rights, a person may lodge a complaint with the Parliamentary Ombudsman in order to protect himself or herself from office abuse or bureaucracy. In cases of violation of equality of rights of men and women, persons may lodge their complaints regarding discrimination or sexual harassment with the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman whose office was opened in 1999.



# DEMOGRAPHY AND HEALTH

## I. OVERVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION

Virginija Eidukien  
**Sigita Litvinavičienė**

### **Demographic processes**

In recent years the main demographic processes in Lithuania have acquired new features: birth rate has dropped significantly, mortality indicators have risen, migration flows have changed – more people emigrate than immigrate.

For a long time, natural growth made up the sheer bulk (approximately 77%) of the total population growth during 1960 – 1990. The greatest natural growth occurred at the beginning of that period; immigration started to influence population growth later. During 1986 – 1990, immigration accounted for 43% of population growth. However, emigration was the decisive factor in the decrease in population which began in 1992. Since 1994, when the natural growth became negative, in other words when growth turned into decline because deaths started to outnumber births, this became a determining factor in the subsequent decrease in population.

At the beginning of 1999, the population of Lithuania stood at 3,700,800, women comprised 52.8% of the population.

### The ageing population

The age structure and overall of population depend mainly on reproduction patterns and migration. From the demographic point of view the age structure of the country's population, if compared to the other European states, is not very old: meanwhile the share of children in the total number of the population is still higher than average, and the share of old people is lower. In Lithuania the average age of women is 38.4, of men – 33.9 years of age.

However, the process of ageing of the population is in progress. This process is affected by the decreasing birth rate and the growing life expectancy. For many years ageing was induced by

these two factors, although recently it has been mainly affected by the low birth rate.

Demographic ageing is characteristic of both men and women, however, their levels differ considerably. At the beginning of the year there were 247,000 men and 426,000 women over 60 years of age. Men's age structure is much younger: at the beginning of 1999 men 60 years of age and older comprised 14.1%, and women 21.8%. We may state that one of the main features of ageing is that women constitute the majority (63%) of the population of this age.

### **Marriage and divorce.**

During this decade, there have been clear changes in the population's attitude towards marriage. The number of marriages has decreased since 1991, and the indicator has actually become lower than during the first post-war years. There is no doubt that this has a negative impact on the birth rate, because traditionally in Lithuania children are born in wedlock. After a marked decrease in the number of marriages in 1992-1993, in recent years this trend remains stable, although the decrease continues at a slower rate. In 1998 the number of marriages dropped only by 2%. Not only has the number of first-time marriage fallen, but the number of remarriages has also declined, actually by half. Cohabitation is becoming more common, as is the postponement of childbirth.

Compared with other countries, couples in Lithuania still marry fairly early; the average age of people marrying for the first time remains basically the same: 22.9 year for women, and 24.9 years for men.

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### **Marriage and divorce (per 1,000 population)**

	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>
<b>Marriage</b>	9.8	6.0	5.1	5.0
<b>Divorces</b>	3.4	2.8	3.1	3.2

The divorce rate increased from 1990 to 1994. In 1991 there were 4.1 divorces per 1,000 population. The number of divorces and the divorce rate have slowed and remained stable since 1994 – an average of 11,000 couples are divorced annually (three divorces per 1,000 population). The number of divorces per 100 marriages remains high and fluctuates depending party on the declining number of marriages (Table 2).

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**Divorce rate by length of marriage  
(per 100 marriages)**

<b>Length of marriage</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1997</b>
<b>0-4</b>	10.4	8.0	9.0
<b>5-9</b>	11.6	9.3	11.5
<b>10-14</b>	7.7	6.2	6.8
<b>15-19</b>	5.2	4.1	4.5
<b>20-24</b>	3.3	2.2	2.6
<b>25+</b>	4.7	2.4	3.2
<b>Total divorce indicator</b>	42.9	32.2	37.6

More often, divorce happens during the fifth sixth years of marriage (approximately 3% of all marriages dissolve). Recently, the divorce rates for the first and second years of marriage have decreased. This can be explained by the fact that there are fewer people marrying at a young age. Approximately 20% of couples divorce their tenth year of marriage, and 11% during the following decade, while 3% divorce after having been married for more than 25 years.

The primary negative consequence of divorce is the increase in single parent families. In 1998, there were 8,398 divorced families with under-age children (71% of all divorces). Consequently, more than 12,000 children live in single parent (usually the mother) families; in 1990-1998, approximately 100,00 children ‘lost’ one of their parents to divorce.

**Fertility**

A decrease in the birth rate began to take place on an unexpected from 1991. This decrease failed to slow even when a numerically fairly large generation reached a reproductive age. In 1998, 37 thousand children were born, 34 % less than in 1990. The total fertility rate fell from 2.0 to 1.36. The birth rate fell the most

dramatically, by 11%, in 1993. The declining trend continues today, but at a significantly slower rate.

Such low birth rate does not guarantee the change of generations. The demographic situation is the most favourable when the sum fertility indicator ensures a simple reproduction of the population and fluctuates at around 2.1 – this means that during her lifetime each women has to give birth to at least 2 children.

The average age of mothers is low, though in recent years it has been advancing. In 1998, the average age of all child-bearing women was 26.1 years, and of those giving birth for the first time 23.3. It is likely that in the future, given the postponement of marriages and births, the average age of mothers will increase.

At the present time the majority of families raise one or two children. The decrease in fertility has not had a noticeable on the pattern of successive births. The proportion of first-born children has recently stabilised and reached approximately half of all births (Table 3).

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**Births according to succession (%)**

	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>	<b>Fourth and subsequent</b>
<b>1990</b>	48	36	11	5
<b>1995</b>	50	35	10	6
<b>1997</b>	48	35	10	6
<b>1998</b>	46	36	11	7

Based on long-term tradition, fertility was determined by births in wedlock; only 6-7% of children were born out of wedlock. The decrease in the birth rate over the last few years has in fact been caused by a decrease in births to married couples, which is directly related to a decrease in the number of marriages. The number of children born in wedlock fell by 47% in 1990-1998, while the number of extra-marital births rose by 68%; in 1998 they constitute 18% of all births. Most of these children (68%) are registered by the mother's application. This allows to presume that unmarried couples, whose number is increasing, are not inclined to have children and for the time being will not have an impact on the birth rate.

## II. GENERAL HEALTH INDICATORS

### Mortality and life expectancy

Fundamental changes in mortality patterns and rates began in 1990. Among the most indicative changes were a rapid increase in the general mortality rate, particularly growth in mortality among people of working age, and an upsurge in so-called non-medical related mortality. There are two quite distinct period for mortality trends; an increase during 1990-1994 and a decrease in 1995-1998.

Mortality increased by 21.4% from 1989-1994, with the greatest increase in 1993 when the mortality indicator grew by as much as 11%. Cities saw the greatest increase in mortality, though the rural mortality rate remained significantly higher – as much as 73% (18% by standardised mortality rates) – than the urban rate. This surge in mortality affected men more than women; mortality among men increased by 27% and among women by 14%. There was a particularly significant increase in mortality among urban men – as high as 37%.

Since the first positive signs which appeared in 1995, there has been a noticeable and sustainable decrease in mortality up to now. In 1998, 40,757 people died, which was 5,729 less than in 1994; the mortality indicator fell by 12 % and at present is at the level of the year 1991. The drop in mortality increased the average life expectancy. In 1998 life expectancy for women reached 76.9 years and for men 66.5 years (Figure 1).

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Women	76.2	76.1	76.0	75.0	74.9	75.2	76.1	76.8	76.9
Men	66.6	65.3	64.9	63.3	62.8	63.6	65.0	65.9	66.5
Total population	71.5	70.7	70.5	69.1	68.7	69.3	70.6	71.4	71.8

**Figure 1. Average life expectancy**

### Mortality patterns

The current mortality pattern is characteristic of most economically advanced countries. Three main groups of death causes account for the biggest number of deaths: diseases of circulatory system, malignant tumours and accidents, traumas and poisoning: 1998 – 86.4%.

The main cause of death remain cardiovascular diseases. In 1998 these diseases caused more than half of all the deaths (44% of deaths among men and 65.8% among women). The standardised indicator of men's mortality by diseases of the circulatory system exceeds by half as much as that of women (Table 4).

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**Standardised mortality rate**  
(European standard population – 100,000)

<b>Cause of death</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>
Total deaths	1043.6	1206.1	1036.8	1015.6
Women	773.1	842.8	742.6	736.6
Men	1432.6	1711.1	1450.2	1408.5
Infection and parasitic diseases				
Women	3.8	6.3	5.4	6.2
Men	17.1	26.7	26.4	25.8
Malignant neoplasm				
Women	137.3	144.5	135.7	139.1
Men	281.5	292.8	285.3	285.9
Diseases of circulatory system				
Women	482.7	484.0	451.7	444.4
Men	738.1	787.0	680.7	648.3
Respiratory diseases				
Women	25.9	24.1	20.5	20.4
Men	84.8	86.9	73.2	77.6
Digestive diseases				
Women	18.5	20.0	42.8	26.5
Men	29.8	43.9	20.6	54.0
Accidents, poisoning, trauma				
Women	49.8	71.1	256.7	56.7
Men	205.4	331.4	57.3	252.3

Malignant tumours are the second major cause of death that accounts for 20.1% of deaths among men and 17% among women. The number of deaths by malignant tumours is constantly on the rise, mostly among men.

**In 1998 there were 5,358 cases of death, or 13.1%, caused by accidents, poisoning and traumas. Usually it is young and middle-aged men. After a few years of a reduced rate of death by accident, during the last two years the number**

**of such deaths increased; and there have been fewer suicides, murders and deaths caused by alcohol.**

### Abortions

Abortions in Lithuania still remain an acute problem as in other post-socialist countries. Though certain trends of a decline in the number of abortions have been observed, the figure still remains high. The fact that abortions serve as the only means of family planning and contraceptives are not widely used. The long-lasting shortage of information on contraceptives has had an impact on forming such a concept. The Education of society in sex education, family planning and sexual life was also neglected.

With the restoration of independence and establishment of a market economy possibilities opened to choose modern methods for regulating pregnancies. However, following a decline in the economic situation of the country, sexual contraceptives of the highest quality and harmless to health have become unaffordable to a certain part of the society. In addition to that, general economic recession and unemployment problem emerging during the transition period significantly reduced the possibility of young families to provide for the growing children. This stipulated the decline in fertility and the number of abortions.

Since 1993, a tendency for the decline in the number of abortion has been observed, conditioned by a reduction in the number of induced abortions. Over a five-year period this number fell by almost 37%, the number of induced abortions by 44,6% (depending on the woman's decision and medical indications).

The increase in the number of spontaneous miscarriages causes concern. In 1991 there were 7 spontaneous miscarriages per 100 births, in 1997 this figure amounted to 15.

Table 5

### Abortions

	1991	1995	1997	1998
Abortions, total, in thousands	45.9	37.7	30.6	28.5
Induced abortions	40.8	31.1	22.4	20.9
Spontaneous miscarriages	4.0	4.8	5.8	5.5
Ectopic pregnancies		0.9	1.1	1.0
Other	1.1	0.7	1.0	1.0
Induced abortions per 1000 Woman aged 15-49	43.5	33.7	24.3	22.4

Induced abortions per 100 Live births	73.4	76.4	60.1	56.9
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The structure of induced abortions constituting the majority of all abortions has been changing very moderately over recent years. The exception is the fact that abortions depending on medical indications were reduced by as 1,3 times. Abortions using vacuum aspiration (mini abortions) are carried out in the earliest stages of pregnancy, when they are least detrimental to woman's health; however, they account for just a half of all induced abortions.

The biggest share of induced abortions are carried out for woman aged 23-34 (over 70%). Since 1991, the age structure of woman, who underwent abortions, has not changed considerably.

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#### Abortions by women's age

Woman's age, years	Number of induced abortions (%)			
	1991	1995	1996	1997
under 14 inclusive	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
15-19	4.9	5.3	6.4	6.7
20-34	75.4	73.9	73.9	72.3
35-49	19.7	20.8	19.7	21.0

#### Incidence of malignant neoplasm's and active tuberculosis

Incidences of malignant neoplasm's among females during the years of transition has increased significantly. In 1990 257.6 new cases fell per 100 000 females, in 1998 there were 354.0. Females of fertile age (aged 15-49) made up 18% of all infected.

In 1998 by localization of malignant neoplasm's the highest share fell per melanoma and other skin malignant neoplasm's (16,6%), the second place was taken by breast cancer (17,2%). Since 1991 incidence of malignant neoplasm's of that localization grew as much as two times. In 1990 they accounted for 11,9% of all incidence of malignant neoplasm's, in 1997 they made up 16,4%.

The incidences of tuberculosis is very alarming. Though it is attributed to the so-called social diseases, people not only from the lowest social layers are infected with it.



Female incidence of tuberculosis in 1990-1997 grew twice: in 1990 23.6 incidences fell per 100000, in 1998 this figure was 52,5. It should be noted, that urban females get infected with tuberculosis more often than rural females do, i.e. they account for approximately 705 of all infected for the first time.

### **Incidence of mental disorders**

Indicators of mental disorders in Lithuania went down as much as 1,7 times during the transition period. In 1990 270.4 new incidences fell per 100 000 persons, in 1996 this figure was 155.8. It is still difficult to change the public opinion in relation to mental patients. During the soviet period politically “inconvenient” and unreliable persons could be placed in psychiatric hospitals. Persons suffering from mental disorders used to be isolated from society and they had to tackle problems of their integration themselves. The public’s opinion in relation to patients ill with mental disorders has been currently changing and persons facing critical situation more frequently resort to the assistance of psychologists or psychiatrists. Such an assistance becomes more accessible to the public at large. Doctors of relevant profiles work in schools, Labour exchanges etc. Nevertheless, even nowadays a certain part of the public avoid resorting to the qualified assistance of doctors-psychiatrists in case of chronic stress or augmented nervousness. Cases when persons become addicted to alcohol or drugs are not rare.

With an application of TLK-10 in morbidity statistics in 1997, figures of the former years of the transition period are difficult to compare.

There were 5,4 thousand persons ill with mental disorders registered for the first time in 1997 (i.e. 145.5 cases per 100 000 population), of which females made up 44,4% and minors under 14 accounted for 29%. Females were mostly suffering from temper (temporary insanity) diseases (29,1% of all diseases), children were ill with behavioral and emotional disorders, which disclosed themselves in childhood and teens age (34,9%). Another 34% of minors, facing mental health problems, had a diagnosis of mental backwardness. At the end of the year there were 77,5 thousand patients suffering from mental disorders (2 092.2 incidence per 100 000 population), of which 45.7% were women and 11.0% children.

### **Morbidity by sexually transmitted diseases**

The number of sexually transmitted diseases has been growing significantly during the transition period. Inadequate education in sexual life has its impact on that. With the abolition of compulsory treatment of infected persons, their registration and coverage became inaccurate. The prostitution business has also exerted its influence on the prevalence of venereal diseases.

Table 7

**Morbidity by sexually transmitted diseases**  
(Number of incidence)

	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>
<b>Syphilis</b>	72	3379	3146	2326
Women	36	1473	1450	1110
Men	36	1906	1696	1216
<b>Acute gonorrhoea</b>	2190	3597	1823	1345
Women	778	828	325	219
Men	1412	2769	1498	1126
<b>Chronic gonorrhoea</b>	761	460	198	142
Women	463	259	96	80
Men	298	201	102	62

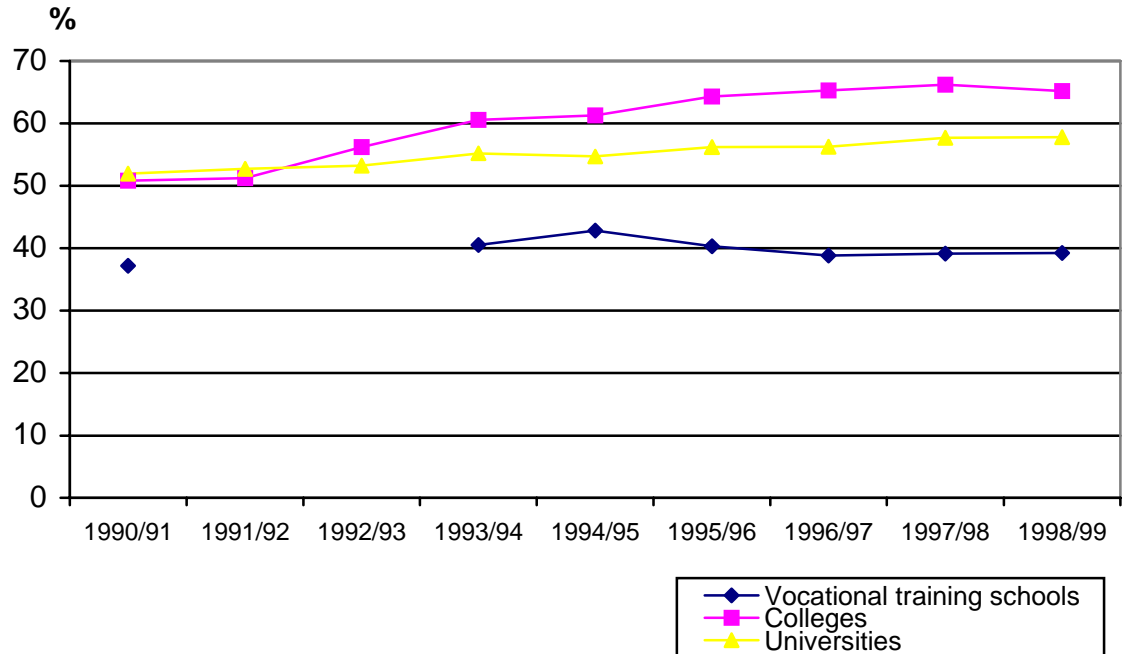
It is too early to draw a conclusion, that if the 1998 trend of syphilis incidence decline continues, it should be noticed, that incidences of acute gonorrhoea has gone down as much as 3.6 times since 1994, and incidence of chronic gonorrhoea decreased during the entire transition period and in 1998 it was 5 times less if compared to 1990.

Persons aged 20-29 accounted for the largest majority of those infected with venereal diseases in 1998 (about 50%), of which 65% were males. Of that amount children and teenagers (under 17 inclusively) account for 7%, the bigger share falls for girls (60%).

AIDS remains an ongoing concern of society and doctors. The first HIV infected patient in Lithuania was registered in 1988. Over a period of ten years (from 1988 to 1998 128 HIV infected persons were registered, though alone in 1998 this figure was 45. Starting with 1988 of all the registered HIV infected persons 4 were woman, 13 developed AIDS and 9 persons died.

## WOMEN IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

In Lithuania, education is one of the spheres where women's accomplishments have been tremendous. In this country, questions concerning women's illiteracy or lack of educational opportunities for women never arise. It is notable that Lithuanian women put a lot of effort to acquire a high level of education as possible than men (Lithuanian Department of Statistics, 1995; Statistics Lithuania, 1999). In the academic year 1998/99, women comprised 50.7% of the total student population in all educational institutions, 50% in secondary schools, 39.2% in vocational training schools, 65.2% in colleges and 57.8% in universities<sup>1</sup>. The number of girls



in secondary school remains stable at around 50%, and in vocational training schools, colleges and universities the numbers fluctuates slightly (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Changes in the number of women studying in vocational training schools, colleges and universities, %

<sup>1</sup> including other university type schools of higher education: academies, institutes.

Thus, high numbers of women prevail among the student population. Since 1990, the number of women studying at colleges and universities has witnessed a continuous constant growth. In considering these figures from the point of view of vocational training, it is obvious that the majority of young men choose industry related professions, and overall women tended to choose professions connected with office work. In the academic year 1998/99, in vocational training schools the largest number of women studied craft and manufacture related professions (7713), although they still comprised only 24.2% of all the students. Many young women (4502) also chose studies in home economics, and here they constituted the majority at 61.4%. The services sector is the third most popular choice among young women (3812 girls, 84.7%). In comparison to other modes of studies, women's representation in engineering, transport and communications was low.

In colleges, girls and boys also opt for different educational programmes. Girls tended to choose trade and business (6835 girls, 78.4%), teacher's training (3047; 91.9%) and nursing and treatment (2901; 91.8%) studies. Where as the boys usually choose to study engineering (5850 boys, 71.3%), trade and business management (1880; 21.6%), transport and communications (973; 69.3%) programmes.

A similar trend in the choice of professions can be observed in universities. Here, the largest number of women (10536) opted for a teacher's profession and studies in education, where they comprised 77.6% of the total students in this area. Men tend to choose technical studies (9260 men; 68.4%). It is evident that at all levels of education women and men choose different professions. Certainly, stereotypes of 'feminine' and 'masculine' professions plays a significant role, although it is no secret that men tend to choose those professions that promise the potential of higher salaries and status. This premise is supported by the fact that men avoid the teaching profession, which is not regarded 'feminine' but clearly has no prospect from the point of view of incentives in better salaries and career advancement. The acquired professions probably does affect men's and women's situation in the labour market at the greater extent than the level of education, because it is abundantly clear that women enter the labour market with higher level of education (Table 1).

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WOMEN AND MEN WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE  
LABOUR MARKET,  
BY EDUCATION, 1998, %

EDUCATION	Employed population		Unemployed	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Higher	25.7	19.5	9.1	6.2
College	28.0	20.3	24.3	16.3
Vocational	15.8	28.4	23.9	32.3
Secondary	19.9	18.6	34.5	24.9
Basic (9 years)	7.1	9.1	10.9	15.8
Primary (does not have primary education)	3.5	4.1	1.5	4.4

A recent trend reveals that a growing number of women have been trying to attain an even higher level of education. This is evident in the increasingly numbers of women undertaking doctoral studies. For example, during the academic year of 1993/94, in doctoral studies women comprised only 34.0%, and in 1998/99 their number showed a significant increase reaching the figure of 51.8%. The number of women who acquired a doctorate in philosophy is growing at a much slower but steady rate: in 1993 women comprised 33.9%, and in 1998, 36.4% of all the doctorates in philosophy. It is very difficult for women to achieve the top level in academic and research fields. However, the number of women doctors habilitatus is growing: in 1993 women constituted 10.8%, and in 1997 – 14.5% of all the doctors habilitatus (Figure 2).

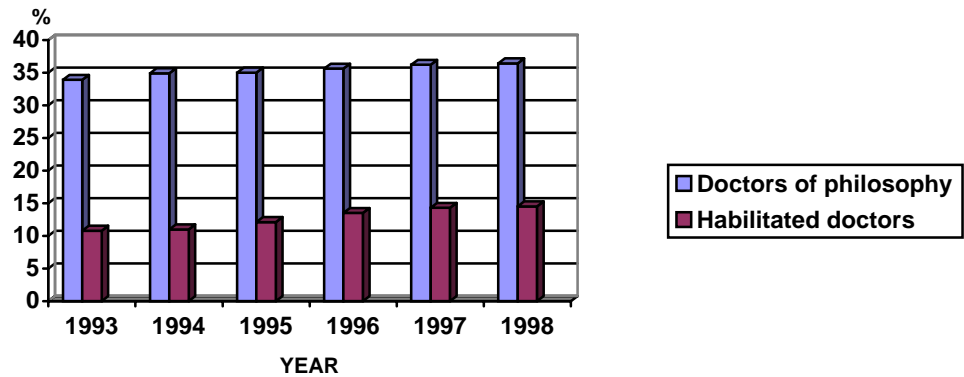


Figure 2. Share of women doctors in philosophy and habilitated doctors, %

The issue of the teaching profession which is considered the most ‘feminised’ profession, should be discussed separately. Indeed, in 1998 women constituted 77% of all the teachers in the country, and in secondary schools they comprised as many as 86%. In vocational training schools women constituted up to 63% of the pedagogues, in colleges 68%, and in universities 41%. However, distribution of women and men by posts was very diverse. Although in secondary schools women comprise an absolute majority, they make only 36.5% among headmasters. It is even more difficult for women to climb up the hierarchy ladder of an academic career: in 1998 there were 31.4% of women among associate professors, and only 9.5% among professors. In respect of the hierarchy of university posts at senior levels, practically no progress has been observed: in 1993 women comprised 28.3% of the associate professors and 9.5 % of all the professors (Figure 3). Therefore, even in educational institutes which are considered the most feminised sphere, men dominate at the decision-making level.

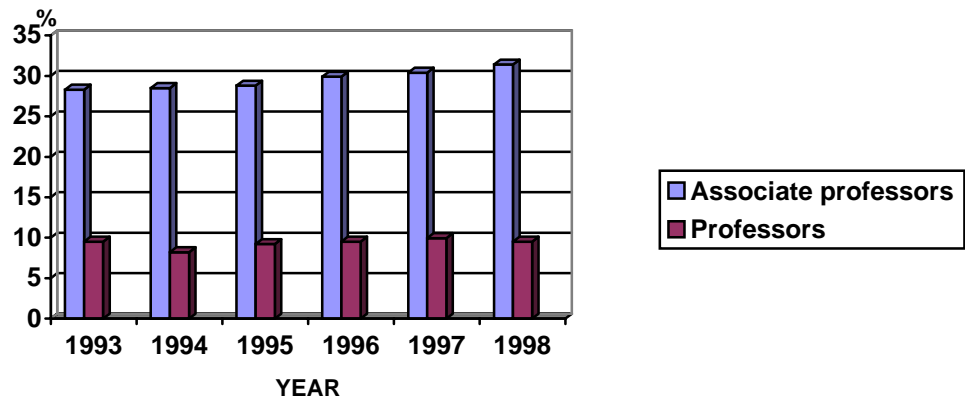


Figure 3. Share of women associate professors and professors, %

Let us now examine the particular problems that women encounter and experience in the education system.

*Secondary school.* At this level of education the number of girls and boys almost coincides. This ratio has remained stable for almost ten years. However, there is a popular belief that there are many more girls learning in secondary schools and, therefore, boys should receive special attention. Another myth which perpetrates the former belief, says that teachers give higher marks to girls because they are better disciplined. This myth, which has no basis whatsoever, but it does reinforce negative attitudes held by teachers' towards the achievements of boys and girls.

*Vocational training schools and colleges.* As was mentioned before, here a distinction between 'male' and 'female' professions is being made. Therefore, even though women attain a higher level of education, men have better prospects in the labour market.

*Universities.* There are more female students in universities, however, like in vocational training schools and colleges, they choose professions that have less prospects in terms of career advancement and higher salaries. Besides, university lecturers are also affected by the myths of supposedly better conditions for girls in secondary schools. Therefore, the numerous attempts to "help the boys" enter the most popular professions by introducing entrance quotas for boys was implemented by some universities. In 1997, Kaunas University of Technology attempted to introduce 'quotas' for men. However, after a successful campaign launched by women's organisations against such discrimination against women students these quotas were abolished. The adoption of the

Law on Equal Opportunities (December 1, 1998) now makes it illegal to establish different conditions of entrance for any educational studies and, thus, one hopes that no similar attempts will be made in the future (Lietuvos Respublikos Moterų ir vyrų lygi galimybių statymas, 1999).

*Research and academic activities.* Achieving and attaining the top positions in the research and academic field is much more difficult for women and, for the time being, the progress has been very slow. For many women the beginning of an academic career usually coincides with giving birth to and raising children which is a decisive factor in climbing the hierarchical ladder. On the other hand, though, universities were not in a hurry to encourage women to seek an academic career. Recently, however, there have been marked changes. For example, the Rector of Vilnius University, taking into account unequal opportunities of genders, issued a decree (April 16, 1997, No. R-28) which provides temporary measures to ensure that at the Vilnius University women hold 40% to 50% of top positions. The Rector gave a mandate to create favourable conditions for women who can write or are already writing dissertations for habilitation by granting them a longer academic leave and giving them priority in publishing their research work. In addition, to re-address the imbalance of gender in employment opportunities, the Rector stated that competitions for top academic and administrative positions, with other conditions being equal, to give priority to women. It is not known yet whether this measure has had any effect on women's academic career; its outcome should become clear later. There are also doubts as to whether granting longer academic leave and priority in publishing research work does not conflict with labour laws and the Law on Equal Opportunities. Nevertheless, the proclamation of such principles alone may have had a positive impact on the change of public opinion about women's academic career.

*Teacher's profession.* Everybody would, perhaps, agree that it is not constructive or positive when one gender dominates in a profession. Teacher's profession being one of them. Today, with so many single parents and problem families, children have already forgotten a positive role model of men, and the shortage of male teachers at schools raises even more problems. In order to increase the number of male teachers there is one measure that could remedy the situation, namely, an increase in teachers' pay. No other measures will be as effective. There have been proposals to introduce quotas for men who choose a teaching profession. However, under the current circumstances, when graduates find



employment by themselves, men who complete pedagogical studies are not willing to work at schools. According to the survey "Opportunities of Higher School Graduates in Lithuanian Labour Market" conducted in 1995-1996 (Purvaneckienė, Vasiliauskaitė, 1997), only 55% of men who obtained a degree in teaching in 1993, worked at school during the survey (in comparison with 85% of women).

To conclude the analysis of gender differences in the education system, we may state that even in the education system where women have had their best achievements, women encounter a considerable number of problems. Although more women than men are engaged in teaching, it is not women who determine the education policy. Ministers of Education and university rectors have always been men. Headmasters, heads of education departments and authors of textbooks or curricula have mostly been men. Nevertheless, women who have no access to decision-making, are usually held responsible for the mistakes in the education system.

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## FAMILY STANDARD OF LIVING IN YEAR 1998

### **Regina Deveikyt**

The Family Standard of Living is best reflected by the survey of household budgets conducted by the Department of Statistics. The concept of household comes to be broader compared to the customary concept of family: the households include single persons, self-supporting persons, as well as two girl friends residing together and having a common budget. Those can be several families with one joint budget, for example, parents and the family of their grown-up children, that are considered to be one household. At present the households to be surveyed are selected from the Inhabitant Record by the random sample method. The method ensures equal opportunities for the representatives of all layers of society to be selected for survey. Once selected, the households are asked to register all their income and expenditures for one month. The calculations embrace not only cash income and expenditures, but also the in-kind income and expenditures, i.e. in-kind remuneration for work, presents, products obtained from their own household and the like. Since 1996 the survey has been done under a new programme that corresponds to the main requirements of the EUROSTAT, although the change of the methodology does not ensure comparison of the recent information to that obtained in previous years.

There were 8267 households who, participated in the budget survey in 1998. In 47 percent of households surveyed women were the head, in 53 percent – men. The head of the household was, as a rule, considered to be the person, earning most income. Only a bit more than one-third (36.5 percent) of women who were household heads – lived in marriage (including marriages not registered officially). The rest were widows (29.2 percent), single (13.5 percent), divorced or lived separately from their spouse (20.8 percent), i.e. were in households with no men, who could become head of the household.

Table 1

#### **Households by size and composition**

	<b>All the households</b>	<b>Including households, in which the head was:</b>	
		<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>

Average number of persons in households	2.69	2.33	3.02
Including, percent:			
Children below 18	26.4	24.4	27.5
Men	32.3	23.6	38.4
Women	41.3	51.5	34.1

Slightly less than one-half (44 percent) of all the households surveyed were families with children, including every eighth family – a single parent family, i.e. one adult with an under-aged child.

### **Income**

The positive change in the Lithuanian economy in recent years has had a positive impact on human social development and the growth of well-being. The results of the surveys of household budgets for three years distinguished some tendencies in changes in the inhabitants' income and expenditures, as well as the consumption structure. The disposable income of households in 1998 per household member, was 422 Lt per month (4 Lt. = 1 USD). In comparison with 1997 it grew by 14.5 percent, and in two years, if compared to 1996 – by 29.3 percent. With the growth of consumption prices the actual income grew correspondingly from 9 percent to 13 percent.

*The income level and its structure were dependent upon the composition of households. The survey data disclosed single persons as having the largest disposable income i.e. 553 Lt. The families with the largest income were married couples without children (519 Lt per person), the lowest – one adult (most often the mother) with an under-aged child (336 Lt per person). The household standard of living varied depending upon the type of the household, as well as the number of children in the household. The families with one child under 18 had a disposable income per person 1.7 times bigger compared to those in families with three or more children. The level of disposable income for the latter was only 60 percent of the average level for the Republic.*

*The composition of the households also played an important role not only to the level of the disposable income, but also to their structure. The income from jobs in all types of households was the major source of income, although its highest comparative load was in those households, in which the number of members of working age was biggest, i.e. couples with children under 18 and the so called other households, which were as a rule*

*comprised of couples with the under-aged children and grown-up children. The households, of one adult and an under-aged child had a job income amounting to just 52 percent of the total income, 29 percent of the total income was alimony, support from the relatives and similar income.*

In households, in which the head was a woman, the income was somewhat less compared to the households, in which the head was a man, - correspondingly, 404 and 435 Lt per person.

Table 2

**Disposable income** (per capita, per month)

	<b>All households</b>	<b>Household head woman</b>	<b>Household head men</b>
1997	368,9	358,5	375,5
1998	422,5	403,7	435,3

**Expenditures and Consumption**

The increasing expenditures of population increase the consumer capacity. The consumption expenditures per household member in 1998 comprised 427 Lt per month, that is 11.6 percent more compared to 1997 and 22.6 percent more than in 1996.

In 1998 the monthly consumer expenditures per urban inhabitant comprised 467 Lt, including 413 Lt cash expenditures – the cash expenditures of a rural inhabitant correspondingly were 343 Lt. and 232 Lt.

The income increase allows changes in the structure of consumption. The universally recognised positive indicator for changes in the structure of consumption is the decrease of the expenditure share for nutritional products. For 1998 if compared to 1996 it had decreased by 7 percentage points and comprised 48.1 percent. The cash expenditure for nutritional products comprised 41.4 percent of total cash expenditures. One surveyed household member allotted 6.7 Lt for food daily, without including expenditures at restaurants, cafes and canteens; the cash expenditures comprised 4.8 litas, the in-kind (home-made or grown products were consumed) – 1.9 litas.

12.3 percent of total consumption expenditures went to maintain the apartment and cover the costs for energy and fuel. On average the urban households spent 168 litas for these needs, the rural ones – 84 litas. 8 percent of total consumption expenses were to obtain

clothes and footwear, 6.7 percent – transport, 4.8 percent – furnishing the apartment and daily maintenance, 3.5 percent went for health care, 3.8 percent – for the services at hotels, restaurants and canteens.

***As shown by the survey data the living standard of families raising two children or more was much lower compared to the other households surveyed. Families with two children could allot to have 14 percent less consumption expenses compared to the average households surveyed. As for the families raising three or more children – as much as 41 percent less. The families with many children (raising three or more under-age children) could afford to spend only as much as 4.7 litas daily for sustenance, although food expenditures comprised as much as 57 percent of their total expenditures.***

### Living Standard Assessment

The households, which participated in the survey of household budgets, were asked to assess their own living standard. As many as 72 percent of the households considered themselves as belonging to the middle-class, 26 percent – to the poor and only 2 percent – to the well-off. Although the income rate in villages was lower compared to in urban areas, the urban and rural populations estimated their living standard in a similar way. That provides proof to the statement that urban households, of the same income as rural, experience a lack of means.

There were significant deviations in estimates of the living conditions by different types of households and by different social - economic characteristics. An especially large share of those identifying themselves as being poor were comprised of single parent families (one adult with children) – 46 percent, as well as single person households – 33 percent. As indicated the consumption expenses in the households comprised of an adult with children compared to the households of other types were among the lowest. That was not valid for single persons: the average consumption expenditures in that group of households were the largest. Thus, the identification of single persons as poor was predetermined by their material status. Single persons as well as single parents raising children were much more socially vulnerable which made an impact on the evaluation of the living standard of their households. The families with many children more often than others identified themselves as poor almost – 31 percent.

As mentioned above, the actual disposable income of the population in 1998 was 9 percent bigger than those one year before. Meanwhile, 56 percent of the households that participated in the survey considered, that their living standard had not changed in recent years, 34 percent considered it had become worse and only 10 percent considered it to have improved. An improvement in their households was indicated by 13 percent of respondents from big cities and only 7 percent of the rural respondents.

Single adults with under-aged children more often than others responded that their life had become worse during recent years: such a response was chosen by 46 percent of the single parent families.

One half of all the households, which indicated the decrease of their standard of living, had mentioned the rise of prices and the same income in the household as the main cause. 30 percent relate the decrease to unemployment, 8 percent – to the loss of work capacity due to sickness.

*The households were asked to indicate the amount of money needed to maintain an average living standard and the amount needed to satisfy their minimal needs. The average amount to satisfy the minimal needs indicated was 347 Lt per person monthly, i.e. just 8 Lt less compared to the average cash consumption expenditures. That meant the income available enabled an average consumer to satisfy just minimal needs. Besides, the size of minimal needs was very much dependent on the family composition and their standard of living. The families, raising three or more children considered 210 Lt sufficient to satisfy the minimum needs of one person; meanwhile their cash consumption expenditures comprised just 172 Lt, i.e. 82 percent of the minimal need. Families with one or two children as well as households with no children indicated larger amounts needed to satisfy minimal needs, although they did not exceed their consumption expenditures.*

*Table 3*

**Need of means as indicated by households, Lt per person monthly**

	<b>Minimal needs</b>	<b>Average needs</b>	<b>Cash consumption expenditures</b>
<b>Total number of households</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>355</b>
<b>Households by type</b>			
Single person	463	863	506
Single adult with children under 18	308	610	281
Couple with children under 18	320	652	337
Other households with Children under 18	291	591	276
Childless couple	415	776	429
Other households without children	376	737	378
<b>Number of children under 18 in a household</b>			
1	353	713	363

**Need of means as indicated by households, Lt per person monthly**

	<b>Minimal needs</b>	<b>Average needs</b>	<b>Cash consumption expenditures</b>
2	296	602	305
3 or more	210	440	172
households without children	408	778	424

As seen from the table, separate groups of households have indicated completely different amounts needed to satisfy the minimal and average needs, although there was not a single group as for 1998 to have consumption expenditures reach the amount needed to satisfy their average needs.

## **EMPLOYMENT OF RURAL WOMEN IN YEAR 1998**

### **Vitalija Motiekaitien**

There is a lot written and survey data published about the situation of women in Lithuania. Although, up till recently the situation of rural women was not analysed. From our practice and experience we do know, that the situation of rural women is especially hard from the point of view of work, income as well as the possibility to participate in the life of society. In case there is no statistical data, the proof becomes impossible. It was for this particular reason that the Women's Information Centre has ordered the statistical analysis of the survey data. Vitalija Motiekaitiene, the head of the Employment Statistics Group at the Department of Statistics, carried out the analysis. She presented the data on the inhabitant structure, employment, unemployment, income distribution etc. in two sections: town/village, men/women. Thus, it will be interesting not only for those interested in the position of rural women, but all rural inhabitants, affected by other social issues. The analysis does not present data of women's position in a separate village; it presents the materials of other surveys as analysed by the Department of Statistics. Thus, the readers should not get disappointed in case they do not find answers to some of the questions: the analysis of data presented might serve as the basis for further specialised surveys.

### **I. Demographic Situation in Lithuanian Villages**

The structure of the inhabitants of Lithuania from the point of view of gender has been stable for many years. The post-war period is characterised by the rapid growth of towns and their inhabitants. The rural inhabitants were dominant before the war, but in the twenty years after the war the town inhabitants comprised more than one-half of the total population. At the beginning of 1998 there were 3704 thousand inhabitants in Lithuania, out of which 32 percent dwelt in villages. Women comprised 52 percent of the total rural population. A similar proportion was characteristic to the entire country. At the beginning of 1998, for 1000 rural men there were 1092 women, as for urban men - 1134 women.

With the restoration of independence in Lithuania there was a decrease in the number of inhabitants due to migration and a low birth rate, although it remained comparatively stable in rural areas. Since the beginning of 1993 with the start of agricultural reforms, the numbers of rural inhabitants started to grow due to the fact that a certain part of the town inhabitants returned back to the villages after the restitution of their parents' or relatives' land ownership. The unsuccessful working of a farm, hard work in a village and difficulties in the procedures of land restitution were the reasons for a certain part of former city residents returning back to the city.

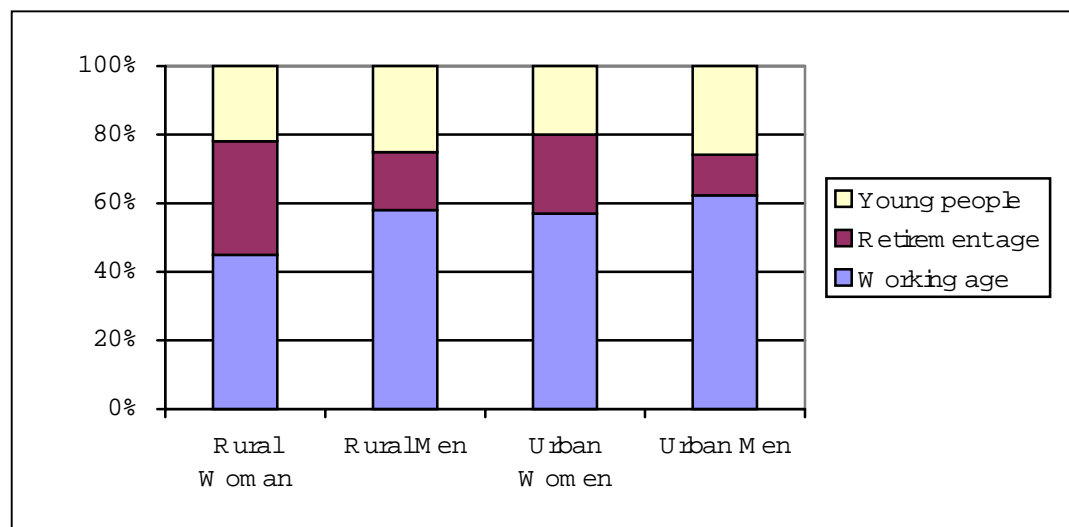


In the beginning of 1997 there was a noticeable decrease of rural inhabitants in number, as for the beginning of 1998 it started to grow again.

Table 1  
 Number of rural and urban inhabitants  
 (beginning of the year, thous.)

Year	Town		Village	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
1990	1336	1191	617	564
1995	1338	1189	623	568
1997	1345	1189	613	560
1998	1342	1184	615	564

The population age structure in towns and villages differs. At the beginning of 1998 there were more inhabitants of working-age both in towns and in villages, compared to numbers of retirement-age inhabitants. The ratio for town and village populations differed significantly. There were more women of working-age by 36 percent in village compared to women of retirement-age, meanwhile in town there were more women of the working-age by 2.5 times compared to women of retirement-age in town. The real village - was mainly comprised of pension-age people. Women – pensioners comprised 33 percent of the total village women, whereas for men - only 17 percent.



**Figure 1. Distribution of Inhabitants by Major Age Groups (%)**.

The tendency of inhabitants ageing gradually could be noticed. Both in towns and villages the number of old people were increasing and the number of children (aged 0 - 14 years old) was decreasing. In 1970 children exceeded, old people in number by 82 percent, meanwhile at present it is only 16 percent, as for the villages – there were more old people compared to those of children. The ratio of the young to the old inhabitants can be well illustrated by the ageing indice.

Table 2  
Ageing indice  
(number of inhabitants aged 60 and over per 100 children under 15 years of age)  
(at the beginning of each year)

	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1998</b>
<b>In village</b>	69	85	103	105
<b>In town</b>	40	45	56	76

The social exclusion of rural inhabitants, contrary to the urban, was more outstanding: they had less possibilities to be employed, use modern technologies in the household and had limited possibilities to use the services of health care, education, culture. The indicators of human social development show a lower life quality in villages. The mortality and sickness indices (related to the non-medical causes of death and social ailments) were higher in villages compared to those in towns; the poverty level and scope in villages exceeded that in towns, besides the level of unemployment was higher in rural areas.

Table 3  
Mortality of the inhabitants  
(deaths per 1000 inhabitants)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total inhabitants</b>			<b>Rural inhabitants</b>		
	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>

1970	8.1	9.8	8.9	10.3	12.5	11.3
1980	9.4	11.8	10.5	13.1	16.6	14.7
1990	9.8	11.7	10.7	14.6	17.1	15.8
1995	10.7	13.8	12.2	15.2	18.9	17.0
1997	10.0	12.4	11.1	14.5	17.1	15.7

There were three major causes of death: cardiovascular disorders, malignant tumours and accidents. Out of the total population 87 percent of all the deaths could be attributed to these causes.

Due to these reasons the mortality of the rural population was higher compared to urban inhabitants for the ailments of the cardiovascular system by - 2 times, accidents by - 63 percent, malignant tumours - by 37 percent.

Table 4  
Mortality by causes and gender  
(number of deaths per 100000 inhabitants)

Death causes	Village			Town		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
Malignant tumours	185	313	246	157	208	181
Cardiovascular system disorders	1042	808	930	492	439	467
Respiratory tract diseases	52	113	81	17	36	26
Accidents, poisonings, traumas	78	332	200	52	203	123
including: transport – related accidents	14	58	35	10	30	20

suicides	18	117	66	13	58	34
Total	1452	1712	1576	791	1010	894

Suicides in the latest seven years have become a serious social problem in Lithuania. Since 1991 the number of suicides has been increasing increasing. In 1997 there were 1348 suicides of men and 284 of women in Lithuanian. In absolute numbers there are more suicides in the biggest cities (53 percent out of the total numbers of suicides), although the rural suicide indices per 100 000 inhabitants are double compared to the urban. At present the most numerous suicidal risk group is rural men aged 40-49. As for women – they are rural inhabitants aged 40-49, as well as urban and rural inhabitants over 75 years of age.

The life expectancy for men and women differs. In 1997 in Lithuania it was: 76.8 years for women, 65.9 for men, for rural women – 75.3 years, for men – 62.6. The high rate of mortality for the rural population of working-age persons made a significant impact. The outcome of different rate of mortality for men and women in Lithuania is that life expectancy for a woman significantly exceeds the one for men: for rural inhabitants by 12.7 years, for the urban – by 10 years.

Due to a variety of social and economic processes in Lithuania, a substantial number of children in Lithuania do not attend secondary schools. According to estimates by the Experts from the Department of Statistics in the 1997-1998 school year there were 23 thousand or 4 percent of such children aged 7-15, including 85 percent residing in villages. That accounts for the social exclusion of rural children and youth. It will be more difficult for them in the future to join the ordinary economic activities.

The restructuring of the Lithuanian economy had painful consequences for the system of education. Initially there were many kindergartens closed down along with the collective farm system falling apart. Later the kindergartens were attended less and less due to the decrease of the well- being of families and the growth of the fees for taking care of the children as well as the spread of unemployment. The kindergartens' efficiency decreased as they became more and more empty with every day and were closed down or reorganised into primary schools, residential homes for children and other institutions. At present many rural places are left without any pre-school institutions. The number of

places for children of pre-school-age has decreased per 1000 children – twice in town and four times in village.

## II. Employment of Inhabitants

### 2.1 Problems of employment assessment

Agricultural production in Lithuania remains inefficient and of small competitive capacity. Around 20-22 percent of all employed are involved in agricultural production. This is an extremely high percentage in comparison to other countries of Western Europe. This is due to the prevailing big farms that are dominant in Western Europe along with the high technical level of labour in agriculture. In Lithuania, like in neighbouring Latvia and Estonia, small-farm agriculture prevails.

At the beginning of 1998 the Agriculture Register had 328 thousand small-farm owners with no more than 3 ha of land. There were 67,5 thousand farms over 3 ha of land registered in the Farmers' Farms Register. 48 percent of those registered in this Register – are women. In addition, the parents' or relatives' land was restituted or rented by another 201 thousand inhabitants. The average size of the land owned by the farmers, including the non-arable land is approximately 7 hectares.

The high employment rate in agriculture is historically predetermined by tradition. In Lithuania, which is different when compared to the other Baltic States, the number employed in agriculture were always the highest.

Table 5

#### Employed in agriculture (in percent)

	1935	1960	1970	1980	1990	1997	1998
Lithuania	80	54	31	23	19	22	21
Latvia	65	36	21	16	17	18	19
Estonia	...	26	17	14	13	9	10

The Department of Statistics took into consideration the contemporary situation in Lithuania and the recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), while conducting the population employment survey and kept to the following approach:

**Employed inhabitants** – all the inhabitants over 14 years of age, who were employed at the time of the survey for any work that

lasted no less than 1 hour per week and for which they received a wage in cash, or in-kind (food products and other types or products) or had profit (income). The small-scale farmers of working-age with no other source of living except their own land, irrespective of whether they sell or consume the product they obtain were considered employed. The small-scale farmers - pensioners are considered to be employed in the case that their income from agriculture exceeds the pension they receive.

If the pension for the majority of rural pensioners is bigger than the net income from land, they are considered to be non-active inhabitants. In case that they were considered employed in agriculture, then their share would be not 20 percent, but 30 percent or even 40 percent.

### *2.2 Major characteristics of the activities of inhabitants*

The data on employment obtained by a survey conducted by the Department of Statistics in May 1998 indicated that there were 2987 thousand inhabitants in Lithuania of the surveyable age, i.e. over 14 years old, including 31% rural inhabitants. Out of the total population there was 53 percent, including - 1106 thousand employed in towns, as for the villages – there were 463 thousand or 30 percent out of the total number of employed person.

There were 262 thousand unemployed (following the recommendations of the ILO), including 69 thousand rural inhabitants.

The employed and the unemployed comprise the economically active inhabitants or the work force (as in the surveys of population employment). There were 1831 thousand or 61 percent inhabitants of the surveyable age comprising the work force. Out of them one-third of all the work force or 532 thousand were parts of the rural population.

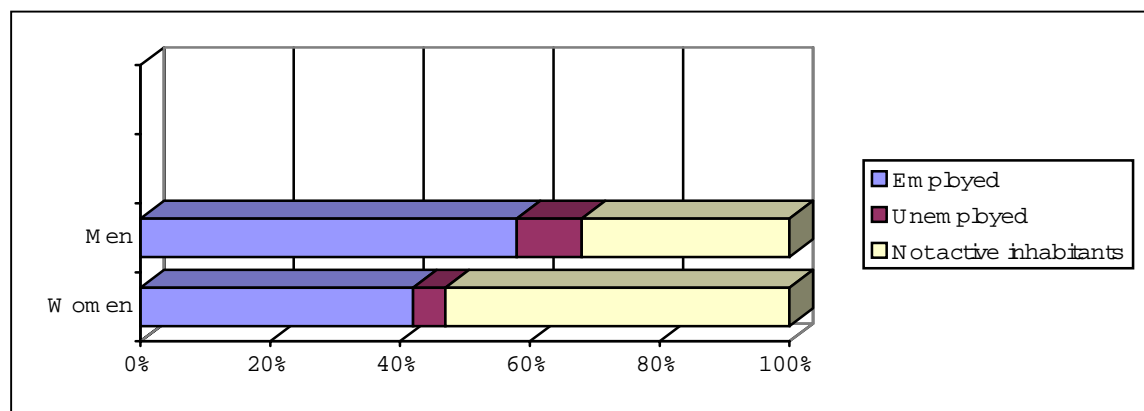
Table 6

#### **Population distribution by their activity level (thousand)**

	Total inhabitants			Rural inhabitants		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
Inhabitants over 14 years of age	1607	1380	2987	497	439	936

Employed	753	816	1569	208	255	463
Unemployed	116	146	262	25	44	69
Work force	869	962	1831	233	299	532
Not active inhabitants	738	418	1156	264	140	404

There were more rural women of surveyable age compared to men. They comprised 497 thousand or 53 percent out of the total of rural inhabitants surveyed. There were, nevertheless, a smaller number of employed rural women compared to men. They comprised 45 percent of the total rural inhabitants employed. This was due to the fact that more girls compared to boys studied at secondary schools. Quite lots of women were raising under-age children and were housewives, and also, they retired earlier and fell into the group of the non-active population. That was why there were twice as many non-active women compared to men. There were less unemployed rural women compared to men. They comprised 25 thousand or more than one-third (36%) of the total rural population.



**Figure 2. Rural Population Activity, in Year 1998**

### 2.3 Employed by age groups

Employment differed by age groups. There was much less urban employed youth under 24 years of age, compared to rural youth, correspondingly 10% and 15%. That was accounted for by the urban youth attending secondary, high or higher education, whereas more rural children having graduated from basic school (nine years of studies) started employment or assisted their parents on the farms.

For May 1998 there were 119 thousand working women over 55 and men over 60 years of age. They comprised 15 percent of this age group. There were less employed rural inhabitants of this age group, compared to those in urban areas, correspondingly 13 percent and 17 percent. As it was much more difficult for urban pensioners to make their living just on a pension, a substantial part of them were working. Rural inhabitants of retirement age did not work in agricultural enterprises, the majority of small-scale farmers of this age group were considered to belong to the category of non-active inhabitants. The farmers of retirement age and family members of retirement age who helped them comprised 60 percent of the total farmers and were defined as belonging to the category of the employed.

Table 7

**Employed inhabitants by age groups (percent)**

Age groups	Total population			Rural population		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
14-24	10	13	11	13	17	15
25-34	26	28	27	25	26	26
35-44	30	27	29	26	26	26
45-54	24	18	21	24	17	20
55-59	6	8	7	6	8	7
60 and >	4	6	5	6	6	6
Total	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

In all the age groups there were less employed rural women compared to rural men, except for the age group of 45-54 years. The higher employment of women of this age was predetermined by their ability to allot more time to work as they have raised their children by that time.

*2.4 Population employment level*

The population employment was best reflected by the level of employment. This level for Lithuania was 52.5 percent, whereas for rural women - only 41.8 percent. More than one-half of all women were working in towns, much more than in villages. Although the employment level of young rural women aged 14-24



was higher than the total. It was correspondingly 30.7 percent and 25.8 percent. It could be explained by higher numbers of urban young women of this age group who were studying. The highest level of employment of rural women in the age group of 45-54 years was 82.9 percent as for the lowest – it was for the age group of 55-59 years – 36.7 percent. The employment level for the rural women of this age was twice as less compared to men. The majority of rural women of this age group usually were economically non-active.

Table 8

**Population employment level<sup>1)</sup> (percent)**

Age groups	Total population			Rural population		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
14-24	26	36	31	31	48	40
25-34	71	78	74	70	78	74
35-44	81	83	82	81	87	84
45-54	79	77	78	83	77	80
55-59	38	76	55	37	69	51
60 and >	7	18	11	7	15	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>49</b>

<sup>1)</sup> Employment level – ratio of the employed population with total number of population of the surveyable age.

*2.5 Population employment status*

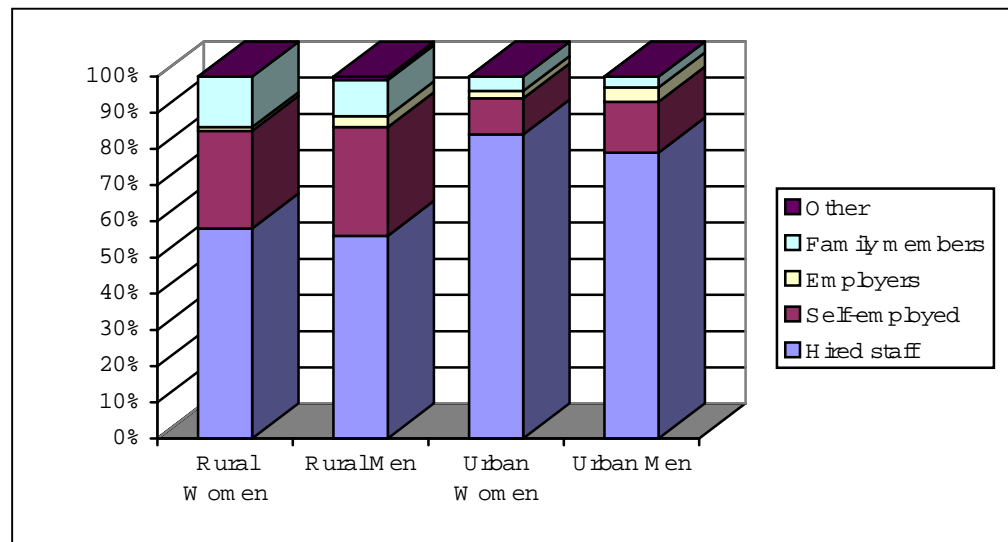
In accordance with the ILO recommendations the employed were classified into several employment status groups:

**Employers** – the owners of all types of enterprises with one or more partners, having control of the amount of shares i.e. having the private property right.

**Hired staff** – persons who work on the basis of a written or oral contract with the employer, in accordance to which they will receive agreed remuneration. Hired persons are not the owners of the means of production.

**Self-employed** – are the persons working independently at their own enterprise with no hired persons. Their activities are based on individual labour or their family members' work. This category includes small-scale agricultural farmers who produce agricultural goods to satisfy their needs or for sale. In addition, this group also includes persons, who systematically produce goods or provide services expecting income or profit. Those are small-scale craftsmen (construction workers, producers of goods, sewers, barbers and the like, musicians, artists, painters, traders), i.e. persons who do not belong to any company or enterprise. The persons working on patent basis belong to this group.

**Family members who help by participating in the labour activities of an enterprise (farm).** This category includes persons residing in the same household, but who are not farmers or enterprise owners themselves. This is especially characteristic of the farmers' families with one of the members being the farmer and others helping him.



**Figure 3. Unemployment status**

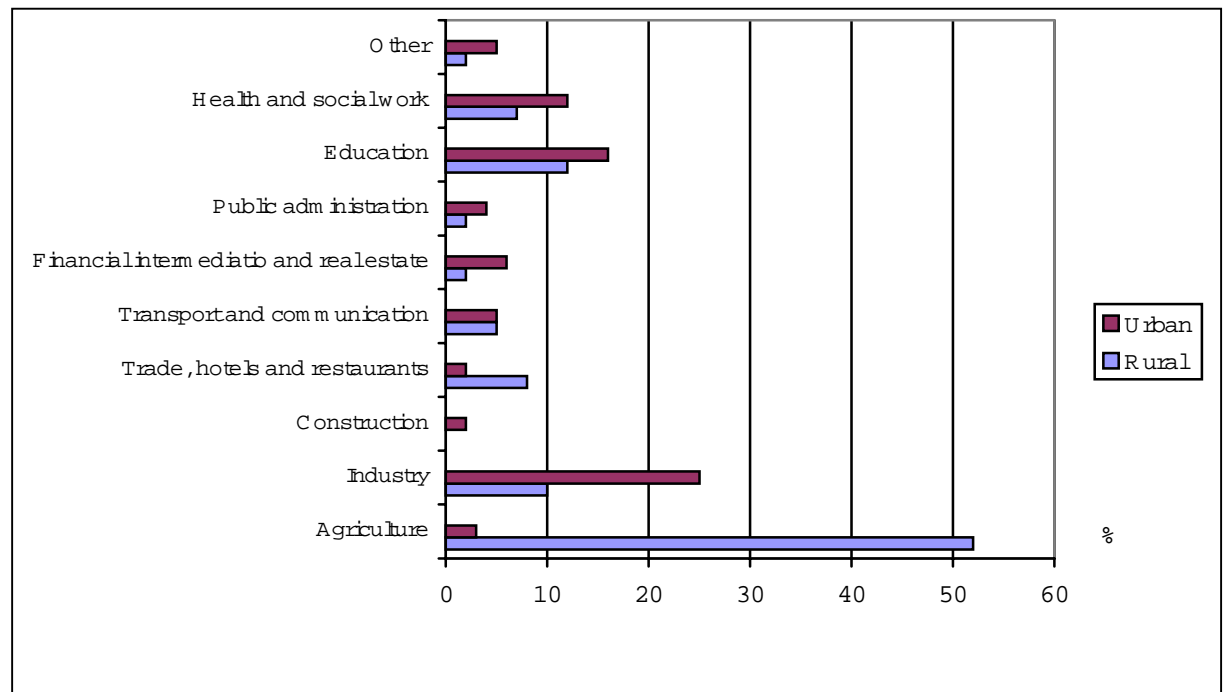
The hired staff in villages, contrary to those in the country at large, comprises just slightly more than one-half of all the employed in villages (57%). Approximately one-third of the rural population is self-employed; i.e. they work on a farm or in the plots of land they own - up to 3 hectares. The majority of small-scale farmers have cows or pigs, which are the main source of living for them.

At the beginning of 1998 there were 57,8 thousand farmers registered at the Farmers' Register with a similar number of helping family members employed.

### 2.6 Employment by economic activities

Population employment by economic activities in territories differs greatly. Out of the total 1569 thousand of employed, 23 percent are in industry, 19,5 percent in agriculture and 15 percent in trade. The rural population consists of 463 thousand inhabitants, including 55 percent men. Women's share comprised 45 percent of those employed in villages. The majority of rural inhabitants (56%) were employed in agriculture, around 11 percent in industry, in educational institutions - 8 percent and in trade - 7 percent.

The majority of rural women and men were working in agriculture, correspondingly 109 thousand or 52 percent and 151 thousand or 59 percent of the employed of both genders. Around another 12 percent of women were working in educational institutions (schools and kindergartens), around 10 percent - in industrial



enterprises, and around 7 percent in trade and health care organisations.

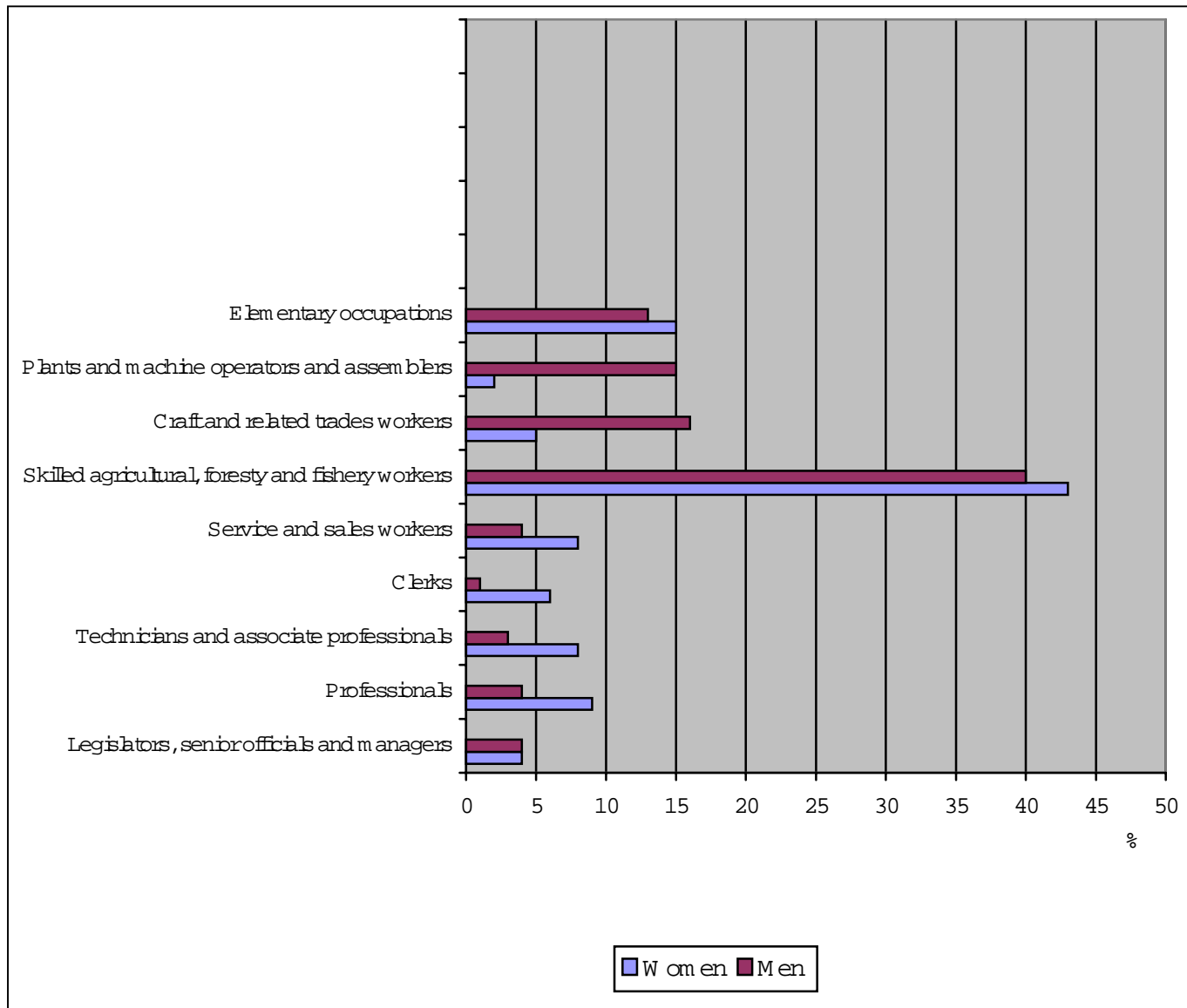
**Figure 4. Distribution of Women by Economic Activities (%)**

The smallest number of women (0.1%) was employed in construction works, financial mediation and real estate activities as well as state government (1.8%). There were three times less women compared to men in rural governing institutions. However, in educational institutions there were two times more women than men, as for the health care – even three times more. This was characteristic of all the economy at large.

### *2.7 Employment by vocations*

In Lithuania there were no areas of employment that dominated outstandingly, although in villages the highly qualified agriculture, fishery and forestry workers distinguished themselves on a largest scale, because more than one-half of the rural population was employed in agriculture. In the economy at large women were most often employed as specialists (145 thous. or 19%), i.e. teachers, lecturers, doctors and medical nurses. A significant part of them were educated as specialists in trade and services (108 thousand, or 14%), i.e. they were working as sales-women, post and communication staff.

The majority of men worked as craftsmen and workers of interrelated specialities. They comprised around 27 percent of total employed men. A significant part of men (17%) were working as operators of equipment, machinery and assemblers. There was 13 percent out of the total number of men employed as legislators, senior officials and governors. Women in this vocational group



were twice less, i. e. 57 thousand.

**Figure 5. Distribution of Employed Rural Women by Vocational Groups, %**

The vocational group listing's greatest number of qualified female staff includes land specialists, fishery and forestry. They comprised 90 thousand or 43 percent out of the total rural women. The second

largest vocational group, in which rural women prevailed were elementary simple vocations, i.e. vocations, that do not require education. There were 15 percent of the total number of rural women. Quite a lot of rural women (9%) were considered to comprise the vocational group of specialists. The smallest number of rural women was among those employed as legislators, senior officials and governors (4%) as well as operators of equipment, machinery and assemblers (2%). The latter vocation being more masculine as it mainly pertains to machine-operators, electricians and welders employed in industrial enterprises.

### *2.8 Hours Worked by the Employed Weekly*

In accordance with article 40 in the Law on Labour Security of the Republic of Lithuania, a normal working day in an enterprise should not exceed 40 hours a week.

There can be none to indicate the amount of weekly hours to an employer or farmer, especially with the seasonal work. As indicated by the population employment survey, the average weekly hours worked are being indicated, because no other registration includes this data.

Table 8  
Employed by weekly hours worked at their main work

	Total	Including hours worked						
		0	1-35	36-39	40	41-45	46-49	50 +
Thousands								
In town	1106	76	134	30	661	31	71	102
In village	463	18	108	13	189	18	31	87
<b>Total</b>	<b>1569</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>189</b>
Percent								
In town	100	7	12	3	60	3	6	9
In village	100	4	23	3	41	4	7	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>

As seen from the table, the amount of weekly hours worked varied. 54 percent of the employed in Lithuania work 40 weekly hours. Not full working week – less than 40 hours was worked by approximately 18 percent, and 50 or more hours – by 12 percent of

those employed. The main overtime hours were worked in agriculture (28%), construction (16%) and trade (17%).

Less than full working day in agriculture was worked by persons involved in cattle rearing and in plant growing. There were 21 percent of agricultural workers. As many as 39 percent employed in education worked up to 35 hours, 45 percent - 40 hours a week. Due to a comparatively scarce number of respondents, the distribution of data by gender lost its sense, so there would be little validity in analysing the data by gender. Thus, villages were analysed irrespective of gender. On average there were 42 weekly hours worked in agriculture, 41 hours in – hotels and restaurants and 40 hours in the activities pertaining to real estate, rent and commerce. The smallest number of weekly hours was in educational institutions - 32 hours, as for the institutions of communication, financial mediation and in other activities - 35 hours in each.

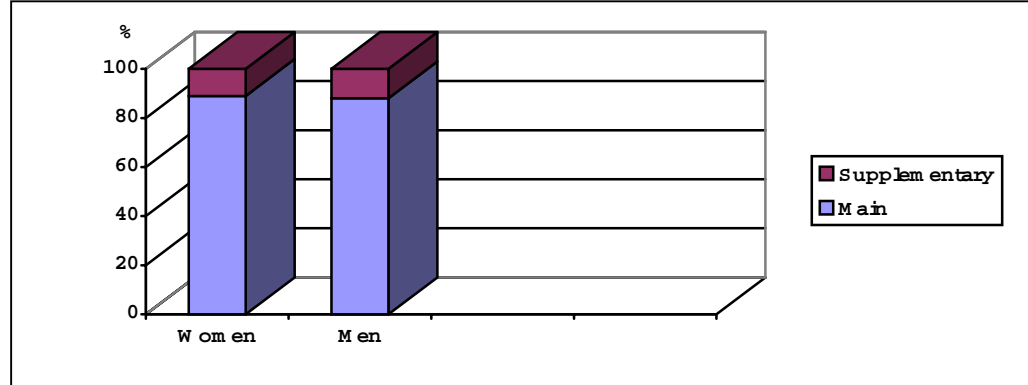
The amount of weekly hours worked by persons of different vocations varies. Most overtime – more than 40 weekly hours was worked by qualified agriculture workers (50%), legislators and governors (24%) and employees in the sphere of services and trade (32%).

The amount of weekly hours-worked in village, by different vocational groups also differs. 53 percent of qualified agriculture specialists, 26 percent of staff in trade and services and 18 percent of legislators worked over 40 hours. Although a substantial part of those employed in these vocations work less than 40 hours a week.

### *2.9 Employment in supplementary work*

Rural inhabitants making their living from a plot of land of 2 - 3 hectares in size experienced a great need for supplementary work as a source of income. In May 1998 there were 6 percent of the employed with supplementary work (in September 1997 - 8 percent).

There were 52 thousand rural inhabitants - 30 thousand men and 22 thousand women who had supplementary work. They comprised correspondingly 12% and 11% of the total rural population. The majority of them were additionally working in the sphere of agriculture (47 thousand): 19 thousand women and 28 thousand men. Some of them were working as farmers or in their own small freeholds at weekends and after working hours. The majority of those with supplementary work were qualified staff in agriculture.



**Figure 6. Main and Supplementary Employment of Rural Population**

### III. Unemployment

#### 3.1 Unemployment concept

There are a lot of discussions lately on how to define an unemployed person and why differences in announced numbers of the unemployed occur in the surveys conducted by the Department of Statistics and those of the Lithuanian Labour Exchange. In accordance with the data obtained by the Department of Statistics on the population employment survey, there were twice as many unemployed compared to the numbers announced by the Labour Exchange. The question about which data was true was often put forward.

The Department of Statistics used the methodology of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and EUROSTAT for the surveys. In accordance to it the unemployed are the persons of surveable age having no job at the time of the survey and who were ready to start work in a fortnight after finding a job, who were active in the search for paid job during a period of four weeks: applied to public or private Labour Exchanges, directly to the employers, acquaintances, friends and unofficial Labour Exchange mass media, etc. were looking for premises and equipment suitable for their business or attempting to obtain patents, licence and credit. The students and pupils, willing to be employed and not interrupt their studies, as well as housewives who were seeking a job for a certain period and ready to start work in the nearest future, were also considered unemployed.

The Lithuanian Labour Exchange collects information on the unemployed who addressed them. In accordance with the Law on Support for the Unemployed, the unemployed are persons of working-age who do not work, do not study at day educational



institutions and are registered with the public local Labour Exchange as persons seeking work and ready to undergo vocational training.

Table 10  
Unemployment in Lithuania<sup>1)</sup>

	Unemployed, thousands			Unemployment level, %		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
Statistics Department survey data						
1997	121	135	256	14,0	14,1	14,1
1998	116	146	262	13,4	15,1	14,3
Registered with the Labour Exchange						
1997	54	45	99	6,0	5,4	5,6
1998 m.	55	55	110	6,2	6,2	6,2

<sup>1)</sup> **September 1997, May 1998**

Every second unemployed, person who applies to the Labour Exchange, is identified as belonging to this category of population in accordance with the data obtained from the survey of the Department of Statistics. On 1 July 1998 the Labour Exchanges had registered 98 thousand unemployed including 35 percent in the rural population. Among all the rural unemployed women comprise 15 thousand or 42%.

The territorial Labour Exchanges conducted surveys on the motivation of the unemployed, which showed that the rural unemployed were more passive compared to the urban. The majority was willing to obtain unemployment benefit or a document that was needed for social benefit. The rural unemployed women comprised one-third of all unemployed women.

### *3.2 Unemployment by age groups*

The growing rate of unemployment among rural inhabitants is becoming a serious problem as there is much less work, compared to the amount of the persons seeking work.

The Department of Statistics conducted a survey in May 1998, the data of which indicated the number of unemployed in Lithuania being 262 thousand, the majority of whom - 74 percent, were urban inhabitants, whereas - 26 percent were rural. There were 44

percent unemployed women. The majority of unemployed women (79%) were town residents. The rural unemployed women comprised 36 percent, men - 64 percent. The rural unemployed women comprised one-fifth of the total unemployed women in the country (21,5%). Almost in all the age groups there were less rural unemployed men than women, except for one group of 35-44 years, in which the comparative load of women comprised 52 percent.

Table 11  
Unemployment by age groups

	Unemployed, thousand			Rural, thousand			Share of the unemployed rural women in total numbers of unemployed women, %
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	
14-24	22	38	60	5	15	20	23
25-34	38	44	82	10	14	24	26
35-44	31	28	59	6	6	12	19
45-54	21	28	49	3	7	10	14
55-59	4	6	10	1	2	3	25
60 and >	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>22</b>

Unemployment is best reflected by the unemployment level. That is the ratio of the unemployed and the work force. The unemployment level as for May 1998 comprised 14.3 percent. The unemployment level of men exceeded the one for women. It was correspondingly, 15.1 percent and 13.4 percent. The average rural unemployment level was – 13 percent. It was lower compared to the average unemployment level in the country. The unemployment level of rural men was 14.7 percent i.e. higher than the unemployment level of women, which comprised 10.7 percent. The distribution of the unemployment levels in the country by different age groups varied a lot. An especially high unemployment level was among the youth, amounting to 34.8 percent in the age group of 14-19 years. The unemployment level for this age group in town is even higher – 41.3 percent, as for the village – 29.4 percent. This high unemployment level among youth is accounted for by the unpreparedness of the youth of this age to enter the labour market, as they have no vocational and labour skills. The employers, on the contrary, need highly qualified and educated staff. This unemployment age

group numbered 19 thousand or 7 percent of the total unemployed, including - 9 thousand or 12 percent of the total rural unemployed.

With years increasing, the unemployment level was decreasing, although in the age group of 20-24 years it was quite high – 22.4 percent. In towns it was 24,1 percent, in villages 19.2 percent. The unemployment level for rural women aged 14-24 years amounted to 18.2 percent and was twice bigger compared to the total rural women.

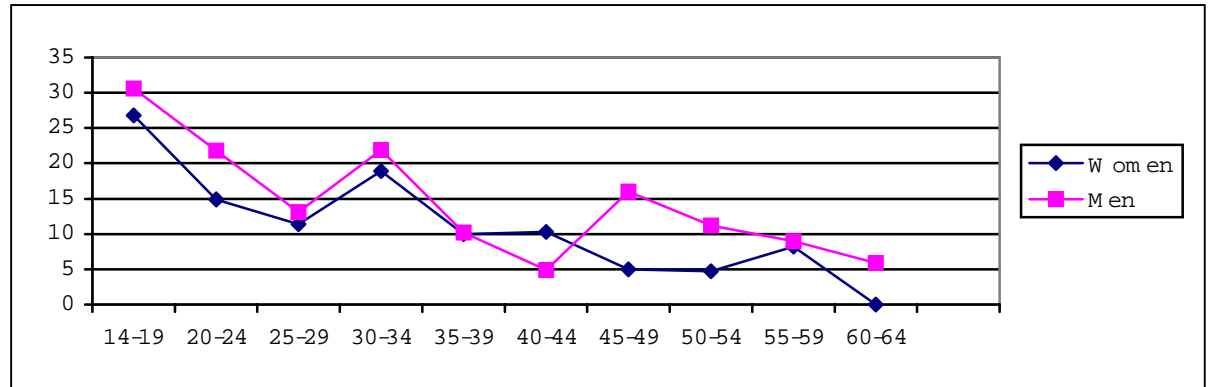


Figure 7. Rural population unemployment levels by age, %

The lower unemployment level of rural residents, especially of women was accounted for by easier ways to find work in rural structures. Many women work in village schools, medical service establishments, communication departments and shops. Besides, young women raising children at home and busy with the home economy, did not consider themselves as unemployed.

### 3.3 Former employment of the unemployed

Out of 262 thousand unemployed in Lithuania 73 percent was previously employed. There was less rural unemployed than urban. They comprised 61 percent of the total number of rural unemployed, in towns there were - 77 percent of the total urban unemployed. The situation was due to the fact that a substantial share of the rural youth was not aiming to obtain general education, which was explained by economic determinants. The majority of rural youth who did not expect the material support from their families stopped their studies, did not attempt to enter specialised secondary schools or higher schools after nine years in basic school and did not work, lived as dependents of their parents. They would be willing to work, but it is hard to find employment in villages, especially for young persons, having no vocation. The secondary school drop-outs were mainly boys. With no employment or income, the youth joined together to form gangs,

which increased crime. In 1997 compared to 1990 there were registered 2,3 times more offences in villages and - 2 times more in towns.

Table 12  
Urban and rural criminality

	1990	1994	1995	1996	1997
Offenses registered					
in village	8716	18366	17221	17323	20406
in town	28340	40268	43598	50730	55410
Offenses registered per 10000 inhabitants					
in village	74	154	144	146	174
in town	111	159	173	201	219

Out of 191 thousand formerly employed unemployed persons 107 thousand or 56 percent have lost their job, as they were dismissed. Women suffered most from that. In Lithuania they comprised 61 percent, in villages 65 percent. Due to personal or family circumstances 12 percent of the unemployed in Lithuania have lost their jobs, and again the women suffered most, especially the young. Women, especially those employed in private structures, who were pregnant or whose small children were sick often were not favoured by the employers. Not every young mother can hire a nanny to take care of the child. Due to that reason they were forced to quit work. Due to family circumstances 12 thousand or 13 percent of employed women had to quit work, whereas as in villages the number was 2 thousand or 10 percent of the formerly employed rural women who lost employment.

Table 13  
Main causes to quit job (percent)

	Women	Men	Total	In village		
				Women	Men	Total
Were dismissed	61	52	56	65	56	60
Other causes	39	48	44	35	44	40
Formerly						

employed	100	100	100	100	100	100
unemployed						

### *3.4 Former economical activities of the unemployed*

As the majority of the persons now unemployed formerly were working, let us analyse the spheres of activities they were engaged in. Since the announcement of Independence restitution the numbers of employed in industry has decreased from 555 thousand to 334 thousand or 40 percent. Thus, the main shares of the unemployed were former industrial workers. Another substantial share of the unemployed were from trade or home services. 18 percent of the total unemployed were engaged in the above mentioned activities. During the privatisation of shops there were many sales persons dismissed, especially the former public shops staff, who could not live up to the new requirements that were presented to them. Besides, many of them were of senior age, whereas the private shop owners needed young sales women.

During the privatisation process there were a lot of enterprises providing home services lost, especially in rural areas. With the premises that underwent privatisation and changed the profile of their activities a lot of small scale equipment repair establishments were liquidated and their staff lost their jobs.

Many rural unemployed were formerly engaged in agriculture. They comprised close to one-half of the rural unemployed. In addition, around 18 percent of the rural unemployed were former workers in industrial companies, around 14 percent – in the spheres of trade and home services. There were more men employed in agriculture compared to women. The men comprised more than 60 percent, as for the women – only one-third of the corresponding formerly employed rural unemployed. Although the unemployed women formerly employed in industrial companies, construction organisations and service industry exceeds unemployed men for these activities. The rural women formerly employed in industry and construction comprised around one-third whereas for men it was one-fifth, in services, women - 41 percent, men - 16 percent of the rural unemployed by gender.

Table 14

### **Former economic activities of the unemployed (percent)**

	Women	Men	Total	In village		
				Women	Men	Total
Agriculture	6	18	13	29	60	48
Industry and construction	38	51	45	30	24	26
Services	56	31	42	41	16	26
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

### 3.5 Former professions of the unemployed

The majority of the formerly employed unemployed persons were highly qualified workers, i.e. were working in industrial companies, as well as in construction. The new employers dismissed less qualified workers of these professions. They comprised almost one-half (45%) of the total formerly employed unemployed. In villages around 60 percent of the total formerly employed qualified unemployed were men.

A significant share of the total formerly employed unemployed were intellectual staff. They comprised 36 thousand or 19 percent of the total. They were mainly senior age population, who failed to adapt to the conditions of a market economy.

The formerly employed unemployed rural women were mainly among the professions in the sphere of services and trade. They comprised one-fourth of the total rural unemployed women.

Table 15  
**Professions of the unemployed in their former job (percent)**

	Women	Men	Total	In village		
				Women	Men	Total
Intellectual work staff	25	13	19	18	4	10
Staff in trade and services	27	6	15	24	4	12
Qualified staff in agriculture, fishery and fishing	4	3	4	24	8	14
Qualified workers	26	60	44	23	56	43
Elementary/simple professions	18	18	18	11	28	21
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

### *3.6 Education of the unemployed*

The majority of the unemployed had no vocational background. Those were persons, who had recently graduated from secondary school. They comprised almost one-half of the unemployed in Lithuania. 22 percent of the total unemployed had only completed basic school. The higher the level of education, the lower the unemployment numbers. There were 18 percent of unemployed with specialised secondary education and 7 percent with the higher and the unfinished higher education among the total unemployed.

***The rural situation is similar. The unemployed here were mainly with a secondary or basic school education (26 thousand each or 38 % in each group). Although, the comparative load of the „educated“ unemployed, was lower in comparison to the one in the country at large. There were 12 percent of the unemployed with specialised secondary education and 3 percent or twice less than in the country at large with a higher or unfinished higher education.***

### *3.7 Job seeking by the unemployed*

The unemployed were seeking work in a variety of ways – mainly via acquaintances and relatives (63% of total unemployed). Around one-half of the unemployed apply to the public Labour Exchange. The services of the private Labour Exchanges were used by around 5 percent of unemployed. This small number was accounted for by the paid-for services they provided. There were more persons who applied to the public Labour Exchanges as they expected not only to obtain work, but also, a document indicating them as being unemployed. The documents entitled them to fee concessions for communal services and free medical services. The registered unemployed obtained the right to receive unemployment benefit for not more than six months annually. The unemployment benefit as for May 1998 fluctuated between 135 to 250 litas (4 Lt. = 1 USD).

As it was complicated and sometimes impossible to find a job in a village, job seeking by asking relatives and acquaintances was less popular than in the country at large. One-half of all rural unemployed sought work in this way. The same number applied at the public Labour Exchanges. There were no gender-based differences in job seeking.

The most popular urban job seeking method was by asking relatives and acquaintances (66% urban unemployed), by applying at the public Labour

Exchanges (55%) and by following mass media advertisements on jobs offered (47% of rural unemployed). As there were almost no offers for rural inhabitants in the press, this way was used by less than one-fourth of the unemployed.

Table 16

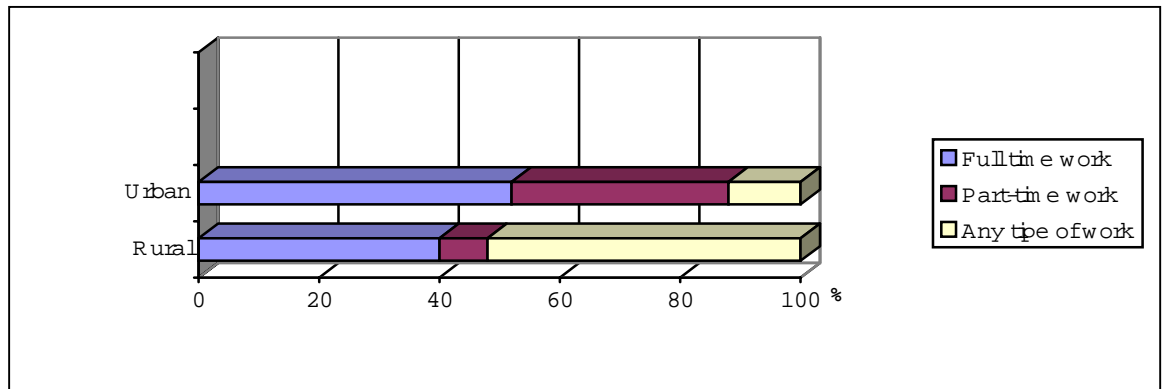
**Job seeking methods used by unemployed (thousand)**

	Wome n	Men	Total	In village		
				Wome n	Men	Total
Addressed to public or private Labour Exchange	69	75	144	15	23	38
Follow mass media advertisements on jobs available	53	54	107	7	9	16
Job seeking via relatives and acquaintances	77	87	164	14	22	36
Addressed directly the employer	23	36	59	6	7	13
Published job seeking announcement in the press	8	15	23	3	1	4
Did nothing to find a job	0	1	1	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>69</b>

The reports clearly indicated the extremely difficult life of the unemployed and small-scale farmers. The respondents usually had requests and even made claims for job seeking. It was especially hard for the families raising many children. With a situation like this people, especially in villages were ready to take up any job just to earn money, which many rural inhabitants were lacking. Any type of work would be acceptable for 65 percent of rural inhabitants (total for the country 44%), including around one-half unemployed women (52%).

The urban unemployed women were more selective. The majority of them (52%) were seeking full-time job and more than one-third (36%) – for part-time work.





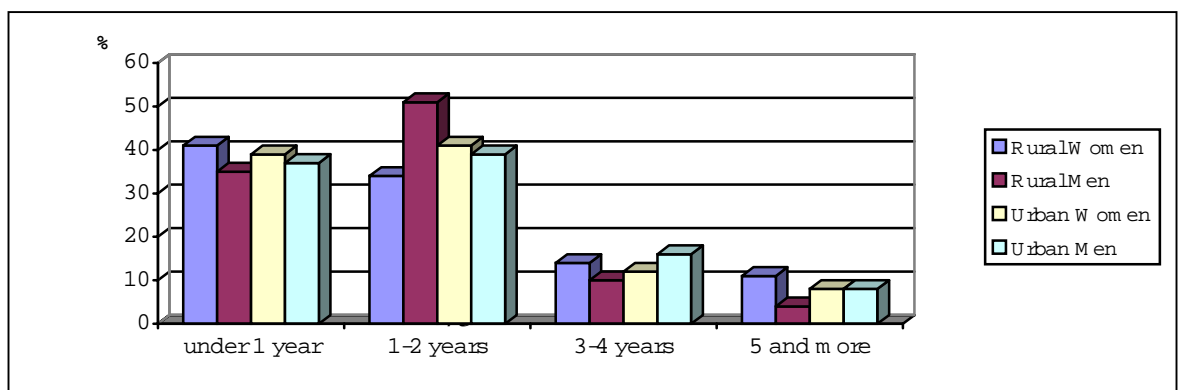
**Figure 8. Job seek by women by type**

### 3.8 Duration of unemployment

The duration of unemployment was varied. The period of seeking work for one year was for 37 percent of the total unemployed. The majority of the unemployed was (41%); those job seeking for 1-2 years. Three or more years of unemployment had been experienced by around 22 percent of the total unemployed. That was a very high percentage, which indicated a hopeless situation for the unemployed with no vocational training, of retirement age and with disabilities. That might have been the reason for such a high rate of suicides and crime in Lithuania.

The urban and rural situations were similar. The rural unemployed under one-year comprised 26 thousand or 37 percent of the total rural unemployed, as for towns there were 38 percent of the total urban unemployed. There was long-term unemployed i.e. the unemployed that was seeking work for more than one year. They comprised 63 percent in villages and 62 percent in towns. This is a very serious problem in the Labour Exchange, as big numbers of unemployed like this cause a complicated situation in the economy of the country.

The duration of unemployment by gender was similar. The high percentage of rural male job seekers for the period of from 1 to 2 years is evident (51%). For the rural women in this group it was 34 percent.

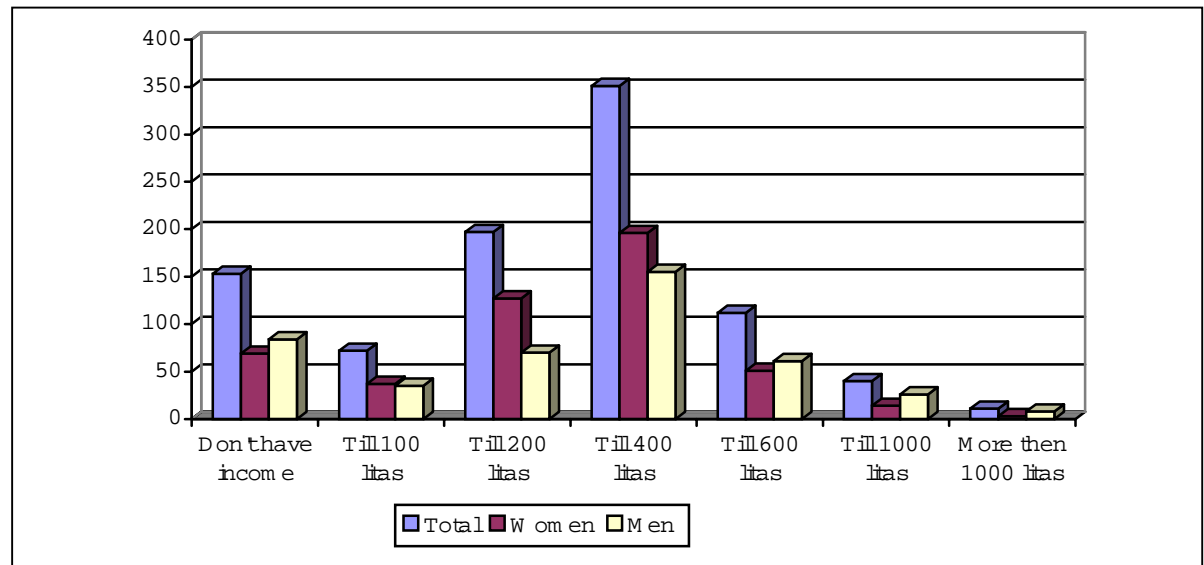


**Figure 9. Duration of unemployment in town and village**

**IV. Population income**

The population employment data estimated the income, of the employed and the unemployed. They were comprised of the actual monthly wage, pensions, benefits as well as a diversity of other income for the agricultural production sold, patent or other activities. The potential income from agricultural production, harvested for their own needs, if estimated, was not included into the calculation.

The average income per capita as for May 1998 was around 400 Lt. Out of 2987 thousand inhabitants over 14 years of age 17 percent had no income at all. Those were – the secondary school pupils and students with no scholarships. There were 16 percent of the rural population like that, as for women - 14 percent of the total rural women. The income of the majority of the population was from 200 Lt to 400 Lt. It was received by 31 percent of the total population, including 38 percent of the rural population, among them - around 40 percent of rural women.



**Figure 10. Income of rural population**

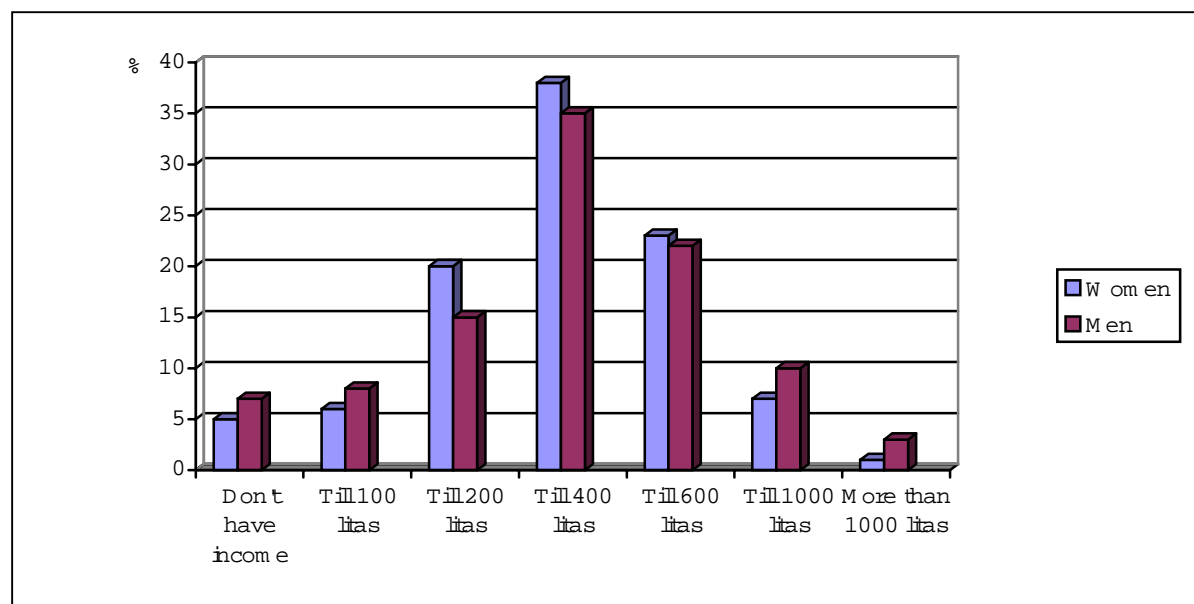
An income below 100 Lt was obtained by persons who received various social benefits, including child-care benefits for children aged from 1 to 3 years. As the average old age pension for an unemployed retired person as for May 1998 was 286Lt, the

majority of pensioners fell into the group with an income below 400Lt. The income exceeding 1000 litas was obtained by 4,5 percent of inhabitants, including the rural population for whom it was only 1,2 percent, i.e. 3 thousand women and 8 thousand men.

#### 4.1 Income of the employed

The net income of the employed, i.e. income left after all type of taxes were paid, was bigger compared to total population, as income from employment was bigger compared to the pensions or different benefits.

The average income of the employed per capita as for May 1998, was around 600 litas, in village around 400 Lt. The income of rural population did not include the in-kind income, the estimate of which was available by calculating the harvest obtained by the farmer. This estimation was not conducted, as the population employment survey conducted in May 1998 did not provide opportunities to estimate their annual size. The substantial share of the in-kind income rural inhabitants would be able to estimate in autumn, with the harvest.



**Figure 11. Income of rural employed, %**

The income for the majority of the employed comprised of 400 Lt to 600 Lt. This comprised one-third of all the employed. The

second biggest group was below 400Lt. The income of this size was received by over 26 percent of the employed.

The figures caused doubts, as the minimum approved wage was declared by the majority of the inhabitants employed in private institutions. It was a rule, as indicated by practice, that employers most often offered contracts for the hired employees at the minimum wage, although actually use a variety of ways to pay much more. The respondents when questioned did not trust the staff from public institutions and more often than not indicated the official, but not actual income. The estimates of their size were complicated. Special population surveys were needed, in which the respondents would have to mark their income all year round. That was very problematic, as the level of the hidden answers of the respondents, especially those with shadow income, would be high. Thus, the information obtained on population income would not be reliable enough. The analogical surveys conducted by the members of the European Union were also hesitant as to the reliability of this data.

The income indicated by rural population was more reliable, as it was really small and there was no sense in hiding them. The income of more than one-third of the rural employed was 200 Lt to 400 Lt. There were 38 percent of women with such income, as for men - 35 percent. There were more rural women compared to men, whose income was below 200Lt. This category had 20 percent of women and 15 percent of men.

As there was more than one-half (56%) of the rural population employed in agriculture, the analysis of their distribution by income made sense. The average income per person employed in rural agriculture comprised around 180Lt (the in-kind income not included). It might increase in autumn when farmers sell the harvest.

**Table 17.**  
Rural population, employed in agriculture, distribution by  
income (**thousand**)

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>
Had no income	11	16	27
Income less than 100 Lt	10	19	29

200 Lt	34	32	66
400 Lt	38	51	89
600 Lt	13	24	37
1000 Lt	3	9	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>260</b>

More than 10 percent of agriculture workers had no income at all, 25 percent had income from 100 to 200 litas. This is income obtained by agricultural products sold.

The majority of the employed 89 thousand or 34 percent had an income below 400Lt. Only a small share (5%) of farmers had an income close to 1000Lt. Those were the large-scale farmers, with an animal farm or hothouse business.

The income of women working in agriculture was smaller than compared to men. Around 40 percent of women received an income below 200 litas, as for men there were only 33 percent in this category. An income below 400Lt was for 35 percent of women and 33 percent of men. There were three times less women with an income around 1000Lt compared to men. They made up 3 percent, as for men 6 percent of the rural unemployed.

#### *4.2 Income of the unemployed*

Out of 262 thousand total unemployed 75 percent had no income whatsoever; in villages out of 69 thousand - 72 percent. An income below 100 Lt was for 7% of Lithuania's population and 11% of the rural unemployed; below 200Lt - 11 percent of Lithuania's population and 14 percent of the rural unemployed. The income of the unemployed most often came from random work performed or support from relatives.

### **V. Life Standard of Rural Population**

The rural life standard could be estimated by the household budget survey implemented by the Department of Statistics. The annual amount of respondents in the survey exceeds 8 thousand households including around 3 thousand rural households.

The survey data demonstrated that the life standard of the rural population was much lower compared to the urban. The survey data of the third quarter of 1998 indicated that the average income of a household calculated per capita was 430

Lt, including - 359 Lt for rural population. The income of the population at large during the third quarter of 1998 grew by 12 percent, if compared to those in the third quarter of 1997, as for the rural population – by 10 percent.

As in-kind economy dominates in the villages, the cash income of the rural population comprises only 64% of their total income and is almost twice lower compared to those of urban population.

The main source of income for the rural population was wages and income for work without being hired. They comprised almost two-thirds of the total income. Although the economic situation as it was and especially the population composition by age made it so, that the job income made up only 67 percent of the cash income of rural population. For those on pensions and benefits - 33 percent (to be compared – in town the job income made up 70 percent of total cash income, and for those on pensions and benefits - 30%).

The consumption expenditure structure was a clear indicator of the living standard. 49 percent of household expenditures went on foodstuff. Although the rural population produced the bigger share of foodstuffs by themselves, food expenditures comprised almost one-half (44 percent) of the total expenditure.

The analysis of poverty level conducted by the Department of Statistics in 1997 disclosed the highest level of poverty being in rural areas. The poverty margin is considered to have been reached when the average consumption expenditure drops by 50 % per household member. 37 percent of the households with three or more children were in poverty. In Lithuania in 1997 there were 17 percent living in poverty, including almost 26 percent of the rural population. The consumption expenditures that were below those calculated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour MLS, per an equivalent consumer were 5,5 percent of urban and 14 percent of the rural population.

The customary urban life-style, undoubtedly, asks for higher expenditures compared to the rural. Thus the household of urban residents with an equal income experience shortages more often if compared to rural. During the household's survey conducted in the third quarter 1998, there were 27 percent urban and 23 percent rural inhabitants who considered themselves poor.

Out of the total rural inhabitants surveyed around one-third have responded that their life standard has worsened during previous years (the life standard had become worse for 37 percent of urban inhabitants), and had become better for 5 percent of rural and 13 percent of urban inhabitants. The life standard had stayed stable for 65 percent of rural and 55 percent of urban inhabitants.

In the households' survey conducted in the third quarter 1998, the surveyed population indicated that it would do to have an average minimum of 577 Lt in village and 761 Lt in town per household member monthly. The absolute minimum monthly income for a household member to make a living/to survive, i.e. make both ends meet, should be not less than 293 Lt in villages and 387 Lt in towns.

## VI. Population by Education

The education of the population in Lithuania was high enough. The survey data for May 1998 indicated 2987 thousand of the inhabitants of the surveyable age were graduates, had diplomas of higher studies - 13 percent and of specialised secondary schools studies - 17 percent.

Table 18

Population of the country by education (percent)

	Women	Men	Total	Village		
				Women	Men	Total
Higher	14	12	13	5	4	5
Not graduated, higher	2	2	2	2	1	2
Specialised secondary schools	19	16	17	14	10	12
Secondary without vocational training	19	17	18	18	16	17
Secondary with vocational training	10	16	13	8	16	12
Nine-year (eight-year) without vocational training	13	15	14	16	18	17
Nine-year (eight-year) with vocational training	2	7	5	3	10	6
Primary (no primary)	21	15	18	34	25	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The education of rural inhabitants was lower than in the country at large, as the majority of graduate specialists were residing and working in towns. Out of 936 thousand rural inhabitants 5 percent had higher education and 12 percent – specialised secondary.

There were 89 percent of the population residing in towns with higher education and 11 percent – in villages. There were 78 percent of the rural population and 22 percent of the urban inhabitants with specialised secondary education.

The education of the employed was even higher. Out of 1569 thousand employed 20 percent had diplomas of higher studies, and 25 percent – have specialised secondary studies. Every fifth person employed had diplomas of higher studies, and every fourth – of specialised secondary studies.

Table 19

**Employed by education (percent)**

	Women	Men	Total	In village		
				Women	Men	Total
Higher	24	16	20	10	5	7
Not graduated higher	2	2	2	1	1	1
Specialised secondary schools	28	21	25	25	15	19
Secondary without vocational training	20	18	19	24	20	22
Secondary with vocational training	13	21	17	13	23	18
Nine-year (eight-year) without vocational training	8	10	9	14	16	16
Nine-year (eight-year) with vocational training	2	8	5	5	12	9
Primary (no primary	3	4	3	8	8	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

**VIII. Population Employment Changes in Two Years**

There were positive changes experienced in the labour exchange of Lithuania. With the decrease of migration of the population, the number of the employed population over 14 years of age (the surveyable age) was increasing as well as that of the total employed population. Since September 1997 until May 1998 there was an increase of the population by 14 thousand or 0.5 percent, the numbers of the employed increased to 5 thousand or by 0.3 percent. Despite the increase of the unemployed population as a crucial factor, the survey of 1997 was conducted in September when the employment of the population was



higher, but not in spring, i.e., as for May 1998. During that period the numbers of unemployed grew by 6 thousand or by 2 percent, although the unemployment level grew from 14.1 percent to 14.3 percent, i.e. it grew by 0.2 percent.

The employment of women in Lithuania grew as unemployment decreased from 121 thousand to 116 thousand or 3 percent. The unemployment level of women also decreased from 14.0 percent to 13.4 percent. With the ageing of inhabitants the numbers of the non-active population grew.

Table 20

**Population employment in 1997-1998<sup>1)</sup>**

a – 1997  b – 1998		Wome n	Men	Total	Village		
					Wome n	Men	Total
Thousands							
Inhabitants over 14 years old	a	1599	1374	2973	494	435	929
	b	1607	1380	2987	497	439	936
Employed	a	741	823	1564	211	265	476
	b	753	816	1569	208	255	463
Unemployed	a	121	135	256	26	31	58
	b	116	146	262	25	44	69
Percent							
Unemployment level	a	14.0	14.1	14.1	11.1	10.6	10.8
	b	13.4	15.1	14.3	10.7	14.7	13.0

<sup>1)</sup> September 1997, May 1998.

The rural situation was even worse. The inhabitants were growing in number there, yet still the numbers of the employed was decreasing as well as those of the employed. The unemployment level in rural areas grew from 0.8 percent to 13 percent. The unemployment level for rural women decreased from 11.1 percent to 10.7 percent.

### IX. Conclusions

At the beginning of 1998 there were 32 percent of total population of Lithuania residing in villages, including 52 percent women.

The numbers of old people were increasing and of children (0-14 years of age) – decreasing both in towns and villages. At the time

in villages there were more old people than children. There were 300 thousand pension-aged persons in villages. They comprised 25 percent of the total rural inhabitants. The pension-age women made up 203 thousand or 33 percent of rural women.

The inhabitant mortality was bigger in villages compared to towns. In 1997 there were 11,1 deaths per 1000 inhabitants, including – 15.7 in village, out of them – 14.5 were women.

During the school year of 1997-1998 there were around 23 thousand dropouts who did not attend schools aged 7-15, including 85 percent of rural inhabitants.

The majority of rural inhabitants, both men and women, were employed in agriculture. 52 percent of total rural women and 59 percent of rural men – were employed in agriculture.

The most popular profession among rural women was as the qualified agricultural workers. They comprised 43 percent of the total employed rural women. There were very few women working as legislators, senior officials and governors (4 percent).

The farmers, as a rule, were rural inhabitants aged 60 and above. They comprised around 60 percent of the total farmers.

The unemployment level as indicated by the data obtained by the Department of Statistics from a survey conducted on May 1998 was 14.3 percent, for rural women – 10.7 percent, for men – 14.7 percent. The highest unemployment was among youth, aged 14-19 years. For Lithuania it was 34.8 percent, in village – 29.4 percent. The unemployment level of young rural women in this age group was 26.8 percent.

Around 73 percent of the unemployed were formerly employed. The majority of them were employed in industrial or construction companies. They comprised 45 percent of the total unemployed. The rural unemployed were mainly working in agriculture. They comprised one-half of the rural unemployed.

The majority of the unemployed did not have vocational training or job experience. To find employment in villages was extremely difficult.

The income of more than one-third of rural inhabitants was below 400 Lt. The women with such an income comprised 39 percent.

There were positive changes experienced in the Lithuanian labour exchange. The number of the population over 14 was growing, as well as the number of the employed population. With the population getting older the number of non-active inhabitants was growing. The unemployment level grew from 14.1 percent in September 1997 to 14.3 percent in May 1998. The unemployment level for rural women during the period dropped from 11.1 percent to 10.7 percent.

## The National Machinery of Equal Opportunities

In Lithuania the issues of gender equality were first addressed in 1994, when a post of a State Counsellor on Women's Issues was introduced in the Prime Minister's Office. In 1996, it was upgraded into office of Adviser to the Government on Women and Family Issues. From the end of 1996 these issues have been referred to as issues of equal opportunities. At the end of 1996 the Government adopted the Action Plan for the Advancement of Women of Lithuania.

The year 1997 was the year when the national machinery of equal opportunities was being created. The Plan up to the year 2000 for the implementation of the Action Plan was adopted. A structural subdivision was established within the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, a gender statistics section was set up in the Department of Statistics and a ministerial group was formed to supervise these issues. Concurrently similar parliamentary groups were formed: a group of Women Parliamentarians involving members of parliament from all political parties headed by a chairperson who is re-elected at the beginning of each parliamentary session, and a parliamentary Commission of Family and Child.

Upon the adoption of the Law on Equal Opportunities at the end of 1998 and the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsman of Equal Opportunities in 1999, which set to work immediately, the national machinery of equal opportunities has been further developed. The Office enjoys broad administrative powers, which accords it a special status even among similar offices in the Nordic countries.

We are convinced that this mechanism will enable women and men of Lithuania to see that all the citizens of the country have to and can make choices with regard to their career and personal life on the basis of equal opportunities.

Ramun Trakymien  
State Counsellor Prime Ministers Office Republic of Lithuania

**Dr. Giedre Purvaneckiene**

## **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

The problem of violence against women started to be studied quite recently. The numbers of registered violent crimes against women are not too high. But there is evidence that the majority of cases of domestic violence are not registered in state statistics because they are not reported to the police. So, the problem remains how to measure the real scope of violence against women? Sociological surveys are to answer this question. An overview of the sociological surveys conducted provides information about prevalence of violence against women.

First of all, our attention should be drawn to the International Crime Victim Survey in Lithuania conducted in 1997, by the Institute of Law and Market and Opinion Research Center "Vilmorus" (Institute of Law, 1997). Firstly, it should be noted that the aims of this survey did not include measurement of the prevalence levels of domestic violence. Secondly, the methodology of the questionnaire design caused leveling heaviness of the crime: questions about heavy crimes (e.g., rape) were put at the same level as theft (however insignificant). In this case one can hardly expect openness from the respondents. Thirdly, the questionnaire was influenced by predominant stereotypes. For example, male respondents were not asked about sexual violence against themselves at all. Nevertheless, let us extract from the results of this survey information out of interest. The methodology did not allow for a broad picture of contact crime but enabled us to discover a high rate of contact violence during the last 5 years, and could serve as a basis for further analysis. The results of the survey are presented in Table 1 (Institute of Law, 1997, P. 52).

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**DISTRIBUTION BY GENDER OF VICTIMS OF  
DIRECT PERSONAL CONTACT DURING THE PAST 5  
YEARS, %**

<b>Type of victimization</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
Personal theft	24.4	15.2
Robbery	3.7	5.9
Assault/threat	7.9	12.0
Sexual offence	3.7	-

N= 2191, 16 years and over, National representative survey

The results of the survey enable us to map out the scope of violence. Let us analyse the type of violence defined as “assault/threat”. Taking into account that 1 % of adult women comprise 15,000 inhabitants we can roughly estimate that there are about 24,000 victims of such offences per year. But crime statistics (Women and Men in Lithuania, 1998) indicated only 6,728 women victims of crime in 1997, in total. This is clear evidence of a high underreporting rate.

But these results do not indicate the place of violence or the relationships of the victims with perpetrator, which is extremely important in the case of violence against women.

The survey “Women in Lithuanian Society” conducted by the “Baltic Surveys” in 1994 (Purvaneckiene, 1995) gives a broader picture of the place and the type of contact violence (Table 2).

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#### **PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AND MEN WHO REPORTED PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY THE TYPE OF VIOLENCE**

<b>Type of violence</b>	<b>Women, %</b>	<b>Men, %</b>
<b>Badly beaten</b>	33	62
- in their parental families	16	22
- in their marital families	18	3
Robbed	18	26
Attempted rape	20	3.6

N=1,500, 15 years and over, National representative survey

In this survey, the respondents were questioned about their whole-life experiences, so the results should not coincide with the previous ones. But the main trends are the same: men are more exposed to physical violence. But here we see quite a different picture when analysing experiences of women and men in their marital families. So, we can conclude that the main problem for women is domestic violence. In this respect, further research on relations between victim and perpetrator is needed. The results of the survey revealed very strong correlation between experienced family violence in childhood and in adulthood. However, women who did not experienced physical violence by parents: 13% experienced physical violence by their spouses. Women who were badly beaten by their parents at least once: 46% experienced violence by their spouses (Purvanckien , 1997).

The survey “Violence against Women and Children” was conducted by the Vilnius University Women’s Studies Centre in 1996 (Moter studij centras, 1997). The respondents were questioned about their whole-life experiences as well. The survey was not representative, therefore, probably, the percentage of women who reported violence was slightly higher than in other surveys, but it gave more interesting facts to consider. First of all, these results confirm the conclusion that women are mostly exposed to domestic violence. Secondly, they draw attention to other types of violence experienced by women (Table 3).

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**EXPERIENCES OF EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY WOMEN**

Type of violence	Women, %
Emotional	77.7
Physical	64.5
- by father	17.5
- by spouse	35.6
Sexual	23.7
Did not experience any type of violence	13.6

N=228, 18-65 years of age

The comparison of results from several studies reveal some reasons why violence against women is marginalised, why it is so difficult to persuade officials and the community that immediate and systematic measures to combat violence against women should be introduced. First of all, the general results of the surveys and crime statistics show that men experience physical violence more often. Therefore, the structure of violent incidents should be disclosed, as well as the relationship between a victim and perpetrator. The deepest insight on violence against women are given in the results of the victim survey "Violence against Women" (Box 1).

### **BOX 1**

#### **MAIN FINDINGS OF THE VICTIM SURVEY "VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN"**

- \* 63.3 % of Lithuanian women have been victims of male physical or sexual violence or threats after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.**
- \* 42.4 % of all married and cohabiting women have been victims of physical or sexual violence or threats of violence by their present partner.**
- \* 53% of all women who had lived in relationships which had already terminated experienced violence or threats by their ex-partners.**
- \* 11 % of Lithuanian women had at least once, after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, been victims of male physical or sexual violence or threats, perpetrated by a stranger, 8.2 % - by a friend, and 14.4 % by an acquaintance or relative.**
- \* 71.4 % of Lithuanian women after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday have been victims of sexual harassment or sexually offensive behavior by a stranger, and 43.8% by a known man.**
- \* 26.5 % of Lithuanian women after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday had experienced sexual abuse by a stranger; 18.2 % by a known man; 17 % were attempts of coercion into sexual intercourse by their date.**
- \* 3.4 % of all victimised women reported that the experienced violence did not affect them, the absolute majority reported that this had caused**



**hatred, helplessness, sorrow or other negative emotions.**

**\* 10.6 % of the victims reported the most serious incident to the police.**

**\* women who were victimised in their parental families more often were victimised in their marital families; women whose mother was abused by their spouse, more often experienced violence by their spouses; men whose father had been violent against the mother, had been more often violent against their own partner.**

**\* 75.3 % of the adult Lithuanian women do not feel safe from risk of assault.**

**\* 79 % of Lithuanian women believe that the home is the safest place for women and children.**

The survey "Violence against Women" (Purvaneckiene, 1999a) was conducted in 1997-1998. It was initiated by the Women's Issues Information Centre, and supported financially by the UNDP and UNIFEM. The National representative survey of adult women was conducted by the company "Baltic Surveys, Ltd." from the 17-26 November 1997. The random sampling methodology was applied. One thousand and ten women aged between 18-74 years old were interviewed on a one to one basis.

The results of the survey showed that only 37.3% of adult women never experienced male violence. The results of the survey, concluded that the most dangerous places for women are their families and their closest environment. Only 11% of women had experienced acts of violence from strangers. Women who experienced violence by friends was 8.2% and by acquaintances or relatives was 14.4%. The highest prevalence level of violence experienced by women was by their husbands or partners. 42.5 % of currently married or cohabiting women at least once in their life experienced physical, sexual violence or threats from their spouses. The most frequent violence women experienced was spousal physical violence (38.1%) and threats (33.5%). Marital rape experienced by 9.9% of currently married women. The results of the survey confirmed also that incidents of violence against women are strongly underreported. Only 10.6% of victims reported to the

police about the most serious incident. The strong correlation between their violent environment in parental families and violence in marital families was confirmed once more. Women who had grown-up in families with the father being violent against them or their mothers experienced frequent violence by their spouses. Men, whose father had been violent against the mother, had been more often violent against their own partner. Another correlation (negative) was observed between gender equality in families and violence. Out of all the women who regarded that their relations with their spouses as equal, 30.4 % experienced spousal violence, and those who regarded their relations as unequal, was very high at 71.5%.

Summarizing the results from various surveys, the general conclusion could be made: the most serious problem for women are domestic and sexual violence.

**Domestic violence** is a very serious problem in Lithuania, as elsewhere. Although, according to the data of the Municipality Police, domestic crimes comprise only 3.1% out of all crimes, they have quite a big share among all crimes against a person. Namely, domestic murders comprised 57.4 % in 1996 and 39.9% in 1997 out of all revealed murders, as well as domestic heavy injuries 43.2% in 1996 and 32.9% in 1997 out of total numbers of revealed heavy injuries. In cases of other violence against persons the percentage of domestic violence is much smaller, what this indicates is that cases of domestic violence are highly underreported unless it does end up in a murder or a heavy injury. Therefore, public and official perception of the extent of domestic violence in its various manifestations is still characterized by limited knowledge and traditional attitudes of shame and secrecy. Women and children are usually victims of domestic violence. According to the data of the Municipality Police, in 1997 women comprised 88.8% and children 9.3% of victims of domestic crime (J rien , 1998).

There are indicators that the extent of domestic violence is growing. According to a pilot study of 1996, conducted by the Women's Studies Centre of Vilnius University, among 200 high school and university female students, 48% of them had experienced violence by their fathers (Moter studij centras, 1997).

According to the public opinion polls, domestic violence is considered a private issue: more than half of the population are of

the opinion that the problem of domestic violence should be solved by the family itself (Purvaneckiene, 1999b).

One of the main obstacles for combating domestic violence is lack of awareness by victims of violence, police enforcement officers, officials and society as a whole. Several actions were undertaken in this field also. The Women's Issues Information Centre, supported by the UNDP/Lithuania campaigned throughout the year of 1996 against domestic violence and violence against women, and organized the national conference, "The Problem of Violence against Women in Lithuania Today", and subsequently published conference papers. In 1997, the WIIC together with Helsinki Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (HEUNI) organized a training seminar for police officials and officers around, "Domestic Violence – What Next?" In 1998, the international conference, "How to Combat Family Violence: Looking for Solutions?", was organized by the Seimas Committee for Child and Family Affairs, Women's Parliamentary Group and Vilnius Women's Home. Recently, the Women's Issues Information Centre accomplished the project "Stop Violence against Women", supported by the UNIFEM. The outcomes of this project are several publications, including the translation of the book, "Confronting Domestic Violence: Resource Manual", which will be used as a textbook in the Law Academy and Police Schools for future police officers. Also, two leaflets and a Reference book for women victims of violence were published and distributed. Recently, the UN General Assembly Resolution 52/86 (12.12.97), "Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Measures to Eliminate Violence against Women", was translated into Lithuanian, published and widely distributed by the Women's Issues Information Centre. Hopefully, it will serve as guidelines to create policy strategies for the elimination of violence against women.

### **Sexual violence.**

Criminal statistics give quite small numbers of sexual crimes. During the last few years, the total numbers of registered rapes or attempted rapes did not exceed 200 per year. But all surveys conducted show a high prevalence of sexual abuse and violence. According to the above mentioned survey "Women in Lithuanian Society" (1994), 20% of adult women and 3.6% of adult men at least once in their life had experienced attempted rape (Table 2). The results of the survey "Violence against Women and Children in Lithuania" (1995), showed a very high prevalence level of sexual violence (Table 3). In her analysis of the survey results

R.Mikalaj nait (1999, p. 78) makes conclusion: "...that young women of 15 to 25 years of age have greater experience of physical and sexual abuse than older women. This allows us to state that the rate of violence against women in our society is on the increase". As it was reported above, however, the last survey was not representative, therefore it would be incorrect to generalize for the whole population.

The national representative victim survey "Violence against Women", also showed a high prevalence of sexual abuse and violence. In this survey, sexual violence was regarded as forced sex (i.e. rape), and as sexual abuse such as unwanted touching, kissing, grabbing, fondling and forcing into sexual relations (i.e. attempted rape). Respondents were not asked about such types of sexual abuse in their marital families. Results on experienced sexual abuse by other men are presented in Table 4.

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**WOMEN WHO WERE SEXUALLY ABUSED OUT OF THE FAMILY, %**

Incidents of sexual abuse	Perpetrator	
	Stranger	Acquaintance/relative
Touching, grabbing, kissing, fondling against a woman's will	22	15
Attempts at forced sex	15.8	10

Seventeen percent of women were sexually abused by their date or boyfriend, who attempted to force them into unwanted sex.

Less respondents reported about the experienced rape (Table 5). But it has to be noted that marital rape was more prevalent than rape out of the family.

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**WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCED SEXUAL VIOLENCE OUT OF THE FAMILY AND IN THE FAMILY, %**

Incidents of sexual violence	Perpetrator			
	Stranger	Acquaintance /relative	Spouse/ partner*	Spouse/ partner**
Forced to have sex when a women did not want to, by holding down or hurting in some way	2.1	1.9	5.9	8.6
Forced to have sex when a women did not want to, by threatening in some way (verbally or with a weapon, or a tool)	1.7	1.0	3.9	5.7

**\* These percentage refer to all adult women**

**\*\* These percentage refer to currently married and cohabiting women**

It is evident that the results of the various surveys differ. But these differences are caused by different interpretations by researchers of “sexual violence”, dependent on the forms and seriousness of incidents. But all surveys show high rates of experienced sexual violence or abuse. And, it is clear that sexual violence and sexual crimes are highly underreported. This is caused by the similar reasons as in the cases of domestic violence. In addition, the whole criminal process in the case of rape is a long and humiliating experience for a victim. The reports in Mass Media from the courts on rape cases depict a threatening picture (e.g., Box 2). Usually a victim changes her testimony due to severe threats by relatives or friends of perpetrators. This is why victims rarely make complaints or withdraw their complaints.

**BOX 2**

From daily “Respublika”, May 25, 1999

## **Rapists of a Young Girl Acquitted in K dainiai** **By Gen Silickien**

**Five rapists from of K dainiai were acquitted by the chairmen of the area court in K dainiai region.**

On September 14, 1998, the area prosecutor's office took criminal action against five residents of K dainiai for gang rape of a young girl, R.Ž. During the pre-trial investigation it was established that on September 12, 1998, at around midnight, R.Ž., a resident of K dainiai, was walking home from a discotheque and was assaulted by two strangers. They lured the girl into a billiard-room. Shortly, they were joined by four of their friends. The youths were drinking alcohol heavily and, refused to let the girl leave, and forced her to drink alcohol. They struck her head with a cue stick the girl who had been made drunk had by now lost her bearings, and was unconscious. She was carried to the sauna room, undressed and raped by all those who were present in the billiard-room.

In the morning the young girl went to her friend's house in a state of shock, with her face badly swollen. She could hardly walk and complained about the pain around her hip area. Experts established that the girl had not had sexual relations prior to this event.

The girl's testimony given during the investigation was checked on the scene of the crime, the girl recognised, and identified the defendants. However, the young men who were charged with rape, denied the allegations and maintained that the underage girl had sexual relations with them of her own accord.

The area court of K dainiai region, which head the case, adjourned the case for further investigations and required more evidence.

During the repeated hearing of the case the victim collapsed and the judicial sitting had to be postponed. The victim gave in to the pressure of the defendants and their parents and changed her evidence, saying she had "forgotten" the events when she was hit on the head with a cue stick and could not recall what had happened to her in the billiard-room.

**Legal obstacles faced by women who experienced violence.** At present there are no separate laws on (physical) violence against women or domestic violence. The Criminal Code contains about twenty articles on violence in total, but they are gender neutral. Theoretically, the same articles apply in both cases: violence by a stranger or by a family member. The differences are in criminal procedures and attitudes of the law enforcement officers or judges. Attitudes towards domestic violence is to treat it as a private matter. There are no legal mechanisms to stop a perpetrator of domestic violence by police and prevent future violent behaviour, unless an incident resulted in murder or heavy injuries. In other

cases, the police force only makes an official remark to perpetrator that his behaviour is asocial.

Criminal procedure in cases of violence by a stranger or in the domestic environment is different (Meškauskaitė, 1999). In the case of violence by a stranger, police makes investigation and brings case to the court, even if a victim refuses to make complaint herself. In cases of violence in the domestic environment, the victim personally has to bring the case to the court (or apply personally to the police). Private cases are analysed by judges without pre-investigation by prosecution (unless there are no heavy injuries). But in all these cases the application of a victim is obligatory. However, women very seldom make complaints or withdraw them after some time.

One of reasons which prevents women from reporting violence by their husbands is absence of legal mechanism to protect a victim from the perpetrator in the future. There are no possibilities to remove him from the domicile or to prohibit further contact with the victim. The new draft Family Law (Lietuvos Respublikos Civilinis kodeksas, 1998) has an Article on temporary protection measures in cases of divorce proceedings only. If this draft Law passes the Seimas, it will at least be the first step towards the protection of women and children in cases of domestic violence.

In connection with sexual violence, there are three articles in the Criminal Code concerned specifically with sexual crimes against women: Article 118. Rape, Article 119. Coercion of a woman into sexual intercourse, and Article 120. Sexual intercourse with a sexually underdeveloped person.

According to the Government resolution No.77 of 21 January, 1998 on the Implementation of Action Plan of the Advancement of Women of Lithuania in 1998-2000, the legal basis (Criminal Code) should be permanently improved. The responsibility lays with the Institute of Law, Criminal Code drafting group and the Ministry of Justice. The same institutions are responsible for the improvement of the practice of application of the existing laws.

The new draft Criminal Code underwent many changes and amendments since it was published two years ago. So, at present it is difficult to evaluate the draft until it is published once again. The first draft was criticised a lot by women's NGOs because of the omission of violence against women, but it seems that the amendments offered by women's NGOs were not included into the

draft. There are no women's NGO at present to be a "watch-dog" to the draft Criminal Code, and the situation could be really tough if the draft commences to the discussion stage in the Seimas (Parliament), and it would be too late to interfere with many amendments.

**Assistance for victims of violence.** As from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1999, there was the only one institution named the Crisis Centre and it remains the only shelter for abused women, established by the NGO Vilnius Women's Home.

But there are other options for victims of domestic violence to receive assistance. According to the data from the Women's Issues Information Centre, as from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1999, the following institutions located in different cities provide assistance for women victims of violence:

1. Shelters (5): 2 shelters established by the municipalities; 1 shelter established by the Church; and 2 shelters established by the Municipality Police.
2. Lodging for the night homes (3): 2 established by the municipalities and 1 established by municipality police.
3. Consultative centres (2): Centre of Psychological Consultation and Cabinet of Family Relations.
4. Consultative centres, established by the Municipality police (2).
5. Phone lines of psychological help (5).
6. Phone trust lines, established by the Municipality Police - 40.

Two institutions Vilnius Women's Home Crisis Centre and Shelter for Abused Women, and Vievis Shelter for Women and Children provide assistance to abused women irrespectively of having children. Vilnius Shelter for Battered Mothers and Children provides accommodation only for mothers with children, but works as consultative centre for all battered women. The Caritas Care Home is oriented towards assistance for homeless women with children or pregnant women, not putting special stress on experienced violence. Shelters or consultative centres established by the Municipality police are oriented towards assistance to victims of violence.

The Vilnius Women's Home Crisis Centre and Shelter for Abused Women are the only two institutes that operate on a strong feminist ideology. The Vilnius Women's Home Crisis Centre and Shelter for Abused Women have been unable to establish the shelter due to lack of financial resources. So, the Crisis Centre only provides



psychological, medical or legal assistance on daily basis. Assistance and support is provided by volunteers mainly. The Crisis Centre operates a telephone service for women in domestic violence situation, open for 13 hours per day (8 am - 9 pm). Since it opened in November 1996 until February 1999, the Crisis Centre has provided assistance for 490 abused women.

The Caritas Care Home, on the contrary, put stress on traditional family and Catholic values. On the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1999, 15 women with 20 children lived in the Caritas Care Home. The Caritas Care Home has good facilities to give refuge for mothers of new-borns.

The most professional assistance and the most substantial support women can get is from the Vilnius Shelter for Battered Mothers and Children. The shelter has a permanent staff team of professionals, mainly social workers. Every woman and her children are allocated one social worker. On the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1999, 13 women with 28 children lived in the shelter. This shelter has very close relations with the Municipality police, and is protected from possible attacks from violent husbands. Women can stay for six month in the shelter, so it is enough time for women to establish their independent life from a violent husband: to receive short term training, to find a job and a living place. In all these activities they are assisted by a personnel from the shelter, if needed. The shelter has plans to expand: to renovate their premises under the roof and to buy a separate flat in different location for emergency crisis centre.

The Vievis Shelter for Women and Children works in two directions. They provide after school services for children from risk within their families (children are provided with meals, have possibility to take a shower and to wash their clothes, support to prepare their lessons, play, etc.). And, the other direction is providing shelter for battered women. There were very few women clients. Vievis is a very small town, so everybody knows if a women seeks help. Shame prevents women from using the shelter services. It became clear that taking into account present attitudes, shelters in small localities has to collaborate with each other and to provide women with shelters in other localities than the one she lives in.

It has to be noted, that the Municipality Police is also starting many initiatives to establish services or shelters for victims of domestic violence. It is very difficult to analyse the effectiveness of other services, especially those that do not specialise, because

the majority of them are only starting to be involved in offering assistance for battered women. But the wishes of such services to be included into the "Reference book for women victims of violence" (Praktiniai patarimai, 1999) shows changes in their awareness.

Sumarizing the analysis of the situation, one can state that there is a very high prevalence level of violence against women, and the most serious problem for women are domestic and sexual violence. At present, there is quite a good established base of research results and informational-educational materials. It is high time to take practical actions now.

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## WOMEN AND ELECTIONS

As described in the chapter "Political Participation: Statistical Data", 28 political parties, organizations, or electoral coalitions (24 in multi-mandate electoral districts) took part in the Parliamentary elections in October 1996. Under a proportional representation system, only five parties won 5% of the vote and achieved mandates in the Parliament: the Homeland Union (Lithuanian Conservatives) - 29.80%; the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party - 9.91%; the Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party - 9.52%; the Lithuanian Center Union - 8.24%; and the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party - 6.60%.

Besides these five, representatives of the following parties or political organizations were also elected to the Lithuanian Parliament in single-mandate districts: the Lithuanian Democratic Party; the Lithuanian Farmers' Party; Lithuanian Liberal Union; the Lithuanian National Party - "Young Lithuania"; the Lithuanian National Union; the Lithuanian Poles' Electoral Action; the Lithuanian Women's Party; the Union of Christian Democrats; and the Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees of Lithuania.

Local government elections did not result in any great changes vis a vis political party influence. Besides the aforementioned, representatives from the following parties or political organizations were elected to the local government councils: the Lithuanian Liberty Union; the Lithuanian Citizens' Alliance; the Union of Russians of Lithuania; the Lithuanian National Economy Party; and the National Progress Party of Lithuania. But their representations were low in numbers.

Political parties increasingly have more and more influence on the state policies. One half of the parliamentarians are elected in multi-mandate districts, and local governments are elected only in multi-mandate districts, i.e. according to the political parties or political movements lists. After elections public policy is determined by the election programs of parties which won elections.

**Women’s and gender equality questions in the election programs of political parties**

In 1997, the Women’s Issues Information Centre initiated a research project, “Women and Elections”. One part of this project was an analysis of the election programs of 10 political parties regarding women’s or gender equality issues (Purvaneckiene 1999). The parties were chosen on the basis of the results of the 1996 Parliamentary elections, the results of the 1997 elections to local government councils, data from sociological surveys, and their influence on the life of the state and the society. Election programs of the following political parties were analyzed:

- Homeland Union (Lithuanian Conservatives) [HU(LC)]
- Lithuanian Center Union [LCU]
- Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party [LCDP]
- Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party [LDLP]
- Lithuanian Farmers' Party [LFP]
- Lithuanian Liberal Union [LLU]
- Lithuanian National Economic Party [LNEP]
- Lithuanian National Union [LNU]
- Lithuanian Social Democratic Party [LSDP]
- Lithuanian Women's Party [LWU]

Women's, gender equality, and equal gender opportunity issues were reflected to varying degrees in the election programs of the different parties: some programs did not mention them at all, and others discussed the issues extensively. First let us examine these issues from a quantitative point of view (Table 1).

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**Women's and gender equality issues as reflected in party election programs**

Party	Women's and gender equality section	Family issues section	No. of times “woman” appears	No. of times “gender equality” or “equal

				opportunity” appears
HU(LC)	-	-	-	-
LCDP	-	Special role of the family Support for the family, and child protection	4	-
LCU	Propositions regarding problems of equal gender opportunity	-	26	1
LDLP	Policies fostering female and male equality	State support for the family	6	5
LFP	-	-	3	-
LNEP	-	-	1	-
LLU	-	-	-	-
LNU	-	Support for the family	1	-
LSDP	Woman in the family and society	Woman in the family and society Policies regarding family support and housing	26	4
LWP	Conditions for women	Family and childcare	45	2

Using the data from the table regarding their point of view on women, equal rights and/or opportunities issues, one can divide the parties into 3 groups vis a vis their election programs:

**1. Parties which do not present a clear position on women's, or equal rights and opportunities issues in their election programs.** 4 parties belong to this group: the Homeland Union (Lithuanian Conservatives), the Lithuanian Farmers' Party, Lithuanian Liberal Union, and Lithuanian National Economy Party. The parties in this group could be further divided into 2 sub-groups:

1a) The HU(LC) and the LLU would belong to this sub-group; the word "woman" does not appear once in their programs, although they do emphasize the Constitutional principle of gender equality. The parties in sub-group a) of the first group do not declare their

position vis a vis questions on women and equal gender rights, or opportunities in their election programs.

2a) The LFP and the LNEP, does mention separate social guarantees for women in their Policy on Social Guarantees. The parties in group 1b) touch on women's issues only formally, and they make no effort at all to understand women's problems. They have no consequent policies regarding women. Their old-fashioned "formulas" regarding women's issues express anti-democratic ideas.

**2. Parties which give a great deal of attention to the family question and allocated women to the sphere of the family.**

These 2 parties are: the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party and the Lithuanian National Union. In summarizing the election programs of these 2 parties, one can allocate them both to the same group, only because they accentuate the significance of the family to society. However, their programs are completely different: the LCDP program consequently expresses the present day Christian approach of a democracy, while the LNU program has neither consistency, relevance, or a clear policy regarding the family in general.

**3. Parties which clearly formulate their position regarding issues on women, gender equality and equal opportunity.**

This group includes: the Lithuanian Center Union, the Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party, the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, and the Lithuanian Women's Party.

LCU election program offers contemporary measures to improve conditions for women, though economic measures only. When raising other problems, i.e. violence against women, the election program has nothing to offer to improve the situation. In analyzing the LCU election program, one gets the impression that the entire program is written without taking gender differences in society into consideration; it seems as if "Propositions regarding problems of equal gender opportunity" were written separately, and does not relate to the other sections. The election program mostly touches upon economic problems for women, in which respect it is presented competently.

In its election program the LDLP treats the problem of gender equality from a position of human rights and of social justice. In analyzing gender equality from the point of view of democracy, one misses any declaration of involving women in politics and



public office, even though the equal participation of women and men in decision making is a corner-stone of democracy.

In the election program of LSDP, the following immediate actions are laid out in the sub-section entitled, "Woman in the family and society": with the help of various forums and discussions, to formulate a healthy public attitude regarding gender equality rights, interrelationships in the family, in society, and in the labour market; to foster and support the activity of various women's associations and organizations; to foster representation by women at all levels of elected organs; to provide the opportunity for women's organizations to participate in local government; to create an effective system for re-qualifying specialists and employing women, by urging state and private enterprises to create new jobs for women; to activate the education of women in the sphere of questions regarding social insurance, labour rights, etc.; to take all measures to stimulate activity and co-operative ventures by business women; to improve medical services and a health maintenance system for women; in conjunction with professional unions to strive for increased exemptions and guarantees for working mothers; to adopt a Law on Equal Gender Rights and Opportunities and a program to implement such, with measures to eliminate discrimination and violence against women, and to abolish sexual coercion and exploitation of women; to humanize women's incarceration institutions so that they respect human rights, and to not keep newly born infants on the premises. To establish shelters for women, and ensure that local governments provide them with services.

But on the other hand, one can say that they are very contradictory regarding women's and equal gender opportunity issues. The above mentioned claims sound the most up-to-date of all the programs. However, this impression vanishes when one goes on to read the sub-section on "Problems regarding family support and housing" in which the most conservative attitudes are expressed. One gets the impression that the "Woman in the family and society" sub-section was written by people with experience regarding women's problems and with international attempts to deal with them, while the section on social guarantees for families was written by people who know nothing about women's or gender equality problems, or Lithuania's laws as they exist.

Analyzing the program of the LWP from the point of view of gender equality, rights and opportunity is a most difficult task. For this program was formulated by women themselves, and should

therefore optimally reflect women's aspirations. However, let us try to look at this program in the same critical light as all the others. In summarizing an analysis of the LWP election program, one could say that in spite of everything, of all the party programs, it does deal with women's problems the most. But its position is not consistent, and even the departure point of its attitude towards women is not clear. Its general provisions claim that the LWP is based on a matrilinear culture, and that it wishes to revive that culture. This term is usually applied to describe pre-Christian cultures, and one could doubt whether a matrilinear culture is compatible with the radically Christian (Catholic) attitudes of the LWP, as laid out in the "Religion and relations with the Church" section. From the claims in the general section one could surmise that the LWP views women's and equal gender opportunity problem from the point of view of democracy and human rights; but even from this position, it lacks consistency. The LWP election program allocates most of its attention on the worsening of the demographic situation, on motherhood, and children. Therefore, the majority of its attitudes and suggested measures are pro-natal. There is a fair amount of attention given to women taking part in politics and government, but there is a shortage of concrete policies to implement these in practice. Because the LWP claims to support the "Action Plan of the Advancement of Women of Lithuania", one could hope that it would use the measures presented in that program, but it is precisely the Women's Party election program which should be offering more advanced recommendations than those in the Government's approved program. It must be admitted openly that the LWP election program is sufficiently eclectic (like the majority of Lithuania's parties), but in fact it cannot be otherwise, if one wants to reconcile the ideas of women of liberal and social democratic, feminist and anti-feminist, and other irreconcilable leanings, within one program.

Let's compare the political party election programs with the "Action Plan of the Advancement of Women of Lithuania". It was formulated on the basis of international documents, the international obligations of the Lithuanian Government, scientific research, and recommendations by women's organizations. Therefore, one can say that it complies with both the needs of Lithuania's women, and with international standards. There are 9 critical areas in the Program for the Advancement of Lithuania's Women, which demand immediate action in order to achieve equal rights and opportunities among men and women. Let us take a look at how these critical areas and certain specific problems are

reflected in party election programs (Table 2). The Table lists the parties which touch upon these areas or individual questions in their election programs, irrespective of whether their decisions foster equal gender rights and opportunities, or have the opposite effect.

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How the main problems for women are reflected within the political party election programs?

Critical areas and problems	Party programs which reflect these problems
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Protection of women's human rights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Law on Equal Gender Opportunities</li> <li>- Gender Equality Institution</li> </ul>	<p>LDLP, LSDP, LWP LSDP, LWP LDLP, LSDP</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Economic – Social Conditions for Women</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social assistance system</li> <li>- Childcare institutions</li> <li>- Childcare leave</li> <li>- Protection of women's ownership rights</li> <li>- Discrimination on the labour market</li> <li>- Unemployment</li> <li>- Re-qualification system</li> <li>- Fostering women's businesses ventures</li> <li>- Safety for women at work</li> <li>- Conditions for reconciling work and family responsibilities</li> <li>- Pensionable age</li> </ul>	<p>LCU, LDLP, LSDP, LWP LCU, LDLP, LFP, LNEP, LNU, LSDP LNU LFP, LSDP LCU LCU, LSDP LSDP, LWP LCU, LSDP, LWP LCU, LSDP LFP, LNEP  LCDP, LCU, LDLP, LSDP LNU</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Women and Environmental Protection</b></p>	-
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Women's Health and Family Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Abortion</li> <li>- Sex Education</li> </ul>	<p>LCDP, LCU, LSDP, LWP LCDP, LSDP LSDP</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Women and Education</b></p>	-
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Women in Politics and Government</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advancement of public and women's consciousness</li> <li>- Striving for greater representation by women</li> <li>- Quotas on party electoral lists</li> <li>- Support for women's organizations</li> </ul>	<p>LCU, LDLP, LSDP, LWP  LSDP  LCU, LSDP, LWP LSDP LDLP, LSDP</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Coercion and Violence against Women and Girls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prostitution</li> <li>- Women's shelters</li> </ul>	<p>LCU, LDLP, LSDP, LWP LCDP, LSDP LSDP</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Women and the Mass Media</b></p>	LCU
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Statistics and Gender Differences</b></p>	-

Based on their claims to be concerned regarding the most critical women's issues, the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party clearly takes the first place (with 22 indicators); then comes the Lithuanian Center Union (12 indicators), followed by the Lithuanian Women's Party (9) and the Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (8). Naturally one can disagree with the nature of this sort of analysis, but if voters were to read the party programs, they would want to know the answers to questions which concern them.

Having analyzed the data presented in Tables 1 and 2, one can conclude that voters did not choose which party to vote for on the basis of their concerns as reflected in their election programs vis a vis issues dealing with women's, or equal gender rights and opportunities. The Homeland Union (Lithuania's Conservatives), which won the election, barely touched on these questions in their election program. However, one should note that out of the five parties which ended up in Parliament according to a proportional representation system, three (the LCU, LDLP, and LSDP) did allocate a fair amount of attention to the questions on women's, or equal rights and opportunities, in their election programs.

Until now, most political parties did not allocate much attention to women's, or equal rights and opportunities problems. An analysis of election programs shows that some of them included these issues in their programs only as a formality, without any in depth work; some of the election programs are based on laws which are no longer in effect, and they continue to use out-of-date and obsolete legal categories. Some programs are contradictory. Naturally, different attitudes vis a vis these problems should be reflected in the different party programs. The Lithuanian Center Union, the Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party, and the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party programs could be considered to be the most consequent. The Lithuanian Women's Party and the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party allocated the most attention to women', or equal rights and opportunities problems, and one can see that they are attempting to mainstream women's or gender equality problems in many spheres of public life; but at the same time, the programs of these parties are the most contradictory.

Having analyzed the Lithuanian Parliamentary election programs of the 10 political parties, one can draw the following conclusions:

- None of the political parties mainstream women's or gender equality problems into all spheres of public life.

- Only 4 political parties allocate a great deal of attention to women's or gender equality problems: the Lithuanian Center Union, the Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party, the Lithuanian Women's Party, and the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party.

- The programs of the Lithuanian Center Union, and the Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party are the most consistent in

this respect. Although the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party does not allocate much attention to women's or gender equality problems, it does maintain a consistent, modern Christian Democratic position.

- The Lithuanian Social Democratic Party offers strategies regarding dealing with women's and gender equality problems which most approximate international standards, but at the same time, its other attitudes express contradictory, unrealistic, and legally incompetent ideas.

- The Lithuanian Women's Party allocates the most attention to women's problems, but its attitudes are marked by eclecticism, inconsistency, and vagueness.

- The provisions outlined in the political party programs regarding women's and gender equality issues did not essentially affect voters' decisions during the 1996 Parliamentary elections.

### **The behaviour of women voters**

Women make up 54% of the voters in Lithuania. If women voted unanimously, their voice would determine election results. What determines which party women vote for: age, education, residence, or political views? Do women's political views and their vote differ from men's?

Representatives of the classical political theory claim that women are more conservative than men, and that they are more inclined to support and vote for conservative parties (Lipset, 1981). This is particularly characteristic of Catholic countries. This was the expected norm. However, the situation has been changing over the last years, and in many countries women are giving more of their support to left-wing parties and their candidates. De Vaus and McAllister (1989) analyzed the results of post-election surveys in 11 Western countries<sup>2</sup>, and determined that in 10 of them, women have more right-leaning views than do men. Only in Australia are women more left-leaning than the men. The principal factors determining women's conservatism are religiosity and non-participation in the labour market (i.e. remaining in the role of homemaker). Because increasingly more women in Western countries are entering the labour market, and because religion is

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<sup>2</sup> Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Ireland, G. Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, USA.

losing its significance, the difference between men's and women's views are diminishing. After analyzing the political attitudes of different social demographic groups, the authors conclude that equally non-religious women working together with men (and even more so, students, unemployed and pension-aged women) have more left-minded views than do men.

In Lithuania, women almost hold an equal position with men in the labour market; in 1996 they made up 50.1% of the labour force (Lithuanian Dept. of Statistics, 1997). This factor could direct younger women's political attitudes to the left. Lithuania's women are more religious than the men, and the older they are, the more important religion is to them (Purvaneckienė, 1995). This factor would direct older women's political attitudes to the right.

In countries with a stable democracy, there is a strong direct relationship between the populations' political views, and their vote for parties which represent their point of view, especially if there are two dominating parties in the country. Parties in Lithuania have not yet taken up firm positions on the left-right scale, and the population has not taken on stable political views. But there are indications that this process is taking place.

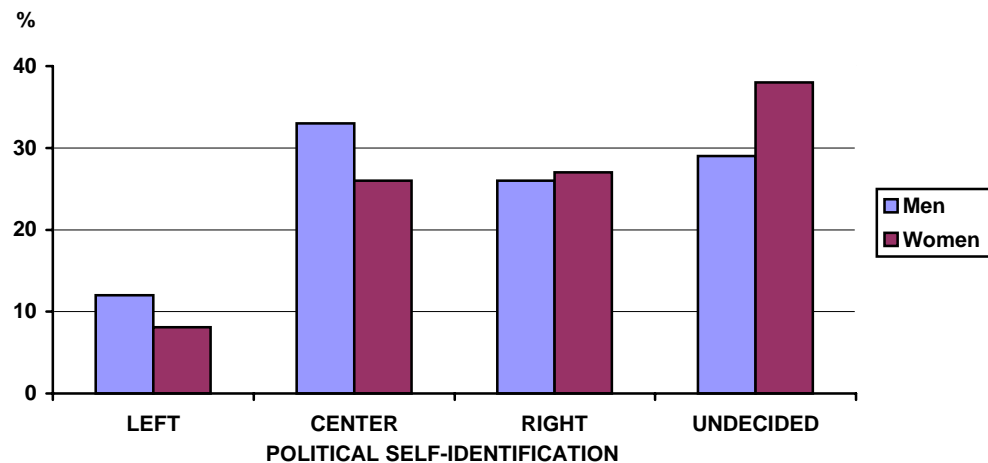
One part of the research project "Women and Elections", initiated by the Women's Issues Information Centre was an analysis of the intentions of women voters, and their behaviour during the 1996 Parliamentary elections (Ališauskienė, Purvaneckienė, 1999). An analysis of the results of the public opinion polls carried out by the company "Baltic Surveys, Ltd." in August 1996, November 1996, and August 1997 were used. These polls did not have a special intent, and therefore we will not analyze the relationship of political views as being dependent on various social demographic indicators, but will analyze how women's political views have changed over the last period.

The changes in women's political views over the last period, as well as the relationship of voting to certain social demographic indicators: age, education, residence, and political views were analyzed. Using the results of the standard public opinion polls, women's voting on the basis of their religiosity cannot be analyzed. Also, in Lithuania the results of voting by working women and by homemakers cannot be compared, since there are too few of the latter.

## Political views of Lithuania's women

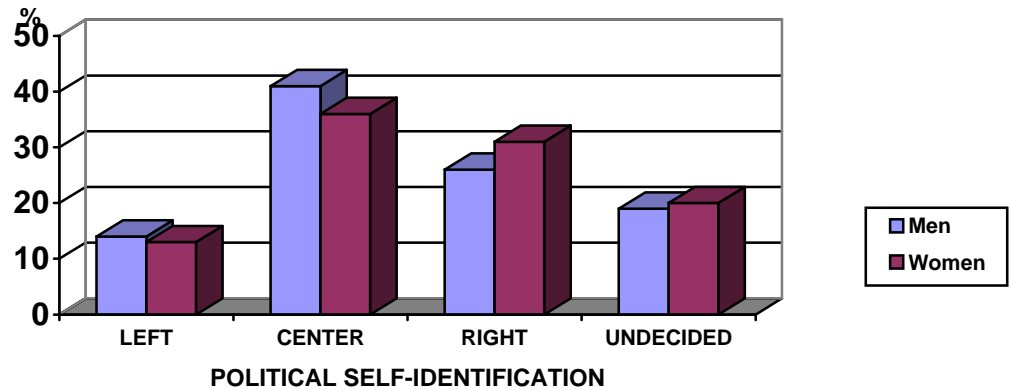
The "Baltic Surveys" have long been analyzing how people identify their views on a political scale. It must be said that for a long time, there were a great many who did not know where they fit on the scale. Lately, people have been identifying their political views more easily. Let us examine the changes in political views over a period of one year: from August 1996 (Figure 1) to August 1997 (Figure 2).

We can see that the political views of men and women in August 1996 differed mostly in that more women than men were not able to describe their political affiliation. Also, somewhat more women than men identified with the center. A year later, the political views of men and women had become more uniform.



**Figure 1. Women's and men's political self-identification 1996**  
**08**





**Figure 2. Women’s and men’s political self-identification 1997  
08**

We can see that over the year, the proportion of men who were unable to identify their views somewhat diminished: from 29% to 19%. Also, there was a certain increase in the number of men identifying with the center. The greatest change over the year was that the number of women unable to identify their political views fell by nearly half: from 38% to 20%. The greatest increase was in the number of women identifying with the center. One should not attach a great deal of meaning to this increase, since this group includes people who grade their own views from 4 to 7 on a 10 point scale (where 1 indicates extreme left, and 10 - extreme right). Thus even those in the center group identified themselves as being more left-oriented (4-5) or more right-oriented (6-7). They are therefore described as being only relatively center-oriented, and should not necessarily be identified as supporting the Lithuanian Center Union. But the fact that a larger proportion of women identified their views as being either left or right-oriented than they did in 1996, does indicate a growth in women's political consciousness.

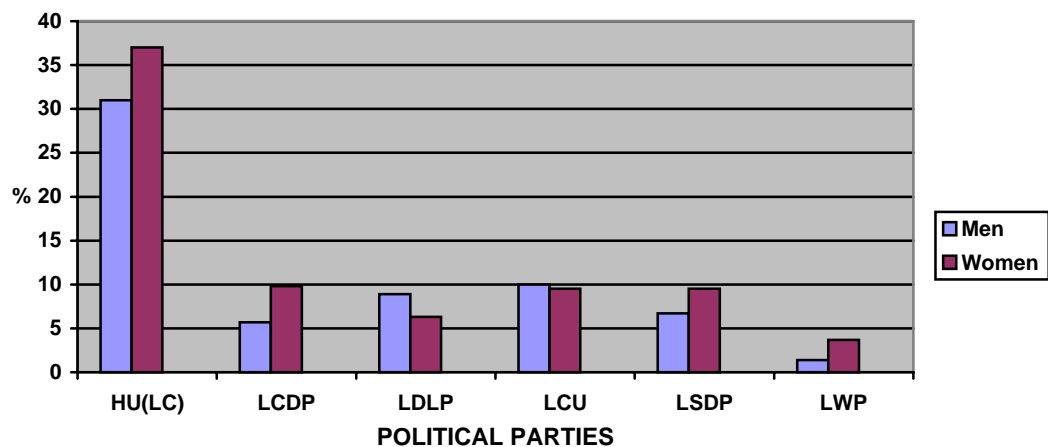
## **Election results as reflected in public opinion polls**

In analyzing the election results, we included those parties which ended up in Parliament under the proportional representation system: the Homeland Union (Lithuanian Conservatives) [HU(LC)] - 29.80%; the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party [LCDP] - 9.91%; the Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party [LDLP] - 9.52%; the Lithuanian Center Union [LCU] - 8.24%; and the

Lithuanian Social Democratic Party [LSDP] - 6.60%. Although the Lithuanian Women's Party [LWP] did not win the required 5% vote, we will include it in the analysis because men's and women's behaviour during the elections should differ vis a vis this party.

It goes without saying that since the ballots are secret, there are no official statistics regarding how many men and women voted for individual parties. There are only the general results. The analysis of the behaviour of women voters during the 1996 Parliamentary elections was based largely on the data from the November 1996 survey.

Who did women vote for in the 1996 Parliamentary elections? First let's see whether women voted differently from men (Figure 3).



**Figure 3. Distribution of men's and women's votes in the 1996 parliamentary elections**

We can see that more women than men voted for the HU(LC), the LCDP, the LSDP, and the LWP, and that more men voted for the LDLP. More men than women voted for the majority of those political parties which did not end up in Parliament under the proportional representation system. 24.8% of men and 16.8% women voted for the parties which are not listed in this Figure, which allows one to conclude that women are more inclined to vote for the better known political parties. As predicted, more women than men voted for the Lithuanian Women's Party. More women also voted for the HU(LC) and the LCDP, and at the same

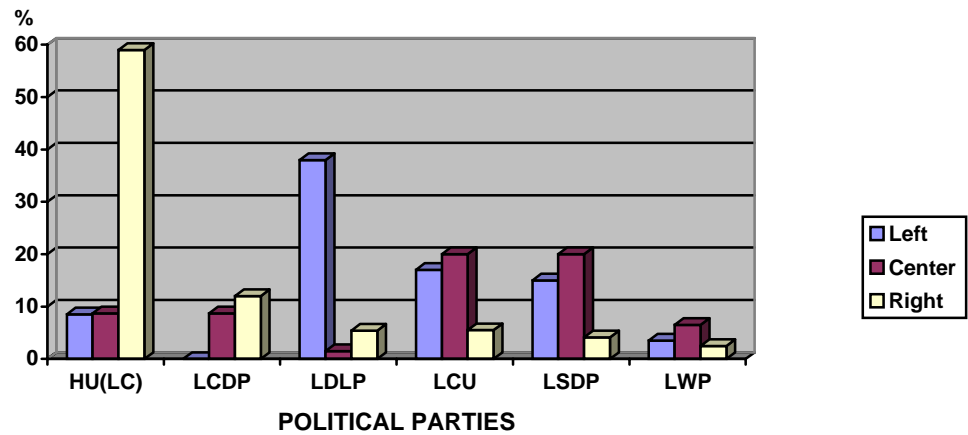
time, more voted for the LSDP. One can assume that they represent women having different views. One could also assume that a larger number of women voted for the HU(LC) and the LCDP due to their religiosity, and for the LSDP - due to their participation in the labour market. There are no means to accurately verify these assumptions within the limitations of this survey, but if it appears that a greater number of older women (who are more religious) voted for the HU(LC) and the LCDP, and that younger women (who are in the job market) voted for the LSDP, then this assumption would be more firmly substantiated.

What determines the choice of a political party? Results of the survey show that there is a relationship between party choice and age. A greater number of older women voted for the HU(LC) and the LCDP, and that younger women voted for the LCU, LSDP, and the LWP. Education also determined the women's choice of which party to vote for. The clearest relationship between education and party choice is visible in those who chose the LCU: the higher their level of education, the greater the proportion voting for this party. A greater number of women with higher education also voted for the LSDP, while those with the least education voted for the LCDP. The distribution of supporters on the basis of education for the HU(LC) is a very interesting one. The greatest number of women with the least education voted for this party (46%), as did a fair number with the highest education (39%). It was women with a secondary level of education who were the least inclined to vote for the HU(LC). But this is a very important group, because it comprises the largest proportion of voters. Of course, women's education is also related to their age, and so it is difficult to say which has the greater influence - age or education, though it appears to be age which in fact plays the greater role. The age and education are also connected with religiosity, so it could be concluded that results do not contradict the supposition that the religiosity of older women influences their voting for right-wing parties, and that the participation of younger women in the labour market influences their voting for more left-wing parties. The choice of party also depends on residence. In this survey, residential localities were divided into 3 groups: rural (up to 2,000 inhabitants), urban, and large city. It was mostly urban women who voted for the HU(LC); fewer rural women voted for them. Women in large cities and rural areas voted for the LDLP and the LCU. It is these voters' ballots which hold the most weight, for most voters live primarily in the large cities, and secondly in rural localities. The LSDP had more voters in urban and rural areas, and

the LWP - in urban areas. Women who voted for the LCDP were the most evenly distributed on the basis of residence.

Political views had the greatest influence on the women's choice in casting their ballot (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Distribution of women's ballots according to parties on the basis of different political views**



As already mentioned, there should be absolutely no direct relationship between women's voting behaviour and political views, but it is important to analyse whether one can forecast election results on the basis of the distribution of women's views according to the left-right scale. Those who voted for the HU(LC) were mostly representatives of right-leaning views, and those for the LDLP - left-leaning. Only women of right and center views voted for the LCDP. Women of center views mostly cast their vote for the LCU and the LSDP; a fair proportion of women with left-leaning views also voted for these parties. Voters for the LWP represent all views, but mostly the center. Here one can make conclusions about which political direction women voters assign to political parties. The HU(LC) is clearly seen as right-wing, the LCDP - more right-leaning, the LDLP - clearly left-wing. Meanwhile the LCU and the LSDP are considered center-left parties.

A fairly large proportion of women who were not able to identify their political views (21%) took part in the 1996 Parliamentary elections. The greatest proportion of women who could not identify their views voted for the HU(LC) and the LCDP.

In summarizing an analysis of the distribution of women's votes, we can identify the most characteristic aspects of the women who voted for each political party (Table 3):

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### **The most characteristic aspects of the women who voted for each political party**

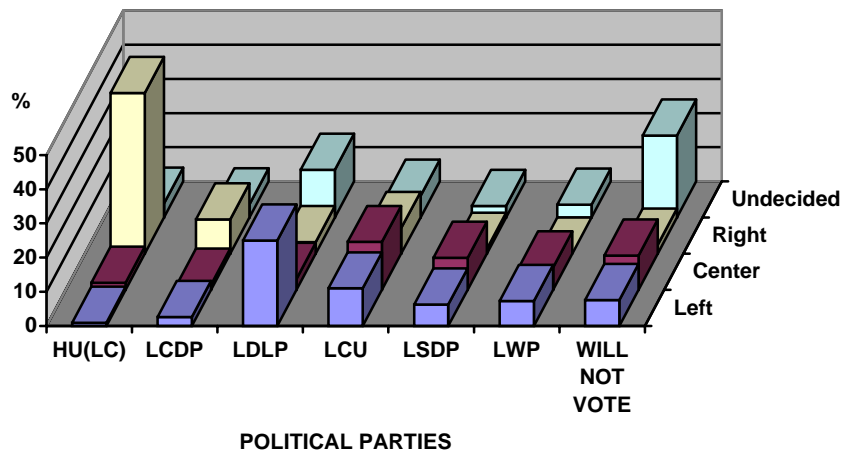
Party	Age	Education	Residence	Political views
HU(LC)	Older	Incomplete sec. Higher	Urban Large city	Right Undecided
LCDP	Oldest	Incomplete sec.	Various	Right Undecided
LDLP	Various	Various	Large city Rural	Left
LCU	Younger	Higher Secondary	Large city Rural	Center Left
LSDP	Younger	Secondary Higher	Urban Rural	Center Left
LWP	Younger	Secondary	Urban	Various

The circle of voters for the HU(LC) and the LCDP is made up of older women with right-leaning views (or undecided). Of this group, rural women were more inclined to vote for the LCDP, and women with a higher education - for the HU(LC). The circle of voters for the LCU and the LSDP is made up of younger women with higher education, and center and left-leaning views. Of this group, more women living in large cities voted for the LCU, while a greater number of urban residents voted for the LSDP. Women who voted for the LDLP are different in one aspect - i.e. their left-leaning views.

## Changes in voting intentions

One cannot forecast how voters will behave during the next elections on the basis of the results of August 1997, but they do show general tendencies and inclinations regarding party affiliation. According to the results of the survey, there was a decrease in the popularity of the HU(LC), the LCDP, the LDLP, and the LWP, and an increase in the popularity of the LCU.

We saw that according to the data from the August 1997 survey, more women were able to identify their political views. Since identification of one's views on the political scale is one of the primary indicators used to forecast voting intentions. Let us analyze the August voting intentions, on the basis of women's political views (Figure 5).



**Figure 5. Voting intentions of women with different political views 1997 08**

As we mentioned earlier, in the last year or so, a growing number of women are able to identify their political views. Looking at Figure 5, we can see that the voting intentions of women with different political views relate more appropriately to the distribution of parties on the political scale. The votes of women with right-leaning views would be distributed between the HU(LC) and the LCDP, with some going to the LCU. A greater portion of women with left-leaning views would vote for the LDLP, with the

rest distributed among the LCU, the LSDP, and the LWP. The votes of women with center views would be distributed mostly among the latter three parties. An interesting fact is that in August 1997, none of the right-leaning women had any intention of voting for the Women's Party. This means that as far as women were concerned, the Women's Party had acquired a position on the political scale which was to the left of the center. We can also see that women with left and center views remain unclear as to which party - the LCU or the LSDP - better represent the interests of people with such views. There is also an interesting distribution of the voting intentions of women who cannot identify their political views (as we already mentioned, there are less of those to compare with August 1996). The greater portion of such women did not intend to vote, another portion were determined to vote for the LDLP, and some for the LCU and the LWP. After the Parliamentary elections, the majority of those who had been unable to identify their political views said that they had voted for the HU(LC).

Nevertheless, approximately one-fifth of all women are still unable to identify their political views. They make up a fairly large proportion of voters. Obviously, the political parties will still have to contend for their votes in the next elections. Of course, some of them will continue not to vote. But it is those parties which women consider to be center or left-leaning which have the higher chance of attracting a portion to their side. The same could also be said about those women who do not intend to vote. If they were persuaded to vote, one could guess that they would vote more for the center or left-leaning parties. Therefore, based on the August 1997 survey results, one can say that the center and left parties still have a reserve of voters who could be persuaded to join their side.

Based on the analysis of women's voters behavior during the elections to the Seimas in 1996 and their voting intentions, the following conclusions were made:

- Women's political consciousness has been growing in the last year: an increasingly greater number of women are able to define their views on a left-right political scale.

- During the 1996 Parliamentary elections, more women than men voted for the HU(LC), the LCDP, the LSDP, and the LWP, and fewer voted for the LDLP.

- During the 1996 Parliamentary elections, more women than men voted for the better known political parties, i.e. for those which ended up in Parliament under the multi-mandate system.

- A significantly larger number of women than men voted for the Lithuanian Women's Party, and after the elections, the difference between men and women intending to vote for the LWP grew even greater.

- Women's political views are the main determining factor in their choice of which political party to vote for: over time, this relationship continues to grow stronger.

- Age is the most influential demographic indicator in the distribution of women's votes accorded to a political party. This distribution is also influenced by education and residence.

- It was mostly older women with right-leaning views who voted or intended to vote for the HU(LC) and the LCDP, and younger women with center and left-leaning views who voted for the LCU and the LSDP. The exceptional indicator for LDLP voters was their left-leaning political views.

- An analysis of the results does not contradict the assumption that their religiosity has an influence on women's right-leaning views, and that participation in the labour market has an influence on their left-leaning views.

- Women consider the HU(LC) and the LCDP to be right-wing parties, and the LDLP a left-wing party. They are not clear regarding their position on a left-right scale of the LCU, LSDP, and LWP: they are all considered to be left of center parties.

- With the increase in the political consciousness of women, and in the relationship of their voting or their intention to vote for the appropriate party on the basis of their views, one can begin to forecast election results on the basis of an analysis of women's political views.

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## LABOUR MARKET AND SOCIAL SECURITY

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### WOMEN AND THE LABOUR MARKET IN LITHUANIA

**A political, economic and social reform started in Lithuania at the beginning of the 1990's predetermined essential changes in all spheres of life, including paid employment. The transition period has meant the decreasing scope of production that has unavoidably caused a decrease of the employed persons and subsequently, the increase of the unemployed in numbers. The processes of privatisation and modernisation of the economic systems have changed the employment structure of the population drastically. New groups of the employed from the point of view of their economical status have emerged: the employers, the hired employees and the self-employed. In Lithuania as well as in other post-communist countries a specific labour market structure has been formed containing the traditional segments (employment and the unemployment) and two new ones: the 'hidden' unemployment and un-official employment which are not reflected in the official statistics. According to the views of some experts', there are around from 200 thousand to 400 thousand people working in the 'grey market economy' and 70 - 180 thousand job seekers who are not registered in the Labour Exchanges (Pranešimas, 1997). These factors taken together makes the analysis of employment even more complicated, not to mention that the special survey results on the labour market presented by the Department of Statistics and the information of the Labour Exchange to some extent differ. (Kanopienė, 1997)**

This article's main focus is the analysis of the role of women in labour market in Lithuania under the conditions of an economy in transition. It aims to show how the changes in the labour market influence the employment possibilities of females. Chapter 1 will discuss the general tendencies of women's participation in the labour market concentrating on the level of their economic activity, dynamics within the labour market and the distribution of the work force in various professions and branches of economy. Chapter 2 will concentrate on women's unemployment issues within the wider context of Lithuania's economic situation. Chapter 3 will analyse the economic position of women, how they combine both professional and family roles.

#### **1. General Tendencies of Women's Employment - 1990-1998**

## 1.1. Labour Force and Economic Activity

Lithuania, as well as other communist countries, was distinguished by especially high economic involvement of women, this was ensured by the implementation of the policy at the "overall employment". For the Marxist ideology the participation of women in the sphere of paid job was the major precondition to ensure their equal rights. Active measures were taken to reinforce an ideology that those women whose choice was motherhood and housewife were perceived as negative, and employed women in the labour market were the preferred ideal. Since the 1970's more than half of the employees in the labour market were women, their employment indicators differed slightly from those of men. According to the Census figures of 1989, there were 81% employed women of working-age, corresponding indicator for men was 86.1% (Professional, 1995). With the restitution of independence in Lithuania the impact of women's work on the economy of the country has started to decrease. During the period of 1991-1995 the total number of employed women decreased by 195.8 thousand (19%), meanwhile the number of employed men by 58.2 thousand (6.6%) (Table 1). The decrease of numbers of women employed in total decreased amount of the employed comprised more than ¾-ths, i.e. amounted to 77%.

Table 1  
**Employment trends from 1991 to 1998** (average annual numbers in thousands.)

	1991	1993	1995	1997	Change	
					1991-95	1995-97
Population of working-age	2127.6	2108.3	2110.8	2128.6	- 16.8	17.8
Women	1030.8	1021.6	1026.1	1039.0	- 4.7	12.9
Men	1096.7	1086.7	1084.7	1089.6	- 12.0	4.9
Employed population	1897.6	1778.2	1643.6	1669.2	- 254.0	25.6
Women	1020.9	931.8	825.1	821.2	- 195.8	- 3.9
Men	876.7	846.4	818.5	848.0	- 58.2	29.5
Unemployed Population	5.2	81.1	109.0	104.5	104.3	- 4.5
Women	2.1	35.8	59.6	55.6	56.6	- 4.0
Men	3.1	45.3	49.4	48.9	47.7	-0.5
Work Force	1902.3	1859.3	1752.6	1773.7	- 149.7	21.1
Women	1023.9	967.6	884.7	876.8	- 139.2	- 7.9
Men	878.4	891.7	867.9	896.9	- 10.5	29

There was an evident decline of women employed among the total number of the employed population - from 53.8% in 1991 to 50.2% in 1995. It is evident that with the minor changes of the working-age population (which has declined during this period by 16.8 thousand), the decrease in numbers of the employed was closely interrelated with the outstanding changes in the economic activity of population. From 1991-1995 the women's employment level has decreased by 18.6% (from 99.0% to 80.4%), and for the men the corresponding figure was 4.5% (from 79.9% to 75.4%).

In March 1991 when the Law on Employment of Population in Lithuania was passed, the official registration introduced a new category in terms of their employment status, this was the unemployed and people in search for job. As can be seen from Table 1, the numbers of the unemployed population during the first years of independence have started to grow rapidly and have reached

approximately 110 thousand in 1995. It is worth mentioning that in the run of this period (except for 1993) women comprised more than half of the officially registered persons being unemployed.

Towards the end of 1996, and the beginning of 1997 alongside economical growth the number of the employed have started to decrease, the rate of the unemployment has diminished insignificantly. Although these are positive trends in the Labour Market, as can be seen from data presented, they are related to the growth of male participation. The employment rate for men has increased to 77.8%, and the total amount of the employed has increased by 29.5 thousand. In comparison the number of employed women continued to decline, and the indicators reveal a decrease of their employment rate to 79.0%. The share of females in total employment went down to 49.2%.

## **1.2. Changes in Employment Structure**

The economic reforms and the processes of privatisation in Lithuania have resulted in an extensive “flow” of the employed from the state sector to the private sector. In the periods of 1990-1997 the total number of people employed in state enterprises, institutions and organisations has decreased from 1332.9 thousand to 518.8 thousand, a decline of almost 60%. In contrast, the numbers of people employed in private enterprises have almost doubled from 564.7 thousand to 1117.7 thousand. At the beginning of 1998, the share of the private sector in terms of the national employment structure comprised almost 2/3 (68.3%), in comparison with of 34.5% in 1991. It should be noted that more than half (around 58%) employees from the state sector were women, meanwhile men were more active in the private sector activities (their share comprises 57%).

What are the reasons behind the slower feminisation of the private sector? On one hand, the so called “feminine” branches of economy (education, health care and social and work) are actually maintained as a part of the state sector (Table 2). In contrast, the “masculine” spheres and activity (construction and some branches of processing industry) are almost completely privatised. On the other hand, as indicated by special surveys, women get involved into private business much slower compared to men. The Department of Statistics has conducted a survey on manpower in May 1998, which highlighted the fact that women employers comprised less than 1/3 of the independent or self-employed persons – around 40% (Darbo, 1998). The data obtained under the international survey “Fertility and Family in Lithuania”, conducted during the period of 1994-1995 (5000 inhabitants of Lithuania, aged from 18-49 were questioned), indicated that majority of women (83.7%) had no intention of undertaking private initiatives nor start up independent business. The corresponding indicator for men was much lower (64.1%). (Kanopiene, 1997).

A number of reasons accounting for the greater difficulties faced by women starting their own business and how women position themselves in the private sector were analysed by R. Aidis (1997), a study based on solely on women entrepreneurs in Lithuania. The difficulties encountered by women entrepreneurs can be summarised as:

- To start with, those are patriarchal traditions and outlooks which create a “asymmetric” role distribution in a family in which women are completely responsible for taking care of the children and housework. In the workplace

stereotypic approach towards differences in skills of men and women that is wide spread in society makes it necessary “for a woman to constantly prove themselves and work much harder for her qualification be recognised” (Aidis, 1997, p.68). 86% of women indicated that it was much more difficult to be a businesswoman compared to a businessman, 71% experienced direct gender biased discrimination.

- The unfavourable business environment plays a significant role as well. It accounts for the corresponding economic policy implemented by the government, permanent changes in legislation, punitive taxes, limited possibilities to take credits and so on.
- It is quite often that the start up and successful development of business are being limited due to lack of knowledge, information, personal experience and specific business know how (Aidis, 1997, p. 64-71).

There is high probability that the growth of men's role in the private sector (the 1998 Labour Force survey data indicate that 73% of men employed in national economy are engaged in private sector compared to 59% of women) will only strengthen the existing gender inequality and deepen the labour market segregation by gender. These tendencies can be observed by the analysis of the structural employment changes of the population.

It has to be noted that the concentration of the feminine and the masculine manpower in certain domains of professional activities is characteristic both of the centrally planned economy and the free market economy. The analysis of statistical data from Lithuania in comparison with several countries of Western Europe and Scandinavian countries (the comparison was made using the data of the late 1980's) indicated that, irrespectively of the type of social system and peculiarities of the economy, specialisation of males and females in the employment domain was closely interrelated with the traditional gender roles in society and family. Women predominate in the trade and social services (i.e. education and health care) and men dominate the industrial sector (i.e. construction, transport, some branches of industry). Another point is that men and women are positioned differently in the hierarchy of the labour market and perform work activity pertaining to different status, which enables the state to presene of the vertical gender biased occupational segregation (Professional, 1995).

The information about the vertical gender biased occupational segregation is presented in the Population Census, so in Lithuania the latest data pertain still to the Soviet period (year 1989), therefore it would be quite difficult to have exact estimates of the changes in different segments of the “occupational pyramid”. The data of the Labour Force survey conducted by the Lithuanian Department of Statistics indicate that during the period of 1994-1998, the share of women on the top of the “occupational pyramid” has decreased. It is notable that the share of women amongst the legislators, senior officials and governors has decreased from 39.6% to 34.1%, accompanied by an increase on the importance of their work in some “popular” vocations such as technicians (here the data shows an increase from 60.7% to 69%). It has to be stated that women continue to form the majority among the public servants (85%), in the trade and services (71%), specialists (70%) and a minority (from 15% to 25%) among the most of the workers (“blue collar”) occupations (Darbo, 1998).

The analysis of the horizontal segregation of the labour market has to take into account the general changes in the structure of economy. It is well known that during the Soviet period, Lithuania turned into a quite modern industrialised Republic, with a large concentration of the employed in the industry (machinery and textile), construction and transport. Although, if compared to the market economy countries the sector of services played much less significant role in the employment of the population.

During the period of transition, especially the first years of independence (the so called period of economical crisis 1990 –1993 with the decrease of GDP by almost by 60%), due to the extremely difficult general situation in the industrial enterprises and construction companies there was a need to lower down the scope of production to a large extent. Due to these factors, during the period of 1989-1993 employment in the industrial sector has decreased by 35 %, - in construction - 45 %, transport - 40 %. Nevertheless, the private sector continued to develop and there was an evident increase of employment in the sector of social services. The numbers of those working in trade increased by 43%, financial mediation and commercial activities by - 60%. The numbers of employed in health care and education almost did not change.

The year 1994 marked the end of the economic decay period, the national economy development indicators had started to improve and there was some growth in the industrial production. As mentioned previously in section 1.1, these processes accounted for the increase of the employed since year 1996. Despite the continuing flow of the employed from one domain of activities to another, the services sector in terms of employment continues to grow. This is accompanied by the decrease of employment in the industrial and construction sector. The trends reflected in the statistics show that if in 1994 there more than half of the employed were concentrated in the so called “sphere of production”, then in 1997 the services sector exceeded the industrial sector.

The above mentioned processes predetermined certain changes in the structure of women's employment (Table 2). With a steady decrease of the women's role in the labour market, since 1992 there was a significant decrease of women's share in almost all branches of economy except education and health care. The biggest decrease was in trade (16.1 percentage point), hotel and restaurant business (12.8 percentage point), transport and communication (10.4 percentage point), processing industry (8.2 percentage point). The employment of men in some former highly feminised activities has noticeably increased, e.g., in trade their numbers have more than doubled.

The structural changes of employment patters are interrelated both with the development of the private economy, especially the trade and services sector, as well as with the processes of land reforms. It should be remembered that during the Soviet period a majority of rural inhabitants were collective or state farm workers (over 80%). In 1990 there were only 2.9 thousand private farmers, and in 1994 the number of private farmers increased to 111 thousand. The change of land ownership was linked to a series of negative processes in employment, in particular the emergence of the “hidden” unemployment. These changes had extremely painful

consequences for women. For example, there was a decreasing in the number of kindergardens, village schools, libraries and health care institutions in the rural areas. The qualified women-employees lost their job places and were forced into positions of becoming housewives.

## **2. Unemployment of Women**

### **2.1. Dynamics of unemployment**

The first unemployed were registered at the Territorial Labour Exchanges at the end of year 1991, the number amounted to 4.2 thousand in total of which 3.0 thousand were women. In 1992, the total number of the unemployed increased to 20.7 thousand. It is worth noting that the growth of the unemployment rate was especially high at fall of the same year, when there were around 4 thousand unemployed registered monthly. The following year the growth of the unemployment rate stabilised, and by the end of 1993 it reached 31 thousand. Towards the end of 1994, the figures increased to 33.3 thousand. The statistics of the country had two categories of the unemployed up till 1995: those who had an official status of the unemployed and persons seeking for job, registered at the Labour Exchanges, thus the total number of the unemployed was much bigger (at the end of 1994 it exceeded 77.9 thousand).

It is worth mentioning, that during most of the periods in question (except for the year 1993), women comprised the majority of the unemployed (over 60%) and their share among the job seekers was much smaller, around 40%. Due to the fact that the status of the unemployed was only provided and referred exclusively to the unemployed dismissed under specific clauses, such as an organisations or an enterprises staffing cuts, liquidation and bankruptcy, it is evident that women were in the least favourable position during the initial stage of economic reforms. Special surveys conducted by the author at the end of 1992 at Vilnius Labour Exchange have revealed that a substantial share of the unemployed women (close to 40%) were highly competent specialists and were qualified at University level, holding diplomas in engineering, economy, and humanities. They were previously employed at a management level in industries, scientific institutions, as well as different private firms. In comparison with men, the duration of women's unemployment was much longer, every third woman was a job seeker for 3-4 months, every fifth woman - for 5-6 months, or completely failed to secure a job. In comparison for the male job seekers these indicators were 20% and 7% (Professional, 1995).

During the period of 1995-1996, the number of the unemployed continued to increase and reached the figures of 109.4 thousand in total, and women comprised 59.6 thousand towards the end of 1996. Although the

unemployment level has decreased during the following year, the figures of the unemployed women remained high (Table 3).

Table 3

**Unemployed women and men in 1993-1997** (average annual data)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Unemployment level, % :					
Women	3.5	3.4	6.7	7.6	6.2
Men	4.2	2.9	5.6	6.6	5.6
Women's share among unemployed, %	44.1	52.5	54.7	54.2	53.2

In analysing the dynamics of unemployment, it is important to consider not only the Labour Exchange data, but also the results of special labour force surveys conducted by the Department of Statistics. These surveys reveal a much higher unemployment rate in the country as they present information about the unemployed persons not registered with the Territorial Labour Exchanges. For example, in May 1998, according to the data of labour force survey the number of unemployed persons in the country has reached 262 thousand in total, and women comprised of 116.5 thousand unemployed. The unemployment rate had reached 14.3%; meanwhile the corresponding Labour Exchange data showed that 110.3 thousand in total were unemployed (50.0 thousand women) and the unemployment rate was 6.2%. It should be noted that the number of the officially registered unemployed women in the country continued to grow, it had reached a high of 53.6 thousand during the third quarter of year 1998 (women comprised 54% of the total number of unemployed), and by the fourth quarter of the year 1998 it reached 61.1 thousand (49.8%).

## 2.2. Unemployment Structure

**The social-demographic differences among unemployed women and men have emerged with the appearance and growth of unemployment in the country. As mentioned already in section 2.1., during the first few years of the economic crisis it was highly evident that very highly qualified specialist's women would more often lose their job in comparison to men. This tendency up till now continues as indicated in Table 4, women constitute more than 2/3 of the unemployed holding high and specialised secondary level qualifications. They comprise slightly more than a half of the unqualified unemployed persons (53%).**

Table 4

**Distribution of the Unemployed Women by Education** (end of each year)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998*
Total number of the unemployed women with high level education	3314	3744	5848	5150	5054	4136
share of persons with the high education, among unemployment women, %	10.4	9.1	8.3	8.6	8.2	7.7
Total number of the unemployed women	7217	9602	16473	14550	14252	12122



with specialised secondary level education						
Share of persons with specialised secondary education among the unemployed women, %	22.6	23.3	23.4	24.4	23.0	22.6
% of women among the unemployed persons with the high level education	62.9	64.3	68.5	67.0	60.8	68.2
% of women among the unemployed persons with specialised secondary level education	61.2	64.9	67.9	68.1	66.5	68.4
% of women within the total numbers of the unemployed	48.9	52.9	55.1	54.5	51.5	54.0

\*End of III quarter

The discussions on the unemployment issues often put stress upon the employment possibilities for the youth and graduates of various educational institutions. Nevertheless, the analysis of unemployment statistics by age enables us to conclude that it is the problem of women in their early forties - fifties. As can be seen from Table 5, the number of men exceeds only in the youngest age group (up till 18 years of age). Women prevail in the age groups of mid and senior working age (up till 54 years). During the period of 1993-1998 the proportion of persons of both genders under 24 in the total number of the unemployed has fallen from 23.4% to 18.3%. In contrast, the comparative load of women over 30 among unemployed has increased significantly, in 1993 it amounted to 30% and currently it is around 37%. Analogical changes of the male indicators are from 29% to 26.9 %.

It is possible to indicate that the employment possibilities for women, especially those over the age of 30 years old are much poorer. This was confirmed by the official statistical information on the duration of the women's and men's unemployment, as well as by the results of special investigations. As indicated by the Labour Exchange data, out of all registered unemployed women at the end of 1997, more than 1/5 (i.e. 22%) were job seekers for more than 6-12 months, more than 15% were recognised as long-term unemployed, with the duration of their unemployment exceeding one year. Analogical indicators for men were lower - 20% and 10% respectively. As demonstrated by the labour force survey of May 1998, every fifth unemployed man and every seventh unemployed woman were job seekers for more than two years (Darbo, 1998).

What are the reasons for the higher levels of unemployment among women and the longer duration of their unemployment? The questions can be partially answered from the results of a sociological survey conducted by the author in 1996-1997.

### **2.3. Women is Employment Possibilities**

The explanation of the peculiarities of women's position in the labour market and the reasons for segregation of activities horizontally and vertically by gender reveals diverse explanations in sociological theoretical perspectives.

These include, the labour supply and demand (theories of "double labour market"), position of women and men in the social structure of the society and the systems of labour distribution ("two roles" theories), subjective approaches and inclinations of the employers. The Feminists pay particular attention to the gender system which is endemic in all societies, they pose that possibilities for women to enter the labour market are initially predetermined by the patriarchal relationships at work places (Walby, 1995).

In order to determine whether the discrimination of women does exist at the stage of "entrance" into the labour market as well as to demonstrate the factors that make a impact on the decision-making of the employers and managers in regard to their recruitment policies and practices, a sociological survey was conducted in 1996-1997 by the author. The survey contained a collection and analysis of information from job advertisements, interviews with employers and women job seekers. (Kanopiene, 1998).

The data collected from all the job advertisements published during the first six months in 1996 in the daily newspaper "Lietuvos rytas" (N=3531), has demonstrated, that the requirements of the employers have a strong accent on the demographic characteristics of the future employees, i.e. their gender and age. Every tenth job advertisement (281 or 8%) contained direct requirements as to the gender of the employee, those that contained the nouns of corresponding gender to characterise the vacant work position/occupation were found in 2364 advertisements (67% of the total advertisements), and only 344 advertisements (9.7%) were "neutral" in terms of gender requirement. The men were offered a wider variety of employment opportunities, including the traditional "feminine" work, in contrast women were invited to work in the exclusively feminised areas. The men were offered "leadership" positions, relating to high personal responsibility and group leadership. No such duties or opportunities were offered to women directly at all. Employment opportunities requesting higher level qualifications and related to comparatively autonomous activities of the individual (1797 advertisements) were also targeted more at men (61 direct and 1333 indirect requirements) than women (16 direct and 235 indirect requirements). Meanwhile, women were more often invited to take the positions of executives. The men were more often requested to have the corresponding professional experience in the field of work applied for and a diploma of high school/university level and certain personal qualities considered important for the future workplace activities. The advertisements targeted at women contained requirements referring to age and appearances. (The age requirements were presented in every fourth job advertisement, the most "popular" being the age limit of 35 years, although there were often requirements by employers for much younger staff.) The knowledge of foreign languages and computer skills were most often required from women and this accounts for the popularity of positions of secretary, secretary-public relation's officer among women and these are directly and indirectly stipulated in job advertisements.

The results of the surveys of the employers (there was 101 standardised interviews and five in-depth interviews with persons responsible for the choice of candidates to occupy the vacant position of a manager) indicate that very often the employers pose requirements not directly related to the characteristics of work activities. Nearly half of the respondents (47%) indicated that the manager should be a male, almost two thirds (64%) indicated that she/he should be young and many of the employers (42%) were concerned with the good

appearances of the candidate for both genders. The requirements concerning the demographic characteristics were based initially on the assumptions concerning roles of women and men in the family. The employers related the family with the traditionally held views of the woman's duties and responsibilities, and they kept in mind the difficulties women face in trying to combine their work and family lives. However, being a father or married in many cases was considered to be an advantage for a male candidate and a prerequisite of his reliability and interest to strive for high career goals. The attitudes on the potential vocational abilities of women and men as well as their psychological characteristics played a significant role in the employer's choice of their employees. It turned out that the employers consider initiative, impetuosity, rational thinking and leadership ability, (i.e. the traits, that were distinguished by them as desirable for prospective managers during the interviewing process) as "masculine" traits. The traditionally 'feminine' traits such as emotionality, service-mindedness and obedience were not considered by the employers to be important in their choice of a prospective manager. The majority of the employers held very stereotypical views in which they considered men to be more capable in mathematics and technical disciplines (this statement was supported by more than a half of respondents).

The results of women job seekers survey, which included 250 female respondents from Vilnius and Kaunas revealed that the majority of women have experienced diverse range of offences and humiliation at work, in other words, they were exploited and discriminated on gender basis. Every second respondent (47%) has noted that she was (is) treated as inferior employee compared to her male colleagues. Most frequently cited cases of gender discrimination included: lowering the salary; humiliation of women's personality; discrimination when hired or dismissed from their work place; obstacles to vocational career development and mistrust in women's skills and qualifications. Every fourth respondent (25%) has experienced sexual harassment at work. The survey results revealed that the young single or married women with no children were disrespected by their colleagues at work, and experienced over familiarity in behaviour and sexual harassment. Similar kinds of harassment were least experienced by married women with children, although motherhood and family duties are the main obstacles in their attempts to maintain their employment or in search for one. Almost a half of the married women respondents with child care responsibilities (42%) indicated that motherhood was the cause of many difficulties at work. The results of the survey demonstrated that women of middle age (i.e. over 35) more often suffer discrimination in their workplace due to staff cuts and redundancies. It is also much more difficult for them to secure future employment, as the major success factor in seeking for work is the young age. It is interesting to note that other social and demographic characteristics play a minor role in these cases. It was a common fact that that younger women would often hear that they would not be employed because they might get married, or they might get pregnant. The opinion of respondents was that women's position in the public sector was much better compared with private, gender inequality was not so evident and issues discrimination against women were related to the traditional stereotypes attitudes and values. Meanwhile the position of women in private firms is dependent upon the economical interests of the employers as well as competitiveness, it often happens that the laws here are completely ignored.

Thus, the investigation has demonstrated that the traditional approach on the family roles of men and women in society at large serve as basis for the

behaviour of the employers and continues to be among major factors to control the participation of Lithuanian women in the sphere of paid job. The conditions of competitiveness in the sphere of vocational activities, rivalry for job vacancies, position, salaries and the like are predetermined most often by the not so evident or "seen" social-demographic factors (such as gender, age, family roles), but actually they are really of extreme importance.

### **3. Peculiarities of Women's Working Life**

#### **3.1. Working time and remuneration**

Since 1994, the Department of Statistics has conducted annual surveys on the labour force. These investigations, as well as results of diverse sociological investigations provide significant information on women's participation in the economical life of the country. This provides not only insightful comparisons of the situations of women and men in the labour market, but also show the impact of their social roles in the employment domain, as well as their social and material well-being.

The sociological literature distinguishes three models of women's working life: a "disrupted" vocational career, when after marriage and birth of their first child women become housewives; an "interrupted" vocational career, when women interrupt their presence in the labour market for a certain time until their children reach a certain age; and a "continuous" vocational carer, when women match their maternity leave with their paid employment. During the Soviet period, the "continuous" model was characteristic and applicable to the majority of women, this is evident by the high indicators of their employment which only slightly differed from those of men in all the age groups (Kanopiene Vida, 1997).

During the Independence period with the changes of the employment conditions, new social groups emerged. These are the registered unemployed in the Labour Exchanges; people with no official sources of income who earn money, most often in the "gray" economy structures; and the job seekers. As it was demonstrated by the survey, "Fertility and Family in Lithuania", the category of the housewives has become quite numerous. The largest numbers of housewives are in the - age groups of 25-34 years (9.9%) and 35-44 years (8.7%), the lowest in the age group of 18-24 years (3.3%). It is possible to presume that the majority of housewives comprise women who lost their jobs, and do not actively seek for ones, or that they have lost hope of being re-employed. This group, alongside with the women raising small children, who are on maternity leave, comprise almost one fourth of the total number of women (Kanopiene V., 1997).

According to the data of the Labour Force survey, conducted by the Department of Statistics, in May 1998, the most substantial differences of the indicators for the employment and economic activity of men and women were amongst married people under 24 years of age (Table 6). The gender differences in the group of the most active working ages (25-49) were significantly lower for the

married. Among those who were single, divorced and widowed, the indicators of employment and economic activity for women were even higher compared to corresponding indicators for men. This is evidence of the family role impact on working life.

Table 6

**Levels of Men's and Women's Economic Activity by Age and Marital status**  
(%)\*

Age groups	Economical activity rate			Employment rate		
	Women	Men	difference	Women	Men	difference
Single	38.1	54.2	16.1	32.1	39.7	7.6
14-24 years	26.6	42.9	16.3	19.7	29.9	10.2
25-49 years	84.4	83.3	-1.1	78.3	63.3	-15.0
Married	67.9	78.3	10.4	59.8	69.8	10.0
14-24 years	59.9	88.2	28.3	48.8	76.7	27.9
25-49 years	88.5	96.4	7.9	77.3	85.6	8.3
Divorced, widowed	40.1	55.0	14.9	33.5	42.6	9.1
14-24 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
25-49 years	94.8	87.1	-7.7	76.4	61.3	-15.1

\* This table contains no data on the age group of 50-64 years, as the younger retirement age of women makes a very significant impact.

Some Western scholars, especially the Scandinavian academics consider that in order to have exact estimates of the mutual relationship between the family duties and paid job, it is extremely important to compare the factual work load carried out for the paid job (Ellingseter, 1990).

There were no specific studies or research of duration of working time in Lithuania during the Soviet times, as it would have been derived of any meaning given the circumstances of full employment and the duration of a working day/week legally defined. During the period of transition and to market economies the situation has changed, for economical reasons many people had to work extra hours (or on the contrary - shorter hours), and many people had to manage working in several places. In May 1998, in accordance with the labour force survey more than 140 thousand persons were forced to work less than a full working day, and women comprised 56% among them. This was how one tenth of all employed women worked and 7.5% of men. Although, the indicators of those working less than a full working day/week obtained from the survey the "Fertility and Family in Lithuania" were somewhat higher (17%). It also revealed certain gender based differences, with 87 % of men working a full day in comparison to 82 % of women.

As was demonstrated by the Labour Force survey, a significant number of people (over 90 thousand, of which 40.2 thousand are women) were engaged with additional work, many worked overtime hours in their main place of employment. A more detailed analysis of the working week (Table 7), showed that women comprise the larger group of people who had their working week shorter than average (almost one third of all employed women). Another point

is that almost every fifth woman (18%) had long working hours i.e. over 41 hours per week, although men comprised the larger group at 25%.

Table 7

**Employed Men and Women Broken Down by Hours Worked in a Week**

	Amount of hours worked per week					
	less than 35	36-39	40	41-45	46-49	Over 50
Women (thousands)	209.8	25.1	381.9	25.7	46.8	63.3
Men (thousands)	125.8	17.8	468.1	23.7	55.3	125.3
% of women	62.5	58.5	44.9	52.0	45.8	33.6
% of employed women	27.9	3.4	50.7	3.4	6.2	8.4
% of employed men	15.4	2.2	57.4	2.9	6.8	15.3

The different structure of employment between women and men to a large extent influenced whether they had the options to have a shorter working day, this was particularly true for women employed in the trade and service industry. Thus the comparison of the duration of the hours of the working week between women and men in the same occupational groups becomes meaningful (Table 8).

Table 8

**Average hours of spent at work per week by Different Occupation Groups**

Occupation Groups	Women	Men	Difference
Legislators, senior officials and governors	39.2	43.7	4.5
Specialists	32.8	36.3	3.5
Technicians	35.7	38.6	2.9
Public servants	35.1	35.7	0.6
Employees in services and trade	37.4	42.8	5.4
Blue collar workers in agriculture, fishery and fish breeding workers	41.0	45.4	4.4
Craftsmen and workers of similar occupation	33.0	39.2	6.2
Operators and assemblers of equipment and cars	36.0	41.2	5.2
Elementary vocations	36.1	36.5	0.4
Average in the national economy	36.1	40.6	4.5

The results of the survey in the “Fertility and Family in Lithuania” demonstrated, that the duration of men's working week was longer in all branches of economy, except for the financial mediation. These differences were most prominent in the so called “masculine” types of work activity such as transport, legal protection, law and order, commercial enterprises, and real estate (Kanopiene V., 1997). This kind of situation, is associated with the duties of the hierarchical structure of occupations (i.e. among the specialists), and with the desire of males to earn more to support the family as head of household or as the “bread winner” (Table 9).

**Table 9 reveals that the largest differences in the duration of the working week are amongst the group of**

**married people with one fourth of men and only every tenth women working longer than 45 hours weekly. The indicators for single and divorced men and women show very little differences, whilst the indicators for widowed women are even higher. Men with children had a long working week twice as often as women with children, and the group of single people revealed no gender differences.**

Table 9

**The Duration of Working Week by Demographic Characteristics, % in Every Group (Kanopiene V., 1997)**

	Women				Men			
	18-24	25-44	45 +	Varied	18- 24	25-44	45 +	Varied
Single	10.4	61.8	12.3	15.2	5.3	50.0	13.7	30.7
Married	10.8	67.4	10.4	11.4	3.8	45.6	22.5	28.0
Divorced	10.8	64.9	12.4	11.8	7.1	39.3	16.1	37.5
Widowed	7.9	58.7	11.1	22.3	-	62.1	5.6	33.3
Childless	10.4	61.2	11.6	16.8	5.3	47.4	15.3	32.0
With children	10.8	67.2	10.8	11.2	3.7	45.7	22.5	28.1
aged 18-24	5.6	43.6	19.2	31.2	13.6	56.6	14.0	14.0
aged 25-34	4.9	45.9	19.2	28.9	11.4	67.0	10.9	9.9
aged 35-44	3.9	44.4	24.8	25.1	9.4	69.3	10.4	10.4
aged 45-49	1.0	53.9	15.0	28.6	9.6	62.9	10.0	16.1
Total	10.7	65.8	11.0	11.7	4.2	46.1	20.6	28.0

It is possible to presume that the differentiation of the working load in paid employment for men and women, as well as the differences of economic activity, is partially predetermined by the gender differences in the family roles. However, the differences in Lithuania are not so outstanding if compared to those in some Western countries. For example, in Norway the average duration of the working week for men is 38.5 hours, and for women it is 29.8 hours (Minilacts, 1995). This difference in the average working week in Norway is almost twice as large if compared to the situation in Lithuania (see Table 8).

The differences in paid employment in relation to the working time, do not fully explain the differences in salaries for women and men, which are present in the statistical data: in year 1998 the women's salary comprised 87.4% of the average monthly salary, meanwhile the men's – exceeded the indicator to a large extent (113.6%). Although during the latter years the women's average salary grew slightly more rapidly if compared to men's (e.g., since 1994 it grew 3.1 times, meanwhile men's - 2.9 times), but still for today women earn less almost by one fourth if compared to men (Darbininku, 1999). This difference is even bigger in same groups of occupation (e.g., women public servants get only around 66% of men's salary in average) as well as the branches of industry (Table 10). The analysis of the data from this table reveals some interesting regularities:

- It has been possible to distinguish five branches of economy in which women earn more in comparison to an average employee (the third column of the table). It is possible to observe that in those branches in which men

comprise the majority, women earn much more, despite the outstanding differentiation of salaries by gender (second column).

- The lowest salaries for women, as well as for men are in the most feminised spheres of employment such as the textile industry, health care and education. The data about the salaries in trade, hotel and restaurant business should be estimated with certain stipulations, considering the extremely high privatisation level of these industries, which indicates the prevalence of the so called “double accounting”. Here a mismatch of the data to the factual situation is possible.

The statements about the objective and economically grounded basis for the salaries of women and men are hard to prove. These opinions are also held by many Western scholars as well. They indicate that the differences of salary indicators are accounted for by the segregation of the labour market, as well as by insufficient social estimation of women's work, their duties and qualification are “lowered down” in the society (Gender, 1995).

The role of men as ‘breadwinners’ gives them more importance in the family. As mentioned earlier, this attitude is reinforced in the workplace whereby employers in their decision-making processes give priority to men, precisely because they are seen as the primary earners in the family. This practice is a major obstacle for women seeking employment.

As men contribute a higher income into the family budget, it also allows them to “escape” from other duties and responsibilities in the family.

Table 10

**The Differences between Men’s and Women’s Remuneration by Types of Employment, April 1998, in % \***

<b>Types of Employment</b>	<b>Monthly average salary of women compared to men's in corresponding branch</b>	<b>Monthly average salary of women compared to the average in the national economy</b>	<b>Women's share among all employed</b>
I	II	III	IV
Total	76.9	87.4	51.9
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	93.6	89.5	18.8
Processing industry	77.8	83.5	47.7
including textile	80.7	75.7	75.5
Electricity, gas and water supply	78.1	108.2	24.4
Construction	88.7	95.4	13.7
Wholesale and retail sale	81.5	75.9	56.7
Hotels and restaurants	77.4	62.5	74.3
Transport and storing, communication	84.8	100.2	32.3
Financial mediation	67.2	154.6	63.0



Real estate, rent, and commercial activities	82.8	99.0	46.8
Computers and interrelated activities	74.6	105.6	48.5
Scientific research and applied works	77.4	95.9	52.9
State government and protection social insurance	87.6	134.5	39.2
Education	83.9	81.8	76.5
including higher education	62.1	91.8	54.9
Health and social work	86.6	76.3	83.1
Other service activities	87.9	77.2	54.2

\*The calculation conducted by the author, as based on the Statistics Department data (Darbininku, 1999)

### 3.2. The Problems of Matching Professional and Family Roles

**When Western sociologists refer or analyse the distribution of duties and responsibilities between the husband and wife, they widely use concept of “role”. In considering the functions performed by a family as a social institute, it is possible to distinguish the following roles of both the spouses as: the breadwinner; the decision maker; the person responsible for home economy or the "manager; the care giver; the service provider (the housewife); the primary parent and also the provider of emotional psychological support in the family.**

**The survey “Fertility and Family in Lithuania” has provided detailed information on the functions of these roles in a family (Kanopien , 1997). The analysis provided is based on the distribution of responses by women and men on a number of questions included in the questionnaire. The survey reveals that the main role allocated to the man in a family is as the breadwinner of the family (Table 11).**

Table 11  
**Role Distribution between Husband’s and Wife’s in Families** (% from total number of families)

<b>Role</b>	<b>Exclusively men's duty</b>	<b>Duty of both spouses</b>	<b>Exclusively Women's duty</b>
Family breadwinner	44.9	44.8	10.3
Decision – maker	28.6	48.4	23.0
Provider of emotional – psychological support	16.7	47.2	36.1
“Manager”	13.6	49.0	37.4
Parental	4.7	50.2	45.1
Care giver	3.8	53.8	42.4

Service provider (housewife)	2.3	24.8	72.9
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Over a half of the respondents noted that the spouses in their families share duties and responsibilities while providing for the family materially such as for the family budget and decision-making making process. However, the largest burden for the caring for the family was on the women, such as taking care of the disabled or sick family members, and care and raising children. Women also took the main burden for routine house work such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry. This not only consumes most of their time, but is also very tiring. Only few women receive episodic assistance from their husbands, which was also revealed by previous research (Kanopen , 1983). It is evident that men are more engaged in performance of those roles that are interrelated with the activities outside the domain of the family, or those requiring permanent labour (provider of emotional and psychological support). It has to be noted that slightly more than one half of all men do help their wives with child care responsibilities, no doubt this makes the negative impact on the socialisation of boys and girls in the family.

The most uneven role distribution is observed among women aged 45-49. As indicated by data in Table 12, this group of women perform the tasks associated with the “four angles of the home” in true sense of the word, they receive the least amount of support in caring for the family and housework. However, their contribution to the family budget is much larger in comparison with that of the younger generations. It is not without foundation that in the sociological literature in the West women, this group of women are often referred to as “the superwomen”.

Table 12

**The Role Distribution in the family between the Husband and Wife by Age**  
(Kanopiene V., 1997) \*

	Family breadwinner	Decision-maker	Emotional	Responsibility for family budget	Career	Parenting	Service provider
18-24 years							
Woman	6.8	17.9	38.2	27.0	37.7	52.2	70.7
Both	34.5	52.6	47.1	53.0	58.4	44.7	26.8
Man	58.7	29.5	14.7	20.0	3.9	3.1	2.5
25-34 years							
Woman	9.4	24.3	38.6	37.5	46.9	50.1	75.1
Both	41.1	48.7	47.3	47.6	48.8	45.6	22.6
Man	49.5	27.1	14.1	14.9	4.3	4.3	2.3
35-44 years							
Woman	14.9	34.1	46.9	48.8	44.2	49.5	78.9
Both	47.7	43.7	39.4	39.0	53.0	45.7	18.6
Man	37.4	22.2	13.7	12.2	2.8	4.8	2.5
45-49 years							
Woman	15.6	40.6	48.0	51.9	53.6	51.3	82.3
Both	46.1	40.9	41.9	36.6	42.0	37.0	15.6
Man	38.3	18.5	10.1	11.5	4.4	11.7	2.1

\* The table is based on the responses from women

As can be seen from data presented in Table 12, the primary role of the man as a breadwinner predetermines the degree of his "power" in the family. In the younger age groups, with women contributing less into the family budget men evidently make the major decisions such as on the family expenditures. Women in these families have displayed a more passive role and more than often are only mothers and housewives.

As a generalisation it is possible to state that the situation of a contemporary woman in a family is two-sided. Despite their being equal partners in decision-making and budget management, they are at the same time an unpaid labour force in the family concerned with the care of the home and providing emotional and psychological support for the family. This inequality in sharing of housework reflects most clearly the patriarchal attitudes in Lithuanian society, despite the fact that for the last fifty years women have been active participants in the economical life of Lithuania. The burden of housework and family responsibilities makes it very difficult for women to be successful in careers and strive high in the occupational hierarchical ladder. Due to the fact that women are mostly viewed from the perspective of their family duties and responsibilities, their "double" roles become an important prerequisite for the hidden as well open discrimination on the grounds of a single characteristic – their gender.

## **Conclusions**

1. During the period of 1991-1995, shortly after Lithuania has regained its independence, the total number of employed women had decreased by 195.8 thousand, or by almost one fifth, meanwhile the number of employed men also by 58.2 thousand, or by 6.6%. In this period the number of women in relation to the total number of employed population decreased from 53.8% to 50.2%. The decrease in number of the employed women was interrelated with evident changes in the economical re-structuring. The level of women's employment in 1991-1995 decreased by 18.6% and for men the decrease was 4.5%. Towards the end of 1996 and 1997, with the growth of economy the numbers of the employed started to grow, there were slight decreases in the unemployment level. Although, all these positive labour market tendencies were interrelated with the increase of the employment activity of men. However, for the women, the decrease in numbers of the employed continued and there were corresponding decrease of employment indicators for women (up to 79%), as well as their share among the employed (up to 49.2%).

2. Women comprise more than a half (about 58%) employees in the public sector, but its share in the overall employment structure has decreased by one third. In the private sector men are more actively engaged (57%). The reasons for the slower rate of feminisation of the private sector are interrelated with the so called "feminine" types of employment such as education, health care and social work, which actually remain a constituent part of the public sector. Meanwhile the "masculine" spheres of activity such as construction and the processing industry underwent almost complete privatisation. As it is demonstrated by special surveys, the rate of women entering the private sector and business is much slower in comparison with to men. The data obtained by

the Department of Statistics revealed that in 1998, women comprised less than one third among the employers and around 40% among self-employed.

3. Since 1992, women's record of employment has decreased significantly in almost all branches of economy, except for the education and health care. The most substantial decrease was in trade, hotel and restaurant business, transport and communication, as well as in the processing industry. With the restructuring of the labour force, the employment of men in some femininised activities has noticeably increased i.e. in trade industry their numbers more than doubled.

4. The number of the officially registered unemployed women in Lithuania continues to increase on a regular basis, at the end of 1998 it exceeded 61 thousand, women continued to comprise half of all the unemployed, including more than two thirds of unemployed with higher education. The analysis of the changes by age of the unemployed demonstrates unemployment to be the problem of middle-age women. The numbers for men exceed that of women only in the youngest age groups. The number of unemployed women over 30 has increased among the total unemployed from 30% to 37%.

5. Sociological surveys demonstrate that in the domain of paid employment, especially during the phase of "entering" the labour market women are discriminated on the grounds of their gender and age. The traditional attitudes towards the family roles of men and women lie at the heart for the employers' behaviour and remains the most important factor to exclude the equal participation of women in Lithuania in domain of paid employment.

6. According to the Labour Force survey, conducted by the Department of Statistics in May 1998 the biggest differences of employment as well as economic activity indicators of men and women was for married people in the age group under 24 years old. One tenth of the employed women worked only a part of the working day and the duration of the average week was shorter (36.1 hours) compared to men's (40.6 hours).

**7. The statistical data reveals the differences in salaries between men and women. In 1998, women's salaries comprised of 87.4% of an average monthly salary, but the corresponding indicator for men exceeded it significantly (by 113.6%), i.e. women earned one fourth less compared to men. Despite the significant differentiation of salaries by gender in all groups of professions and branches of industry, women in the so called "masculine" areas of employment earn much more in comparison to the average in national economy. However, the lowest levels of salaries for women (as well for men) were in the most feminised areas such as the textile industry, health care and education.**

8. Sociological surveys highlight that women perform a variety of roles in the family such as the decision-maker, the "manager" of family budget, the care giver, the mother, the provider of emotional and psychological support. The

primary significant role of a man is the family breadwinner and only every fourth woman receives help from her husband with housework. The opportunities for women to successfully pursue a career in paid employment are hindered by the family and housework responsibilities. As women are often approached in the labour market from the perspective of their family roles, their "double" roles come to be the most important prerequisite, both the hidden and often open discrimination by a single characteristic - their gender.

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Table 3

**Employment in the Branches of Economy by Gender (1992 -1997)**

Branches of economy	% employed in private sector in 1997	Changes in numbers of the employed during 1992-1997, in thousands. (+/-)		% of women among employed		Distribution of employed women by branches of economy (%)	
		Women	Men	1992	1997	1992	1997
Total	67.7	-160.2	-25.8	52.9	49.2	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	95.3	-14.4	+15.1	41.2	37.3	15.3	16.5
Mining industry and exploitation of quarry	81.8	-1.1	-1.6	35.0	30.3	0.2	0.1
Processing industry	88.2	-135.2	-77.7	53.2	45.0	27.0	15.9
Supply of electricity, gas and water	5.5	-0.9	+11.8	30.2	20.3	0.9	1.0
Construction	91.7	-12.3	-38.4	15.0	11.2	2.6	1.6
Wholesale and retail sale	98.0	+19.4	+48.3	81.7	65.6	14.8	20.0
Hotels and restaurants	90.6	+3.3	+8.4	85.5	72.6	1.6	2.3
Transport and storing, communication	36.8	-22.7	-8.7	41.7	31.3	5.3	3.5
Financial mediation	41.1	+1.0	+1.4	86.1	79.9	1.2	1.6
Real estate, rent and commercial activities	41.7	-1.8	+0.1	49.1	45.2	2.1	2.2
State Institutions and defence	-	+6.1	+13.8	37.1	35.6	1.9	3.0
Education	7.4	+21.6	-10.3	67.2	76.0	9.3	13.8
Health and social work	12.3	+4.8	-1.4	82.4	84.4	8.7	11.0
Other services	63.7	-28.4	+13.3	76.1	60.1	9.1	7.5

Table 5

**Distribution of the Unemployed by Gender and Age (end of earth year)**

Groups by Age	1993			1995			1997		
	Women	Men	% of women	Women	Men	% of women	Women	Men	% of women
Total	32000	33467	48.9	70366	57372	55.1	61885	58274	51.5
Under 18 years	1336	1244	51.8	1523	1825	45.9	968	1795	35.4
19-24	6363	6400	49.8	10637	10010	51.5	9195	10665	46.3
25-29	4531	5181	46.6	9464	7034	57.4	7361	6446	53.3
30-49	16495	16083	50.6	40467	29125	58.1	35420	29138	54.9
50-54	3074	2906	51.4	7752	4868	61.4	6942	4880	58.7
55-59	183	1614	10.2	515	4389	10.5	1999	4947	28.8
Percentage									
Total	100.0	100.0	-	100.0	100.0	-	100.0	100.0	-
Under 18 years	4.2	3.7	-	2.2	3.2	-	1.6	3.1	-
19-24	19.9	19.1	-	15.1	17.4	-	14.9	18.3	-
25-29	14.2	15.5	-	13.4	12.3	-	11.9	11.1	-
30-49	51.5	48.1	-	57.5	50.8	-	57.2	50.0	-

50-54	9.6	8.7	-	11.0	8.5	-	11.2	8.4	-
55-59	0.6	4.8	-	0.7	7.7	-	3.2	8.5	-

\*by the end of III quarter



Ramun Trakymien

## STATE STRUCTURE

The Republic of Lithuania is an independent democratic state expressing the common will and interests of its people. The foundations of the social system are enforced by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania adopted in 1992, by a referendum which also establishes the rights, freedoms and obligations of its citizens. Under this Constitution, sovereign state power is vested in the people of Lithuania and is exercised by the Seimas (Parliament), the President of the Republic, the Government and the Courts.

*THE SEIMAS The Seimas consists of 141 members who are elected for a four year term on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. The structure and procedure of activities of the Seimas are determined by the Statute of the Seimas which has the power of the law.*

*The Seimas elects its Chairperson and three Deputy (Vice)*

*Chairpersons. The present Seimas was elected on October 25), 1996.*

*The present Chairman of the Seimas of Republic of Lithuania is*

*Vytautas Landsbergis. is a one-chamber parliament which deliberates on and enacts amendments to the Constitution. Its remits are to enacts laws; adopt resolutions regarding the organization of the referendum; call presidential elections; approve or reject the candidacy of the Prime Minister proposed by the President of the Republic; review the programme of the Government submitted by the Prime Minister and decide whether to approve it or not; upon the recommendation of the Government, establish or abolish ministries of the Republic of Lithuania; supervise the activities of the Government; and may adopt a motion of no-confidence in the Prime Minister or individual Ministers; appoint judges to, and Chairpersons of, the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court; appoint to, and dismiss from office, the State Controller as well as the Chairperson of the Board of the Bank of Lithuania; call local government Council election; establish the Central Electoral Committee and change its composition; approve the State budget and supervise the implementation thereof; fix State taxes and other obligatory payments; ratify or denounce international treaties whereto the Republic of Lithuania is a party, and consider other issues of foreign policy. A new obligation of the Seimas is the appointment of the Ombudsman on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.*

The Seimas is composed of 141 members elected for a four-year term. The Seimas elects its Chairperson (the Speaker) and Deputy Chairperson(s).

THE PRESIDENT of the Republic is the head of State. *From 1993 the Republic of Lithuania has the Presidents institution.* The President represents the State of Lithuania and performs all the duties which he or she is charged with by the Constitution and laws. The President of the Republic of Lithuania is elected by the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot for a term of five years.

The first democratically and directly elected President of the Republic was Algirdas Mykolas Brazauskas, who was elected on February 14, 1993. Recent presidential elections were held on December 21, 1997, resulting in the election of Valdas Adamkus, who took office on February 25, 1998.

THE GOVERNMENT is the highest authority of executive power. It comprises of the Prime Minister and Ministers. The Prime Minister is appointed or dismissed by the President of the Republic, with the approval of the Seimas. Ministers are appointed by the President of the Republic on the nomination of the Prime Minister.

The Government administers the affairs of the country, protects the inviolability of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania, and ensures State security and public order; implements laws and resolutions of the Seimas, as well as the decrees of the President; co-ordinates the activities of the ministries and other governmental institutions; prepares the draft budget of the State and submits it to the Seimas; executes the State Budget and reports on the fulfilment of the budget to the Seimas; drafts bills and submits them to the Seimas for consideration; establishes diplomatic relations and maintains relations with foreign countries and international organisations; and discharges other duties prescribed to the Government by the Constitution and other laws.

The current Lithuanian Government is headed by the Prime Minister Rolandas Paksas. The Government consists of 14 Ministers and 14 Ministries.

The present government was recently re-formed and started its work on June 10, 1999, following the resignation of the government composed of the Conservatives and the Christian- democrats on the grounds of the non-confidence expressed by the President. The new government is formed again by Conservatives and Christian- democrats with representation of the Central Party.

The PROGRAM OF THE GOVERNMENT of Lithuania outlines the following strategic foreign policy goals:

1. To ensure national security through integration into the Trans-Atlantic community and its institutions.
2. To strengthen the national economy and promote the economic well being of Lithuanian citizens through integration into the European common market of goods, services and capital.

In implementing these goals Lithuania seeks to participate fully in the Western political, economic and collective security structures, while at the same time maintaining extensive bilateral ties and good neighborhood relations with its Eastern neighbors. Lithuania is also committed to active participation in global as well as regional international organizations.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT is organized on the basis of the administrative-territorial division of Lithuania. Apskritis- Districts- the largest local administrative units. Urban settlements and district towns constitute the lower level of local self-government, which is represented by the municipal councils elected by the local population for a period of 3 years on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

COURTS AND PROSECUTION. Justice is exercised exclusively by courts. The court system in Lithuania comprises the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, circuit courts and district courts, made up of elected judges and assessors. Judges of these courts and of the Supreme Court are elected by the Seimas for a term of five years. Legal assistance is rendered by the Bar. Criminal prosecution is exercised by the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Lithuania and by local prosecutors under his direction.

The Prosecutor General and his deputies are appointed by the Seimas. Local prosecutors are appointed by the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Lithuania.

As the part of administrative reform the Administrative courts were established in 1999. The later essentially fulfilled the work of the Institution of the Seimas Controllers, who investigated the violations of citizens rights by the civil servants.

Lithuania has the Constitutional Court responsible to satisfy the requirements of the Constitution to the Law. *The Constitutional Court considers and adopts decisions concerning the conformity of laws of Republic of Lithuania and legal acts (legislation).*

POLITICAL PARTIES. All 35 political parties enjoy freedom and independence of action. Their organisational structure is based exclusively on the territorial principle. The Ministry of Justice registers

political parties. The Law forbids the activity of political parties of other states in Lithuania.

The main political parties in Lithuania at present are: the Homeland Union (Lithuanian Conservatives), Christian Democratic, Social Democratic, Centre and Democratic Labour parties, all presented at the Seimas as the parliamentary.

#### EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

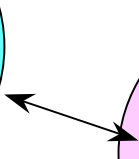
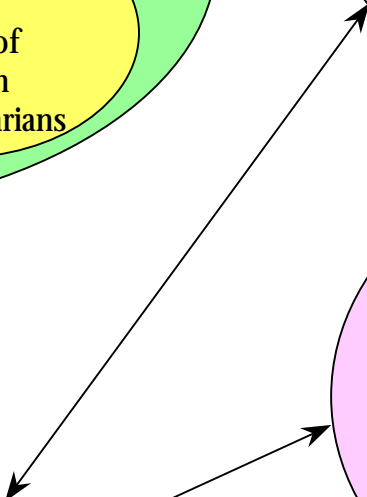
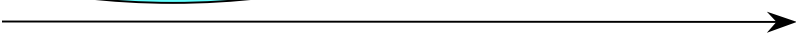
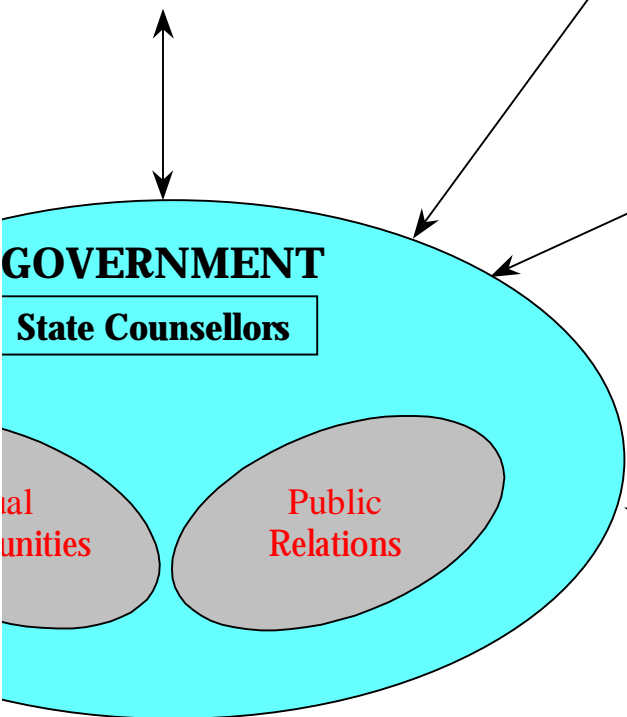
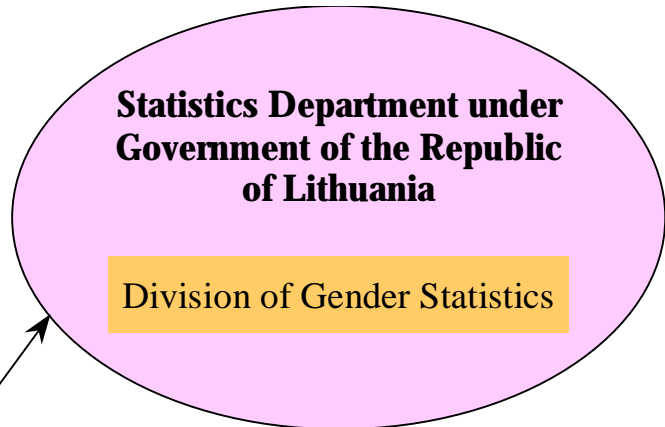
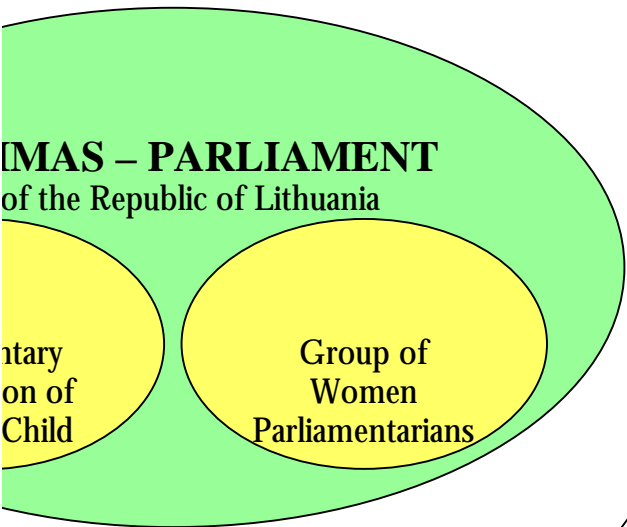
- Basically all educational institutions are state or public. Schools of general education are of 3 kinds:
  - primary (4 years, 836 schools, 141 pre-schools)
  - basic (9 years, 592 schools) and
  - secondary (12 years, 695 schools).
- . Children start school at the age of 6-7. A minimum education requirement that is compulsory is nine years.

The education in Russian, Polish, Jewish, Belorussian, German is offered in approximately 150 secondary schools.

*There are 41 private school, including 5 secondary schools, 5 basic, 10 primary schools, 18 high schools, 2 Catholic Lycees and St. Joseph's Catholic Seminary and International Business school at Vilnius University.*

At present there are 15 institutions of higher education or universities: 6 universities, 6 academies, two institutes of higher education and one Catholic seminary with a total number of 55,728 students.

In addition, there is the Lithuanian Academy of Science, which has four divisions (social sciences; exact sciences; natural sciences and technical sciences) and 17 research institutes.





## Equal Opportunities –National Policy of Lithuania

*Different countries usually place different emphasis on equal opportunities for race gender and ethnic minorities. From now the stress on equal rights for race has been transferred on to gender equal opportunities as well as equality of minorities.*

*Ethnic minorities receive fair treatment in Lithuania. Both citizens and permanent residents are equally supported by the state. Equal social benefits, health and social insurance, pensions, loans, subsidies for the education of children, maternity leave, and employment opportunities are equally available to all. Education is offered in the native languages of five ethnic minorities. 74 schools in Russian, 71- in Polish, 1- Belorussian, 1- Jewish, 1- German languages and 46- mix are State funded. 32 Sunday schools in 4 languages are available. Broadcasting for radio and television programmes are transmitted in four languages and newspapers in seven minority languages (36 in total) are run with government support. All nationalities are represented by approximately 50 NGOs, and their activities and cultural programmes are supported and funded by the Department of Ethnic Minorities and Emigrants under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, and other NGO supporting budgetary foundations.*

*Nevertheless the status of men and women does differ. With this in mind, I would like to give a short presentation on the gender equality in Lithuania in past and present context.*

*My short digression has led me away from my main story to the history of gender equality in Lithuania. To this end I would like to underline an unusual treatment of women in the medieval Lithuania. The first European Code - the Lithuanian Statute of the 16<sup>th</sup> century - stipulated the aggravation of the penalty for killing or inflicting bodily injury on a woman as twice as severe as in the case of men. It was also entitled that the woman had her own share in the property owned by the family. Moreover, women exercised a right to represent the legal interest of the family and husband (i.e. property interests) in court. The latter provision seems a strikingly progressive idea even from a present perspective. This is an unprecedented case in the world history of male-dominated society.*

*Lithuania lost its independence in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is next to impossible to imagine several thousand women convening a meeting under the occupation regime of tsarist Russia with no special facilities available and with no mass media to help their communication. This event did take place in Lithuania in 1907! After the restoration of its independence in 1918, women were given the right to vote. It was ensured in the Constitutions of the Republic of Lithuania of 1920 and 1922 - the fundamental law of the state.*

*In many European countries the woman's right to vote at the elections was recognised only after World War II.*

*In respect to education opportunities of women, Lithuania is in a prominent position. 58.6 % of university and 70 % of high school graduates are women. However, the average wage of women was only 80% of the average wages of men The situation is the same in other including the Nordic countries - world*

*leaders in gender equal opportunities (“On Women and Men in Sweden and EC”, 1992, “Wages”,p. 47) Why? Women are the losing majority in the competition for leading positions. They are too often pushed to the back of the room in the race for top executive jobs.*

*Employment statistics shows that leading positions are strongly held by men indeed. The situation has been changing for the better, especially in the last year or so, with an increasing number of women participating in the decision making processes at all levels of Lithuanian society. The growth rate of the number of women in the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania during the 1995-1996 General Elections was 250%, i.e. from 10 to 25, which according to the World Parliamentarian Statistics ranks Lithuania first in the pace of growth. Female participation in the elections was even slightly higher. As a result, 18.1% of women are currently Parliament members. Women's participation in the elections to local municipal authorities was also fairly high. From 30% of women on the list 22% were elected during the 1997 elections. The number of women in diplomatic service is increasing rapidly, in one year alone, the number of female ambassadors increased by 3 in 1998.*

*Women participation in business is on the rise too. One of the two largest private banks is headed by a woman. Some flourishing enterprises are also managed by women. The participation of women in small business shows an upward tendency. Both the Government and NGOs take care of the process. The Government adopted the Women Advancement Programme and its Implementation Plan. National machinery for gender equality was created. The Parliament passed the Law on Equal Opportunities in 1998. The office of an Ombudsman on Equal Opportunities is opened. Both women and men can apply to the ombudsman's office in a case of violation of their rights.*

*A year ago our press had very few publications on gender equality. Therefore, in 1998 the Lithuanian Government together with the Nordic Council of Ministers held a two-day seminar for journalists. Even though it was quite hard to prove that inequality exists, now the latter is evidently recognised by our mass media.*

*Last year saw the introduction of training programmes for Lithuanian officials on gender equality.*

*Too little attention was paid to Small and Medium –sized business (SMS). The SMS Business Division was established in the Ministry of Economy. The SMS Business Development Programme was introduced in the same vein. But this is not enough. So far as our public is concerned they do not realise that small women business should get support separately, people tend to associate it with the inequality and discrimination of men.*

*The Government proved that it was serious about tackling the problems of women in the rural regions by launching the Governmental Programme on the Problems of Women in the rural areas. The Division of Rural Development and Regional Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture is in full charge of the implementation of the programme.*

*Lithuanian NGOs are working actively on our society's awareness of gender equality.*



*The mass media are very helpful in shaping the awareness and mentality of our society, but inequality still persists. However, there are fields where women can have a more advantageous position. On the other hand, the men's right to get custody of children in divorced families is restricted. In particular, a new Civil Code and Family Law seem to ensure equal rights, including custody of children for fathers. The Law has already been discussed and given public hearings in all its aspects in the Parliament- Seimas.*

*Despite, proper legislation in place, Lithuania still is not able to ensure absolute equality. Therefore, the shaping of our population's awareness of equality of men and women is high on the agenda of the mass media, NGOs, and the Government.*

*I would like to conclude my presentation with an observation that our Nordic neighbours, and the Nordic Council of Ministers in particular, set work and practice patterns that we expect to follow. The representatives of the UN, in particular, the Lithuania UNDP Resident Co-ordinator, Cornelis Klein, we have obtained the most dedicated supporter of the cause of gender equality in Lithuania.*

Ramun Trakymien  
State Counsellor  
Prime Ministers Office  
Republic of Lithuania