

Press release in connection with the
International Women's Day

Date: 7 March 2014

EU IS NOT EVEN HALFWAY TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY IN DECISION-MAKING

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) marks the International Women's Day by presenting the Institute's research in the area of women and decision making to representatives of Lithuanian Government, embassies and non-governmental organisations. "Elections to the European Parliament will be held in May and the first Gender Equality Index for the European Union shows that the biggest gender gap in the EU is in the area of *Power*. As the Index points out, the EU is not even halfway towards gender equality in the area of decision-making. We all hope that the results of the elections will support bridging this huge gender gap. And we hope for more women in the Parliament to ensure the change." says Virginija Langbakk, Director of EIGE.

EU in deficit of democratic power

The Gender Equality Index proposed by the European Commission and created by EIGE is a unique measurement tool which supports evidence-based policy making and indicates where political priorities should be shifted to accelerate the process of achieving a gender-equal Europe.

The lowest score in the EU is in the area of power in decision-making, with an average score of only 38 at the EU level (where 1 stands for no gender equality and 100 for full gender equality). It's well below halfway towards gender equality. The greatest distance from gender equality is in the representation of women and men on boards of the largest quoted companies, with an EU average score of only 23.3. There is significant inequality in political structures – only 25 percent of ministers and 23 percent of members of the parliaments are women.

Measures such as a quota system could improve gender equality in this area and have a positive effect on all other areas.



Challenges for gender equality in Lithuania

Lithuania, with a gender equality score of 43.6 is below the EU average (54), on the 18th place. The scores show that there are significant challenges that Lithuania needs to address to achieve a more gender equal society. The most visible gender gaps for Lithuania are differences in *earnings* and *income* (LT 26.8) and a low representation of women in *economic decision-making* (LT 29.0). Other researched areas, like Climate Change, rank Lithuania at number 19 among EU Member States in terms of proportion of women in top position within Environment, Transport and Energy sectors.

The Gender Equality Index – for progress in gender equality

The Gender Equality Index gives scores for each Member State and presents an EU average in the areas of: work, money, knowledge, time, power and health to enable the first ever detailed assessment of how close the EU and Member States have come towards gender equality in each of the critical areas. Violence and Intersecting inequalities are the two satellite domains of the Gender Equality Index. 'I'm very glad that EIGE has developed a Gender Equality Index,' says Michael Gustafson, Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament. 'It enables each Member State to evaluate and compare amongst each other the progress they've made in various fields of gender equality, as well as where progress is most needed. I hope it will lead to further progress in gender equality.'

The full report and all Gender Equality Index results are available at:

<http://eige.europa.eu/content/activities/gender-equality-index>

Lithuania - country profile is available at:

<http://eige.europa.eu/content/gender-equality-index#/country/LT>

Lithuania – power domain:

<http://eige.europa.eu/content/gender-equality-index#/domain/power?country=LT>

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