

NEWS REPORT

Date: 25 January 2015
Expert: Gediminas Andriukaitis
Title: The second attempt to appoint new Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson fails at the Parliament
Country: Lithuania
Context
Issue at stake: The Parliament fails to appoint the new Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson and the post remains vacant since November, 2013
Ground of discrimination: All grounds
Source: Political development, miscellaneous
Field: All fields
Legislative provisions: According to Article 14 of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, the Parliament appoints Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson for the term of 5 years (the number of terms is unlimited).

Content

Political development: On 20 November 2014 the Speaker of the *Seimas* (Parliament) - Loreta Graužinienė - proposed Diana Gumbrevičiūtė-Kuzminskienė, an experienced lawyer with a scientific background in the field of non-discrimination (PhD) and 10 years of legal practice as an attorney, as a new candidate for the position of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson. During the plenary sitting of 25 November the members of the Parliament voted on the appointment of the new candidate and although no doubts regarding her professional qualifications were raised at the sitting, her candidacy was not approved (48 – for, 42 – against, 18 abstentions). This was a second failed attempt to appoint a new head of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson institution. On 23 December 2013 the first attempt to appoint a new candidate was also not successful. An experienced lawyer who was also a professor of international law was then rejected (47 – for, 42 – against, 15 abstentions).

The post of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson remains vacant since November 2013, when the former head of the institution Aušrinė Burneikienė passed away and the Board of the *Seimas* appointed the Ombudsman of the Rights of the Child as a temporary substitute, until the Parliament appoints another Ombudsperson for Equal Opportunities.

Internet link source and additional information: Stenograph of *Seimas* plenary sitting of 20th of November, 2014, a proposal of Diana Gumbrevičiūtė-Kuzminskienė as a candidate for the post of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson:
http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=488482

Stenograph of *Seimas* plenary sitting of 25th of November, 2014, voting for Diana Gumbrevičiūtė-Kuzminskienė as a candidate for the post of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson:

http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=489167

Speaker of the Parliament Loreta Graužinienė speaks to the media after failed attempts to appoint the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson (28-12-2014):

http://kauno.diena.lt/naujienos/lietuva/politika/l-grauziniene-seimo-nusiteikimas-apsunkino-lygiu-galimybiu-kontrolieriaus-paieskas-666830#.VMTO7_6UeXQ

Stenograph of Seimas plenary sitting of 17th of December, 2013, a proposal of Lyra Jakulevičienė as a candidate for the post of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson:

http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter2/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=462471

Stenograph of Seimas plenary sitting of 23rd of December, 2013, voting on Lyra Jakulevičienė as a candidate for the post of Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson:

http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter2/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=462912