



## European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

### NEWS REPORT

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| <b>Country:</b>                  | Lithuania   |
| <b>Title:</b>                    | Sex equality dimension in the new draft labour legislation (social model)   |
| <b>Date:</b>                     | 26 May 2015   |
| <b>Expert:</b>                   | Tomas Davulis   |
| <b><u>Context</u></b>            |   |
| <b>Issue at stake:</b>           | New draft laws on modernising labour law introduce women quotas on company boards, but other draft provisions are controversial |
| <b>Ground of discrimination:</b> | Sex   |
| <b>Source:</b>                   | Draft legislation   |
| <b>Field:</b>                    | Employment, pregnancy and maternity, parental leave   |
| <b>Applicable law:</b>           | Lithuanian Labour Code (draft)  |

### Content

**Law development:** The Ministry of Social Security and Labour announced the draft labour legislation, which forms part of the so-called 'social model'.<sup>1</sup> This refers to the EU-funded project 'Legal-administrative model of labour relations and social security', which was initiated by the Ministry to increase the competitiveness and effectiveness of the labour market and address the current problems of statutory social insurance. Amongst many novelties to increase the flexibility and security of workers, there is also a proposal to amend the Law on Companies to introduce women quotas on company boards. However, some changes may be considered setbacks for workers with family responsibilities.

The Ministry of social security and labour entrusted the group of scholars to prepare the new codification of labour legislation with the aim to address these problems. The draft Labour Code was published officially on 15 March 2015 and now is under debate in the Tripartite Council. The Government expects that the legislation will reach the Parliament for its adoption in June 2015.

The draft Labour Code aims to transpose the labour law directives, but there are also measures that intend indirectly or directly to increase equality between women and men:

- 1) the right to unpaid time off for family needs;
- 2) the right to request distance work, part-time work, and job sharing for employees with children;
- 3) the right to flexible or individual work time schedule;
- 4) the obligation on employers with more than 50 employees to approve remuneration schemes and equality strategies and make them publicly available;
- 5) the obligation to reserve 1/4 of places in management boards for women in state and municipal enterprises and joint stock companies;

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<sup>1</sup> It is now open for discussion, before it is submitted to the Government and then to the Parliament.

6) other improvements on the fight against discrimination.

**Key points of analysis:** The proposed legislation contains a set of measures to ensure greater protection against discrimination based on sex, and to promote equal opportunities at the workplace (the right to request flexible working time arrangements; transparency in remuneration and the duty to establish the equality strategies; quotas on women in management boards; etc.). However, some proposals that affect employees raising children may actually restrict rights, because of the diminished level of protection against dismissal.

**Internet link source:**

The draft legislation is available in Lithuanian at: <http://www.socmodelis.lt/wp-content/uploads/Darbo-kodekso-projektas.pdf>.