



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE
FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE
PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**



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Sixth Report submitted by Lithuania

**Pursuant to Article 25, paragraph 2 of the
Framework Convention for the Protection of
National Minorities – received on 8 September 2026**

SIXTH REPORT
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION
FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES
IN THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
submitted pursuant to Article 25(2) of the Convention

List of Acronyms

CDADI – Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion of the Council of Europe

ECRI – European Commission against Racism and Intolerance

OSCE – Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

IHRA – International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

MoC – Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania

KCCVN – Public Institution *Kaunas Centre for the Cultures of Various Nations*

OEOO – Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson

Constitution – the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania

SRL – Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania

PORL – Parliamentary Ombudspersons of the Republic of Lithuania

LRT – Public Institution *Lithuanian National Radio and Television*

Methodological publication – *Romų vaikų ugdymo patirtis Lietuvos bendrojo ugdymo mokyklose* (Educational Experience of Roma Children in Lithuanian General Education Schools), methodological publication of the National Agency for Education

Committee of Ministers – Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

Framework Convention – Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Advisory Committee – Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe

Roma Inclusion Plan – Action Plan for Roma Inclusion 2030

Roma Inclusion Programme – Vilnius City Municipality Programme for the Inclusion of the Roma in Society 2024–2026

The Roma Platform – The Lithuanian Roma Platform: the Path towards Co-operation with Municipalities

RCC – Public Institution *Roma Community Centre*

MSSL – Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania
MoESS – Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania
HNC – Public Institution *House of National Communities*
MoJ – Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania
DNM – Department of National Minorities under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania
LNM – Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania
CNM – Council of National Minorities
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania
SDA – State Data Agency
SCLL – State Commission of the Lithuanian Language
MoI – Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania
OIJE – Office of the Inspector of Journalist Ethics

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Introduction

The sixth report on the implementation of the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the Framework Convention) in Lithuania is submitted pursuant to Article 25, paragraph 2, of the Framework Convention.

The Republic of Lithuania was one of the first European states to sign the Framework Convention on 1 February 1995 and to ratify it without reservations on 23 March 2000. It has consistently fulfilled its international obligations by respecting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms and by ensuring equal opportunities for the self-expression of all persons belonging to national minorities and the equality of cultures. The Framework Convention entered into force on 1 July 2000.

Lithuania regularly submits information to the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (hereinafter referred to as the Advisory Committee) on the implementation of the Framework Convention and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. Pursuant to Article 25(2) of the Framework Convention, the Republic of Lithuania submits a report every five years. The information contained in this report covers the period from 2021 to 2026.

Information for this report was prepared by a standing committee comprising representatives of the Department of National Minorities under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the DNM), the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as MoC), the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the MSSL), the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the MoESS), the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the MoJ), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the MFA), the Ministry of the Interior of the

Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the MoI), the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman (hereinafter referred to as the OEEO), the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language (hereinafter referred to as the SCLL) and the Office of the Inspector of Journalistic Ethics (hereinafter referred to as the OIJE).

The draft report was published on the website of the DNM (tmde.lrv.lt), presented to and discussed with the Council of National Minorities. Comments and proposals received from national minority non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders during the public consultation were considered in the preparation of the final version of the report. The report consists of three parts: (1) information on the results of the fourth monitoring cycle; (2) measures taken by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania in response to the Advisory Committee's recommendations for immediate action; and (3) the policy pursued by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania in the light of the articles of the Framework Convention and the recommendations received.

I. Measures taken to raise awareness of the results of the fifth monitoring cycle and the Framework Convention

The fifth report on the implementation of the Framework Convention in the Republic of Lithuania was published in Lithuanian and English. The publications were distributed to the authorities responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the Framework Convention: MoC, MSSL, MoESS, MoJ, MFA, MoI, OEEO, SCLL, OIJE, as well as the Seimas (hereinafter referred to as the SRL), the Parliamentary Ombudspersons of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the PORL), the Government Office of the Republic of Lithuania, and the following public institutions: The House of National Communities (hereinafter referred to as the HNC), the Kaunas Centre for the Cultures of Various Nations (hereinafter referred to as the KCCVN), the Roma Community Centre (hereinafter referred to as the RCC), the Klaipėda Centre for National Cultures (hereinafter referred to as the KCNC), the Visaginas Cultural Centre (hereinafter referred to as VCC) and other municipal cultural centres and national minority organisations. The publications were also distributed at seminars, conferences and meetings with national minority non-governmental organisations.

Monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Advisory Committee's Fifth Opinion was also carried out. In June 2025, letters were sent to the authorities responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and the Framework

Convention, including the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, the Office of the Ombudsman for Children's Rights, the State Data Agency and the Council for National Minorities (CNM). The authorities were asked to review the Advisory Committee's recommendations, assess whether the recommendations falling within their remit had been or were being implemented, and take action to implement those recommendations and the provisions of the Framework Convention.

Awareness-raising activities

The recommendations from the fifth monitoring cycle were incorporated into the DNM's priority activities. The recommendations have become key guidelines for developing strategic and operational plans. In organising its activities, the DNM paid particular attention to implementing the provisions of the recommendations. The following were organised:

- Seminars and training sessions. The thematic seminars and training sessions were aimed at education professionals, representatives of non-governmental organisations and national minorities. These events focused primarily on the rights enshrined in the Framework Convention and the recommendations addressed to Lithuania. For example, at the seminar *Atminties kelias: romų istorijos pažinimas ir mokymas mokykloje* (Memory Path: Learning and Teaching Roma History at School), organised by the DNM for teachers from schools across Lithuania seeking to deepen their knowledge of Roma history, identity and the Roma genocide and to integrate these topics into the educational process, participants were introduced to Roma history, identity and cultural heritage, highlighting the diversity of the Roma community and its complex historical experience. The seminar also presented the recommendations of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (hereinafter referred to as the IHRA) on teaching and learning about the persecution and genocide of Roma during the Nazi era. The seminar strengthened teachers' competences and encouraged the responsible integration of Roma history into school education, thereby fostering historical awareness and intercultural dialogue.

- Public events. Conferences and public debates were organised, involving representatives of the wider public, non-governmental organisations and the academic community. These events encouraged dialogue on the rights and inclusion of national minorities. In 2025 and 2026, the DNM organised international conferences entitled "iN: Integration and Inclusion Forum", each of which brought together around 300 participants: international and national experts, policy-makers, university lecturers, and representatives of the media and non-governmental organisations. The forums focused on strengthening evidence-based national minority policy, promoting social cohesion, trust and inclusion as essential conditions for a strong and resilient society, and advancing

the implementation of these principles, which contribute directly to strengthening intercultural dialogue and ensuring mutual respect and security.

- Non-formal education initiatives. Information on the Framework Convention and the rights of persons belonging to national minorities was incorporated into seminar programmes. In 2025, the DNM organised a seminar for representatives of Lithuanian municipalities and the Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania on the legal framework governing the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. The seminar also addressed the preservation of intangible cultural heritage and the promotion of multiculturalism, and included discussions on ways to strengthen engagement and enhance co-operation.

To raise public awareness, communication tools were also used. Information was published online, emphasising the importance of the Framework Convention. Social media accounts were also used to disseminate key information in an easily accessible format, thereby reaching a wider audience, particularly young people.

Co-operation with national minorities

The DNM maintained an ongoing dialogue with representatives of national minorities in order to ensure they were kept informed about the monitoring process and its results. The meetings of the Council of National Minorities (CNM) provided an opportunity to discuss the recommendations and set priorities for their implementation.

In 2025, the CNM met with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania to discuss issues relevant to national minorities, including the protection of their rights, opportunities to improve the Law on National Minorities, issues relating to cultural heritage, participation in public life, strengthening education and cultural inclusion, and the fight against antisemitism, xenophobia and manifestations of hatred.

Co-operation with international organisations

State authorities cooperated actively with international organisations: the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (hereinafter referred to as ECRI) and other institutions. Lithuania regularly submitted reports on the implementation of its international obligations, participated in international expert meetings, and took the recommendations into consideration when developing national policy.

From 27 November to 1 December 2023, experts from the Advisory Committee and ECRI visited Lithuania to assess the implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and ECRI concerning the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. They also examined the activities and achievements of national minority cultural and

integration centres; the measures taken by municipalities to support national minorities traditionally residing in their municipalities and to preserve their heritage and promote their culture; and efforts to combat hate speech and ethnically motivated violence, safeguard freedom of expression, disseminate information on national minorities, and promote integration.

The experts took part in meetings and discussions with representatives of State authorities and national minorities. The main challenges in implementing the recommendations and the progress made were discussed.

Thematic meetings were held with representatives of State authorities, municipalities, non-governmental organisations and national minority communities. These meetings helped to foster constructive dialogue, exchange good practices and plan specific actions.

All these activities encouraged closer co-operation between institutions, a better understanding of the recommendations, and greater involvement of national minority communities. Specific measures for the further implementation of the recommendations were also discussed, including the continuation of awareness-raising activities, capacity-building and the promotion of dialogue.

In co-operation with the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, seminars and training sessions were organised for civil servants, representatives of national minority non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders. The events addressed the provisions of the Framework Convention, their practical implementation, and national minority policy issues relevant to Lithuania. Participants were also provided with copies of the fifth report on the implementation of the provisions of the Framework Convention. On 7 July 2022, the practical seminar (Raising Awareness and Preventing Conflict in Multicultural Societies) was organised to strengthen the capacity of public authorities and experts to identify potential tensions in multicultural environments, promote dialogue, and raise awareness of the standards for the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and their importance for social cohesion and conflict prevention. All participants in the events received publications on the Framework Convention.

These events contributed to raising awareness of the Framework Convention monitoring process and the implementation of its recommendations, while fostering an inclusive and well-informed society. Lithuania will continue to seek to raise awareness and implement the recommendations of the monitoring process.

It is important to note that the geopolitical developments during the period 2021–2026, including Russia's war against Ukraine, created additional challenges for social cohesion,

countering disinformation, and strengthening societal resilience. In this context, State authorities placed particular emphasis on strengthening civic integration, promoting democratic values, and maintaining dialogue with national minority communities in order to prevent social polarisation and foster mutual trust.

II. Measures Taken to Improve the Implementation of the Framework Convention and to Implement the Recommendations of the Fifth Monitoring Cycle

Committee of Ministers' recommendations for immediate action

Recommendation 1

Undertake awareness-raising and trust-building measures with a view to creating a climate conducive to the exercise by persons belonging to national minorities of their rights under the Framework Convention. Intensified measures should also be taken to ensure that the authorities at all levels are aware of their obligations deriving from the Framework Convention.

During the period 2021–2026, targeted measures were implemented with the aim of raising public awareness and strengthening the capacity of the authorities to safeguard the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. The Framework Convention and the Advisory Committee's recommendations are available in Lithuanian on the websites of the DNM, the Public Institution House of National Communities¹ and the Public Institution the Kaunas Centre for the Cultures of Various Nations: tmde.lrv.lt, tbn.lt and 154kulturos.lt.

The DNM carried out systematic information and educational activities targeting State and municipal authorities, educational institutions, non-governmental organisations and representatives of national communities. Seminars, conferences, consultations and discussions were organised on the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, international obligations, the application of the provisions of the Framework Convention, the principles of non-discrimination, and the recommendations addressed to Lithuania concerning the improvement of the situation of national minorities.

Particular emphasis was placed on strengthening the capacity of municipal authorities, as many practical issues relating to the education of persons belonging to national minorities, cultural activities, access to information and community involvement are addressed at the local level. The DNM provided methodological support to municipalities, particularly on Roma-related issues,

¹ <https://tbn.lt/tarptautiniai-teises-aktai/>

organised consultations on ensuring the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and promoted the exchange of good practices.

In order to strengthen mutual trust between the authorities and national minority communities, dialogue with the CNM, which serves as an advisory body to the DNM, was further strengthened. The CNM brings together representatives delegated by various national communities, and its activities enable national minority organisations to participate directly in discussions on legislation, culture, education, the use of minority languages and other issues of relevance.

Trust was further strengthened through the DNM's regular consultations with the CNM, national community organisations in municipalities with substantial national minority populations, as well as with the HNC, KCCVN, RCC, the Klaipėda City National Cultures Centre, the Visaginas Cultural Centre and the Lithuanian National Minorities Folklore and Ethnography Centre in the preparation of strategic plans and programmes. The participation of national minority organisations contributed to greater involvement of national communities in decision-making processes.

Measures were also implemented to raise public awareness of national minorities and their contribution to the development of the Lithuanian State. Representatives of the DNM, State authorities, public institutions and non-governmental organisations regularly participate in cultural events organised by national communities, educational projects, public awareness campaigns, public discussions², commemorative events and festivals that promote intercultural dialogue and foster tolerance and respect for cultural diversity.

Particular attention was paid to the education of national minorities. Lithuania continued to ensure the possibility of receiving pre-school, pre-primary and general education in national minority languages. Measures were implemented to strengthen teachers' professional competences, methodological guidance was developed, and cultural and educational projects contributing to the preservation of national identity and civic integration were funded.

It should be noted that, during the period 2021–2026, Lithuania strengthened both the legal and institutional framework for the protection of national minorities, expanded consultation and dialogue mechanisms, and increased public and institutional awareness of the rights of national minorities and the State's international obligations. These measures contributed to creating more favourable conditions for persons belonging to national minorities to exercise their rights under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

² The discussion festival *Būtent!* featured discussions on the present and future of national minorities: <https://tmde.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/diskusiju-festivalyje-butent-buvo-kalbama-apie-tautiskumo-reiksme-xxi-amziu-je-w1y/>

Recommendation 2

Adopt a comprehensive legal framework on the protection of national minorities, thereby ensuring that persons belonging to national minorities can effectively exercise the rights enshrined in the Framework Convention.

An important step in the implementation of the Framework Convention was the adoption by the SRL, on 7 November 2024, of the Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania³ No. XIV-3079 (hereinafter referred to as the LNM), which entered into force on 1 January 2025. It should be noted that Lithuania had no dedicated legislative framework governing the protection of national minorities for more than a decade. The new LNM established a comprehensive legal framework for the protection of the rights of national minorities. It provides a clearer definition of the concept of a national minority, specifies the competences of public authorities, and lays down the principles governing the use of national minority languages, the preservation of cultural identity, education, consultation and participation in public life. This has significantly strengthened legal certainty both for national minority communities and for public authorities.

The LNM establishes the following key provisions:

- it introduces the concept of a national minority, based on an inclusive definition. The citizenship criterion clearly distinguishes the policy on the protection of the rights of national minorities from migration policy. The criterion of long-standing, strong and lasting ties with the Republic of Lithuania also ensures that the definition covers:
 - historical national minorities – national minorities regarded as "old historical national minorities", which are endangered and have no historical homeland with which they can identify;
- it defines a person belonging to a national minority as a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania residing in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania who has an ethnic identity other than Lithuanian and seeks to preserve that identity;
- it introduces the concept of national identity, defined as a person's freely chosen identification with the nationality of one of their parents or grandparents, based on the totality of the characteristics specific to that nationality – culture, language, traditions and customs – or at least one of those characteristics.
- it defines a national minority language as a language other than Lithuanian that is used as a mother tongue by persons belonging to a national minority and establishes the principles governing its use, including the right to use that language freely and without interference, in private and in public, orally and in writing;

³<https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/372796c2a26611efa605b9842742bf37>

- it guarantees the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish organisations freely, to participate in political, public and non-governmental activities at national and international level, and ensures the protection of their civil and political rights through participation in public life;

- it establishes the CNM as a permanent mechanism for the participation of persons belonging to national minorities. The CNM is composed of representatives of organisations uniting national minorities and non-governmental organisations active in the field of the exercise of the rights of national minorities. This law guarantees the right of representatives of national minorities to participate in addressing cultural, educational, social, economic and other issues affecting them and to represent their interests before state and municipal institutions. As a collegiate advisory body operating on a voluntary basis, the CNM submits proposals to the institution authorized by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, which is responsible for implementing national minority policy, as well as to state and municipal institutions and bodies on legislative initiatives, policy development, strategic issues relating to the preservation of the identity of national minorities and the development of their culture, other matters related to participation in shaping and implementing national minority policy, measures for the implementation of targeted programmes for national minorities, priorities for providing support to non-governmental organisations active in the field of the protection of the rights of national minorities, and the implementation of international obligations. This has strengthened the legal framework for the effective participation of national minorities in public life and in decision-making on matters affecting them.

- it also establishes the legal framework, conditions and procedures for education, culture and information dissemination relating to national minorities;

- it lays down the rights, freedoms and obligations of persons belonging to national minorities, as well as the State's obligation to create conditions enabling them to preserve and foster the customs and cultural and linguistic identity of national minorities;

- it establishes the institutional framework for the formulation and implementation of State policy on national minorities and for the representation of national minorities.

Together with other applicable legislation,⁴ the LNM creates the conditions for establishing a uniform understanding of national minorities and ensuring the exercise of the specific rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

⁴ The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the Law on Equal Opportunities, the Law on the State Language, the Law on Public Administration, the Law on Education, the Law on Associations, the Law on Religious Communities, the Law on the Provision of Information to the Public, the Law on the Identity Card and Passport, the Law on the Spelling of Personal Names and Surnames in Documents, and the Law on the Registration of Civil Status Acts.

Sub-paragraph 7.4.11 of the Implementation Plan for the Programme of the Twentieth Government of the Republic of Lithuania⁵ provides for "improving the provisions of the LNM, following an analysis, with a view to implementing the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities" (responsible authority – MoJ; participating institutions – MoC, MoESS; implementation deadline – the fourth quarter of 2027). To implement these provisions, by Order No. 1R-33 of 19 February 2026 of the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania⁶, a working group composed of representatives of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, MoC, MoESS, MoJ, DNM, CNM, SCLL, MoI and Mykolas Romeris University was established to improve the provisions of the LNM. The working group submitted proposals regarding the draft legal act, the most significant of which included: the possibility of submitting applications to municipal administrative authorities in a national minority language; the possibility of spelling personal names using the Latin alphabet (without diacritical marks) in accordance with the spelling and word-formation rules of the relevant national minority language; the right to display topographical signs on private property in the mother tongue; national minority schools and the teaching of the State language in schools where instruction is provided in a national minority language.

Recommendation 3

Provide a legal framework and take a range of practical measures to ensure the right to use national minority languages, orally and in writing, in dealings with administrative authorities, and monitor the implementation of these measures. To this end, the authorities should ensure that, in areas traditionally inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities, the exercise of this right is not made dependent on whether they constitute a certain percentage of the local population. This right should also be guaranteed irrespective of whether the applicant has knowledge of the Lithuanian language, and persons belonging to national minorities should be encouraged to make use of it.

In assessing the implementation of this recommendation, it should be noted that, during the period 2021–2026, Lithuania strengthened the system for the protection of the rights of national minorities, expanded practical communication and consultation measures, and sought to ensure that administrative services were accessible to all residents, including national minority communities. At

⁵ Plan for the Implementation of the Provisions of the Programme of the Twentieth Government of the Republic of Lithuania, approved by Resolution No. 895 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 10 December 2025, *On the Approval of the Plan for the Implementation of the Provisions of the Programme of the Twentieth Government of the Republic of Lithuania*.

⁶ [Order No. 1R-33 of the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania of 19 February 2026 On the Establishment of a Working Group to Improve the Provisions of the Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania.](#)

the same time, Lithuania upheld the constitutional principle of the status of the State language and ensured a balance between national legislation and its international obligations.

During the period 2021–2026, Lithuania sought to ensure the protection of the State language and compliance with constitutional principles on the basis of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the Constitution), Article 14 of which provides that the State language shall be Lithuanian; the Law on the State Language of the Republic of Lithuania⁷, the principal legal act governing the use of the State language in public life and regulating the use of the State language in state and municipal institutions, in the provision of public services, in documents, public signs, the dissemination of information, education, culture and other fields (amendments adopted in 2025–2026 strengthened the requirements for customer service in the Lithuanian language); the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania⁸, which establishes the requirements for teaching the Lithuanian language and proficiency in the State language within the education system; the Law on Public Administration of the Republic of Lithuania⁹, which provides that public administration shall be carried out in the State language; the LNM, which establishes the rights of national minorities while at the same time emphasising the status of the State language and its mandatory use in public life; and other laws and secondary legislation.

Through the above-mentioned legal acts, in particular the LNM, which establishes the right of national minorities to preserve their language, culture and identity, Lithuania ensures the right to use national minority languages. The Law provides that, in accordance with the Constitution and other legal acts, persons belonging to national minorities have the right to use their language freely in private and public life.

In 2023, the DNM requested all 60 municipalities of the Republic of Lithuania to indicate whether they apply paragraph 25 of the Rules for the Examination of Requests and Complaints of Persons at Public Administration Entities, approved by Resolution No. 875 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 22 August 2007 *On the Approval of the Rules for the Examination of Requests and Complaints of Persons at Public Administration Entities*, and, where this provision concerning the acceptance of written requests in languages other than the State language is applied, to specify the languages in which services are provided to residents.

According to the information provided by the municipalities, residents are served in one or more national minority languages in half of the 60 municipalities, most commonly Russian, Polish and Ukrainian. See also Article 10.

⁷ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.0B0253BB424C/asr>

⁸ <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.1480/asr>

⁹ <https://e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.0BDFFD850A66/asr>

The activities of administrative authorities in Lithuania are based on the constitutional status of the State language. At the same time, municipalities and State authorities in areas traditionally inhabited by larger national minority communities apply a flexible and pragmatic approach to the provision of services to residents. In many municipalities, employees are able to communicate in national minority languages, particularly Polish and Russian, where this is necessary to promote social inclusion and ensure the effective provision of services.

To ensure the accessibility of high-quality public services, municipalities also provide services in national minority languages and frequently rely on employees who are proficient in those languages. This is particularly relevant in Vilnius District Municipality, Šalčininkai District Municipality, Visaginas Municipality, Klaipėda City Municipality and other municipalities where national minority communities have traditionally lived. The practical accessibility of administrative services for national minority communities is ensured through the application of the principles of good administration and non-discrimination.

It should be noted that the Lithuanian legal system does not prohibit the additional use of national minority languages when providing information to residents, provided that the use of the State language is also ensured. Municipalities and public institutions provide multilingual information on their websites, in information publications, and in the fields of culture and public services, particularly in the above-mentioned municipalities.

In implementing the Framework Convention, Lithuania seeks to maintain a balance between the protection of the rights of national minorities and the constitutional status of the State language. The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania has emphasised the importance of protecting the State language in public administration. At the same time, State authorities seek practical solutions to ensure that the needs of national minority communities are met and that services remain accessible.

The DNM strengthened its dialogue with national minority communities and the CNM by discussing practical issues relating to the implementation of language rights. National community organisations had the opportunity to submit proposals on improving the accessibility of administrative services, the provision of information and communication.

Representatives of national minorities in Lithuania have the right to communicate with public authorities in their mother tongue. In practice, such situations are addressed in accordance with the principles of good administration, proportionality and responsiveness to residents' needs.

Lithuanian authorities also devoted attention to raising awareness of the rights of national minorities. The DNM, municipalities and non-governmental organisations implemented projects

and initiatives encouraging national minority communities to participate more actively in public life, make greater use of public services and become more actively involved in decision-making processes.

Recommendation 4

Establish a legal framework for the display of topographical indications also in national minority languages and coordinate the implementation of Article 11(3) of the Framework Convention at the national level. In doing so, the authorities should identify the areas traditionally inhabited by substantial numbers of persons belonging to each national minority, taking into account the specific situation of each national minority and the demographic composition of the area over a period longer than the intervals between population censuses, and display topographical indications in the relevant national minority language in those areas.

The LNM strengthened the overall system for the protection of national minorities and created a basis for further discussions on practical mechanisms for implementing language rights, including issues relating to public signs and topographical indications.

Lithuania continued expert, institutional and political discussions on the practical implementation of Article 11(3) of the Framework Convention. These discussions involved State authorities, the DNM, representatives of municipalities, national community organisations and international experts.

Lithuania maintains that decisions concerning topographical indications must ensure a balance between the protection of the rights of national minorities and the constitutional status of the State language. In its case-law, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania has emphasised that the State language is a constitutional value and one of the fundamental elements of statehood; therefore, the regulation of public signs must comply with the Constitution.

Lithuania recognises the importance of the cultural and historical heritage of national minorities and seeks to ensure the visibility of their identity in the public space. In practice, multilingual information signs, including signs in national minority languages, are used in some municipalities and at cultural sites, particularly in the fields of culture, tourism, historical heritage and community information.

When planning measures in the fields of culture, education and community integration, State authorities and municipalities take into account not only official population census data but also the historical settlement of national communities in specific regions.

Discussions on the possible wider use of national minority languages in topographical indications highlighted the need to ensure a clear national legal framework, consistent application of the law throughout the territory of the State, and legal certainty for municipalities and residents.

During the period 2021–2026, Lithuania also strengthened its dialogue with national minority communities not only through close co-operation with the CNM but also through other measures. National community organisations had the opportunity to submit proposals concerning cultural visibility, language rights and measures to preserve national identity in the public space.

In Lithuania, the use of national minority languages in private and in public, including at cultural events, in the activities of national minorities or in communications by non-governmental organisations, is not restricted. National minority languages are actively used in cultural life, and the State supports projects aimed at preserving and promoting national minority languages and cultures.

In assessing the implementation of this recommendation, it should be noted that, during the period 2021–2026, Lithuania strengthened the legal framework for the protection of national minorities, developed dialogue on the implementation of language rights, analysed international practice and promoted the visibility of the cultural identity of national minorities in the public space. Further practical decisions concerning topographical indications are linked to the further development of the national legal framework, ensuring compliance with constitutional principles and strengthening public dialogue.

Multilingual information signs are used in the fields of culture, historical heritage and tourism. Lithuania seeks to maintain a balance between the protection of the rights of national minorities and the constitutional status of the State language.

Recommendation 5

Continue, in close co-operation with representatives of the Roma minority, to implement measures aimed at improving Roma housing conditions, access to healthcare services, employment opportunities and employment, as well as access to quality education, with particular attention paid to women and girls.

The implementation of the Advisory Committee's recommendation is based on a long-term policy for Roma inclusion. During the period 2021–2026, Lithuania implemented its Roma integration policy by moving from short-term action plans (2022–2023) to long-term strategic planning until 2030, aligned with the EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation. During this period, comprehensive measures aimed at promoting the social inclusion of the Roma community, protecting human rights and reducing social exclusion were consistently

implemented. In implementing these measures, particular attention was paid to close co-operation with representatives of the Roma community, non-governmental organisations and municipalities.

State policy measures

The principal national strategic documents on Roma integration in Lithuania are:

- Action Plan for Roma Inclusion 2030¹⁰

Since 2024, the Roma Inclusion Plan has been the principal national strategic document. Its objective is to promote equality, social inclusion and participation of Roma in society.

The document provides the long-term national strategic framework covering measures to combat discrimination and antigypsyism, improve educational opportunities for Roma, promote employment, improve access to healthcare, empower Roma women and young people, strengthen civic participation, and promote co-operation with municipalities and civil society.

The Roma Inclusion Plan also provides for the activities of Roma mediators, strengthening local Roma platforms, promoting Roma culture and identity, strengthening the Roma non-governmental sector, and enhancing inter-institutional co-operation.

- Action Plan for the Integration of Roma into Lithuanian Society 2022–2023¹¹

This was the first national document prepared in response to the European Commission Communication of 7 October 2020 on the EU Roma Strategic Framework for Equality, Inclusion and Participation 2020–2030 and the Council Recommendation on Roma Equality, Inclusion and Participation. The document provided for measures in the areas of education, employment, healthcare, preservation of culture, reduction of discrimination, strengthening Roma participation, and co-operation with municipalities and non-governmental organisations.

- Action Plan for the Promotion of Non-Discrimination 2021–2023¹²

This plan, which was adopted and coordinated by the MSSL, sets out measures to combat discrimination on the grounds of nationality, to prevent hate speech, and to promote tolerance in society, as well as measures to educate the public about human rights.

- National Progress Plan 2021–2030¹³

¹⁰ Action Plan for Roma Inclusion 2030, <https://tmde.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1768374047/10451/D%C4%97l%20rom%C5%B3%20%C4%AFtrauktis%20iki%202030%20m.%20veiksm%C5%B3%20plano%20patvirtinimo%20-%20pakeitimo.pdf>

¹¹ Action Plan for the Integration of Roma into Lithuanian Society 2022–2023, <https://tmde.lrv.lt/uploads/tmde/documents/files/%C4%Aesakymas%20d%C4%97l%20Rom%C5%B3%20integracijos%20%C4%AF%20Lietuvos%20visuomen%C4%99%20priemoni%C5%B3%20plano%202022%202023%20patvirtinimo%20%C4%AEV-33%202022-07-01.pdf>

¹² <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/b1c5e3b03ae511eb8d9fe110e148c770/asr>

¹³ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/d492e050f7dd11eaa12ad7c04a383ca0/asr>

Roma integration policy is also implemented in line with the objectives of the National Progress Plan to reduce social exclusion, improve access to education, strengthen the protection of human rights and promote equality.

- State Progress Strategy *Lithuania's Vision for the Future "Lithuania 2050"*¹⁴

Although this strategy is not a dedicated Roma policy document, measures for Roma inclusion were linked to the objectives of social inclusion, equal opportunities, poverty reduction, access to education and civic participation. Measures promoting Roma inclusion were integrated into the broader social policy framework.

The implementation of the Action Plan focused on increasing access to early childhood education, preventing early school leaving, encouraging Roma participation in the labour market, providing mediation and counselling services, and involving Roma non-governmental organisations.

Roma inclusion is also promoted through the Roma Inclusion Programme, which provides for measures to promote social inclusion and equal opportunities, as well as targeted employment programmes implemented by municipalities to support the social inclusion, employment, housing, psychological well-being and community empowerment of Roma women and girls.

Statistics

According to the data of the 2021 Population and Housing Census, 2,251 persons of Roma ethnicity lived in Lithuania. Of these, 24.3% resided in the City of Vilnius, while the remainder were distributed across other Lithuanian cities and municipalities, including: Eišiškės, Jonava, Kybartai, Marijampolė, Panevėžys, Varėna, Vilkaviškis, Šiauliai. In terms of gender, Roma women account for approximately 52.6% and Roma men for approximately 47.4% of the Roma population.

The Roma community in Lithuania has a relatively young age structure. Compared with other population groups, it has a comparatively high proportion of children and young people. According to various studies, children and young people account for approximately one fifth to one quarter of the Roma population in Lithuania. Consequently, education and youth inclusion remain among the key priorities of Roma integration policy.

Education

In the field of education, Lithuania implements measures aimed at increasing access to education and reducing early school leaving. During the period 2021–2026, measures supporting

¹⁴ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/it/legalAct/3388adf0a55611eea5a28c81c82193a8?csrt=4846892553884467125>

Roma inclusion and education were strengthened in Lithuania, resulting in improved participation of Roma children in the general education system and a reduction in school absenteeism. Nevertheless, the educational attainment of the Roma community remains among the lowest in Lithuania. More than 70%¹⁵ of Roma have attained less than upper secondary education, while the proportion of Roma with higher education is very low. The same applies to Roma women, who continue to be disproportionately affected by low levels of educational attainment and social exclusion.

According to the analysis contained in the methodological publication *Romų vaikų ugdymo patirtis Lietuvos bendrojo ugdymo mokyklose* (Educational Experience of Roma Children in Lithuanian General Education Schools) (hereinafter referred to as the Methodological Publication), prepared by the National Agency for Education, children and young people participating in general education programmes account for 21.5% of the Roma population in Lithuania, corresponding to approximately 480–490 children and young people¹⁶.

It should be noted that school absenteeism rates are declining. During the 2021–2022 school year, Roma children who did not attend school accounted for 1.47% of all pupils of Roma ethnicity. The authors of the Methodological Publication note that the situation has improved compared with previous years. Nevertheless, schools continue to face challenges in ensuring regular attendance and continuity of learning. During the public consultation on the Sixth Report, the non-governmental organisation Vilnius City Branch Padėk pritapti pointed out that the conclusions of this publication do not fully reflect the actual situation of Roma children in the education system. Consideration should be given not only to individual and family-related factors, but also to the practices of educational institutions, with greater attention paid to possible manifestations of discrimination within the education system.

The publication also emphasises that educational success is strongly influenced by the family's socio-economic situation, parents' educational attainment, living conditions, and trust in schools and educational institutions.

In Lithuania, opportunities are provided for children belonging to national minorities to participate in both formal and non-formal education. Roma children demonstrate active participation in extracurricular activities and in social activities within school communities. Therefore, the State's key priorities continue to focus on ensuring Roma children's access to

¹⁵ Action Plan for Roma Inclusion 2030, 2025. <https://tmde.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1768374047/10451/D%C4%97I%20rom%C5%B3%20%C4%AFtraukties%20iki%202030%20m.%20veiksm%C5%B3%20plano%20patvirtinimo%20-%20pakeitimo.pdf>

¹⁶ Educational Experience of Roma Children in Lithuanian General Education Schools, Methodological Publication, 2023, <https://www.nsa.smsm.lt/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Romu-vaiku-ugdymo-patirtis.pdf>

education and continuity of learning, facilitating their smooth transition to higher levels of education, promoting their participation in non-formal education activities, and empowering Roma youth.

The 2021–2030 Education Development Programme¹⁷ and the Action Plan for Roma Inclusion 2030 provide for measures to improve the educational attainment of Roma, reduce early school leaving and increase access to education. The main priorities include expanding access to early childhood education, providing support for Roma children attending school, mediation services within Roma communities, empowering Roma children and young people, and strengthening co-operation with municipalities and non-governmental organisations.

Within the DNM project *Vietinės romų platformos – kelias link bendradarbiavimo su savivaldybėmis* (Local Roma Platforms – A Path towards Co-operation with Municipalities) (hereinafter referred to as the Roma Platform), specific activities are implemented to improve educational outcomes, including the inclusion of Roma children and young people, strengthening motivation to learn, youth camps, citizenship education activities, a scholarship programme for school pupils and university students, and work with Roma families in municipalities. During Phase VII of the Roma Platform project (2025–2027), additional emphasis is placed on strengthening the leadership skills and learning motivation of Roma youth.

Housing

In 2025, the OEEO conducted the study *Būsto nuomos rinka: Lietuvoje gyvenančių užsieniečių situacijos analizė* (Housing Rental Market: Analysis of the Situation of Foreign Nationals Residing in Lithuania). The study examined discrimination in the housing rental market on the grounds of ethnicity, origin, religion, language or skin colour. The study aimed to examine the experiences of people who had moved to Lithuania when searching for and renting housing by documenting the experiences of foreign nationals living in Lithuania and identifying mechanisms of discrimination in the housing rental market. The findings of the study contribute to identifying the extent of discrimination and to the development of evidence-based policies.

In the field of housing, the Vilnius City Municipality Roma Inclusion Programme provides for an additional housing rent subsidy for Roma families renting accommodation in the private sector. The programme allocates EUR 483,600 for additional housing rent subsidies, EUR 150,000 for the empowerment of Roma women and girls, and EUR 45,000 for mediation services.

¹⁷ Education Development Programme 2021–2030, [https://smsm.lrv.lt/uploads/smsm/documents/files/Administracine%20informacija/planavimo%20dokumentai/pletros%20programos/%C5%A0PP%20projektas%20\(2020-07-24\).pdf](https://smsm.lrv.lt/uploads/smsm/documents/files/Administracine%20informacija/planavimo%20dokumentai/pletros%20programos/%C5%A0PP%20projektas%20(2020-07-24).pdf)

On 4 June 2025, the Vilnius City Municipal Council approved an additional housing rent subsidy for persons of Roma ethnicity who are entitled to the State housing rent compensation scheme, rent accommodation in the private sector (where the subsidy does not exceed the rent specified in the tenancy agreement and the market rental price), and meet the established eligibility criteria relating to Roma ethnicity or former residence in the Kirtimai Roma settlement. In 2025, 35 families benefited from this measure, receiving a total of EUR 33,921. The compensation is regarded as an effective measure for reducing social exclusion and housing insecurity. A similar compensation scheme is also applied in other municipalities with substantial Roma populations.

Health

A study entitled *Lietuvos romų tautybės asmenų padėtis 2022 m.: kompleksinis požiūris* (The Situation of Persons of Roma Ethnicity in Lithuania in 2022: A Comprehensive Approach), conducted in 2022,¹⁸ found that members of the Roma community continue to face certain difficulties in accessing healthcare services, particularly when registering with healthcare providers through digital channels. However, the extent of these barriers has been decreasing. The study also revealed gender differences, with Roma men seeking medical care less frequently than Roma women.

In order to improve Roma access to healthcare services, the DNM has been implementing the Roma Platform project, under which Roma mediators have been working since 2016 in Vilnius, Panevėžys District, Kybartai, Jonava and Marijampolė. They assist Roma in registering with healthcare providers, accompany patients to healthcare facilities, facilitate communication with healthcare personnel, and contribute to the provision of non-discriminatory healthcare services. In 2024, Vilnius City Municipality established a dedicated health mediator position to address issues related specifically to the health of the Roma community. Training on patients' rights in the field of healthcare is provided for mediators. The DNM also includes topics related to healthy lifestyles and healthcare in its training activities for Roma women.

The Vilnius City Municipality Programme for Roma Inclusion in Society for 2024–2026¹⁹ (hereinafter referred to as the Roma Inclusion Programme) provides for measures relating to addiction treatment, the promotion of mental health, access to psychological support, self-help groups, and the services of addiction counsellors.

¹⁸ *Lietuvos romų tautybės asmenų padėtis 2022 m.: kompleksinis požiūris* (The Situation of Persons of Roma Ethnicity in Lithuania in 2022: A Comprehensive Approach)

¹⁹ <https://www.romuplatforma.lt/media/attachments/2025/05/27/romuprograma-2024-2026.pdf>

Employment

The Action Plan for the Integration of Roma into Lithuanian Society 2022–2023 provided for general measures implemented by the Employment Service under the MSSL, including:

- increasing Roma motivation to enter employment or education; providing career guidance and counselling services to assist in choosing a profession and planning a career, taking into account individual characteristics and labour market needs;
- providing employment services for persons with disabilities to support their entry into and retention in employment;
- implementing active labour market policy measures (ALMPs) to promote Roma employment; and providing psychological counselling services.

Following the expiry of the Action Plan for the Integration of Roma into Lithuanian Society for 2022–2023, measures promoting Roma employment were incorporated into the Action Plan for Roma Inclusion 2030, which provides for continued co-operation with the Employment Service, municipalities and non-governmental organisations with a view to increasing Roma participation in the labour market and improving their employment opportunities. In the field of employment, Lithuania continues to develop measures aimed at empowering Roma, particularly Roma women and girls, with a focus on community work, strengthening social skills and promoting participation in public life.

In 2025, 435 persons of Roma ethnicity were registered with the Employment Service, 75 Roma women obtained permanent employment under open-ended employment contracts, while 13 were employed under fixed-term contracts. Over the past five years, 790 persons of Roma ethnicity have been integrated into the labour market, representing 29.3% of registered clients. As declaration of ethnicity is voluntary, the actual number of persons of Roma ethnicity may have been higher.

As part of the implementation of the Vilnius City Municipality Roma Inclusion Programme for 2024–2026, Vilnius City Municipality implements measures to promote employment. In 2025, eight persons benefited from the measures, while two persons did so in 2026.

In order to promote Roma employment and strengthen the economic independence and social empowerment of Roma women, the RCC organised vocational training in beauty services, including seminars for image consultants and practical beauty courses. In 2024, 20 Roma women and girls participated in the project *Romų bendruomenės moterims ir mergaitėms: pažinimo ir gebėjimų ugdymo programa* (For Roma Community Women and Girls: A Programme for Knowledge and Skills Development). During 2024–2025, 46 Roma women and girls participated in the project *Mes – galinčios ir įgalintos* (We Are Capable and Empowered). This project was organized and curated by the Lithuanian Falconry Union, together with the Vilnius city branch

Padėk pritapti (Help Me Fit In). During the public consultation on the Sixth Report, the organisation also indicated that, over the past five years, it has consistently implemented activities under the Vilnius City Roma Inclusion Programme aimed at empowering Roma women and girls, including employment-related activities, training, camps and rights advocacy. A total of 350 Roma, including 163 women, participated in the European Social Fund project *Dirbkime kartu su romais – naujos darbo galimybės ir iššūkiai* (Working Together with Roma – New Employment Opportunities and Challenges). It is noteworthy that 20% of the project participants subsequently entered employment. Since 2023, ten Roma women have obtained vocational qualifications in the beauty sector. According to data from the Employment Service, 75 Roma women entered employment under open-ended employment contracts in 2025, compared with 13 Roma women employed under fixed-term contracts.

Research findings and practical experience indicate that the most effective Roma inclusion measures include the work of Roma mediators, individual counselling, targeted employment and vocational training measures, access to psychological support, comprehensive social services, and sustained public awareness-raising and anti-discrimination initiatives. The DNM continues to implement these measures through the Roma Platform project funded by the European Commission, in close co-operation with representatives of the Roma community, non-governmental organisations and municipalities.

An important role is also played by the Baltic Region Baltic Roma Women Association, which implements projects promoting the equality of Roma women, reducing discrimination, providing legal counselling and strengthening participation in society. During 2024–2025, the Association organised capacity-building training, counselling for Roma women, and events focusing on reducing discrimination and improving access to public services.

Lithuania continues to carry out periodic studies and monitoring of the situation of the Roma community. The DNM is implementing the project *autinių mažumų būklės stebėsenos tobulinimas* (Improving the Monitoring of the Situation of National Minorities), which aims to develop a long-term methodology and a system of indicators for assessing the situation of national minorities (see Article 5).

Recommendation 6

Support the establishment, for each national minority, of a sustainable structure for cultural activities meeting their needs and providing them with conditions, including long-term funding, for organising cultural activities and collecting, presenting and publishing cultural works of that national minority and persons affiliating with it, including women.

To implement this recommendation, Lithuania applies a multi-level funding system consisting of national-level funding, provided by State authorities, such as the Lithuanian Council for Culture, which administers State budget funds allocated to cultural and artistic projects, scholarships and strategic funding for organisations, and local government funding. For example, between 2022 and 2025, Lithuanian municipalities allocated more than EUR 16 million to finance national minority projects (see Annex 1).

The DNM provides annual competitive funding for cultural, educational, informational and community projects implemented by national minority non-governmental organisations. The project implemented enable national minority organisations to preserve their languages, cultures, traditions and historical memory, and to organise events, festivals, exhibitions, publishing activities, educational initiatives and community-building activities. The DNM's project funding is one of the principal instruments enabling national minority communities to initiate and implement cultural activities that meet their specific needs. Between 2021 and 2025, the DNM allocated more than EUR 2 million to support initiatives promoting the activities of national minority non-governmental organisations (see Annex 6).

DNM exercises the rights and responsibilities of the founder of the Public Institution *House of National Communities* in Vilnius and the Public Institution *Kaunas Centre of Cultures of Various Nations* and, through its participation in their governance, contributes to setting their objectives and priorities and to the implementation of activities aimed at preserving the cultural and ethnic identity of national minorities, promoting intercultural dialogue, cultural education and integration.

In addition to project funding, the DNM also supports the activities of national minority cultural centres. National minority cultural centres provide national minority organisations with permanent facilities for meetings, rehearsals, concerts, exhibitions, commemorative events, educational activities, and events promoting minority languages and cultures. Such institutional support is particularly important for smaller national minority communities that do not have their own premises or sufficient administrative resources to ensure the continuity of their cultural activities independently.

An important role is played by the Public Institution *House of National Communities*. It is one of the main venues for the activities of national minority organisations, where national communities come together to organise cultural events, meetings, concerts, exhibitions, language courses, educational programmes and community activities. The House of National Communities in

Vilnius contributes to the promotion of national minority cultures, intercultural dialogue and co-operation among national communities.

The Public Institution *Kaunas Centre of Cultures of Various Nations* operates in Kaunas, providing opportunities for national communities living in the Kaunas region to engage in cultural, educational and community activities. The Centre organises events showcasing the cultures, histories and traditions of different national communities and promotes co-operation among national communities, educational institutions, cultural organisations and municipal authorities.

The infrastructure supporting the cultural activities of national minorities is further complemented by other cultural centres and institutions whose activities or projects receive funding from the DNM. These include *Romų visuomenės centras* (the Roma Community Centre), *Lietuvos tautinių mažumų folkloro ir etnografijos centras* (the Lithuanian National Minorities Folklore and Ethnography Centre), as well as national minority organisations and cultural centres operating at the regional and local levels, such as *Klaipėdos miesto savivaldybės Tautinių kultūrų centras* (the Klaipėda City Municipality Centre for National Cultures), *Visagino kultūros centras* (Visaginas Cultural Centre) and others. These institutions contribute to preserving the cultural heritage of national minorities and to promoting their folklore, languages, traditions, history and contemporary cultural expression. Funding for projects implemented by national minority cultural and integration centres during the period 2022–2026 is presented in Annex 2.

The cultural activities of national minorities in Lithuania are also supported by institutions under the Ministry of Culture. These institutions receive funding from the State budget but may also apply for funding from the Lithuanian Council for Culture and international funds for the implementation of their projects. Accordingly, their activities are financed through two channels: State budget allocations provided through the regular budget planning process and project-based funding obtained through competitive funding applications.

A number of cultural institutions promoting the culture and heritage of national minorities operate in Lithuania. The Vilnius Jewish Public Library of the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania maintains a collection of fiction by Jewish authors and organises public educational and cultural events presenting Jewish culture and history, the significance of Jewish cultural heritage to the development of the Lithuanian State, and the contribution of Litvaks to the global heritage of science, art, industry and other fields.

The Vilna Gaon Museum of Jewish History conducts research and carries out educational and awareness-raising activities on Jewish life, antisemitism and the Holocaust. At the beginning of 2024, the Museum of Jewish Culture and Identity of Lithuania was opened. It is a branch of the

Vilna Gaon Museum of Jewish History located in the historic building of the former *Tarbut* Jewish Gymnasium. It is the first museum in Lithuania to present Jewish history and culture not only through the tragedy of the Holocaust, but through the full spectrum of Jewish life in Lithuania, including customs, everyday life, art and science.

The Kaunas IX Fort Museum conducts research, organises exhibitions and holds events on Holocaust-related topics. The Museum also contributes to raising awareness of Roma history and culture. In 2023, the interactive educational programme *Romany bacht: romų istorija ir kultūra* (Romany Bacht: Roma History and Culture) was presented to the public. Participants were introduced to the history, customs and traditions of the Roma national minority, while also exploring the tragic events of the past as well as present-day realities and challenges. Between 2023 and 2025, a total of 23 such educational sessions were conducted.

The Old Theatre of Vilnius expanded its activities by staging performances not only in Russian but also in Polish and Ukrainian. This created additional opportunities for national minority languages and cultural expression to be represented in the professional performing arts.

In order to better assess the scope of activities of national minority cultural centres and their importance to local communities, the DNM commissioned a survey of visitors to these cultural centres in 2025.²⁰ The survey makes it possible to assess how many national minority organisations and community members make use of the opportunities provided by the cultural centres, which types of activities are in greatest demand, and what additional measures are needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the cultural activities of national minorities. The survey findings are used to plan DNM measures, assess funding needs and strengthen the role of national minority cultural centres as long-term cultural infrastructure (see also Recommendation 7).

As stated above, Lithuania implements this recommendation through a combination of project-based funding for national minority non-governmental organisations and cultural and integration centres, the contribution of State cultural institutions, and evidence-based monitoring. These measures enable national minorities to organise cultural activities on a continuous basis, present their cultural heritage, involve community members, including women, and enhance the visibility of national minority cultures in Lithuanian society.

Recommendation 7

Intensify their measures to combat stereotypes and prejudice against persons belonging to national minorities and to promote respect and intercultural dialogue throughout society as a whole.

²⁰ https://tmde.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1769509830/10465/Tautiniu_mazumu_tyrimas_20251127.pdf

Drawing on the findings of various studies and analyses, the DNM has drawn attention to the increasing prevalence of hate speech and discrimination directed against persons of a nationality other than Lithuanian.

In 2023, the DNM organised two strategic sessions on information security, non-discrimination, hate speech, disinformation threats and ways to identify them. The first session, entitled *Lietuvos tautinės bendruomenės ir naujoji imigracija: tautinės tapatybės (re)konstravimas* (National Communities in Lithuania and New Immigration: (Re)Constructing National Identity), was held in Vilnius and focused on the opportunities and challenges faced by Lithuania in providing protection to newly arrived immigrants. The discussion brought together representatives of national communities, journalists and members of civil society. The second strategic session took place in the Šalčininkai District Municipality and focused on the integration of the Belarusian community in Lithuania. Representatives of national communities, journalists, public figures and representatives of State authorities shared their views and insights. A total of 60 participants attended the two strategic sessions (for comparison, two strategic sessions with 70 participants were organised in 2022).

On 27–29 August 2025, the DNM initiated and funded the national minority youth training programme *Bendraamžių akademija* (Peer Academy). Approximately 30 pupils from schools in Visaginas, Švenčionys, Švenčionėliai and Vilnius providing education in Lithuanian and national minority languages participated in the programme. The three-day programme focused on non-discrimination, recognising hate speech, active and responsible citizenship, media literacy, and the development of teamwork skills. In addressing manifestations of hate, particular attention was paid to recognising stereotypes, discrimination and hostile narratives in the public sphere and on social media, as well as to the importance of constructive dialogue and respectful communication.

Since 2022, the Lithuanian Police, in co-operation with human rights organisations, has organised specialised training for police officers on recognising hate crimes, communicating with vulnerable groups and protecting victims. Police officers have strengthened their knowledge of hate crimes targeting vulnerable communities, including ethnic and national minorities. In 2023, the DNM organised the seminar *Tautinės mažumos Lietuvoje* (National Minorities in Lithuania) for police officers. The seminar included presentations on national minorities in Lithuania, State policy, issues relating to the definition of national minorities, the international legal framework governing the rights of national minorities, freedom of expression and hate speech. Statistics on persons belonging to national minorities living in Lithuania, based on the results of the 2021 Population and

Housing Census of the Republic of Lithuania, were also presented. The seminar was attended by 20 participants, including 15 police officers.

A total of 140 police officers participated in the online training course *Tarpkultūrinių kompetencijų stiprinimas kovoje su neapykantos nusikaltimais* (Strengthening Intercultural Competences in Combating Hate Crime) organised by the Human Rights Monitoring Institute. The training focused on increasing participants' understanding of communities vulnerable to hate crimes and on applying this knowledge to the identification and investigation of hate crimes.²¹

In 2025, the DNM conducted a survey and analysis of visitors to national minority cultural and integration centres. For the purposes of assessing the implementation of the Framework Convention, the analysis draws on the part of the survey covering citizens of the Republic of Lithuania belonging to national minorities, as only they fall within the definition of a national minority laid down in the LNM. The survey is longitudinal in nature: a comparable analysis was carried out in 2022, enabling the 2025 findings to be used to assess developments over time. The survey of respondents belonging to national minorities revealed an increase in experiences of discrimination. In 2022, 15% of respondents reported having personally experienced discrimination, compared with 30% in 2025. Discrimination most commonly occurred in everyday situations, including in public places, on public transport and in interactions with strangers.

Changing public attitudes and combating antigypsyism remain important priorities. In 2025, a study on public attitudes towards minorities and migrants in Lithuania was initiated by the Department of Ethnic Studies of the Institute of Sociology at the Lithuanian Centre for Social Sciences (LCSS) and the non-governmental organisation Diversity Development Group. The survey was conducted by *Baltijos tyrimai*, a Lithuanian–British market and public opinion research company. The findings showed that Roma continue to be the most stigmatised group in Lithuania: According to the survey, 59% of respondents would not like to have Roma as neighbours, while 46% would not like to work with Roma in the same workplace. The representative survey of the Lithuanian population was conducted between 8 and 24 March 2025 and covered 1,020 residents of Lithuania aged 18 and over.

These findings demonstrate the continuing need to address stereotypes, reduce social distance and the risk of discrimination in a systematic manner, while clearly distinguishing measures aimed at protecting the rights of national minorities from broader measures relating to migration and the integration of foreign nationals. They also confirm the need to continue targeted

²¹Police Officers Strengthened Their Knowledge of Communities Vulnerable to Hate Crimes. Human Rights Monitoring Institute, 2022. <https://hrmi.lt/policijos-pareigunai-gilino-zinias-apie-neapykantos-nusikaltimu-pazeidziamas-bendruomenes/>

awareness-raising, educational, hate speech prevention and intercultural dialogue measures. In response to these trends and with a view to ensuring consistent and targeted public communication, the DNM is implementing the information campaign *Pažink, kad nereikėtų bijoti* (Get to Know, So There Is No Need to Fear),²² which aims to reduce stereotypes, prevent antigypsyism, raise awareness of Roma history and culture, and promote respectful intercultural dialogue. In 2025, the campaign reached 17,779,815 contacts, based on a total population of 2,693,602 residents of Lithuania. Additional visibility for the campaign was provided through JCDecaux advertising billboards displayed in public spaces in major cities. Further details are set out in Annex 3.

Stereotypes and prejudice against certain national minorities remain a matter of concern. In response, Lithuania continues to strengthen measures in the fields of education, civic education and public awareness, while promoting intercultural dialogue and co-operation between national minorities and the majority population, with a view to reducing social distance and strengthening social cohesion.

One of the commitments of the 20th Government of the Republic of Lithuania is to prepare and implement an Action Plan on Combating Xenophobia, Antisemitism and All Forms of Discrimination. In 2026, the Action Plan was approved. It provides for 157 specific measures aimed at strengthening the prevention of hate crimes (including those motivated by ethnic, racial, religious and other forms of hatred) and incitement to hatred, contributing to the well-being of vulnerable groups, and promoting public and cultural education on the diversity of groups living in Lithuania, respect for human rights, historical memory and intercultural dialogue. The Action Plan places particular emphasis on the protection of vulnerable groups, reducing stereotypes and strengthening societal resilience to hate ideologies.

In addition, the Republic of Lithuania follows international standards in the field of combating antisemitism. In their activities, State authorities rely on the working definition of antisemitism and the accompanying recommendations developed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). These recommendations are used in developing measures in the fields of education, remembrance policy and the prevention of discrimination, enhancing public understanding of the various forms of antisemitism and strengthening the capacity to recognise them in contemporary society. Lithuania is committed to ensuring a consistent and systematic approach to combating antisemitism, xenophobia and other forms of hatred and discrimination.

Accordingly, the DNM consistently implements measures aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue, civic education and reducing negative stereotypes (see also Articles 4 and 6).

²² <https://roma.lt/pazink>; <https://www.klaipedatkc.lt/naujienos/pazink-kad-nereiktu-bijoti/>; <https://tmde.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/zinomi-lietuvos-zmones-pasakoja-apie-santykius-su-romais/>

Recommendation 8

Pursue and strengthen their efforts to combat and prevent threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence on ethnic grounds and ensure that alleged cases are promptly and effectively examined and, where appropriate, investigated and prosecuted.

The Republic of Lithuania continues to pursue and strengthen measures aimed at combating discrimination, hostility and violence on ethnic grounds, while ensuring the effective prevention, investigation and prosecution of such acts.

The prohibition of discrimination and the principle of equality are enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the “Constitution”), the Law on Equal Opportunities, the Criminal Code and other legal acts. Criminal liability is imposed for incitement to discriminate against, commit violence against or physically assault a group of persons or an individual belonging to such a group on the grounds of nationality, ethnic origin, language or other protected characteristics. Criminal liability is also provided for hate crimes and acts of hate speech.

In order to strengthen the fight against hate crimes and hate speech, Lithuania continuously improves the practices of law enforcement authorities. Specialised training is provided for police officers, prosecutors and judges on the identification and proper qualification of hate crimes and on working sensitively with victims. In addition, co-operation between public authorities, human rights organisations and national minority communities is being strengthened.

The Lithuanian Police and the Prosecution Service apply measures to ensure a prompt response to alleged cases of discrimination, hostility or violence on ethnic grounds. Upon receipt of a report of a suspected hate crime or an act of hate speech, the information is assessed without delay and, where indications of a criminal offence exist, a pre-trial investigation is initiated. The investigations seek to establish the existence of a discriminatory motive and to ensure effective criminal prosecution.

The consistent application of the principle of non-discrimination continues to be ensured in judicial practice, while the competent authorities actively respond to discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech through both preventive and legal measures.

To combat manifestations of discrimination, a lawyer has been employed under the Roma Platform project since June 2023 to provide 15 hours of legal services to the Roma community each month. This ensures the provision of legal services to the Roma community. Approximately 80% of the recipients of these legal services are women. In 2024, legal proceedings were initiated under

Articles 169 and 284 of the Criminal Code concerning the discrimination of three Roma women in the provision of catering services. The court ruled in favour of the claimant.

Particular attention is also paid to prevention. State authorities implement measures to promote public awareness, tolerance and intercultural dialogue with a view to reducing stereotypes, hate speech and social polarisation. National minority organisations, educational institutions and non-governmental organisations are actively involved in these activities.

By Resolution No. 33 of 21 January 2026, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved the Action Plan on Combating Antisemitism, Xenophobia and Any Other Form of Incitement to Hatred and Fostering Jewish Life (hereinafter referred to as the Plan). The Plan provides that, within its remit, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania is the lead implementing authority and undertakes to:

- prepare and submit to the Government proposals for the designation of an entity responsible for coordinating efforts to combat antisemitism, xenophobia and any other form of incitement to hatred, including the implementation of the Plan;
- having assessed the scale and trends of hate crimes and hate speech offences, analyse the relevant provisions of the Code of Administrative Offences and the Criminal Code, assess their application, effectiveness and the deterrent effect of the sanctions provided for therein, and, where necessary, prepare and submit proposals to the Government for legislative amendments;
- inform vulnerable groups about the available remedies for the protection of their violated rights.

Lithuania is also strengthening the monitoring of hate speech and hate crimes in the digital environment and cooperates with social media platforms and other competent authorities to prevent the dissemination of illegal content.

State authorities will continue their efforts to ensure that all alleged cases of discrimination, hostility or violence on ethnic grounds are investigated effectively, impartially and without undue delay, and that those found guilty are held accountable in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Lithuania. Measures aimed at strengthening public respect for human rights, ethnic diversity and democratic values will also continue to be implemented.

Recommendation 9

Take all necessary measures, including financial and legal, to ensure access to public and private broadcast and digital media as well as print media in minority languages for persons belonging to all national minorities. These measures should also include increased coverage of them in mainstream media and support to them for the creation of their own media.

Lithuania continued to develop financial, legal and institutional measures aimed at meeting the information needs of persons belonging to national minorities and increasing their visibility in the public sphere. Examples of these measures include:

- LRT programmes on issues relating to national minorities. Lithuania's national public broadcaster, LRT, provides information content for national minorities by regularly broadcasting programmes in Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, Belarusian and English, and by producing dedicated discussion and current affairs programmes on the rights, culture, education and integration of national minorities. These include *Santara*, *Laida rusų kalba* (Programme in Russian), *LRT Aktualijų studija* (LRT Current Affairs Studio), and other programmes for national communities available through the LRT *Radioteka* and *Mediateka* platforms.

- Coverage of the Lithuanian National Communities Day, the National Cultures Festival and DNM events in national and regional media.

- The information campaign *Pažink, kad nereikėtų bijoti* (Get to Know, So There Is No Need to Fear), aimed at promoting a better understanding of the Roma national minority, its traditions, culture and history. The campaign was implemented in various cities across Lithuania and contributed to increasing the visibility of national minorities and reducing stereotypes.

- The DNM website and social media channels.

The State finances the national public broadcaster, Lithuanian National Radio and Television (LRT), which provides public information services to all groups of the population of Lithuania, including national minorities. Article 5(9) of the Law on the Lithuanian National Radio and Television provides that LRT shall reflect the cultural diversity of Lithuania's national communities and meet their information needs in its activities. These functions are financed through State budget appropriations allocated to LRT.

LRT ensures access to information for national minorities through various media platforms, including television, radio, its online news portal and social media platforms. Content in national minority languages is produced and disseminated through:

- the national communities sections of the LRT.lt news portal in Polish and Russian;
- radio programmes in Russian and Polish;
- programmes on Ukrainian, Belarusian and Lithuanian Jewish issues broadcast on the LRT KLASIKA channel;
- television programmes in Polish, Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian, as well as programmes on Jewish issues broadcast on the LRT KLASIKA channel;
- social media platforms targeting specific language audiences.

The content of these programmes and publications covers current affairs, politics, culture, history, education and regional life, and includes interviews with representatives of national communities, analytical and investigative articles, issues relating to integration policy, explanations of the activities of State authorities and legal processes, as well as topics concerning the identity, cultural identity and self-expression of national communities.

LRT also systematically seeks to ensure that issues relating to national minorities are not confined to specialised programmes. Articles prepared by the national communities editorial teams are regularly translated into Lithuanian and published in the main news feed of the LRT.lt news portal.²³ As a result, issues relating to national minorities become part of the national information space, thereby increasing their visibility in society. Particular attention is paid to the issues and initiatives of national communities living in the regions.

Lithuania has also continued to strengthen a safe environment for the self-expression of national minorities and their participation in public discourse. In order to ensure long-term and sustainable support for national minority media, the Media Support Fund was established in 2023 pursuant to Article 28 of the Law on the Provision of Information to the Public of the Republic of Lithuania. The Law provides for the State's obligation to support the activities of public information producers with a view to promoting media pluralism and the diversity of opinions and national cultures.

One of the principal objectives of the Fund is to ensure that the diversity of national cultures is reflected in the media. To this end, the Fund supports projects presenting the culture, history, heritage and current affairs of national minorities. The Fund operates a dedicated funding programme supporting the publishing activities of media outlets operating in national minority languages and Lithuanian diaspora media.

Under this programme, funding is provided not only for print media but also for radio programmes, video reports, online portals, digital media projects and other information dissemination platforms. This ensures that persons belonging to national minorities have access to information in a language they understand through a variety of communication channels.

In 2024, the Media Support Fund financed national minority media projects, allocating EUR 171,569. Since 2025, media activities and projects have been funded separately: a total of EUR 59,644 was allocated to media activities and EUR 155,876 to projects. In 2026, EUR 83,208 was allocated to national minority media activities, while support for projects amounted to EUR 120,225²⁴.

²³ <https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/lietuvoje>

²⁴ <https://www.medijufondas.lt/skelbiame-2026-m-projektu-finansavimo-rezultatai#rezultatai>

In addition to the State-funded public broadcaster and the support provided by the Media Support Fund, national minority organisations also publish their own periodicals and operate websites, social media accounts and other communication channels through which they present the activities, cultural heritage and current affairs of their communities.

In order to increase the visibility of national minorities in the public sphere and ensure the dissemination of information about their activities, culture and current affairs, the House of National Communities in Vilnius publishes the periodical *Tautinių bendrijų naujienos* (National Communities News). The periodical has been published since 2001 and is issued four times a year. It publishes information on the activities of national minority organisations in Lithuania, cultural events, historical heritage, educational initiatives and other issues relevant to national communities. The periodical contributes to the preservation of national minority languages, cultures and identities and to the promotion of intercultural dialogue in Lithuania.

Tautinių bendrijų naujienos (National Communities News) and other information publications of national minority organisations are available in electronic format, ensuring their wider dissemination and accessibility throughout Lithuania and abroad.

Public support measures for the information activities of national minorities exist in Lithuania; however, most national minority media initiatives continue to be project-based and depend on periodic funding. Moreover, national minorities are most often covered in the national media in the context of cultural events or commemorative occasions. There therefore remains a need for more consistent and systematic coverage of the contribution of national minorities to the social, cultural and economic life of Lithuania.

The DNM provides annual funding for cultural and information dissemination projects implemented by national minority non-governmental organisations. Funding is provided for publications, websites, and cultural and information projects aimed at presenting the history, culture and current affairs of national minorities and improving access to information within their communities. A list of publishing and information dissemination projects funded by the DNM during the period 2022–2026 is provided in Annex 4.

Lithuania implements this recommendation through a combination of the activities of the State-funded public broadcaster, access to digital and traditional media in national minority languages, financial support for national minority media projects, and measures aimed at increasing the visibility of national minorities in the mainstream national information space.

Recommendation 10

Amend the legislation to allow for the use of all diacritics in the languages of national minorities in the spelling of a person's first name and surname in personal identity and other documents. The authorities should also ensure that the procedures and costs related to changing these names are such that they do not discourage requests for name changes.

On 18 January 2022, the Law on the Spelling of Personal Names and Surnames in Documents of the Republic of Lithuania (No. XIV-903)²⁵ was adopted and entered into force on 1 May 2022. The Law allows citizens of the Republic of Lithuania of non-Lithuanian ethnicity and their children to have their first names and surnames written in Latin-script characters (without diacritical marks) in accordance with the spelling and word-formation rules of their national language.

Between 1 May 2022 and 26 February 2026, a total of 424 citizens of the Republic of Lithuania of non-Lithuanian ethnicity and their children changed the spelling of their first names and surnames in accordance with the spelling and word-formation rules of their national language, using Latin-script characters, including the letters w, x, q, cz, sz, rz and others, but without diacritical marks.

In 2025, draft amendments to the Law on the Spelling of Personal Names and Surnames in Documents were registered in the SRL (Draft No. XVP-158 of 21 February 2025 and Draft No. XVP-540 of 3 June 2025). Among other things, the proposed amendments would allow, at the request of a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania of non-Lithuanian ethnicity, the first names and surnames of that person and their children to be entered in identity documents of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania and civil status records using Latin-based characters.

The State Enterprise Centre of Registers is already implementing the project *E. paslaugų pritaikymas e. rezidentams* (Adaptation of E-services for E-residents), which also includes the introduction of UTF-8 encoding, enabling the processing of data using Latin-based characters with diacritical marks used in other languages.

A State fee is charged for changing first names and surnames through the administrative procedure before the civil registry office. It should be emphasised that all persons wishing to change the spelling of their first names and surnames pay the same State fee of EUR 12 established by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, which is calculated on the basis of the costs of providing the name change service.

²⁵ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/c8890cd07e6e11ec993ff5ca6e8ba60c>

Recommendation 11

Adopt legislation recognising the right to display in a minority language signs, inscriptions and other information of a private nature visible to the public.

In the Republic of Lithuania, the right of persons belonging to national minorities to use their language in private life is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the international human rights obligations of the Republic of Lithuania and the applicable national legal framework.

Article 37 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania provides that citizens belonging to national communities shall have the right to foster their language, culture and customs. This constitutional provision provides the basis for the use of national minority languages and the preservation of their cultural identity.

Lithuanian legislation does not prohibit the use of national minority languages for private signs, inscriptions or other information of a private nature. In practice, national minority languages may be, and are, used in various areas of life, including:

- signs and information notices displayed by private individuals,
- information on cultural, religious and community events,
- the activities of national minority non-governmental organisations,
- the activities of cultural and integration centres of national communities,
- communication between private legal entities and business organisations,
- informational publications, websites and social media content.

The Law on the State Language requires the Lithuanian language, as the State language, to be used in official public information and public signs. However, this legal framework does not preclude the additional use of other languages, including national minority languages, provided that the use of the State language is ensured where required by law. In this way, the Lithuanian legal framework makes it possible to reconcile the constitutional protection of the State language with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to use their mother tongue.

In practice, there are numerous examples in Lithuania of national minority organisations, cultural centres, religious communities and private entities providing information publicly in national minority languages alongside Lithuanian or, where it relates to private activities, exclusively in national minority languages. Information on cultural events, festivals, exhibitions, religious ceremonies, community meetings and publications of national minorities is often made available in several languages, thereby enabling communities to use their languages freely and ensuring access to information.

An important step in strengthening the protection of the linguistic rights of national minorities was the adoption of the LNM. The Law enshrines the right of persons belonging to national minorities to use their own language freely in private and public life, to foster and pass it on to future generations, in accordance with the requirements for the use of the official language laid down in the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania.

Accordingly, the Lithuanian legal framework and established practice enable persons belonging to national minorities to use their languages in publicly visible signs, inscriptions and other information of a private nature. Lithuania seeks to ensure a balance between the constitutional protection of the status of the State language and the right of persons belonging to national minorities to preserve, foster and use their language publicly.

Recommendation 12

Ensure that curricula, teacher training and educational materials in general education provide concrete information about the histories and cultures of all national minorities and extend this information to other areas of the curriculum such as foreign language teaching. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee calls on the authorities to ensure that detailed information about these topics is provided in educational institutions attended by pupils belonging to national minorities and in the mainstream schools of the areas where those national minorities live.

Lithuania continues to consistently strengthen measures relating to multicultural education, human rights education and historical memory policy.

The General Curricula for all levels of education, approved by Order No. V-1269 of 24 August 2022 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania *On the Approval of the General Curricula for Pre-primary, Primary, Basic (Lower Secondary) and Upper Secondary Education*, attach significant importance to the cultural diversity of national minorities, multiculturalism and respect for human rights.

The Citizenship Education Curriculum emphasises the appreciation and preservation of the heritage of different nationalities and religious traditions, examines the impact of discrimination, stereotypes and prejudice on society, and develops pupils' ability to respect persons belonging to different nationalities, religions and social groups. The curriculum also provides for the development of pupils' ability to understand the functioning of society and public institutions, critically assess social processes and participate constructively in community life.

In the Lithuanian Language and Literature Curriculum, citizenship competence is linked to the ability to live and act in a multilingual and multicultural environment. Pupils learn to analyse linguistic phenomena in a multicultural context, compare elements of different languages, engage in

respectful discussion, respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and share opinions and information responsibly. Knowledge of the cultural and linguistic diversity of national minorities is also integrated into the analysis of literary works.

The curricula for Polish, Russian, Belarusian and German as mother tongue and literature emphasise that the cultural and linguistic context is an essential part of the educational process. These curricula aim to preserve the mother tongue and culture while strengthening pupils' integration into the social and cultural life of Lithuania and fostering civic responsibility and respect for shared democratic values.

The history and culture of national minorities are integrated not only into language teaching but also into the curricula for history, citizenship education, ethics, arts education and other subjects. In this way, knowledge of Lithuania's multicultural history and society forms an integral part of general education both in schools for national minorities and in schools where education is provided in Lithuanian.

In the field of teacher education, teacher training programmes include modules designed to develop the competences of future teachers, based on the values of democracy, empathy, human dignity, responsibility, openness, cultural identity, citizenship and intercultural understanding. The development of these competences continues throughout teachers' professional careers through participation in continuing professional development programmes.

The Description of Competences for Teachers and Education Support Specialists, approved by Order No. V-1499 of 27 November 2023 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, further strengthened the provisions relating to inclusive education, cultural diversity and respect for human rights.

At present, five accredited national continuing professional development programmes for teaching staff have been developed for teachers working in schools for national minorities:

- *Įtraukiosios mokyklos kūrimo strategijos* (Strategies for Creating an Inclusive School);
- *Lietuvių kalba ir kultūra dvikalbio ugdymo kontekste* (Lithuanian Language and Culture in the Context of Bilingual Education);
- *Daugiakalbystė ir bendradarbiavimas kalbų mokymo(si) procese* (Multilingualism and Co-operation in the Language Teaching and Learning Process);
- *Ikimokyklinio ir priešmokyklinio ugdymo mokytojų kompetencijų ugdyti įvairiakalbių lietuvių kalbą tobulinimas* (Enhancing the Competences of Pre-primary and Pre-school Teachers to Teach Lithuanian to Multilingual Children);

- *Integruotas kalbinis ir kultūrinis ugdymas pradinėse klasėse* (Integrated Language and Cultural Education in Primary Classes).

Lithuania pays particular attention to integrating the topics of the Holocaust, antisemitism, the Roma genocide and the history of national minorities into education. As a member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) since 2002, Lithuania draws on the recommendations and methodological materials developed by the organisation in the fields of education and remembrance policy.

The Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust, the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, the Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion, and the Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Persecution and Genocide of the Roma during the Nazi Era have been translated into Lithuanian and are available to Lithuanian authorities, teachers and the wider education community.

In 2024, the IHRA adopted the Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Persecution and Genocide of the Roma during the Nazi Era. Dainius Babilas, Director of the DNM and Lithuania's representative in the IHRA, also took an active part in the discussions on these recommendations. The Recommendations emphasise the need to expand knowledge about the Roma genocide, combat the distortion of history, strengthen teacher preparedness, and integrate the history of the Roma into the general education process.

To support the practical implementation of these Recommendations, the DNM organised the first pilot training sessions for Lithuanian history teachers in 2025 on the genocide and persecution of the Roma during the Second World War. The training programme was developed on the basis of the IHRA Recommendations and international good practice. Teachers were introduced to the history of the Roma, the topic of the Roma genocide, teaching methodologies, and ways of integrating these topics into the educational process. This initiative was presented to the IHRA Committee on the Genocide of the Roma as an example of good practice in the implementation of the Recommendations.

In addition, the DNM participates in the implementation of the Action Plan on Combating Antisemitism, Xenophobia and Incitement to Hatred. The plan provides for measures aimed at training history teachers on the Roma genocide, based on the recommendations of the IHRA and other international organisations, as well as raising awareness of the Holocaust, the Roma genocide, antisemitism and human rights.

Lithuania ensures that information on the history and culture of national minorities, the Holocaust, the Roma genocide and human rights is integrated into general education curricula,

teacher education, continuing professional development and educational materials, while strengthening teachers' capacity to address these topics in a professional and systematic manner.

Implementation of the Articles of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Article 1

The protection of national minorities and of the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to those minorities forms an integral part of the international protection of human rights, and as such falls within the scope of international co-operation.

The Republic of Lithuania regards the protection of the rights of national minorities as an integral part of human rights and seeks not only to ensure the inclusion of national minorities but also to create conditions for their active participation in public life and decision-making processes. To this end, coordination in the field of human rights and co-operation with international organisations are being strengthened.

The Republic of Lithuania continued its co-operation with international organisations active in the field of human rights protection: the European Union, the Council of Europe (including ECRI), the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (hereinafter referred to as UNESCO), the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (hereinafter referred to as the OSCE).

State authorities actively participated in the work of international organisations and exchanged good practices and expert knowledge. The integration of international obligations into national legislation and policies was ensured. Since the fifth monitoring cycle, Lithuania has continued to strengthen its human rights protection system.

Between 2021 and 2026, international human rights monitoring bodies, in their assessment of Lithuania, focused primarily on the rights of national minorities, Roma inclusion, the protection of human rights, hate crimes and hate speech, gender equality and other related issues, while continuously assessing the capacity of Lithuanian authorities to implement previous recommendations and ensure the systematic application of international human rights standards.

Since 2022, the Republic of Lithuania has consistently fulfilled its reporting obligations under the ratified United Nations and Council of Europe human rights treaties. During the fifth monitoring cycle, Lithuania submitted or underwent reviews of its reports under the International

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the European Social Charter. These reporting processes covered issues relating to non-discrimination, national and ethnic origin, language, religion, education, social rights, the rights of women and children, the situation of the Roma, migrants and other vulnerable groups.

The DNM is the main body responsible for compiling and providing information on the situation of national minorities in Lithuania to state institutions and international human rights monitoring mechanisms. The DNM prepares reports and contributions thereto pursuant to Lithuania's international obligations in the field of the protection of national minorities, coordinates the collection of information from State authorities and social partners, and participates in the preparation of the positions of the Republic of Lithuania in international organisations. Some of these reports are prepared in co-operation with the MFA, the MSSL and other competent authorities. Reports prepared by the DNM under the Framework Convention, the Opinions of the Advisory Committee on Lithuania, and the Resolutions of the Committee of Ministers are publicly available on the DNM website in order to ensure transparency and public access to information²⁶.

International bodies positively assessed Lithuania's efforts in the fields of combating discrimination, promoting equal opportunities, preserving the cultural identity of national minorities, Roma inclusion and the protection of human rights. At the same time, they issued recommendations concerning the further protection of the rights of national minorities, the prevention of hate speech, the strengthening of Roma inclusion and the protection of vulnerable groups. Some of these recommendations were implemented through the adoption of the Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the LNM), which entered into force on 1 January 2025.

In addition to participating in the implementation of international human rights recommendations, the DNM actively contributed to the dissemination of international standards and recommendations in Lithuania through its co-operation with the OSCE and other international partners.

On 22 February 2022, representatives of the DNM and the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities discussed activities to mark the anniversary of the Ljubljana

²⁶ <https://tmde.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys-1/tarptautinis-bendradarbiavimas/europos-taryba/>

Recommendations. It should be noted that the DNM translated into Lithuanian and published all ten OSCE recommendations and guidelines relating to the rights of national minorities.²⁷

In co-operation with the MFA, the DNM and other competent authorities organised meetings with officials responsible for national minority issues. On 7–8 November 2022, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Kairat Abdrakhmanov, paid an official visit to Lithuania. Following the visit, the High Commissioner commended the Government, the SRL, national, local authorities and civil society for their efforts to promote diversity in Lithuania and to ensure equal opportunities for all persons, irrespective of their origin. During the visit, the High Commissioner visited the DNM, the House of National Communities in Vilnius, the Roma Community Centre, the Polish House in Vilnius, and the Vilnius Francišak Skaryna Gymnasium, where education is provided in Belarusian. In his report following the visit to Lithuania, the High Commissioner positively assessed Lithuania's efforts to ensure equal opportunities irrespective of a person's origin or nationality, as well as its efforts to identify solutions to ensure access to education for children fleeing Russia's war against Ukraine.

In 2024, the OSCE and the DNM organised an expert round-table discussion entitled “Recommendations on Effective Participation of National Minorities in Social and Economic Life – Practical Implications and Good Practices”, bringing together the United States Special Representative for Racial Equity and Justice, the Senior Adviser to the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, a specialist from the Office of the United States Special Representative for Racial Equity and Justice, a representative of the Embassy of the United States, and the Policy Adviser to the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.²⁸ Representatives of the DNM and local authorities also took part in it. The purpose of the discussion was to present the thematic recommendations and guidelines published periodically by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. The recommendations focus primarily on such areas as education, employment, housing, healthcare, digital inclusion, regional development and environmental protection. In each of these areas, particular attention is paid to the challenges faced by women belonging to national minorities of different age groups, as well as by young people.

²⁷ Department of National Minorities under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, [47516 DNM Part 2.pdf \(lr.v.lt\)](#)

²⁸ Vilnius District Municipality, 2024, https://vrsa.lt/gyventojams/naujienos/40/susitikimas-savivaldybeje-rekomendacijos-del-veiksmingo-tautiniu-mazumu-dalyvavimo-socialiniame-ir-ekonominiame-gyvenime:4287?fbclid=IwY2xjawSV8BBleHRuA2FlbQlXMAbicmlkETBZb1Rnd3hOcHNvd1hJcXREc3J0YwZhchBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODIwMDg5MgABHvCpOPoSrQqsbShDB_cjEfY1mAf5dtGpWAdOWxBv9tucDwLNfqiJzj4zEI0K_aem_4-22_Vq_SMEHCO7LJWFvQ

The discussion also covered the lives of different national minorities and national communities in the country's regions, as well as equal opportunities for all citizens to exercise their constitutional rights, irrespective of their ethnic origin or religion.

The experts were interested in the situation of refugees from Ukraine and Belarus, the integration of Roma into society, and the provision of public services to all residents of the regions. The participants were introduced to the preservation of traditions and cultural diversity in the Vilnius District Municipality, as well as the celebration of national holidays.

On 4 December 2025, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Christophe Kamp, visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The discussions addressed Russian propaganda and disinformation based on unfounded allegations of the alleged “persecution of Russian speakers”. Lithuania encouraged the High Commissioner to address the violations committed by Russia in Ukraine and neighbouring countries. The discussion also addressed the issue of strengthening social cohesion across the OSCE area.

Later that year, representatives of the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the DNM met to discuss the situation of national minorities in Lithuania and measures to further strengthen the participation of national minorities in civil society, while reducing social tensions and exclusion.

Representatives of the OSCE also participated in the international conferences “iN: Integration and Inclusion Forum”, organised by the DNM for two consecutive years. In 2025, presentations included a presentation delivered by OSCE representatives entitled *Nuo įtraukties prie dalyvavimo: sėkmingos tautinių mažumų politikos ramstis* (From Inclusion to Participation: A Pillar of Successful National Minority Policy). The presentation emphasised that the protection of national minorities should be regarded as an integral part of the human rights protection system and that, in order to achieve sustainable social cohesion and a democratic society, it is essential to create conditions enabling persons belonging to national minorities to participate actively in public, cultural and political life. It was emphasised that persons belonging to national minorities should not merely be the subjects of public policy but equal partners in decision-making on matters affecting them, and that their participation in civil society is an important means of strengthening social cohesion and preventing conflict. It was further emphasised that an effective national minority policy is based on continuous co-operation between State authorities and national communities, ensuring that communities have the opportunity to participate in the development and implementation of public policies. The presentation highlighted cultural and linguistic diversity as a

source of societal strength and a resource for a democratic State, while also emphasising the importance of international co-operation.

The forums focus on the role of national minorities in integration processes, linguistic and socio-cultural integration, the specific characteristics of Eastern Lithuania, youth participation, challenges in the public sphere, the preservation of historical memory, and hate speech in the context of hybrid threats.

The conference “iN: Integration and Inclusion Forum”, which has become an important platform for international co-operation, brought together more than 30 speakers and around 300 participants, including policymakers, academics, representatives of State authorities, journalists, and representatives of national community organisations from Lithuania and abroad in 2026. The Forum provided an in-depth discussion of issues relating to the rights, participation and integration of national minorities.

Article 2

The provisions of this Framework Convention shall be applied in good faith, in a spirit of understanding and tolerance and in conformity with the principles of good neighbourliness, friendly relations, and co-operation between States.

The Republic of Lithuania consistently adheres to the principles of good neighbourly relations and international co-operation by actively participating in the work of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Union and the OSCE in the fields of human rights and the protection of national minorities. Co-operation with neighbouring States and the kin-States of national minorities was continued in the fields of culture, education, historical heritage and civic dialogue, thereby contributing to stronger mutual understanding, tolerance and friendly relations.

The Republic of Lithuania implemented the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights and followed up on the implementation of recommendations issued by international monitoring bodies. Lithuania focused primarily on strengthening the implementation of its existing international obligations and enhancing its participation in international human rights mechanisms.

During the fifth monitoring cycle, Lithuania became a hub for independent Russian and Belarusian media outlets, civil society organisations, and persons who had fled their countries due to repression. The MFA updated the accreditation mechanism for foreign journalists working in Lithuania and extended the accreditation period, thereby providing a secure legal basis for them to continue their professional activities. The MFA also cooperated with non-governmental organisations seeking to strengthen support for representatives of independent media. The MFA

continues its efforts to counter false narratives disseminated by Russia in international organisations that seek to discredit Lithuania's efforts to protect and promote the rights of national minorities living in Lithuania.

On 21 September 2022, the Minister of Foreign Affairs participated in the high-level side event of the seventy-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly marking the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. The Minister reaffirmed Lithuania's commitment to ensuring the rights of national minorities and expressed deep concern over the dissemination by Russia and Belarus of disinformation regarding the situation of national minority rights in the Baltic States, Poland and Ukraine, aimed at destabilising sovereign States and even justifying military aggression against Ukraine. The Minister called on the international community to remain vigilant in identifying, rejecting and condemning false allegations and to take effective measures to protect the rights of persons belonging to ethnic, national, religious and linguistic minorities, thereby contributing not only to their well-being but also to global stability.

The DNM participated in the work of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (hereinafter referred to as the CDADI): on 26–27 September 2022, representatives of the DNM participated in a meeting of the CDADI working group in Strasbourg, during which a draft recommendation on promoting the active political participation of young people belonging to national minorities was prepared. During the reporting period, Lithuania was represented in the plenary work of the CDADI by representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania.

In 2024, at the 8th plenary meeting of the CDADI, a representative of the MFA presented the implementation of the Committee of Ministers' recommendations and the latest measures and effective practices introduced by Lithuania to combat hate speech.

From 17 May to 13 November 2024, Lithuania held the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and devoted particular attention to cultural diversity and heritage, as well as to combating incitement to hatred. The main initiative of Lithuania's Presidency in this field was *Savaitė be neapykantos kalbos* (The Week without Hate Speech), held in Strasbourg on 17–20 June 2024. Other thematic events were also organised during the Presidency: the Council of Europe Cultural Routes Academy (19–20 June 2024, Vilnius), the High-level Conference on the European Social Charter (3–4 July 2024), and *Kompasas – į pagalbą mokytojui žmogaus teisių švietime* (Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People) (24 October 2024, Vilnius).

Lithuania participates annually in the United Nations Forum on Minority Issues. On 28 November 2025, during the eighteenth session of the Forum, representatives of the MFA delivered a statement on the recognition of the contribution of national minorities to the economic, social, cultural, political and institutional development of societies. Lithuania reaffirmed its commitment to protecting the rights of national minorities, ensuring freedom of religion, and presented national measures to safeguard the cultural and linguistic education of national minorities.

In implementing the provisions of this Article, the Republic of Lithuania is guided by its national legislation and continues to consistently strengthen policies promoting intercultural dialogue and social cohesion. Particular attention was paid to strengthening inter-institutional co-operation and ensuring constructive dialogue with national minority communities, taking into account the recommendations issued during the fifth monitoring cycle.

The Republic of Lithuania consistently adheres to the principles of good neighbourly relations and international co-operation by actively participating in the work of international organisations in the fields of human rights and the protection of national minorities. The DNM further developed inter-institutional and international co-operation by organising expert visits, participating in international meetings, and exchanging good practices with the competent authorities of other States. During the reporting period, representatives of the DNM visited Romania to learn about that country's experience in ensuring the rights of the Tatar and Jewish communities, preserving their cultural and religious heritage, and promoting the participation of these communities in public life. Co-operation with the Baltic States was also strengthened through study visits and expert meetings with representatives of Estonian and Latvian authorities and national minority organisations, during which national minority policy development, models of intercultural dialogue, co-operation with communities, the protection of cultural heritage, and recent legislative initiatives were discussed. Such exchanges contributed to the sharing of good practices, enhanced mutual understanding, and the more effective implementation of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. Initiatives aimed at combating hate speech, discrimination and stereotypes were also continued, including preventive, educational and public awareness-raising activities. For information on the implementation of bilateral and multilateral co-operation agreements and international obligations, see Article 18.

In 2024, the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in the Republic of Poland, in co-operation with the Museum of Polish History and the Lithuanian Institute of History, organised an event marking the 30th anniversary of the Treaty between the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Poland on Friendly Relations and Good Neighbourly Co-operation. In 2026, Mykolas

Romeris University, in co-operation with the DNM, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland and the Institute of Central Europe, organised the international conference *Geriausios Europos patirtys tautinių mažumų apsaugos srityje* (European Best Practices in the Protection of National Minorities).²⁹ The conference emphasised dialogue and the exchange of experience in the field of the protection of the rights of national minorities. In addition, with a view to further strengthening good neighbourly relations with the Republic of Poland, other joint events and expert discussions were organised on the protection of the rights of national minorities, cultural co-operation and the preservation of historical heritage.

Following Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2022, the Republic of Lithuania significantly expanded its co-operation with Ukraine in the fields of culture, education and civic education. Joint projects within the framework of the Lublin Triangle³⁰ were continued, promoting awareness of the common cultural heritage, youth co-operation and intercultural dialogue.

Lithuania also promoted dialogue with the kin-States of national minorities. In 2026, the DNM hosted a meeting with the Ambassador of Armenia, the Honorary Consul of Armenia and representatives of the Armenian community in Lithuania.³¹ The meeting focused on initiatives relating to cultural co-operation and the promotion of Armenian culture in Lithuania. Dialogue also took place between Lithuanian and Armenian cultural institutions on expanding cultural co-operation.

Article 3

1. Every person belonging to a national minority shall have the right freely to choose to be treated or not to be treated as such and no disadvantage shall result from this choice or from the exercise of the rights which are connected to that choice.
2. Persons belonging to national minorities may exercise the rights and enjoy the freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present Framework Convention individually as well as in community with others.

²⁹ Mykolas Romeris University, 2026, <https://www.mruni.eu/news/europos-ekspertai-mru-aptars-tautiniu-mazumu-apsaugos-issukius-ir-sprendimus/>

³⁰ The Ministers of Culture of Lithuania, Ukraine and Poland signed a declaration of intent on trilateral co-operation within the 'Lublin Triangle' framework, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, 2022, <https://lrkm.lrv.lt/lt/news/the-ministers-of-culture-of-lithuania-ukraine-and-poland-have-signed-a-declaration-of-intent-on-trilateral-co-operation-within-the-lublin-triangle-format/>

³¹ Support for Armenia's European aspirations was expressed during a joint visit by representatives from Lithuania and France, Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2026, <https://www.urm.lt/en/news/928/support-for-armenias-european-aspirations-was-expressed-during-a-joint-visit-by-representatives-from-lithuania-and-france%3A45833>

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee

The Republic of Lithuania ensures the right of every person freely to choose their national identity and to decide whether they wish to be treated as a person belonging to a national minority. This right is guaranteed in accordance with the principles of free self-identification with a nationality on the basis of its characteristic features, such as culture, language, traditions and customs, human dignity, equality of persons and the prohibition of discrimination, as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the “Constitution”) and the Law on National Minorities.³²

Article 29 of the Constitution provides that all persons shall be equal before the law, the courts and other State authorities and officials, and that human rights may not be restricted, nor may privileges be granted, on the grounds of nationality, language, origin or any other ground. Article 37 of the Constitution guarantees citizens belonging to national communities the right to foster their language, culture and customs (see Recommendation 11).

Taking into account the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning the principle of voluntary self-identification and the availability of data on national minorities, the Republic of Lithuania continued to develop its system for collecting and publishing statistical data, ensuring that information on nationality is collected solely on the basis of an individual's free self-identification.

With a view to ensuring that persons belonging to national minorities are able to exercise their rights and participate in public life, the State supports the activities of national minority organisations and cultural and integration centres, and provides funding for projects in the fields of culture, education and social integration. National minority organisations are provided with opportunities to participate in decision-making processes through various consultative platforms.

In implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the DNM consistently maintained dialogue with national minority organisations and their representatives. This dialogue was ensured through the activities of the Council of National Communities (CNC) (renamed the Council of National Minorities (CNM) in 2025), public consultations, working groups and meetings with national minority organisations. During the preparation of the Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania, the DNM initiated consultations with national community organisations, experts, representatives of the academic community and the competent authorities, and the proposals received were considered during the legislative process. These measures enabled persons belonging to national minorities and their organisations to participate in decision-making processes

³² Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania, 7 November 2024, No. XIV-3079, [https://tmde.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1731920838/9042/XIV-3079%20\(1\).pdf](https://tmde.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1731920838/9042/XIV-3079%20(1).pdf)

and to express their interests. In addition, the DNM annually administers calls for proposals for projects in the fields of culture, education, youth and integration of national minorities. Throughout the preparation, implementation and evaluation of these calls, the DNM consults on a continuous basis with national minority organisations, cultural centres and communities.

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

Since the fifth monitoring cycle, Lithuania has continued to develop its national minority policy based on the protection of human rights, the principle of non-discrimination and respect for the principle of self-identification.

The Lithuanian legal system consistently upholds the principle of non-discrimination, while the courts and the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson examine alleged cases of discrimination on the grounds of nationality or ethnic origin (see Article 4).

The LNM strengthened the legal framework for the protection of the rights of national minorities and more clearly enshrined the principles governing the protection of national identity. The Law emphasises that national identity is based on an individual's free self-identification and that no adverse consequences may arise from a person's chosen or unchosen national identity.

Following the adoption of the LNM, the mechanism for the participation of national minorities was restructured and re-established on a new legal basis through the Council of National Minorities. This created the institutional conditions enabling persons belonging to national minorities not only to express and preserve their national identity freely, but also to participate collectively in public life and in decision-making processes at the national level. It also created opportunities for communities to express their interests in an organised manner in the fields of culture, education, language use, integration and other areas. This mechanism contributes to the implementation of Article 3(2) of the Convention by ensuring that persons belonging to national minorities are able to exercise the rights set out in the Convention both individually and in community with other members of their community.

The participation of national minorities in public life and decision-making processes was also further strengthened. At the practical level, measures to preserve the cultural and linguistic identity of national minorities were continued, including financial support for non-formal education schools, cultural projects, national minority non-governmental organisations, cultural and integration centres.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

There are more than 200 national minority non-governmental organisations operating in Lithuania, representing various national communities. Each year, the State provides funding for cultural, educational and integration projects of national minorities aimed at strengthening national identity and promoting the participation of communities in public life.

Within the scope of its mandate, the State Data Agency (hereinafter referred to as the SDA) regularly collects, analyses and publishes statistical data necessary to assess the situation of national minorities in Lithuania. Data on the number of permanent residents and their distribution by nationality are published annually, and more detailed information is also made available by municipality and other territorial units. These data are used in the development and evaluation of national minority policy, the preparation of national and international reports, and the monitoring of the implementation of the rights of national minorities. In addition, the SDA continues to develop its system of gender and equality statistics, enabling the assessment of the situation of different groups of society, including persons belonging to national minorities, and contributing to evidence-based public policymaking.

The availability of these data makes it possible to assess the demographic situation of national minorities, their participation in public life, and the impact of equality policies on different groups of the population.

By Resolution No. 150 of 19 March 2025 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania On the Statistical Survey on Equal Opportunities and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (hereinafter referred to as the Resolution), the State Data Agency (SDA) was mandated to conduct the Statistical Survey on Equal Opportunities and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and to produce statistical information in accordance with the List of Topics, Indicators and Dimensions for the Statistical Survey on Equal Opportunities and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men approved by the Resolution (hereinafter referred to as the List), which includes the dimensions of sex, age, administrative territory, place of residence, disability, citizenship, country of birth, educational attainment, nationality and other dimensions. Pursuant to subparagraph 3.2 of the Resolution, all indicators included in the List, broken down by the dimensions specified therein, are to be compiled and published by the SDA on the Official Statistics Portal within the time limits set out in Part I of the Official Statistics Programme, but no later than 1 January 2027.

The indicator database of the Official Statistics Portal has been supplemented with indicators in the fields of population and social protection, disaggregated by nationality and other dimensions.

The population statistics have been supplemented with the following indicators and/or dimensions:

- the number of permanent residents at the beginning of the year, by nationality (where the number of persons of a particular nationality is fewer than 10, they are grouped under “other”), sex and age group at the national level;
- the number of permanent residents at the beginning of the year, by nationality (Lithuanians, Poles, Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, other, not specified), age group, sex and place of residence;
- the number of permanent residents at the beginning of the year, by nationality (Lithuanians, Poles, Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, other, not specified), sex, age group and municipality;
- the number of live births, by the mother's nationality (Lithuanians, Poles, Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, other, not specified);
- the number of marriages, by nationality (Lithuanians, Poles, Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, other, not specified);
- the number of divorces, by nationality (Lithuanians, Poles, Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, other, not specified);
- the number of emigrants, by nationality (Lithuanians, Poles, Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, other, not specified) and sex.

Social protection, education and health statistics have been supplemented with the following indicators and/or dimensions:

- the number of employed young people (aged 14–29), by nationality;
- the number of candidates for the European Parliament, by age and nationality;
- the number of candidates for the SRL, by age and nationality;
- the number of candidates for municipal councils, by age and nationality;
- the number of elected members of municipal councils, by age and nationality.

The number of permanent residents by nationality and municipality as at the beginning of 2025 is provided in Annex 5.

Article 4

1. The Parties undertake to guarantee to persons belonging to national minorities the right of equality before the law and of equal protection of the law. In this respect, any discrimination based on belonging to a national minority shall be prohibited.

2. The Parties undertake to adopt, where necessary, adequate measures in order to promote, in all areas of economic, social, political and cultural life, full and effective equality between persons belonging to a national minority and those belonging to the majority. In this respect, they shall take due account of the specific conditions of the persons belonging to national minorities.

3. The measures adopted in accordance with paragraph 2 shall not be considered to be an act of discrimination.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee

Lithuania continued to strengthen its legal and institutional framework to ensure equality before the law and protection against discrimination for persons belonging to national minorities. One of the most significant measures in the field of national minorities was the adoption of the new LNM. The Law strengthened the legal recognition of national minorities and established the State's responsibility for the protection of their rights. The LNM establishes the State's obligations to create conditions for preserving the identity, culture and language of national minorities and to ensure the protection of their rights. The LNM also provides that the terms used therein shall be understood as defined in the Law on Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Lithuania and other legal acts governing the protection of human rights (see Recommendation 2).

The OEEO plays a central role in promoting equal opportunities and preventing discrimination. Pursuant to Article 17 of the Law on Equal Opportunities of the Republic of Lithuania, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, acting in accordance with the principles of legality, impartiality and justice, in the manner prescribed by the Law, examines complaints concerning discrimination, conducts investigations on his or her own initiative, provides consultations in response to inquiries, carries out independent reviews of the situation regarding discrimination, submits recommendations to State and municipal authorities and institutions on improving legislation and on priorities for the implementation of equal rights policies, carries out preventive and educational activities, and promotes equal opportunities. The OEEO also provides consultations to individuals on cases of discrimination and conducts public awareness campaigns.

In carrying out its functions as the National Human Rights Institution, the Parliamentary Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania monitors the human rights situation in Lithuania and prepares annual human rights monitoring reports. These reports address issues relating to the prevention of discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes, the rights of migrants and asylum seekers, social exclusion, and the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups, including national minorities.

The Action Plan for Combating Antisemitism, Xenophobia or Any Other Form of Incitement to Hatred and for Fostering Jewish Life, adopted in 2026 and also relevant to the protection of persons belonging to national minorities from discrimination and manifestations of hatred, provides for 157 measures in the areas of education, law enforcement, culture, remembrance policy, data collection, and combating antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of hatred. These measures are aimed at strengthening efforts to combat hate speech, hate crime, discrimination and stereotypes, raising public awareness, and promoting respect for human rights and cultural diversity (see Recommendation 8).

Lithuania strengthened the capacity of its institutions to prevent hate crimes and ensure effective protection for victims. The Training Against Hate Crime for Law Enforcement (TAHCLE) programme of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) continues to be used in the training of police officers to improve the identification, recording and investigation of hate crimes. The project *Atsako į neapykantos nusikaltimus ir neapykantą kurstančias kalbas Lietuvoje stiprinimas* (Strengthening the Response to Hate Crimes and Hate Speech in Lithuania) was also implemented to enhance co-operation between law enforcement authorities and civil society. In 2023, the Prosecutor General's Office, in co-operation with the OSCE ODIHR, prepared methodological guidelines for the investigation of hate crimes and hate speech. These measures contributed to a more effective response to criminal offences motivated by hatred based on race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or other protected characteristics.

In 2024, the MSSL launched the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Coordinators model in five municipalities (the municipalities of Panevėžys City, Klaipėda District, Ukmergė District, Jonava District and Molėtai District). These coordinators are responsible for coordinating the implementation of policies on equal opportunities, non-discrimination and protection against violence at the local level.

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

Since the fifth monitoring cycle, the Republic of Lithuania has continued to develop a strategic framework in which the equality and inclusion of persons belonging to national minorities are integrated into the overall national development policy, while placing an even stronger emphasis on the protection of national minorities and the prevention of discrimination.

An important policy development was the continued implementation of the National Progress Plan 2021–2030. The plan establishes the horizontal principle of equal opportunities for all, which applies across all areas of public policy and strategic planning. The plan provides for the

creation of conditions enabling all residents to participate in public life, reducing social exclusion, strengthening inclusion and ensuring equal opportunities for all. The plan establishes the principle of equal opportunities for all as one of the horizontal principles applicable across all areas of public policy. The objectives set out in the plan relating to the promotion of social inclusion, improved access to education, increased participation in cultural life, and the strengthening of national and civic identity provide the strategic basis for measures aimed at reducing social exclusion and promoting equality among different groups of society, including persons belonging to national minorities.

Lithuania continues to implement systematic measures to prevent discrimination, ensure equal opportunities and provide effective protection against discrimination for persons belonging to national minorities. To this end, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour coordinates the implementation of the systemic measures set out in the Action Plan for the Implementation of Equal Opportunities for 2024–2026, approved by the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania in 2023. These measures are aimed at strengthening the implementation of the principle of non-discrimination, raising public awareness of discrimination on various grounds, including nationality, language, origin and ethnic origin, strengthening institutional capacities, and promoting the implementation of equal opportunities policies at both the national and municipal levels. The purpose of the plan is to foster respect for human dignity, reduce discrimination, and strengthen the promotion of equal opportunities across various areas of public life. The plan also emphasises inter-institutional co-operation and the role of municipalities in promoting equality and social inclusion.

Targeted measures to improve the situation of national minorities, in particular the Roma community, are implemented under the Action Plan for Roma Inclusion 2030, coordinated by the DNM (hereinafter referred to as the Roma Inclusion Plan). The objective of the Roma Inclusion Plan is to promote equality, social inclusion and the active participation of Roma. The Roma Inclusion Plan sets out objectives relating to combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma, reducing poverty, increasing employment, promoting participation in the education system, improving health literacy, enhancing access to housing, strengthening the participation and empowerment of Roma, supporting Roma culture, and promoting intercultural dialogue. The outcome indicators of the Roma Inclusion Plan are based on the sociological study *Situation of Roma People in 2020*, conducted by Dr Vita Kontvainė, and the socio-demographic analysis of the Roma population in Lithuania for the period 2001–2021, *Lietuvos romai* (Roma in Lithuania), prepared by Dr Daumantas Stumbrys.

Although challenges remain in combating discrimination against Roma in Lithuania, the Roma Inclusion Plan is characterised by a broader and more systematic approach than previous strategic documents.

Legal assistance provided through the activities of the Roma Platform has become an important practical instrument for preventing discrimination and protecting rights. Members of the Roma community are regularly provided with legal advice on discrimination, social rights, employment, housing and other issues. These activities contribute to improving access to justice and increasing confidence in legal remedies.

The practical impact of these measures is illustrated by a court judgment delivered in 2024 in a case concerning discrimination on the grounds of nationality. The court found that a catering establishment in Jonava had unjustifiably refused to serve Roma women and concluded that discrimination had occurred. This case constitutes a significant example demonstrating that cases of discrimination are identified, victims make use of available legal remedies, and State authorities ensure the effective right to protection against discrimination.

Active participation in international initiatives relating to Roma inclusion and protection against discrimination has also continued, including participation in the work of the Council of Europe Ad hoc Committee on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM). The discussions have focused in particular on hate speech, discrimination and segregation, as well as on strengthening long-term policy measures.

In 2025, the OEEO and the DNM discussed plans to make data on equality by nationality publicly available. The meeting also addressed the situation of national minorities, the prevention of discrimination, and the strengthening of co-operation with non-governmental organisations in the field of human rights following the entry into force of the new LNM. In addition, considerable attention was devoted to the need to raise awareness of the identification of discrimination, to improve opportunities for reporting discrimination to the competent authorities, and to promote the greater inclusion of national minorities, particularly newly arrived persons. Plans to organise training for Roma mediators and to strengthen co-operation in the implementation of the Roma Inclusion Plan 2030 were also discussed.

During the reporting period, greater attention was paid to the potential of national community organisations in integration policy. National community organisations can act as intermediaries between State and municipal authorities and communities by helping to identify more effectively the needs of persons belonging to national minorities, disseminate information,

strengthen trust in public institutions, and promote the participation of communities in decision-making processes.

Accordingly, during the reporting period, practical and institutional conditions were established and further strengthened to enable national community organisations to play a more active role in integration policy, to serve as platforms for community representation and mediation, and to contribute to the implementation of measures promoting equality, non-discrimination and social inclusion.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

Statistics from the OEEO show a consistent number of complaints concerning alleged discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality, language, origin, ethnic origin and citizenship:

- in 2021, 29 complaints were received, 91 written inquiries were submitted, 6 inquiries were received through the Office's Facebook account, and 25 consultations were provided by telephone;
- in 2022, 30 complaints concerning alleged discrimination on these grounds were received;
- in 2023, 32 complaints were received;
- in 2024, 29 complaints were received, 5 investigations were initiated on the OEEO's own initiative or following the receipt of information, 213 written inquiries were submitted, and 46 consultations were provided by telephone and 2 in person;
- in 2025, 59 complaints concerning alleged discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality, language, origin, ethnic origin and/or citizenship were received.

The OEEO conducted investigations into alleged cases of discrimination: in 2024, 95 investigations were conducted, of which 5 were initiated by the Ombudsperson on her own initiative; in 2025, 93 investigations were conducted, of which 12 were initiated by the Ombudsperson on her own initiative.³³ In 2025, the OEEO adopted 410 decisions, of which 50 found violations of the Law on Equal Opportunities.³⁴ These data indicate that the mechanism for preventing and monitoring discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality, language, origin and ethnic origin is functioning effectively in Lithuania.

³³ Annual Report for 2024 of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson of the Republic of Lithuania, <https://lygybe.lt/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/lygiu-galimybiu-kontrolieriaus-2024-m.-veiklos-ataskaita.pdf>

³⁴ Annual Report for 2025 of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson of the Republic of Lithuania, <https://lygybe.lt/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/2025-m.-lygiu-galimybiu-kontrolieriaus-veiklos-ataskaita.pdf>

The increasing number of complaints may be regarded as an indication of growing public awareness of how to recognise discrimination and of increasing confidence in the mechanisms for the protection of equal opportunities.

The 2024 implementation report on the Action Plan for the Implementation of Equal Opportunities for 2024–2026³⁵ notes that the majority of the measures implemented were educational and training-related in nature. These measures focused on raising public awareness, strengthening the capacities of professionals, preventing manifestations of hatred, and improving inter-institutional co-operation. In this way, they sought to strengthen society's resilience to discrimination and to promote respect for human rights and cultural diversity.

The MoI publicly publishes annual reports on hate crimes and hate speech on its website.³⁶ According to [the Report on the Situation of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech in Lithuania in 2025](#), the following offences were recorded:

- 106 criminal offences under Article 170 of the Criminal Code (Incitement against Any National, Racial, Ethnic, Religious or Other Group of Persons) (66 in 2024);
- one case of minor bodily harm, allegedly motivated by hatred;
- one attempted murder, allegedly motivated by hatred;
- 27 other criminal offences allegedly committed with the intent to express hatred.

Surveys of public attitudes indicate that, although Lithuania has consistently strengthened measures to combat discrimination, some persons belonging to national minorities continue to experience discrimination and social exclusion. In 2025, 30% of respondents belonging to national minorities reported having personally experienced discrimination on the grounds of nationality (15% in 2022). Moreover, 84% of those who had experienced discrimination stated that it had occurred in everyday situations in public life (53% in 2022), while 20% of respondents indicated that members of their family or friends had experienced discrimination. In addition, 62% of respondents belonging to national minorities considered the growing prevalence of negative public attitudes towards national minorities to be one of the most significant challenges for the future.

A 2025 study conducted by the Institute of Sociology found that Roma remain the most stigmatised group in Lithuania: According to the survey, 59% of respondents would not like to have Roma as neighbours, while 46% would not like to work with Roma in the same workplace. Many studies emphasise that the media and publicly available information have a significant influence on the formation of public attitudes.

³⁵ Action Plan for the Implementation of Equal Opportunities 2024–2026. 2024 Implementation Report, <https://socmin.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1740465102/4390/ataskaita%202024.pdf>

³⁶ Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, <https://vrm.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys/viesasis-saugumas-1/atsakas-i-neapykantos-nusikaltimus-ir-neapykanta-kurstancias-kalbas>

At the same time, the dynamics of these indicators show that, despite the anti-discrimination and public awareness measures being implemented, reducing experiences of discrimination and negative societal attitudes remains an important priority for the further implementation of relevant policies.

In response to these trends and with a view to ensuring consistent and targeted public communication, which is essential for reducing stereotypes and discrimination, raising public awareness, strengthening intercultural dialogue, and promoting knowledge of Roma history and culture, the DNM is implementing the public awareness campaign *Pažink, kad nereikėtų bijoti* (Get to Know, So There Is No Need to Fear) (see Recommendations 5, 7 and 8).

In 2023, the DNM organised two strategic sessions on information security, non-discrimination, hate speech, disinformation threats and their identification. A strategic session entitled *Lietuvos tautinės bendruomenės ir naujoji imigracija: tautinės tapatybės (re)konstravimas* (National Communities in Lithuania and New Immigration: (Re)Constructing National Identity) was also held, during which participants discussed the opportunities and challenges faced by Lithuania in providing protection to newly arriving immigrants. The discussion brought together representatives of national communities, journalists and members of civil society. A second strategic session, entitled *Lietuvos tautinės bendruomenės ir naujoji imigracija: tautinės tapatybės (re)konstravimas* (National Communities in Lithuania and New Immigration: (Re)Constructing National Identity), was organised in the Šalčininkai District Municipality. It focused on issues relating to the integration of the Belarusian community in Lithuania. Representatives of national communities, journalists, public figures and representatives of State authorities shared their views and insights. The sessions were attended by 60 participants (70 participants in 2022).

As part of its efforts to strengthen the resilience of national minorities to information threats, promote knowledge about national minorities and improve public awareness, the DNM organised two strategic sessions in 2024 on information security, non-discrimination, hate speech, disinformation threats and their identification. The strategic session *Manipuliacijos istoriniais naratyvais geopolitinių iššūkių kontekste* (Manipulation of Historical Narratives in the Context of Geopolitical Challenges) was attended by representatives of educational institutions and the academic community. The event included discussions on ways to prevent the escalation of conflicts and the dissemination of distorted historical narratives. The strategic session *Integracija kintančios tikrovės sąlygomis* (Integration in the Context of a Changing Reality) was attended by representatives of national communities, State authorities and the academic community. The following presentations were delivered: *Lietuvos visuomenės nuostatos etninių, religinių, migrantų*

ir kitų socialinių grupių atžvilgiu (Public Attitudes in Lithuania towards Ethnic, Religious, Migrant and Other Social Groups), *autinės mažumos, migrantai, pabėgėliai: senos ir naujos įtamos Lietuvoje po 2024 m. Rusijos agresijos prieš Ukrainą* (National Minorities, Migrants and Refugees: Old and New Tensions in Lithuania Following Russia's Aggression against Ukraine), and *Karas Ukrainoje ir daugiakultūrės visuomenės adaptacija: veiklos gairės* (The War in Ukraine and the Adaptation of a Multicultural Society: Guidelines for Action).

The measures implemented strengthened the preventive approach to addressing the challenges posed by discrimination, hate speech and disinformation, while contributing to the promotion of intercultural dialogue and social cohesion. They contributed to a better understanding of the situation of national minorities, migrants and other groups in society, promoted the critical assessment of information, and strengthened the capacity of various stakeholders to respond jointly to evolving social and geopolitical challenges.

Article 5

1. The Parties undertake to promote the conditions necessary for persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture, and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely their religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.
2. Without prejudice to measures taken in pursuance of their general integration policy, the Parties shall refrain from policies or practices aimed at assimilation of persons belonging to national minorities against their will and shall protect these persons from any action aimed at such assimilation.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

Lithuania creates the conditions necessary for persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely their language, religion, traditions and cultural heritage. In implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, funding for the culture of national minorities was maintained and, in certain cases, increased, while the activities of cultural centres and the protection of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage were further strengthened. In pursuing its integration policy, Lithuania seeks to create conditions enabling persons belonging to national minorities to preserve their national identity while actively participating in public life.

The LNM strengthened the legal recognition of national minorities and established the State's obligation to create conditions enabling them to preserve and develop their national identity, language, culture, traditions and heritage.

The continuity of the cultural activities of national minorities is ensured through the State funding system. Calls for proposals for cultural projects are organised annually, under which partial funding is provided from the State budget. Between 2021 and 2026, more than 900 projects received funding. Support is provided for the activities of national minority non-governmental organisations across different regions of Lithuania, projects promoting the socio-cultural integration of Roma, initiatives fostering civic engagement and intercultural dialogue in Eastern Lithuania, non-formal education for children and young people, and projects aimed at strengthening cultural identity and media and information literacy. Projects in the fields of culture, civic engagement, remembrance, intercultural co-operation and the activities of integration centres also receive funding. Information on the funding of cultural projects of national minorities for the period 2021–2026 is provided in Annex 6.

Additional opportunities to preserve and promote the culture of national minorities are provided through the general cultural funding system. The Lithuanian Council for Culture provides funding for cultural projects, including projects promoting the culture of national minorities, such as festivals, exhibitions, publishing initiatives, performing arts, educational activities, remembrance initiatives and intercultural dialogue. This measure is important because the culture of national minorities is not isolated from the State's overall cultural policy. It may receive support not only through dedicated national minority policy measures but also through the general national cultural funding system.

Article 5 of the Framework Convention is implemented not only at the national but also at the local level. Lithuanian municipalities allocate funding for the preservation of the historical, architectural and cultural heritage of national minorities. Funding is also provided to cultural centres and national minority organisations organising festivals, concerts and exhibitions. Information on municipal funding in the field of national minorities is provided in Annex 1.

The practical infrastructure supporting the cultural activities of national minorities is ensured by cultural and integration centres. These institutions provide conditions for the activities of national minority organisations, the promotion of culture, the transmission of traditions, promotion of identity, community self-expression and intercultural dialogue.

In 2022, the DNM organised an analysis³⁷ of the needs of the audiences of cultural centres to assess the needs of visitors to national minority culture and integration centres, the state of media and information literacy, and the need to strengthen integration-related competences. For the purposes of the implementation of the Framework Convention, the findings of this study are relevant insofar as they relate to citizens of the Republic of Lithuania belonging to national minorities and their opportunities to participate in cultural, public and community life.

The study found that cultural centres constitute an important practical public service venue, enabling citizens of the Republic of Lithuania belonging to national minorities to preserve their identity, participate in community life, access information, and engage in integration and intercultural dialogue initiatives. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended to strengthen activities aimed at combating discrimination and protecting human rights, expand media and information literacy and integration-related competences, involve young people more actively through project-based and international activities, improve the dissemination of information in the digital environment, strengthen methodological support for national minority non-governmental organisations, and promote non-formal education for children and adults.

Between 2022 and 2024, the DNM consistently strengthened the capacities of staff of national minority culture and integration centres and of community leaders. The training courses and seminars organised covered the rights of national minorities, the preservation of culture and intangible cultural heritage, intercultural dialogue, media and information literacy, and reducing tensions in a multicultural society. The training took place in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda and Visaginas and was attended by staff of cultural centres, representatives of national communities and community leaders. The objective of the training was to strengthen capacities to preserve cultural diversity, promote community inclusion, and contribute to intercultural understanding.

An important aspect of the implementation of Article 5 of the Framework Convention is the preservation of the intangible cultural heritage of national minorities – an essential element of their identity, including their language, traditions and customs. The Inventory of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Lithuania includes the gastronomic tradition of the Lithuanian Tatars, the tradition of the Tatar wedding cake *čakčakas*, the Lithuanian Karaim wedding tradition, the *Sabantuy* spring festival marking the completion of spring agricultural work celebrated by the Tatars of Visaginas, the tradition of making Vilnius Easter palms in the Vilnius region, and the tradition of the use of the Yiddish dialect of Lithuanian Jews (Litvaks) in Lithuania. The latter is

³⁷ Analysis of the Needs of Lithuanian Cultural Centres for National Minorities and Guidelines for Their Activities, https://tmde.lrv.lt/uploads/tmde/documents/files/DNM_Centrai_2022_ataskaita.pdf

described in the Inventory as a tradition reflecting the continuity of the linguistic and cultural identity of Litvaks in Lithuania.

In 2025, the Inventory was also supplemented with examples of good practices in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage: the *Mārțișor* spring celebration of the Lithuanian Moldovan and Romanian communities and the Roma cultural festival *Gypsy Fest*. The *Gypsy Fest* festival includes public performances, concerts, creative workshops, presentations of culinary heritage and traditional textiles, as well as the Romavision young talent competition.

With a view to strengthening the involvement of national minorities in safeguarding cultural heritage by promoting the identification of traditions significant to their communities and activities aimed at their preservation, the Lithuanian National Centre for Culture³⁸ organises training courses and provides consultations for representatives of national communities on the identification, documentation and nomination of elements of intangible cultural heritage.

The State also creates the conditions necessary to preserve religious identity as an important element of the cultural identity of national minorities. The Constitution, the Law on Religious Communities and Associations of the Republic of Lithuania and other legal acts guarantee freedom of religion, the right freely to profess one's religion, perform religious rites, preserve religious traditions, and establish and operate religious communities and associations. The Republic of Lithuania recognises nine traditional religious communities and associations: Latin Rite Catholics, Greek Rite Catholics, Evangelical Lutherans, Evangelical Reformed Christians, Orthodox Christians (Eastern Orthodox), Old Believers, Jews, Sunni Muslims and Karaites. At least eight of these communities have a clear historical connection with the religious, cultural and community identity of national minorities, including the religious life of the Ukrainian, Belarusian, Russian, Russian Old Believer, Jewish, Tatar, Karaite, German, Latvian and other communities.

At the practical level, the State creates the conditions necessary for places of worship, religious organisations and cultural institutions of various religious communities to operate. Annual allocations from the State budget to support the activities of traditional religious communities and associations contribute to the preservation of religious traditions, sacred heritage, community ties and cultural memory. Such measures are particularly important for the Polish Catholic, Ukrainian Greek Catholic, Russian Old Believer, Orthodox Christian, Jewish, Karaite, Tatar Sunni Muslim, Evangelical Lutheran and Evangelical Reformed communities, whose religious traditions are inseparable from their national, linguistic and cultural identity.

Accordingly, the legal guarantees of freedom of religion, the recognition of traditional religious communities and associations, and practical State support create the conditions necessary

³⁸ Lithuanian National Centre for Culture, <https://www.lnkc.lt/>

for the religious life of persons belonging to national minorities, the continuity of their cultural identity, and the self-governance of their communities.

An important aspect of the implementation of this Article is the protection of the religious and cultural heritage of national minorities through the provision of financial support for the conservation and preservation of sites of particular significance. The sites receiving funding include the Alanta Synagogue, the Čekiškė Synagogue building, the Kurkliai Synagogue, the Švėkšna Synagogue, the Marijampolė Synagogue, the synagogues of Vilnius and Kaunas, the Vilnius Kenesa, the Kaunas Mosque, the Church of the Holy Trinity of the Old Believers in Daniliškės, the Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity in Švenčionys, the Vilnius Basilian Monastery Complex, and the Mausoleum of the Vilna Gaon.

Religious festivals, traditional commemorations and cultural events provide opportunities for national minorities to pass on their religious and cultural traditions to younger generations and to strengthen their community identity.

In this way, Lithuania seeks to ensure that persons belonging to national minorities are able freely to preserve and practise their religion as one of the essential elements of their identity, thereby contributing to Lithuania's cultural diversity and social cohesion (see Articles 7 and 8).

In addition to implementing legal and administrative measures, Lithuania has also demonstrated, through State initiatives, its commitment to recognising the historical and cultural contribution of national minorities to the development of the Lithuanian State and to raising public awareness thereof.

With a view to strengthening respect for Lithuania's cultural diversity, the historical heritage of national minorities, and their contribution to the development of the Lithuanian State, its culture and society, the SRL designated several commemorative years of significance to national minorities during the reporting period. The year 2022 was designated the Year of the Lithuanian Karaites and the Year of Francysk Skaryna, thereby recognising the history of the Karaite community in Lithuania and the literary and printing traditions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The year 2023 was designated the Year of Saint Josaphat, marking the 400th anniversary of the martyrdom of Saint Josaphat Kuntsevych and highlighting his significance for the religious and cultural history of Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus and the wider region. In the same year, the Seimas devoted particular attention to commemorating the 80th anniversary of the liquidation of the Vilna Ghetto. The year 2026 was designated the Year of the National Communities of Lithuania, with the aim of highlighting the role of national communities in the history, culture and contemporary life of Lithuanian society.

In 2022, as part of the commemoration of the Year of the Lithuanian Karaites, numerous exhibitions were organised, and information publications, catalogues, bibliographies and educational publications on the history and culture of the Lithuanian Karaites were prepared. One example is the book exhibition organised by the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, accompanied by information materials dedicated to the 625th anniversary of Karaite history in Lithuania.

In 2023, the DNM organised and implemented activities to commemorate the Year of Saint Josaphat, aimed at promoting the shared historical and cultural heritage of Lithuania and Ukraine. Public discussions were organised, including *Šv. Juozapato gyvenimas ir veikla, bendras Lietuvos ir Ukrainos paveldas bei jo reikšmė Europos kultūrai* (The Life and Work of Saint Josaphat, the Shared Heritage of Lithuania and Ukraine, and Its Significance for European Culture”) A series of educational lectures was held in the regions to present the history of Saint Josaphat and the activities of the Basilian Order in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. A commemorative logo for the Year was created, and the monograph *Juozapas Kuncevičius (1580–1623). Šventasis iš mūsų ir mums* (Josaphat Kuntsevych (1580–1623): A Saint from Among Us and for Us) was published in Lithuanian. These activities contributed to raising public awareness of the shared cultural heritage of Lithuania and Ukraine and to strengthening knowledge of the historical and religious heritage of national minorities.

Following the designation by the SRL of 2026 as the Year of the National Communities of Lithuania, cultural, educational, academic and public events were organised throughout the country to promote the culture, traditions and historical heritage of national communities and to strengthen intercultural dialogue. One of the key events of the Year was the celebration of the Day of the National Communities of Lithuania, held in Vilnius on 21 May, during which the DNM presented its *Už nuopelnus* (For Merits) awards to individuals and organisations that had made a significant contribution to promoting the culture of national communities, preserving their national identity and strengthening intercultural dialogue. The programme of the year of the national communities of Lithuania also included events held at the SRL, the International Festival of National Cultures in Klaipėda, the *iN Integration and Inclusion Forums*, and numerous regional initiatives organised by national communities. These events contributed to preserving the cultural identity of national minorities, promoting their cultural heritage, and raising public awareness of Lithuania's cultural diversity.

These decisions of the SRL created the conditions for the implementation of nationwide cultural, educational and academic initiatives aimed at promoting knowledge and awareness of Lithuania's historical national minorities and Lithuania's multicultural heritage.

Publishing activities also contributed to promoting the culture and heritage of national minorities. The periodical *Tautinių bendrijų naujienos* (National Communities News) is published annually, alongside periodicals issued by national community organisations. Tatar organisations continue to publish the periodical *Lietuvos totoriai* (Lithuanian Tatars)³⁹ which contains information on the history, culture, religious traditions, community activities and events of the Lithuanian Tatars. Following success in the DNM cultural project competitions and the receipt of funding, periodicals, newsletters, fiction and other publications (from the Polish, Russian, Jewish, Tatar, Karaite, Ukrainian and other communities).

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

The most significant change was the introduction, for the first time, of CNM status in the new LNM. As a permanent consultative mechanism, the CNM ensures the participation of national minorities in addressing issues relating to culture, education, language, heritage and other matters of importance to their communities. This mechanism has strengthened the ability of national minorities to participate in shaping State policy concerning the preservation of their identity.

Another significant development was the launch of the project on improving the monitoring of the situation of national minorities⁴⁰, for which EUR 130,000 was allocated for the period 2025–2026. The project aims to establish a permanent monitoring system and indicators to assess the impact of policies relating to the preservation of the identity of national minorities, cultural participation, language use, integration and non-discrimination. In 2026, the first survey on the situation of national minorities will be carried out and is planned to be repeated every two years. The development of the long-term methodology for assessing the situation of national minorities also seeks to assess the adequacy of the indicators and the possibilities for better reflecting the needs of persons belonging to national minorities across different areas, in compliance with personal data protection requirements and other applicable legislation.

³⁹ *Lietuvos totoriai* (The Tatars of Lithuania), Publications of national Communities, Department of National Minorities under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, <https://tmde.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys-1/leidiniai-ir-publikacijos/tautiniu-bendruomeniu-leidiniai/lietuvos-totoriai/>

⁴⁰ Methodology for Monitoring the Situation of National Minorities, Department of National Minorities under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, 2025, <https://tmde.lrv.lt/lt/teisine-informacija/tyrimai-ir-analizes/tautiniu-mazumu-bukles-stebesenos-metodika/>

Lithuania's policy in the field of national minorities is based on the principles of equal opportunities and participation. The State and municipalities provide funding for schools implementing education programmes in national minority languages, and also support non-formal education, non-governmental organisations, media in national minority languages, as well as cultural and integration centres. These measures create conditions for persons belonging to national minorities to preserve and develop their languages, cultures and traditions, and to safeguard and promote their cultural heritage.

During the 2025–2026 school year, non-formal education schools of national minorities operated in Lithuania, where children and young people learned their mother tongue, history, culture, folklore, music and traditions. More than 300 children and young people attended non-formal education schools of the Armenian, Azerbaijani, Belarusian, Estonian, Greek and Karaite communities alone. The largest was the Ivan Luckevič Belarusian Saturday–Sunday School in Vilnius, with approximately 160 registered pupils.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

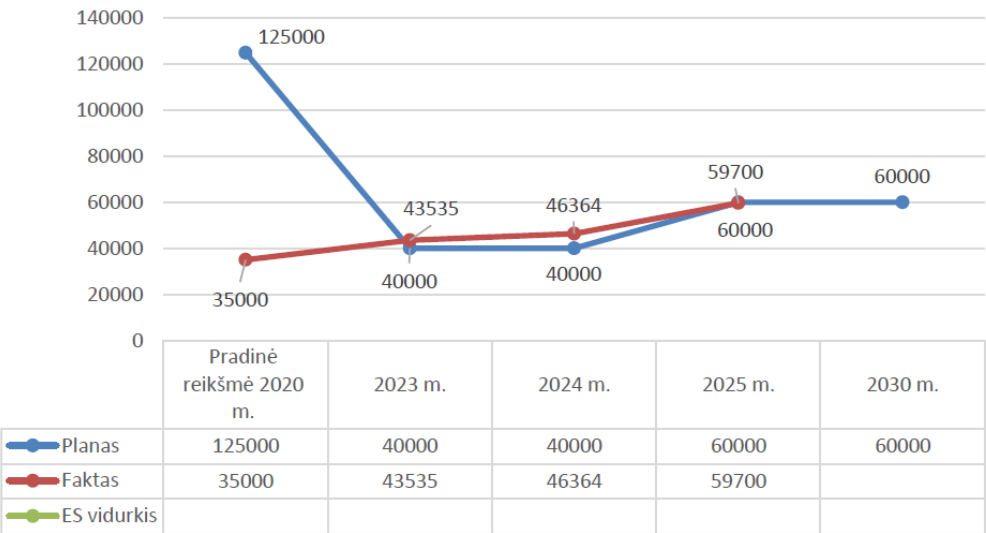
Between 2021 and 2026, State funding for measures relating to the culture of national minorities (including festivals, conferences, exhibitions, education and the teaching of national minority languages), cultural heritage and integration exceeded EUR 2 million. Funding was provided for more than 900 projects aimed at promoting the culture of national minorities, publishing, information dissemination, online communication and fostering intercultural dialogue. This demonstrates both the high level of activity among national communities and the strong demand for State funding.

Between 2021 and 2025, more than EUR 3.25 million was allocated to sites of the religious and cultural heritage of national minorities under the Immovable Cultural Heritage Management and Compensation Programmes. These funds were used for the conservation and preservation of synagogues, the kenesa, the mosque, Old Believer and Orthodox places of worship, and other sites of significance to national communities.

The scope of activities carried out by the cultural centres continued to expand. According to the DNM Activity Report 2025, the number of events organised by these centres and the number of participants attending them increased steadily between 2023 and 2025. This demonstrates the growing engagement of national minorities and society as a whole in activities promoting culture, education and identity. The most significant growth was recorded in the centres in Klaipėda and Visaginas, which actively expanded their cultural, educational and intercultural dialogue activities. Each year, the cultural centres organise approximately 600–700 events. They attract up to 60,000

participants. The number of visitors to the cultural centres is projected to remain stable through the end of 2026.

Figure 1. Number of visitors to national minority culture and integration centres



The DNM organises annual calls for proposals to finance projects implemented by cultural centres. Between 2021 and 2026, a total of EUR 2,447,259 was allocated for the implementation of projects carried out by cultural centres. The DNM also provides partial funding to the Ivan Luckevič Belarusian Museum, the Pabradė Cultural Centre, the Trakai House of Culture, the Polish House in Vilnius, and Simon Karczmar Crafts Yard in Dieveniškės, a branch of the Vilnius Agroecology Training Centre. Information on the funding of cultural centres is provided in Annex 2.

The impact of State-supported cultural and non-formal education measures is reflected in the growing number of participants. During the 2025–2026 school year, several hundred children and young people attended non-formal education schools of national minorities, while the number of visitors to national minority culture and integration centres increased from 44,708 to 59,700 over a two-year period. These figures demonstrate the continued engagement of national minority communities in activities aimed at preserving and transmitting their language, culture and traditions to younger generations. A list of non-formal education schools of national minorities in Lithuania is provided in Annex 7.

Article 6

1. The Parties shall encourage a spirit of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and take effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory, irrespective of those persons' ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, in particular in the fields of education, culture and the media.

2. The Parties undertake to take appropriate measures to protect persons who may be subject to threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence as a result of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

Lithuania continued to implement measures aimed at strengthening social inclusion, non-discrimination, intercultural dialogue and the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in public life, with particular emphasis on combating hate speech, promoting tolerance, and raising awareness among young people and State authorities. Measures to combat hate speech and discriminatory narratives targeting persons belonging to national minorities were also implemented in the public and digital spheres.

The legal framework in the field of education was further strengthened through the implementation of the provisions of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter – the LoE), which require schools to provide pupils with opportunities to participate in programmes aimed at developing social and emotional competences, preventing violence and bullying, and other preventive programmes. Pursuant to Article 43(11) of the LoE and Order No. 317 of 19 March 2024 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania approving the Description of the Procedure for Assessing Compliance with the Criteria for Preventive Programmes, as of 1 September 2024, only preventive programmes meeting the established criteria may be implemented in schools.

With a view to fostering a cohesive civic society by integrating the cultural and historical heritage of national communities into Lithuanian society and promoting cultural diversity, the DNM supported integration, cultural and creative activities and organised a call for proposals for the partial funding of cultural projects promoting the development of the cultures of national minorities. On average, 80% of national minority communities participate each year in initiatives promoting integration and the preservation of national identity.

One of the key measures to strengthen intercultural dialogue and promote co-operation, civic engagement and mutual understanding was the implementation of school co-operation projects in Eastern Lithuania.

Eastern Lithuania is a historically multi-ethnic region of Lithuania, comprising municipalities in the eastern part of the country with sizeable national minority communities, in particular the Vilnius District, Šalčininkai District, Švenčionys District, Trakai District, Širvintos District and Visaginas municipalities, as well as other neighbouring areas. The region is home to

sizeable Polish, Russian, Belarusian, Tatar, Karaite and other national minority communities. In view of the region's multilingual and multicultural environment, the State implements targeted measures aimed at preserving the cultural identity of national minorities, promoting their mother tongues, strengthening education, promoting culture, improving access to information, and fostering civic integration.

The region has a well-developed network of educational institutions providing education in national minority languages from pre-school to general education level. National minority non-governmental organisations are actively engaged, newspapers and other media outlets operate in national minority languages, State-funded projects in the fields of culture, education, civic participation and information dissemination are implemented, cultural events and festivals of national communities are organised, and cultural centres and other national minority institutions are active. The State consistently provides funding for cultural, educational, civic education, youth, information dissemination and community-building projects implemented in Eastern Lithuania, with the aim of preserving the cultural identity of national minorities while strengthening their inclusion in Lithuanian public life.

Under the measure *Pilietiškumo ugdymo, tarpkultūrinio bendradarbiavimo ir atminties įprasminimo veiklos, skirtos Rytų Lietuvos regionui* (Activities for Citizenship Education, Intercultural Co-operation and the Commemoration of Historical Memory in the Eastern Lithuania Region), the DNM allocated EUR 365,675 between 2021 and 2025 to the call for proposals for the partial funding of projects promoting the culture of national minorities in Eastern Lithuania. A total of 212 projects received funding, involving approximately 15,000 children and young people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Information on the funding of projects promoting civic engagement, intercultural co-operation and the commemoration of historical memory in Eastern Lithuania (2021–2025) is provided in Annex 8.

On 4 December 2025, online training was organised for staff of educational institutions in Eastern Lithuania on the funding of cultural projects, the preparation of project applications and the submission of project implementation reports. The training was held on the Microsoft Teams platform and was attended by 30 teachers and project managers from educational institutions in the Ignalina, Šalčininkai, Švenčionys, Trakai and Vilnius District municipalities, the City of Vilnius and the Municipality of Visaginas.

To promote intercultural dialogue, the exchange of good practices and cultural heritage among people of different nationalities living in Lithuania, the DNM continued its tradition of recognising individuals who had made an outstanding contribution to promoting ethnic tolerance

and intercultural dialogue in the media by organising the annual competition award *Už tarpkultūrinio dialogo skatinimą* (For the Promotion of Intercultural Dialogue). A total of 13 entries were submitted to the competition in 2022 (10 in 2021). In 2025, six applications were submitted to the competition (seven in 2024). In 2025, the award for the promotion of intercultural dialogue was presented to an LRT journalist for the series of publications *Rusakalbių Lietuva: kalba, tapatybė ir dialogas* (Russian-speaking Lithuania: Language, Identity and Dialogue) addressing the situation of national minorities in Lithuania. Following the recommendation of the evaluation committee, the special award was shared between journalists for the series of articles *Aš rusas?* (Am I Russian?) and for a publication marking the 70th anniversary of the Polish folk ensemble *Wilia*, which explored themes of cultural heritage and national identity.

Since 2018, the MoC, together with the MoESS, has been implementing the programme *Kultūros pasas* (the Culture Passport), aimed at promoting cultural education for children and young people. Within the programme *Kultūros pasas* (the Culture Passport), cultural education activities presenting the culture, history and traditions of national minorities, including excursions, virtual activities and educational workshops, are offered alongside activities in the fields of music, visual arts, cultural heritage, architecture and multiculturalism. Currently, 26 educational activities on multiculturalism are offered under the programme. The educational programmes of *Kultūros pasas* (the Culture Passport) are delivered by museums, public and private institutions, and organisations throughout Lithuania.

Practical measures to combat hate speech continued to be strengthened through the activities of the Inspector of Journalist Ethics. The OIJE monitored hate speech in the media, examined complaints, issued recommendations to media outlets, and provided guidance on the identification and prevention of hate speech. The OIJE also raised public awareness of the harmful effects of hate speech and the available mechanisms for reporting it.

When examining complaints, initiating investigations on other grounds provided for by law, and adopting decisions in cases where media representatives have improperly exercised their freedom of expression by disseminating hate speech targeting vulnerable groups, the Office of the Inspector of Journalist Ethics explains, in each case, the unlawfulness of such conduct, draws attention to the violations identified and, in accordance with the Law on the Provision of Information to the Public, issues warnings to producers and/or disseminators of public information, while also raising public awareness through social media and other communication channels.

In 2021, a representative of the OIJE participated in training organised by the DNM together with its partners (non-governmental organisations), aimed at raising awareness among

national minorities about hate speech and hate crime. Although the training was primarily intended for members of national minority communities, media representatives were also invited to participate and did so, with representatives of regional media outlets being the most actively involved (see also Recommendations 7 and 12).

Co-operation between State authorities, ombudsperson institutions and non-governmental organisations in combating hate speech was further strengthened. One example of good practice was the EU co-funded project *#NOPLACE4HATE: Lietuvos institucijų atsako į neapykantos kalbą tobulinimas* (*#NOPLACE4HATE: Improving the Institutional Response to Hate Speech in Lithuania*), implemented by the OIJE and the OEEO between 2020 and 2022. The project contributed to strengthening the capacities of officials responsible for investigating and examining hate speech and hate crime cases, enhancing inter-institutional co-operation, and raising public awareness. The project aimed to strengthen institutional capacities by developing clear guidelines for the investigation of hate speech cases, enhancing the capacities of the competent public authorities in the field of hate speech prevention, improving assistance and access to services for victims, and increasing public awareness of how to recognise and respond to hate speech. As part of the project, public awareness campaigns, national publications, social advertising campaigns, and radio and television broadcasts promoting tolerance and respect for persons of different nationalities and religions were carried out.

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

Lithuania further strengthened policy measures relating to social inclusion, intercultural dialogue and the prevention of discrimination against national minorities.

The requirements concerning the quality of preventive programmes implemented in schools, which entered into force on 1 September 2024, aim to ensure a systematic and evidence-based approach to the prevention of violence, bullying, discrimination and social exclusion within the education system.

State authorities placed greater emphasis on public awareness and media literacy initiatives aimed at combating hate speech and discriminatory narratives in the public sphere and on social media. Particular attention was given to regional media, youth engagement and preventive education.

Initiatives to promote youth inclusion were also expanded. On 27–29 August 2025, the DNM initiated and funded the training programme for young people belonging to national minorities *Bendraamžių akademija* (Peer Academy). The programme brought together

approximately 30 pupils from schools in Vilnius, Visaginas, Švenčionys and Švenčionėliai providing education in Lithuanian and national minority languages. The programme placed particular emphasis on non-discrimination, the identification of hate speech, civic engagement, media literacy, resilience to discriminatory narratives and respectful dialogue.

At the policy-making level, greater attention was devoted to monitoring public attitudes towards national minorities and migrants in order to identify emerging social tensions and to develop appropriate integration and non-discrimination measures.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

A 2023 study by the Lithuanian Council for Culture *Gyventojų dalyvavimas kultūroje ir pasitenkinimas kultūros paslaugomis* (Participation in Culture and Satisfaction with Cultural Services)⁴¹, found positive public attitudes towards cultural diversity. According to the study, 73% of residents of non-Lithuanian nationality stated that their personal identity was closely linked to Lithuanian culture, while 76% of respondents considered it beneficial for society to comprise people from different cultural backgrounds. These findings indicate that the preservation of the cultural identity of national minorities in Lithuania is compatible with their successful integration into society and with positive public attitudes towards cultural diversity.

Since 1 September 2024, only accredited preventive programmes may be implemented in Lithuanian schools. At present, the list maintained by the National Agency for Education includes 16 accredited preventive programmes. They are published on the National Agency for Education website: <https://www.nsa.smsm.lt/ugdymo-departamentas/ugdymas-ir-prevencija/prevencines-programos/prevenciniu-programu-sarasas/>.

The programme *Kultūros pasas* (Culture Passport) currently offers 26 educational activities promoting multiculturalism.

Under the #NOPLACE4HATE project, more than 20 publications were prepared and published in the national media to draw attention to the hatred that vulnerable groups continue to experience while living in Lithuania. Social advertising campaigns were also carried out, and radio and television broadcasts promoting tolerance and combating hate speech were produced. Seven series of posters encouraging respect for people of different nationalities, skin colours and religions were created and displayed on advertising billboards in various cities. Specially produced and adapted audiovisual messages (three radio announcements and one television video) were broadcast

⁴¹ *Gyventojų dalyvavimas kultūroje ir pasitenkinimas kultūros paslaugomis* (Participation in Culture and Satisfaction with Cultural Services), Lithuanian Council for Culture, 2024, <https://www.ltk.lt/tyrimai-ir-statistika/kulturos-tyrimai/gyventoju-dalyvavimas-kulturoje-ir-pasitenkinimas-kulturos-paslaugomis-175>

on television and radio to explain how to identify hate speech, raise public awareness, and encourage the general public not to tolerate hate speech targeting vulnerable groups and to report it to the competent authorities.

Drawing on the findings of various studies and analyses, the DNM has called attention to hate speech and discrimination directed against persons of a nationality other than Lithuanian. The findings of these studies indicate that Lithuania continues to face challenges in the areas of discrimination and social distance. Data on incidents of discrimination and hatred are set out in Article 4.

Article 7

The Parties shall ensure respect for the right of every person belonging to a national minority to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

The Republic of Lithuania guarantees the right of persons belonging to national minorities to exercise the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, expression, thought, conscience and religion in accordance with the Constitution, international human rights standards and other national legal acts.

Article 25 of the Constitution guarantees the right to hold one's own convictions, to express them freely, and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas. Article 35 of the Constitution guarantees the right of citizens freely to form communities, associations and political parties, while Article 36 guarantees the right to peaceful assembly.

Persons belonging to national minorities in Lithuania are free to establish non-governmental organisations, cultural associations, religious communities and other associations, to participate in their activities, and publicly to express their cultural, linguistic and religious identity.

National minority organisations and communities in Lithuania are able to organise cultural, educational and public events, commemorations, conferences and festivals. These activities may be carried out freely and without discrimination, subject to the general legal requirements applicable to public events.

The State also guarantees freedom of religion. Religious communities of national minorities are free to perform religious rites, establish religious organisations, use places of worship and preserve their religious traditions (see also Articles 5 and 8).

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

The Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania (LNM), which entered into force on 1 January 2025, strengthened the system for the protection of the rights of national minorities and established the State's obligation to create the conditions necessary for their cultural, linguistic and public activities.

An important development was the establishment of the status of the Council of National Minorities (CNM) in the new Law. The Council serves as a permanent consultative mechanism composed of representatives of organisations bringing together national minorities and non-governmental organisations active in the field of the rights of national minorities. The CNM submits proposals to State authorities, considers issues of relevance to national minorities, and contributes to strengthening dialogue between State authorities and national minority communities.

Representatives of national minority organisations were regularly involved in public consultations, working groups and discussions on issues relating to national minority policy, education, culture and human rights.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

More than 200 non-governmental organisations, associations, cultural and other community organisations of national minorities are actively operating in Lithuania. They carry out cultural, educational, social and religious activities and actively participate in public life.

Representatives of national minority organisations and non-governmental organisations active in the field of the rights of national minorities actively participate in the work of the CNM⁴², consultations with State authorities, and public discussions on human rights, national minority policy and social cohesion. This ensures a structured dialogue between national minorities and State authorities.

National minority organisations and religious communities regularly organise cultural, religious and public events in various regions of Lithuania. Traditional events, such as the International Festival of National Cultures in Klaipėda, the Day of the National Communities of Lithuania celebrations, *Sabantuy*, *Mărțișor*, and other initiatives of national communities, contribute to the effective exercise of the freedoms of association and peaceful assembly and to strengthening intercultural dialogue in society.

National minority organisations actively promote their activities through websites, social media accounts, community publications and other communication channels. These regularly

⁴² Council of National Minorities, <https://tmde.lrv.lt/lt/struktura-ir-kontaktai/komisijos-tarybos-darbo-grupes/tautiniu-mazumu-taryba/>

provide information on cultural, educational, youth, religious and community events, while also presenting the history, languages, traditions, customs and cultural heritage of national minorities. These activities raise public awareness of the cultural diversity of Lithuania's national minorities, contribute to fostering a positive image of national minorities, promote intercultural dialogue, mutual respect and tolerance, and strengthen society's resilience to stereotypes and negative attitudes.

Information on the activities of national minority non-governmental organisations and traditional cultural events in Lithuania (2022–2026) is provided in Annex 9 (see also Article 6).

Article 8

The Parties undertake to recognise the right of every person belonging to a national minority to practise their religion, to hold their own beliefs, and to establish religious institutions, organisations and associations.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

The Law on Religious Communities and Associations and other legal acts guarantee persons belonging to national minorities the right to profess their religion or other beliefs and to establish religious institutions, organisations and associations. Article 26 of the Constitution guarantees freedom of thought, conscience and religion, as well as the right to choose and practise one's religion, either individually or in community with others. The State guarantees the equality of religious communities and associations before the law and protects them against discrimination and incitement to hatred.

During the reporting period, co-operation with the religious communities of national minorities was further strengthened, while intercultural and interreligious dialogue, including through diplomatic initiatives, and public tolerance towards religious and cultural diversity were actively promoted.

In 2025, the Minister of Justice met with Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The meeting addressed issues relating to the activities of the Exarchate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Lithuania and State support for the traditional religious community. During the meeting, the Minister of Justice reaffirmed Lithuania's constitutional principles and its long-standing tradition of peaceful coexistence among religions.

The MoJ continued to perform the functions assigned to it under the Law on Religious Communities and Associations. These included examining documents submitted for the registration

of religious communities and associations, providing opinions to the Register of Legal Entities and the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania on granting State recognition to religious associations, and handling the registration of all churches and other religious organisations in Lithuania. This ensured a transparent registration process for religious communities and associations in accordance with the applicable legal framework (see also Articles 4 and 6).

Under the current legal framework, the following nine religious communities and associations are recognised as traditional in Lithuania: Latin Rite Catholics, Greek Rite Catholics, Evangelical Lutherans, Evangelical Reformed, Orthodox (Eastern Orthodox) Christians, Old Believers, Jews, Sunni Muslims and Karaites. Their history in Lithuania dates back to the times of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

Lithuania continued to safeguard freedom of religion and ensure the conditions necessary for the activities of religious communities and associations. State authorities maintained dialogue with traditional and other religious communities and associations on issues relating to freedom of religion, human rights and social cohesion.

In the field of education, professional development events for teachers continued to be organised. In 2026, the seminar *Atminties kelias* (The Path of Memory) was organised for teachers, with the participation of 21 teachers. The seminar addressed the history of the Holocaust, remembrance, culture and human rights. The DNM also organised training sessions and discussions aimed at preventing hate speech, discrimination and historical stereotypes, thereby contributing to the promotion of respect for freedom of religion, mutual understanding among religious communities, and greater societal tolerance.

Co-operation between State authorities and the Exarchate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Lithuania continued. In 2025, high-level meetings with representatives of the Exarchate and the Ecumenical Patriarchate addressed issues relating to the activities of the community and State support. Lithuanian authorities publicly reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of freedom of religion and to the right of religious communities to choose their canonical affiliation freely. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted that the Exarchate had become an alternative for believers wishing to practise their faith independently of the influence of the Moscow Patriarchate.⁴³

⁴³ Budrys: The Exarchate of Constantinople plays a significant role in uniting the Lithuanian Orthodox community and reducing Moscow's influence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, 2025, <https://www.urm.lt/en/news/928/budrys-the-role-of-the-exarchate-of-constantinople-plays-a-significant-role-in-uniting-the-lithuanian-orthodox-community-and-reducing-moscows-influence%3A45425>

Another significant development was the decision of the SRL to grant State recognition to the Ancient Baltic religious association *Romuva* at the end of 2024. This demonstrates that the mechanism for granting State recognition applies not only to traditional religious associations but also to other religious communities and associations that meet the criteria established by law.⁴⁴

At the practical level, religious communities and associations continued to be involved in public consultations on issues relating to human rights, national minorities and cultural policy.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

At the end of 2025, there were 1,334 religious communities, associations and other religious organisations registered and entered in the Register of Legal Entities in Lithuania (1,327 at the end of 2024). Of these, 1,139 (1,138 in 2024) were traditional religious organisations and 195 (189 in 2024) were non-traditional religious organisations. These religious communities and associations may broadly be classified into 38 religious traditions. While Lithuania officially recognises nine traditional religious traditions, Judaism may be further divided into Hasidic and Mitnagdic traditions, and Orthodox Churches subordinate to both the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Moscow Patriarchate are also represented. The Catholic Church remains the largest religious traditions in Lithuania. According to the 2021 Population and Housing Census, 74% of the population identified themselves as Catholics.

Information on the number of registered religious organisations in 2024–2025 is provided in Annex 10.

Article 9

1. The Parties undertake to recognise that the right to freedom of expression of every person belonging to a national minority includes freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas in the minority language, without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers. The Parties shall ensure, within the framework of their legal systems, that persons belonging to a national minority are not discriminated against in their access to the media.
2. Paragraph 1 shall not prevent Parties from requiring the licensing, without discrimination and based on objective criteria, of sound radio and television broadcasting, or cinema enterprises.
3. The Parties shall not hinder the creation and the use of printed media by persons belonging to national minorities. In the legal framework of sound radio and television broadcasting, they shall ensure, as far as possible, and taking into account the provisions of paragraph 1, that persons belonging to national minorities are granted the possibility of creating and using their own media.

⁴⁴ The Seimas granted state recognition to the Ancient Baltic religious community *Romuva*, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 2024, https://www.lrs.lt/sip/portal.show?p_r=35435&p_k=1&p_t=290356&p_a=1000&p_kade_id=10

4. In the framework of their legal systems, the Parties shall adopt adequate measures in order to facilitate access to the media for persons belonging to national minorities and in order to promote tolerance and permit cultural pluralism.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

The Republic of Lithuania continues to guarantee the right of persons belonging to national minorities to freedom of expression, including the right to receive and impart information and ideas in a national minority language, as well as the right to establish and use their own media. This right is guaranteed by the Constitution, the LNM, the Law on the Provision of Information to the Public of the Republic of Lithuania and other legal acts.

Article 25 of the Constitution guarantees the right of every person to hold their own convictions and to express them freely, as well as the right to receive and impart information and ideas.

The Law on the Provision of Information to the Public of the Republic of Lithuania is the principal legal act governing the production and dissemination of public information and the activities of journalists. The Law provides that every person has the right freely to seek, receive and impart information.

Recognising the importance of access to information and cultural diversity, Lithuania promotes the creation and dissemination of content in various languages, thereby strengthening intercultural dialogue and social cohesion. This is achieved by funding publishing and information dissemination projects of national minority organisations, ensuring multilingual content provided by the public service broadcaster, and creating the conditions necessary for independent national minority media outlets to operate.

During the reporting period, national minority media in Lithuania included the press, radio, television, online news portals and community publications. Between 2024 and 2026, the Media Support Fund financed or assessed projects under its programme for national minority media serving Polish, Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian and other national community audiences. These included *Kurier Wileński*, *Znad Wilii*, *Vis-Info*, *Obzor*, *Šalčia*, *BM TV*, *Radio R*, *ru.delfi.lt*, *TV3 Plus News*, *Malanka*, *Tautinių bendrijų naujienos*, and other media outlets.

The national public service broadcaster, the Lithuanian National Radio and Television (hereinafter referred to as LRT), plays an important role in ensuring the right of persons belonging to national minorities to receive information in languages they understand. LRT produces and disseminates information content in national minority languages and other languages used in

Lithuania (English, Polish, Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian), thereby contributing to access to information, social inclusion and the promotion of cultural diversity (see Recommendation 9).

Persons belonging to national minorities and their organisations are free to establish newspapers, online news portals, and cultural and information publications in national minority languages. They are also able to broadcast radio and television programmes in national minority languages (see Recommendation 9). A list of the national minority publishing and information dissemination projects funded by the DNM, together with the total funding allocated, is provided in Annex 4.

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

During the reporting period, the system of State support for the media underwent a fundamental reform. Since 2024, State support for producers of public information has been administered by the Media Support Fund, whose funding programmes include a dedicated strand for supporting projects and activities of national minority media. This has provided a more consistent basis for supporting national minority print, radio, television and online media and for strengthening their sustainability.

Co-operation with national minority organisations on information dissemination and public information initiatives continued. In 2026, the CNM initiated consultations on the development of a television programme specifically dedicated to Lithuania's national communities.

Issues relating to national minorities are also integrated into LRT's general national programming, thereby increasing the visibility of national communities and contributing to stronger social cohesion. Content produced in national minority languages became available not only through traditional broadcasting channels but also across LRT's digital ecosystem, including its website, mobile platforms, social media channels and online archives. To improve the accessibility of content, LRT introduced real-time automatic translation solutions enabling live broadcasts to be subtitled in Lithuanian, Polish, Ukrainian, Russian and English, thereby reaching audiences both in Lithuania and abroad and contributing to broader access to information and participation in the public information space. LRT also consistently seeks to strike a balance between the right of persons belonging to national minorities to receive information in their own languages and the role of the Lithuanian language as the State language. Additional content relating to national minorities is produced in co-operation with external content creators, producers and journalists (see Recommendation 9).

The information space of national minorities is also strengthened by the HNC which has been publishing the periodical *Tautinių bendrijų naujienos* (National Communities News) since 2001 with a print run of 600 copies. The publication is also available on the website www.tbn.lt and is distributed through the CNM, cultural centres and national communities throughout the country. The publication provides information on the activities of national minority organisations in Lithuania, cultural events, history, traditions, educational initiatives and other issues of relevance to national communities. Its purpose is to promote the integration of national communities into Lithuanian society and to foster multiculturalism and intercultural dialogue. The publication is also available in electronic format (see Recommendation 9).

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

Newspapers, magazines, periodicals and online publications in national minority languages are published in Lithuania. National minority websites and social media channels are also maintained to serve community members and the wider public and to support cultural and public activities. Information on independent and community media outlets is provided in Annex 11.

The State provides annual funding for projects relating to the culture, publishing and information dissemination of national minorities, with the aim of promoting cultural pluralism, the use of national minority languages, and public awareness of the culture and history of national communities (see also Articles 5 and 6).

In 2024, the MSF funded 12 projects under its national minority media projects programme, serving Polish, Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian and broader national minority audiences: *Kurier Wilenski*, *Klaipėda* in Russian, *NovajaKlaipėda.novosti*, *Klaipėda.zanėdeliu.lt*, *Šalčia*, *Savaitės ekspresas*, *Radio R*, *Znad Wilii*, *Artscape*, *news.tts.lt*, *www.zanėdeliu.lt*, *TV3 Plus*, *ru.delfi.lt*, *Malanka* and *news.tts.lt*.

In 2025, the Media Support Fund (MSF) provided project funding for 16 national minority media projects and operating funding for media outlets: *Klaipėda rusų kalba*, *Ekspress nedėlia rusų kalba*, *Pensioner*, *Radio R*, *Malanka Media*, *www.zanėdeliu.lt*, *ru.delfi.lt*, *news.tts.lt*, *www.tie2.lt*, *TV3 Plus žinios*, *Znad Wilii*, *Kurier Wilensk* and *Šalčia* (EUR 59,644)⁴⁵.

Under the 2026 operating funding competition of the Media Support Fund (MSF) for national minority media, funding was awarded to 15 national minority media projects. Funding was awarded to the following media outlets: *www.wilnoteka.lt*, *www.tie2.lt*, *ru.delfi.lt*, *Malanka Media*, *TV3 Plus*, *Radio R*, *Lietuvos totoriai*, *Kurier Wilenski*, *Vis-Info*, *Obzor*, and *Znad Wilii*⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ <https://www.medijufondas.lt/mrf-naujienos/skelbiame-mediju-remimo-fondo-2025-m-konkurso-rezultatai>

⁴⁶ <https://www.medijufondas.lt/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Tautiniu-mazumu-ziniasklaidos-veiklos-finansavimas-2026-m.pdf>

LRT continued to ensure access to information intended for national minorities through a variety of channels. The National Communities Content Unit comprised three journalists in the Polish-language editorial team and four journalists, together with one freelance journalist, in the Russian-language editorial team. LRT regularly produced daily radio programmes in Polish and Russian, weekly television programmes in Polish, Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian, as well as specialised content on Lithuanian Jewish affairs. Multilingual content was regularly published on the LRT website in English, Polish, Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian, ensuring its accessibility to audiences both in Lithuania and abroad.

News published by LRT in national minority languages continues to serve as an important means of information and integration. Between 2022 and 2025, more than 52,000 articles were published on the LRT website in national minority languages: 9,806 in English, 10,779 in Polish, 25,609 in Russian and 6,164 in Ukrainian (the Ukrainian-language section was launched in 2023). The largest volume of content was published in Russian and Polish. Since 2023, Ukrainian-language content has also expanded rapidly in response to changing public needs.

According to public opinion surveys commissioned by LRT, around 80% of the population of Lithuania have a favourable opinion of the public service broadcaster and its ability to provide information relevant to national minorities. These findings indicate that content intended for and relating to national minorities continues to constitute a visible component of the public service broadcaster's output.⁴⁷

LRT's audience analysis indicates not only that this content has maintained a stable reach, but also that audience engagement with it has increased. Whereas in 2022 audiences typically viewed only individual news items, in 2024–2025 users spent more time searching for or viewing content published in national minority languages, reading related articles and browsing the relevant sections of the LRT website. This indicates growing audience engagement and suggests that content published in national minority languages meets long-term information, cultural and integration needs.

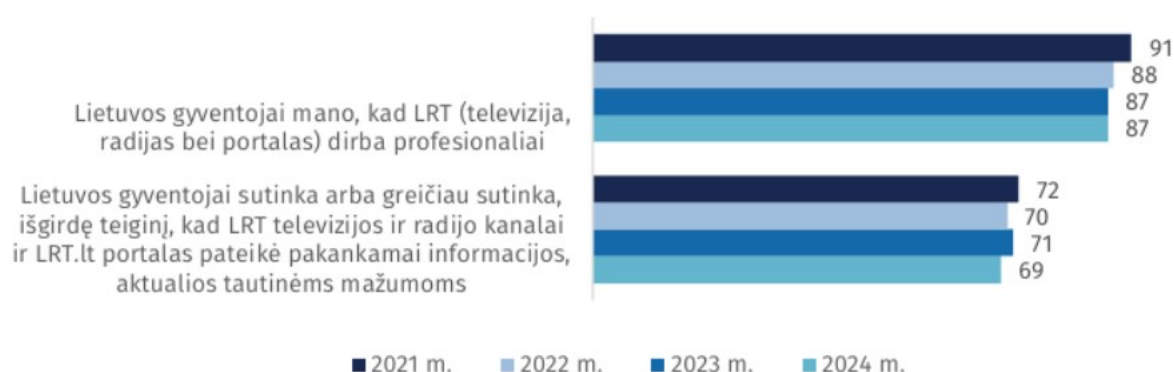
At the same time, LRT has continued to expand multi-platform access to content produced in national minority languages. In addition to its website, such content is disseminated through social media, video-sharing platforms and *Radioteka*. This makes it possible to reach different audience groups, ranging from traditional radio listeners to young users who primarily access information through digital channels. It also helps ensure broader access to information for

⁴⁷ *Lietuvos nacionalinio radijo ir televizijos veikla* (The Activities of Lithuanian National Radio and Television), National Audit Office, 2025, <https://ekspertai.eu/static/uploads/2025-11-03/lietuvos-nacionalinio-radijo-ir-televizijos-veikla-1.pdf>

national minorities and promotes their participation in the public information space. Information on content published in national minority languages and its reach (2022–2025) is provided in Annex 12.

To ensure long-term access to the cultural and historical heritage of national minorities, 92.9% of the analogue media in the LRT archives had been digitised in 2024. This provides broader access to content relating to national minorities.

Figure 2. Survey conducted by the Lithuanian National Radio and Television



Šaltinis – Valstybės kontrolė pagal Lietuvos nacionalinio radijo ir televizijos veiklos ataskaitų duomenis

State funding schemes provide annual support for information dissemination and cultural projects implemented by national minority organisations, contributing to the visibility of national minorities in the public sphere and to the preservation of their cultural identity.

Periodicals in Polish, Russian, Tatar and other languages continue to be published in Lithuania. In Eastern Lithuania, newspapers are published in Polish and Russian, while national minority radio stations, online news portals and other media outlets operate to ensure the right of persons belonging to national minorities to receive information in their mother tongue and to promote multiculturalism.

Periodicals in the languages of national minorities (2022–2026) are listed in Annex 13.

Representatives of national minority organisations and the media participate in public consultations and discussions on policies relating to public information, human rights and combating hate speech.

Article 10

1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use freely and without interference his or her minority language, in private and in public, orally and in writing.

2. In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if those persons so request and where such a request corresponds to a real need, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible, the conditions which would make it possible to use the minority language in relations between those persons and the administrative authorities.

3. The Parties undertake to guarantee the right of every person belonging to a national minority to be informed promptly, in a language which he or she understands, of the reasons for his or her arrest, and of the nature and cause of any accusation against him or her, and to defend himself or herself in this language, if necessary with the free assistance of an interpreter.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

The legal framework includes provisions enabling persons belonging to national minorities to use a national minority language in their communication with public administrative authorities. This right is guaranteed by the Law on Public Administration and the Rules on the Examination of Requests and Complaints and the Provision of Services to Persons by Public Administration Entities (the revised version of the Rules was approved by Government Resolution No. 1014 of 1 December 2021). Under these Rules, requests and complaints may be submitted, both orally and in writing, in a language other than the State language, as determined by the head of the respective public authority.

The Republic of Lithuania guarantees the right of persons belonging to national minorities to use their language freely and without interference, both orally and in writing, in private and in public life. These rights are guaranteed by the Constitution, the Law on National Minorities (LNM), the Law on the State Language and other legal acts.

Article 37 of the Constitution provides that citizens belonging to national communities have the right to foster their language, culture and customs. The LNM guarantees the right of persons belonging to national minorities to use their national minority language freely in their private and public life.

In areas traditionally or densely inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities, municipal authorities provide residents with opportunities to obtain information and consultations in a language they understand, in accordance with the requirements of national legislation.

In criminal, civil and administrative court proceedings, persons are guaranteed the right to the assistance of an interpreter. The Code of Criminal Procedure of the Republic of Lithuania provides that persons who do not speak Lithuanian must be guaranteed the right to receive

information, in a language they understand, about procedural acts and any suspicions or charges brought against them, as well as the right to defend themselves with the assistance of an interpreter.

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

In implementing the Advisory Committee's recommendations, Lithuania continued to strengthen the capacity of State authorities to ensure the effective implementation of the linguistic rights of persons belonging to national minorities in practice, with particular emphasis on access to public services and the protection of human rights.

The capacities of employees of State and municipal institutions continued to be systematically strengthened in the fields of human rights, equal opportunities and non-discrimination. The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson organises training for State authorities, municipalities and public sector bodies on the prevention of discrimination, the promotion of equal opportunities, the application of human rights standards, the provision of inclusive public services, and equal treatment. The training covers the prevention of discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion and language, as well as the non-discriminatory provision of public services. The Office has also developed an online learning platform and e-learning courses for public sector employees.

The Action Plan for the Implementation of Equal Opportunities 2024–2026⁴⁸ provides for training and advisory measures for public sector employees. The plan places particular emphasis on preventing discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, nationality and religion. In addition, following Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2022 and the resulting increase in demand for multilingual public services, State authorities expanded translation and multilingual information services and strengthened the capacity of their staff to work with persons from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds by providing training on service delivery to foreigners and intercultural awareness. These measures strengthened the capacity of State institutions to operate in a multilingual environment and to ensure linguistic accessibility. Although they were not intended exclusively for persons belonging to national minorities, in practice they enhanced the preparedness of public authorities to provide services to persons of different nationalities and linguistic backgrounds.

The LNM strengthened the legal framework for the protection of the linguistic rights of persons belonging to national minorities and more clearly regulates the principles governing the use

⁴⁸ Action Plan for the Implementation of Equal Opportunities 2024–2026,
<https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/ecaf9b702d7111ee9de9e7e0fd363afc/asr>

of national minority languages in the fields of culture, education and information (see Article 6 of the LNM).⁴⁹

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

In Lithuania, there are schools for national minorities, cultural centres and non-governmental organisations which actively contribute to the preservation and use of the languages of national minorities.

Of the 110 general education schools, 58 provide teaching in Lithuanian and Polish or in Polish; 49 provide teaching in Lithuanian and Russian or in Russian (see also Article 14).

Since 2022, State authorities have significantly expanded the provision of information in Ukrainian, Russian and English. Staff of the Migration Department, the Employment Service, municipalities and social service institutions received methodological guidance and practical support on working with interpreters and providing multilingual services. These measures became an important element of institutional capacity-building aimed at ensuring equal access to public services.

In 28 of Lithuania's 60 municipalities, residents are provided with services in one or more national minority languages (Polish, Russian and Ukrainian). Some municipalities, such as Varėna District Municipality, provide information in English, Estonian, Latvian, Polish, German and Russian. A list of municipalities providing services in the State language and other languages is provided in Annex 14.

Some municipalities have introduced measures to facilitate access to public services for beneficiaries of international protection and Ukrainians who have arrived in Lithuania. Examples of information measures implemented by municipalities:

- Vilnius City Municipality has translated applications for housing compensation into Russian and provides applicants with the option of being assisted by administrators who speak a foreign language (English or Russian);
- Vilnius City Municipality and Klaipėda City Municipality publish lists of healthcare institutions in foreign languages;
- Following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, Klaipėda City Municipality engaged volunteer interpreters (Ukrainian and Russian), while healthcare institutions in Klaipėda introduced telephone interpreting services⁵⁰ (see also Recommendation 3).

⁴⁹ Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania, [https://tmde.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1731920838/9042/XIV-3079%20\(1\).pdf](https://tmde.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1731920838/9042/XIV-3079%20(1).pdf)

⁵⁰ National Audit Office: It is not enough to grant asylum to refugees; they must be better integrated into the labour market and the education system, National Audit Office, 2023, <https://www.valstybeskontrole.lt/LT/Product/24169/pagalba-pabegeliams-ju-socialine-integracija>

Article 11

1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use his or her surname (patronym) and first names in the minority language and the right to official recognition of them, according to modalities provided for in their legal system.
2. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to display in his or her minority language signs, inscriptions and other information of a private nature visible to the public.
3. In areas traditionally inhabited by substantial numbers of persons belonging to a national minority, the Parties shall endeavour, in the framework of their legal system, including, where appropriate, agreements with other States, and taking into account their specific conditions, to display traditional local names, street names and other topographical indications intended for the public also in the minority language when there is a sufficient demand for such indications.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

Spelling of first names and surnames

The right of a person belonging to a national minority to use his or her surname (patronymic) and first name(s) in the minority language is guaranteed by the Law on the Spelling of Personal Names and Surnames in Documents of the Republic of Lithuania⁵¹, adopted on 18 January 2022 (Law No. XIV-903). Article 3 of the Law provides that, "at the request of a citizen of the Republic of Lithuania belonging to a national minority, his or her first name and surname, as well as those of his or her children, shall be written in identity documents of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania and in civil status records using the letters of the Latin alphabet (without diacritical marks)".

The issue of the use of diacritical marks in personal names continues to be considered by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. Draft laws amending Articles 3 and 4 of Law No. XIV-903 on the Spelling of Personal Names in Documents have been submitted. The proposed amendments would allow personal names to be entered in official documents using Latin-script characters with diacritical marks (see also Recommendation 10).

Private signs

Persons belonging to national minorities and their organisations may use national minority languages in privately displayed signs, notices, posters for events, information materials, websites and other means of communication visible to the public. The legal framework does not

⁵¹ <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/32ec5f92790211ecb2fe9975f8a9e52e?jfwid=-zr22zvlgb>

establish a general prohibition on the public use of national minority languages for privately displayed information. At the same time, the use of the State language is required in the fields of public information, consumer information, advertising and official signs.

Topographical indications

The LNM guarantees the general rights of persons belonging to national minorities to preserve and foster their national identity, language, culture and traditions. The issue of topographical indications is considered within the broader context of the existing legal framework, including the regulation of the use of the State language, place names, street names and public signs. The practical implementation of these matters depends on the overall legal framework, the competence of municipalities and the needs of individual local communities (see also Recommendation 11).

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

The draft amendments to legislation currently under consideration by the SRL reflect a desire to further expand the opportunities for members of national minorities to retain the authentic form of their first names and surnames more accurately in official documents.

National minority organisations continue to use national minority languages in their names, event announcements, information on cultural activities, publications and electronic communications. This contributes to enhancing the visibility of the linguistic identity of national minorities in the public sphere.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

During the reporting period, persons belonging to national minorities made use of the possibility to have their first names and surnames entered in identity documents and civil status records using the letters of the Latin alphabet. This measure contributed to ensuring more effective protection of the right of persons belonging to national minorities to use their personal names in the minority language.

According to administrative data, between 1 May 2022 and 26 February 2026, 424 citizens of the Republic of Lithuania and their children exercised the possibility of having their personal names entered in official documents in accordance with the spelling rules of their national language, using Latin-script characters.

The overall statistics likewise confirm the practical relevance of this right for persons belonging to national minorities. Between 1 May 2022 and 31 March 2026, permission to have personal names entered using the letters of the Latin alphabet (without diacritical marks) was

granted to 1,699 persons. Of these, 439 cases (approximately 26%) concerned citizens of the Republic of Lithuania of non-Lithuanian nationality and their children seeking to have their personal names entered in official documents in accordance with the spelling and word-formation rules of their national language. The remaining cases mainly concerned dual citizenship, personal names acquired abroad, or other grounds provided for by law.

The statistical data confirm that the provisions of the Law on the Spelling of Personal Names and Surnames in Documents of the Republic of Lithuania are effectively applied in practice and that one of the main groups benefiting from them consists of citizens of the Republic of Lithuania belonging to national minorities who seek to have their personal names entered in official documents in accordance with the spelling and word-formation rules of their national language.

According to the 2024 Activity Report of the State Language Inspectorate⁵², 158 complaints concerning public signs and the use of bilingual signs were received in 2024. These included disputes regarding public signs displayed in Lithuanian and Polish in the Šalčininkai and Vilnius district municipalities, such as the bilingual signs *Centrum Kultury*, *Gimnazjum im. Jana Śniadeckiego*, *Park miejski* and others.

On 18 December 2024, the Supreme Administrative Court of Lithuania delivered a judgment concerning bilingual public directional signs in Lithuanian and Polish displayed in the town of Šalčininkai. The Court set aside the judgment of the court of first instance and held that bilingual public signs may, under certain conditions, be permissible where they fall within the exceptions provided for by law.

More than 300 national minority organisations, cultural centres and religious communities are active in Lithuania and publicly use national minority languages in their publications, websites, social media, event information and other privately displayed signs.

Article 12

1. The Parties shall, where appropriate, take measures in the fields of education and research to foster knowledge of the culture, history, language and religion of their national minorities and of the majority.
2. In this context the Parties shall inter alia provide adequate opportunities for teacher training and access to textbooks, and facilitate contacts among students and teachers of different communities.
3. The Parties undertake to promote equal opportunities for access to education at all levels for persons belonging to national minorities.

⁵² State Language Inspectorate Annual Report for 2024, 2025, [2024 ANNUAL REPORT REVISED 2025-06.pdf](#)

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

Lithuania has continued to implement measures aimed at ensuring the right of persons belonging to national minorities to education, promoting knowledge of the history, culture and languages of national minorities, and creating conditions for preserving their national identity within the education system.

The education system of the Republic of Lithuania is based on the principle of equal opportunities. Article 5 of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania sets out the principles of the education system, one of which is the principle of equal opportunities: "Equal opportunities means that the education system is socially just and ensures equality for all persons irrespective of their sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views. It guarantees every person access to education, the opportunity to acquire general education and a first qualification, and creates the conditions for improving existing qualifications or acquiring new ones."

Education for national minorities is organised in accordance with the Law on Education, the General Curricula and the Guidelines for Improving Education in National Minority Languages and the Teaching of National Minority Languages. General education schools and non-formal education schools provide opportunities for pupils belonging to national minorities to preserve their national, cultural and linguistic identity and to learn their mother tongue, history and culture.

In order to ensure high-quality teaching and learning materials in national minority languages, the Description of the Procedure for Assessing the Compliance of Printed and Virtual Textbooks and Teaching and Learning Materials for General Education Subjects of Various Levels of Interactivity with Legal Requirements and for Their Provision, approved by Order No. V-184 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania of 15 February 2024, introduced the possibility of using and procuring textbooks and teaching materials prepared and published in European Union Member States for the teaching of mother tongues studied in Lithuania's national minority schools.

The teacher training and professional development system includes measures and study modules for teachers working in national minority schools. Teachers are provided with methodological guidance, and professional development programmes are organised on teaching Lithuanian in a multilingual environment, bilingual education and the promotion of inclusion. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport has also developed methodological materials for teachers

in national minority schools, including recommendations on teaching Lithuanian in primary education.

In 2022, the DNM organised a seminar entitled *Istorijos ir pilietinio ugdymo aktualijos: nuo dalyko link kompetencijų ugdymo (pilietiškumo ugdymas ir daugiatautės visuomenės sugyvenimas)* (Current Issues in History and Civic Education: From Subject-Based Teaching to Competence Development (Civic Education and Coexistence in a Multi-Ethnic Society) for history teachers working in formal and non-formal education institutions for national minorities. Participants were introduced to a professional development programme designed to strengthen teachers' subject-specific and pedagogical competences and to develop their capacity to organise inquiry-based learning. The seminar was attended by representatives of the Visaginas and Šalčininkai municipalities responsible for coordinating the teaching of history in schools, as well as senior history teachers from Eastern Lithuania and the City of Klaipėda, a total of 25 participants.

In the same year, a two-day seminar entitled *Tautinių mažumų vaikų ir jaunimo pilietinis ugdymas. Vaikų, atvykusių iš Ukrainos, integracija* (Citizenship Education for Children and Young People Belonging to National Minorities. The seminar was attended by teachers from Belarusian, Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, Uzbek and Jewish non-formal education institutions. Participants included teachers from Alytus, Klaipėda, Visaginas and Vilnius.

Higher education institutions continued to provide opportunities for persons belonging to national minorities to study in their mother tongue. In the 2025–2026 academic year, the Vilnius Branch of the University of Białystok, established in 2007, admitted 150 new students, bringing the total number of students enrolled to 363. In 2025, 30 students graduated from the Vilnius Branch of the University of Białystok. In 2024, the Branch awarded degrees to 33 graduates, including: 7 – in the field of computer science, 12 – in European studies, 11 – Bachelor's degrees in economics, 3 – Master's degrees in economics. The University provides the Polish national minority in Lithuania with the opportunity to pursue education and obtain qualifications in their mother tongue, Polish, both in general education schools and at university level.

The European Humanities University also continued its activities, offering programmes in Russian, Belarusian, English and German; the Centre for Polish Studies of the Institute of Baltic Languages and Cultures at the Faculty of Philology of Vilnius University continued to offer Polish Studies to all interested applicants, regardless of their level of proficiency in Polish or their nationality; the Centre for Polish Language and Culture at the Education Academy of Vytautas Magnus University continued to offer studies in the Polish language and literature, conduct research projects, organise seminars and carry out other academic activities.

The Department of Slavic Studies of the Institute of Baltic Languages and Cultures at the Faculty of Philology of Vilnius University ensures the continuity of higher education in Russian language, literature and culture. The Department is involved in delivering the Bachelor's degree programme in Russian Studies within the Faculty of Central and Eastern European Languages and Cultures, and the Master's degree programme in Russian Studies. According to information provided by the Faculty of Philology of Vilnius University, the Department of Slavic Studies conducts research on the Russian language, literature and culture, the culture of the Russian national minority in Lithuania, the linguistic identity of Russian speakers in Lithuania, and synchronic and diachronic developments in Russian and other Slavic languages and cultures. The Master's programme in Russian Studies is taught in Russian and is open to international students.

In addition to degree programmes, the School of Languages at the Faculty of Philology, Vilnius University, offers Russian language courses for beginners and advanced learners. Courses are organised during the autumn and spring semesters, as well as during the summer; the summer courses include groups at A1, A2 and B1 levels, whilst in the higher-level groups, instruction is conducted in Russian. This opens up further opportunities for both academic Russian studies and the teaching of the Russian language, as well as the development of language skills.

The DNM continued to implement initiatives promoting interest in national minority issues. In 2023–2024, it organised a competition for the best final theses submitted by students of higher education institutions. 29 submissions were received: 16 Bachelor's theses, 9 Master's theses, 3 doctoral dissertations and 1 scientific article. Awards were presented to students and doctoral candidates from Vilnius University, Vytautas Magnus University, the Vilnius Academy of Arts, the Lithuanian Culture Research Institute, the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, the Lithuanian Centre for Social Sciences and Kaunas University of Technology for outstanding Bachelor's and Master's theses and doctoral dissertations on the following topics: "The Representation of the Roma People in the Lithuanian Historical Narrative: An Analysis of Sites of Memory", "Uneducated and Less Trustworthy: Social Distance in Evaluations of Lithuanian Speech with Lithuanian–Russian and Scandinavian Accents", "Jewish Sites of Memory in Kaunas and Their Significance for the Local Jewish Community", "The History of the Bagdoniai Old Believer Community of Čekautiškis in the Nineteenth Century", "Jewish Artistic Life in Lithuania, 1919–1940: Between Autonomy and Integration", "National Minority Movements in the Post-Soviet Space: An Analysis of the Polish Autonomy Movement in Lithuania", "The Ethnicity Dimension in the Restoration of Private Property Rights: Rethinking the Concept and Role of Ethnicity in the Land Restitution Process in South-Eastern Lithuania"

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

Particular attention is paid to improving access to education and learning outcomes in national minority schools, while preserving opportunities to receive education in national minority languages. Measures to strengthen access to education, inclusive education and integrated support for children continue to be implemented, with particular attention paid to children at risk of social exclusion or experiencing social disadvantage, including children belonging to the Roma national minority.

Under this measure, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport finances projects aimed at promoting inclusive education and improving access to education. The projects *Koordinuota metodinė pagalba įtraukiajam ugdymui organizuoti* (Coordinated Methodological Support for the Organisation of Inclusive Education) and *Visos dienos mokyklos modelio įgyvendinimas, siekiant didinti ugdymo paslaugų prieinamumą* (Implementation of the All-Day School Model to Improve Access to Education Services) are being implemented.

To facilitate the participation of pupils belonging to national minorities, as well as Russian-speaking pupils arriving from abroad and Roma pupils, in the education process, educational institutions under the authority of Vilnius City Municipality provide additional educational support measures. Teaching assistants are employed at the Vilnius Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Adult Education Centre, the Vilnius Saulėtekis Multifunctional Centre and Vilnius Naujininkai School. Teaching assistants support pupils who require additional assistance due to linguistic, social, cultural or individual educational needs by helping them participate in the educational process, understand the curriculum, communicate with teachers and classmates, and adapt more easily to the school community.

Measures to strengthen the teaching of the State language, Lithuanian, in national minority schools, develop teaching materials and improve pupils' learning outcomes also continued to be implemented through the project *Visos dienos mokyklos modelio įgyvendinimas, siekiant didinti ugdymo paslaugų prieinamumą* (Implementation of the All-Day School Model to Improve Access to Educational Services). These measures are intended to ensure equal opportunities for pupils to continue their education at higher levels and to participate successfully in society.

Part V of the Action Plan for Roma Inclusion 2030 also provides for Measure 5.1, which has already begun to be implemented. The measure aims to improve access to education and ensure effective educational support for pupils at risk of social exclusion, including the provision of specialised teaching materials and the introduction of recommended all-day school models.

Maintaining the network of national minority schools remains an integral part of the State's education policy. The provisions governing the reorganisation of the school network provide for exceptions for schools providing education in national minority languages, with a view to ensuring the continuity of their operation and access to education in the regions.

Lithuania continued to strengthen the provision of teaching materials to national minority schools and the methodological support available to their teachers. Topics relating to the history of Lithuania's national minorities, cultural diversity, human rights, Holocaust remembrance and citizenship education continue to be integrated into the general education curriculum. These topics are addressed in history, citizenship education, Lithuanian language and literature, and other subjects.

The National Agency for Education implements projects under which textbooks in the mother tongues of national minorities are developed, digital learning resources are created, and textbooks are procured for general education schools. In 2023–2024, the publication of textbooks aligned with the updated curricula continued, including textbooks for national minority schools. The State also placed particular emphasis on translating subject textbooks into Polish, Russian and Belarusian. Teachers working in national minority schools are provided with methodological support, and specialised teaching materials and digital learning resources are developed for their use. Inter-institutional and international co-operation also continues to be strengthened, creating opportunities for teachers to exchange methodological materials and good practices and to establish professional links with teachers from other communities.

Between 2022 and 2026, scholarly and science communication publications on the history, languages and cultural heritage of Lithuania's national minorities were published. Particular attention was devoted to the themes of the Year of the Karaites of Lithuania, the Year of Francysk Skaryna, the history of the Jews of Lithuania and the multicultural heritage of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Research conducted by the Lithuanian Institute of History and other research and cultural institutions contributed to promoting knowledge and awareness of the history and culture of national minorities.

To mark the Year of the Karaites of Lithuania in 2022, exhibition catalogues, educational, bibliographic and informational publications on the history, language and cultural heritage of the Karaites were prepared and published. The programme for the Year of Francysk Skaryna (2022) promoted the publication of conference proceedings, scholarly articles on the multicultural heritage of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and other popular science publications on Francysk Skaryna and the Ruthenian literary tradition.

Research conducted by the Lithuanian Institute of History covered the history and intellectual heritage of the Jews of Lithuania, the historical ties between Lithuania and Poland, the multicultural heritage of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and comparative studies on the cultural heritage of Lithuania's national minorities, including Jews, Karaites and Tatars. The Institute's researchers also contributed to the development of the Methodology for Monitoring the Situation of National Minorities and to the analysis of public attitudes towards minorities.

Researchers from the Lithuanian Institute of History participated in academic conferences and publishing projects devoted to the history of the Jews of Lithuania, their intellectual heritage and Holocaust remembrance research. In 2023, the conference volume *Vilniaus žydų intelektualinis paveldas* (The Intellectual Heritage of the Jews of Vilnius)⁵³ was published. It explores the contribution of the Jews of Lithuania to Lithuanian and European culture and scholarship.

Research on the history of the Jewish communities of Lithuania, the dissemination of historical memory and the promotion of Jewish heritage also continued. Academic partnerships with centres for Jewish studies in Lithuania and abroad also contribute to these efforts.

The Lithuanian Institute of History conducts research on the history of national minorities, ethnicity, identity, religiosity, community life, migration and borderlands. Between 2022 and 2024, researchers from the Institute's Department of Ethnology and Anthropology participated in the project *Etniškumas, religingumas ir tautinis tapatumas Lietuvoje ir Bulgarijoje. Tradiciniai elementai ir naujos transformacijos* (Ethnicity, Religiosity and National Identity in Lithuania and Bulgaria: Traditional Elements and New Transformations). The findings of this research may serve as an academic basis for the development of evidence-based policies on national minorities.

Between 2024 and 2026, the Lithuanian Institute of History organised academic conferences and conducted research involving researchers from Poland on the historical ties between Lithuania and Poland, the development of border regions, the history of cities, and the multicultural heritage of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.⁵⁴ Research on aspects of Poland's historical heritage in Lithuania was also published, including studies on the commemoration and archaeological investigation of Polish soldiers who died during the conflicts of the twentieth century.

In 2026, the National Minority Mother Tongue Subject Council of the National Agency for Education initiated a survey of teachers of national minority mother tongues on the

⁵³ Conference *Vilniaus žydų intelektualinis paveldas* (The Intellectual Heritage of Vilnius' Jews), 2023, https://www.lma.lt/uploads/Konferencijos_Vilniaus_zydu_intelektualinis_paveldas_leidinys_LT.pdf

⁵⁴ Academic conference *Lietuvos mažųjų miestų ir miestelių tyrimų problemos XV–XVIII a.* (Problems in the Study of Lithuania's Small Towns and Villages in the 15th–18th Centuries), 2024, <https://www.istorija.lt/data/public/uploads/2024/10/2024-11-14-15-lietuvos-mazuju-miestu.pdf>

implementation of the updated General Curricula. The survey was prepared and distributed through municipal and district teachers' methodological groups, thereby strengthening professional links among teachers from different communities, facilitating the exchange of experience, and providing opportunities to submit proposals for improving curricula and teaching materials. The data collected are used to address current challenges in teaching the subject and to further improve the quality of education in the mother tongues of national minorities.⁵⁵

In 2025, with a view to shaping the areas of academic research needed to support the implementation of the State's policy on national minorities, the DNM announced its intention to replace the Academic Works Competition with scholarships, to be introduced from 2026, for students of Lithuanian higher education institutions who choose topics for their final academic papers corresponding to the research areas identified by the DNM in co-operation with the academic community. The purpose of the scholarships is to encourage students at Lithuanian higher education institutions to take an interest in Lithuania's national minorities and to choose topics related to national minorities, including comparative research in this field, for their academic work at all levels of study (Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral).

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

Information on the network of general education schools providing education in national minority languages or teaching national minority languages is provided under Article 14 of the Framework Convention, which specifically regulates the right to learn a national minority language and to receive education in a national minority language.

According to the data from MoESS, 36 municipal projects are being funded under the project *Koordinuota metodinė pagalba įtraukiajam ugdymui organizuoti* (Coordinated Methodological Support for the Organisation of Inclusive Education). The projects aim to strengthen the organisation of inclusive education and improve access to educational support for pupils who require additional assistance in the educational process. This support is also relevant to pupils belonging to national minorities and pupils arriving from abroad, including Russian-speaking pupils and others who require additional support due to linguistic, cultural, social or individual educational needs.

The total value of the 36 projects amounts to EUR 19,551,159.63. The projects are expected to provide services to at least 6,565 pupils. According to data provided by the project beneficiaries, during the first phase of implementation, services had already been provided to 506

⁵⁵ Subject Councils, National Agency for Education, 2026, <https://www.nsa.smsm.lt/ugdymo-departamentas/mokomuju-dalyku-tarybos/mokomuju-dalyku-tarybu-veikla/tautiniu-mazumu-gimtosios-kalbos-dalyko-taryba/>

children, representing 7.68% of the total number of children envisaged under the project agreements.

The projects are being implemented in 36 municipalities: Akmenė District, Alytus City, Alytus District, Biržai District, Druskininkai, Ignalina District, Jonava District, Joniškis District, Kaišiadorys District, Kaunas City, Kaunas District, Kelmė District, Klaipėda City, Klaipėda District, Pakruojis District, Panevėžys City, Panevėžys District, Prienai District, Plungė District, Radviliškis District, Raseiniai District, Skuodas District, Šakiai District, Šiauliai District, Širvintos District, Švenčionys District, Tauragė District, Telšiai District, Trakai District, Ukmergė District, Utena District, Varėna District, Vilkaviškis District, Vilnius City, Vilnius District and Zarasai District.

Although the projects are not intended exclusively for pupils belonging to national minorities, the educational support system strengthened through their implementation helps to better address the needs of pupils belonging to national minorities, in particular Roma pupils and pupils arriving from abroad.

Under the project *Visos dienos mokyklos modelio įgyvendinimas, siekiant didinti ugdymo paslaugų prieinamumą* (Implementation of the All-Day School Model to Improve Access to Educational Services), 21 project agreements have been concluded, with a total value of nearly EUR 29,960,690.26. The projects are expected to provide services to 7,121 children, while more than 1,200 specialists and teachers will strengthen their competences. According to the latest data, services have already been provided to 2,202 children, representing approximately 31% of the planned number of beneficiaries (according to data from <https://vdu.gov.lt/>).

These data demonstrate the State's continued efforts to ensure access to education and equal opportunities to obtain education, improve the quality of education, develop comprehensive support for children and families, and strengthen the competences of teachers and educational support professionals. These measures create more favourable conditions for persons belonging to national minorities, including Roma children, as well as children arriving from abroad who require additional educational support, to access education services and receive assistance tailored to their individual needs.

Article 13

1. Within the framework of their education systems, the Parties shall recognise that persons belonging to a national minority have the right to set up and to manage their own private educational and training establishments.

2. The exercise of this right shall not entail any financial obligation for the Parties.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

In Lithuania, persons belonging to national minorities are guaranteed the right to preserve their language and culture, establish and operate private educational institutions, and provide education in their own language. This right is exercised in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the LoE).

Article 28(7) of the LoE provides: “In areas traditionally inhabited in substantial numbers by a national minority, where requested by the community, the municipality shall ensure education in the national minority language or the teaching of the national minority language”. This provision enables national minorities to preserve their language and cultural identity within the education system.

The right to establish private educational institutions is guaranteed by Article 42(1)(4) of the Law on Education, which provides that schools may be established by other legal persons established in the Republic of Lithuania, legal persons or other organisations of Member States, natural persons, and legal and natural persons of other States. They may establish general education schools, non-formal education schools, vocational education and training institutions, higher education institutions and educational support institutions, provided that they comply with the requirements set out in Article 43 of the LoE, which regulates the operation of schools.

The education system does not impose any legal restrictions on the right of national minorities to establish private educational institutions or to provide education in such institutions, provided that national education standards are observed. Private schools are subject to the same quality and operational requirements as other educational institutions.

Lithuania continues to support the non-formal education activities of national minorities. These schools provide children and young people with opportunities to learn their mother tongue, become familiar with their culture, history and traditions, and strengthen their ties with their national community. The right to establish and maintain such schools is guaranteed under national legislation.

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

Lithuania continued to strengthen dialogue with national minority communities on education-related matters and ensured their participation in decision-making concerning the education of national minorities.

By Order No. V-710 of 2 July 2025 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, the Advisory Group on National Minority Education was established. The group provides a framework for the systematic discussion of the educational needs of national minorities, the submission of proposals on the implementation of education policy, and the maintenance of continuous dialogue between State authorities and representatives of national minority communities.

Lithuania's decentralised education system assigns municipalities a significant role in the organisation of pre-primary and general education. Municipalities establish and maintain educational institutions, organise school admissions, and take decisions on the accessibility of educational services within their territories. When taking decisions on the education of national minorities, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport takes into account Lithuania's international obligations, including the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and consults representatives of national minority communities.

No significant developments in the case-law relating to the right of national minorities to establish and operate private educational institutions were identified during the period 2022–2026.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

Lithuania has State, municipal and non-State educational institutions, as well as non-formal education institutions. The legal framework provides equal opportunities for different communities, including national minorities, as well as religious communities and other legal entities, to establish and operate private educational institutions. Such schools are subject to the general requirements laid down in the Law on Education, without any additional restrictions concerning education in a national minority language. These opportunities are exercised by various national minority communities, including the Klaipėda Special School–Multifunctional Centre *Svetliaciok*, which provides education in Lithuanian and Russian, Marina Mižigurskaja Private Gymnasium, which provides education in Lithuanian and national minority languages.

Following Russia's military aggression against Ukraine in 2022, educational initiatives for Ukrainian children and the Ukrainian community have been further developed in Lithuania. Ukrainian children have the opportunity to attend State, municipal and non-State schools, while organisations of the Ukrainian community and education providers may establish non-formal education institutions, weekend schools and other educational initiatives aimed at preserving the Ukrainian language, culture and identity. The following educational institutions operate in

Lithuania: Public Institution *Rytų Europos mokykla*⁵⁶ and Public Institution *Gravitas Schola*⁵⁷, a private, free-of-charge and open school for children fleeing war, repressive regimes and other crises.

The State finances pupils' education in accordance with the general education funding framework, while cultural and non-formal education activities of national minorities may be supported through project-based funding.

National minority communities also actively organise non-formal education and activities aimed at preserving their cultural identity. Schools provide children and young people with opportunities to learn their mother tongue, history, culture and traditions and to maintain ties with their communities.

There are 31 non-formal education schools operating in Lithuania: one each for the Azerbaijani, Estonian, Greek, Karaite, Romanian, Roma, Latvian, Tajik and Uzbek communities; two Russian and two German schools; three Armenian and three Belarusian schools; four Polish, four Tatar and four Jewish schools; and five Ukrainian schools. These schools are attended by up to 800 pupils. They learn their mother tongue, the history of their people, religion, literature, music and other elements of their ethnic culture. The non-formal education curriculum promotes the transmission of the fundamentals of national culture and the preservation of national identity (see Annex 7).

The establishment of the Advisory Group on National Minority Education has strengthened the institutional dialogue between State authorities and representatives of national minority communities and created additional opportunities to identify and address practical issues relating to the education of national minorities.

Article 14

1. The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to learn his or her minority language.
2. In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if there is sufficient demand, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible and within the framework of their education system, that persons belonging to those minorities have adequate opportunities for being taught the minority language and for receiving instructions in this language.
3. Paragraph 2 of this article shall be implemented without prejudice to the learning of the official language or the teaching in this language.

⁵⁶ Public Institution *Rytų Europos mokykla*, <https://www.rytueuroposmokykla.lt/>

⁵⁷ Public Institution *Gravitas Schola*, <https://www.gravitasschola.lt/>

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

In Lithuania, the right to learn a national minority language and to receive education in a national minority language is guaranteed by the Law on National Minorities of the Republic of Lithuania and the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania.

Chapter III of the Law on National Minorities regulates the educational rights of national minorities. Article 7(1) provides that a person belonging to a national minority has the right to receive education in the language of that national minority or to learn the national minority language in general education and non-formal education schools in accordance with the general education and non-formal education programmes and in the manner prescribed by the Law on Education and other legal acts.

Article 30(2) of the Education Act stipulates that general education and non-formal education schools shall provide opportunities for pupils belonging to national minorities to foster their national, ethnic and linguistic identity, and to study their mother tongue, history and culture. In schools whose statutes, taking into account the wishes of parents (guardians) and pupils, provide for instruction in a national minority language or instruction through the medium of a national minority language, the educational process may be conducted in that language or individual subjects may be taught in that language.

Article 28(7) of the Law on Education further provides that, in areas traditionally inhabited in substantial numbers by a national minority, the municipality shall, where requested by the community, ensure education in the national minority language or the teaching of the national minority language.

To ensure high-quality education in national minority schools, the State finances the educational process, the development of teaching materials, teachers' professional development, and the provision of methodological support. By Order No. V-184 of 15 February 2024 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, additional opportunities were created to use and procure textbooks and teaching materials prepared and published in European Union Member States for teaching the mother tongues of national minorities.

An important element of the implementation of this Article is the strengthening of the teaching of the State language in national minority schools. Since 1 September 2021, at least five hours per week in pre-primary and pre-school education programmes in national minority schools have been devoted to education in Lithuanian. This measure is intended to improve pupils' proficiency in the State language and ensure equal opportunities in their further education.

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

Lithuania has a network of general education schools providing education in national minority languages or multilingual education. These schools provide education in Polish, Russian, Belarusian, Jewish, German and other national minority languages, or offer these languages as mother tongue subjects. In the 2024–2025 school year, there were 110 general education schools providing education in national minority languages.

The State ensures the funding of these schools and creates conditions for their continued operation. To preserve access to education for national minorities, particularly in areas traditionally inhabited in substantial numbers by national minorities, special provisions apply to the organisation of the school network. These provisions allow greater flexibility in assessing the operating conditions of national minority schools and enable pupils to receive education in a national minority language in accordance with the needs of local communities, even where pupil numbers decline or demographic circumstances change.

With a view to improving the quality of education and pupils' learning outcomes, Lithuania places particular emphasis on strengthening the teaching of the State language, promoting the early teaching of Lithuanian, enhancing teachers' professional development, and updating teaching materials.

By Order No. V-710 of 2 July 2025 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, the Advisory Group on National Minority Education was established. This group provides a framework for the systematic discussion of issues relating to the education of national minorities, the assessment of the effectiveness of the measures implemented, and the submission of proposals for improving education policy.

Measures to strengthen the competences of teachers working in schools providing education in national minority languages, update teaching materials and improve pupils' learning outcomes also continued to be implemented.

No significant developments in the case-law relating to the right to learn a national minority language or to receive education in a national minority language were identified during the reporting period.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

All educational institutions provide children and pupils with the opportunity to learn Lithuanian. Taking into account the wishes of parents and children, the State also offers education in national minority languages. At present, there are 110 general education schools in Lithuania

where the languages of instruction are Polish, Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Yiddish and German. Of these, 58 provide education in Lithuanian and Polish or in Polish, while 49 provide education in Lithuanian and Russian or in Russian. At Vilnius Francysk Skaryna Gymnasium, education is provided in Lithuanian and Belarusian; at Klaipėda Hermann Sudermann Gymnasium, in Lithuanian and the mother tongue of the German national minority; and at Vilnius Sholem Aleichem ORT Gymnasium, in Lithuanian, Hebrew and Yiddish.

In assessing the opportunities of pupils receiving education in national minority languages to obtain a high-quality education and achieve a sufficient command of the State language, the number of Lithuanian language and literature lessons in national minority schools was examined during the reporting period. Having examined a request submitted by a member of the SRL, the Ombudsperson for Children's Rights noted that, under the General Curricula then in force, 700 lessons were allocated to Lithuanian language instruction in years 1–4 in national minority schools, compared with 1,015 lessons in schools where Lithuanian is the language of instruction, a difference of 315 lessons. It was noted that the Supreme Administrative Court of Lithuania had ruled that the provision of the General Curricula allocating less time to the teaching of Lithuanian in national minority schools than to the teaching of the mother tongue was inconsistent with the requirements of the Law on Education. The Ombudsperson for Children's Rights stated that this situation did not ensure the best interests of the child, the right to quality education or equal opportunities, and recommended that the MoESS amend the General Curricula and other relevant legal acts to ensure that no less time is allocated to the teaching of Lithuanian than to the teaching of the mother tongue in national minority schools. This issue is important in striking a balance between the right of national minorities to receive education in their mother tongue and the need to ensure a sufficient command of the State language, which is essential for further education, higher education, social integration and participation in public life.

The results of the State Matura examinations, the National Student Achievement Assessment (NSAA), the Basic Education Achievement Assessment (BEAA) and international assessments indicate that pupils receiving education in national minority languages continue to achieve lower results than pupils receiving education in Lithuanian in certain subjects.

In 2024, 20.4% of pupils from national minority schools failed the State Matura examination in Lithuanian Language and Literature, compared with 6.7% of pupils in schools where Lithuanian is the language of instruction. In the State Matura examination in Mathematics, 13% of pupils from national minority schools failed the examination, compared with 9.2% of pupils receiving education in Lithuanian. Approximately 15% of pupils from national minority schools

failed the State Matura examination in Information Technology, compared with around 10% of pupils receiving education in Lithuanian, while the corresponding figures for the Biology examination were 10.5% and just over 4%, respectively.

The results of the 2025 National Student Achievement Assessment confirmed that the largest achievement gaps remain in Lithuanian Language and Literature. In the year 4 and year 8 NSAA, the proportion of pupils achieving at least the basic achievement level in schools where Lithuanian is the language of instruction was approximately 40–50 percentage points higher than in schools where Russian is the language of instruction. The results of pupils receiving education in Polish were also lower, although the gap was smaller, amounting to approximately 20–30 percentage points.

In the Basic Education Achievement Assessment (BEAA) in Lithuanian Language and Literature, the proportion of pupils receiving grades of 7–10 in schools where Lithuanian is the language of instruction was 33 percentage points higher than in schools where Russian is the language of instruction and 28 percentage points higher than in schools where Polish is the language of instruction.

The achievement gaps in Mathematics were smaller. The largest gap was observed in the Year 8 NSAA: pupils receiving education in Polish achieved the highest results, while pupils receiving education in Russian achieved the lowest, with a difference of 11 percentage points between the two groups.

The State recognises these disparities and is implementing targeted measures to improve proficiency in the Lithuanian language, strengthen teachers' competences and ensure high-quality education in national minority schools, while preserving opportunities to receive education in national minority languages and to maintain national identity.

Further information on education in national minority languages is available at: <https://www.nsa.smsm.lt/old/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Tautiniu-mazumu-svietimo-bukles-analize-2022-05-23.pdf>

Article 15

The Parties shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

Lithuania strengthened the participation of national minorities in public and cultural life. The most significant development was the adoption of the new LNM, which enshrines the right of persons belonging to national minorities to preserve their identity, language and culture, and defines the role of State authorities and municipalities in creating conditions for the participation of national minorities in public life.

For the first time in Lithuania, the consultative mechanism for national minorities is no longer merely the Council of National Minorities (CNM) established by administrative decision, but a statutory body with clearly defined functions and representation principles, ensuring the right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate in decision-making on social, economic, educational and other matters affecting their rights and interests. The CNM participates in the work of commissions and working groups, provides opinions on draft legislation and proposes priorities for the funding of non-governmental organisations of national minorities.

To ensure proportionate representation, the law establishes a model for the nomination of representatives based on the size of national minority communities. National minorities numbering more than 100,000 persons in Lithuania nominate three representatives; national minorities numbering between 10,000 and 100,000 persons nominate two representatives; and smaller communities nominate one representative each. In addition, for the first time, the Law provides for the inclusion in the Council of representatives of non-governmental organisations active in the field of the rights of national minorities.

The establishment of the CNM and the statutory regulation of its activities have significantly strengthened the opportunities for persons belonging to national minorities to participate systematically and effectively in public affairs at the national level and to contribute to the development and implementation of the State's policy on national minorities. The principal functions of the CNM are to submit proposals on national minority policy, strengthen dialogue between State authorities and national communities, discuss issues of relevance to national minorities, and promote the participation of national minorities in public life.

An important measure is the State funding provided for the activities of non-governmental organisations of national minorities and cultural and integration centres. Between 2022 and 2026, funding for operational projects covered both specialised cultural institutions of national minorities and municipal and local cultural centres. Funding was provided to HNC, KCCVN, KCNC, RCC, the Lithuanian National Minorities Folklore and Ethnography Centre, the

Polish House of Culture in Vilnius, the Pabradė Town Cultural Centre, the Trakai Culture and Arts Centre, the Visaginas Cultural Centre, the Cultural Centres of Švenčionys and Švenčionėliai, the Ignalina District Cultural Centre, the Ivan Luckevič Belarusian Museum, and other local cultural and community institutions.

Between 2022 and 2026, the DNM allocated almost EUR 4 million from the State budget to cultural projects of national minorities and operational projects of national minority cultural and integration centres. During this period, 983 projects were funded, enabling national minority organisations and cultural centres to carry out activities related to the promotion of culture, the preservation of identity, the socio-cultural integration of Roma, non-formal education for children and young people, intercultural dialogue, citizenship education and community participation (see Article 5).

Lithuania has also strengthened the participation of national minorities in national cultural events. In 2024, the Lithuanian Song Celebration featured, for the first time, a dedicated Day of National Communities of Lithuania, *Aš esu Lietuva. Sujunkime Lietuvą* (I Am Lithuania. Let Us Unite Lithuania), which brought together 11 national minority ensembles. This initiative contributed to enhancing the visibility of national minorities in Lithuania's cultural life.

The day-to-day participation of national minorities in cultural and social life is supported by regional cultural centres and arts institutions. An important role is played by the Visaginas Cultural Centre⁵⁸ which promotes the cultural activities of the Russian, Ukrainian, Tatar and other communities, as well as the Šalčininkai District Municipal Cultural Centre⁵⁹, an important centre for preserving and promoting Polish culture and traditions, which organises cultural events, educational programmes and international projects for the Polish national minority. The Centre actively promotes the participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and public life by organising performances by artistic ensembles, concerts, festivals and other events that contribute to the preservation of cultural traditions and intercultural exchange. The Centre's ensembles, which participate in both regional and international projects, also strengthen co-operation between communities.

The Old Theatre of Vilnius⁶⁰ has expanded access to cultural services by producing performances and cultural content in Russian, Polish and Ukrainian (see Recommendation 2).

⁵⁸ Visaginas Cultural Centre, <https://visaginokultura.lt/>

⁵⁹ Šalčininkai District Municipal Cultural Centre, <https://salcininkaikultura.lt/>

⁶⁰ The Old Theatre of Vilnius, <https://vsteatras.lt/>

2. Other important developments in legislation, policy, case-law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

The new Regulations of the CNM were approved in 2025, and national minority organisations as well as non-governmental organisations active in the field of the rights of national minorities were invited to participate in the process of appointing the members of the CNM. The aim was to ensure broader representation of national minorities and more effective participation in the development of State policy. At the first meeting of the CNM, held in October 2025, the leadership of the Council was elected. A representative of the Polish national minority was elected Chair of the CNM, while representatives of the Romanian and Greek national minorities were elected Deputy Chairs. The meeting also discussed the CNM's immediate priorities. The Council agreed to participate actively in the discussion of the draft Action Plan of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on combating antisemitism, xenophobia and other forms of hatred. CNM members representing the Polish and Russian national minorities were delegated to the commission responsible for evaluating journalistic works on national minority issues.

Among the CNM's key activities was a meeting with the Prime Minister held one month later, during which the CNM presented its expectations for the 20th Government. The meeting addressed the need for broader representation of national minorities in important inter-institutional working groups, commissions and committees. CNM members also raised the possibility of including a representative of national minorities on the Council of the public service broadcaster, discussed the public image and representation of national minorities in the public sphere, and highlighted the importance of education and cultural awareness-raising regarding the contribution of people of different nationalities to Lithuania's history and development. The participants also discussed possible improvements to the Law on National Minorities, issues relating to cultural heritage, the fight against antisemitism, xenophobia and hatred against minorities, and other matters of importance to national minorities.

In 2026, the CNM continued its consultative activities and dialogue with State authorities. A meeting of the CNM was attended by the Prime Minister's Adviser on Legal Affairs, with whom current issues relating to national minority policy and the activities of national minority communities were discussed. Representatives of the CNM also met with the Minister of Culture and discussed the promotion of national minority cultures, funding for community activities and the commemoration of the Year of the National Communities of Lithuania. These meetings strengthen the consultation mechanism for national minorities and their involvement in decisions that affect them.

There is a noticeable increase in the involvement of municipalities in supporting the cultural activities of national minorities, particularly in regions where larger national minority communities have traditionally lived. National minority organisations are being more actively involved in local events, consultation processes and cultural programmes.

Following the geopolitical developments of 2022, greater attention has been given to the cultural and social inclusion of the Ukrainian community in Lithuania by involving Ukrainian organisations in cultural and community activities at both the national and municipal levels.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

The Council of National Minorities for the 2025–2030 term of office comprises:

- 24 members: 15 women and 9 men,
- representatives of 15 national communities: Armenian, Belarusian, Estonian, Greek, Karaite, Latvian, Polish, Roma, Romanian, Russian, Tatar, Ukrainian, Uzbek, German and Jewish,
- 6 members representing cities and regions of Lithuania: Vilnius, Visaginas, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šilutė and Trakai.
- one representative of non-governmental organisations active in the field of the implementation of the rights of national minorities,
- 115 organisations representing national minorities or active in the field of the rights of national minorities that participated in the election process.

Between 2022 and 2026, the DNM allocated almost EUR 4 million from the State budget to cultural projects of national minorities and operational projects of national minority cultural and integration centres. During this period, 983 projects were funded, enabling national minority organisations and cultural centres to carry out activities related to the promotion of culture, the preservation of identity, the socio-cultural integration of Roma, non-formal education for children and young people, intercultural dialogue, citizenship education and community participation.

These figures confirm that the State not only formally recognises the right of national minorities to participate in cultural life but also creates practical conditions for community activities, the promotion of culture, the participation of children and young people, and intercultural dialogue. Lithuania further strengthened its approach to the participation of national minorities as an integral part of civic participation and democratic governance. Greater attention was devoted not only to preserving cultural traditions but also to involving national minorities in dialogue with State authorities, regional cultural policy, discussions on education policy, and strengthening youth and non-governmental organisations. National minority representatives participate in various working groups, councils and other consultative bodies. Representatives of the CNM participated in the

working group on improving the provisions of the LNM (see Recommendation 2); representatives of national minority communities in the field of education participate in the General Education Council under the MoESS; and teachers representing national minorities participate in the National Minority Mother Tongue Subject Council of the National Agency for Education.

The effective participation of national minorities is also ensured through direct dialogue with the highest State authorities. Whenever necessary, representatives of national minorities meet with the Prime Minister, representatives of the Government and members of the SRL, they are invited to meetings at the Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania, visit the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, and participate in sittings, discussions, conferences and other events relevant to national minorities. This practice enables national minority communities not only to present their cultural activities but also to raise issues of importance to their rights, education, language, cultural funding, integration and participation in public life directly with decision-makers. This demonstrates that the participation of national minorities in Lithuania is promoted not only through a formal consultative mechanism but also through continuous institutional dialogue with the legislature, the executive and the Office of the President (see Article 7).

Article 16

The Parties shall refrain from measures which alter the proportions of the population in areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities and are aimed at restricting the rights and freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

The Republic of Lithuania adheres to the principle that measures taken by State authorities must not be aimed at altering the composition of the population in areas traditionally inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities in a manner that restricts the rights and freedoms arising from the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The principles of human rights, equality before the law and the prohibition of discrimination enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania apply to all persons regardless of their nationality or place of residence. National regional development, spatial planning and local self-government policies are based on the principles of social cohesion, equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

When adopting decisions on spatial planning, the organisation of public services or public administration, State authorities are guided by the principles of legality, proportionality and the protection of human rights.

2. Other significant developments in legislation, policy, case law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

No measures were adopted in Lithuania to alter the demographic composition of areas inhabited by national minorities or to restrict the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to national minorities.

The State continued to implement regional development, social inclusion and public service accessibility measures, which apply equally to all residents, regardless of their ethnic origin.

Dialogue with national minority communities and municipalities has continued in order to ensure the effective implementation of the rights of national minorities at the local level.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

National minority communities in Lithuania play an active role in local government, cultural and social life, and their organisations cooperate with State and municipal authorities. In the Cabinet of the 20th Government of the Republic of Lithuania, two of the fourteen ministers – the Minister of Justice and the Minister of the Interior – belong to national minorities, while six representatives of national minorities serve as Vice-Ministers.

The opportunities for the political participation of national minorities are illustrated by the participation of Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania – Christian Families Alliance (EAPL–CFA) in elections: in the 2023 municipal council elections, the party won 57 seats in municipal councils and one mayoral office. In the 2024 elections to the SRL, it won three seats in single-member constituencies, while in the 2024 elections to the European Parliament it secured one seat. The election of EAPL–CFA representatives to local self-government institutions, the SRL and the European Parliament demonstrates that persons belonging to national minorities are able to exercise their electoral rights effectively and participate in decision-making at the local, national and European levels. Detailed information on the EAPL–CFA's participation in the elections is provided in Annex 15.

During the reporting period, no measures were adopted to alter the demographic composition of areas traditionally inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities. In 2023, the Central Electoral Commission reviewed and, on 30 November 2023, approved new boundaries

for 71 (more than half) of the single-member constituencies for the 2024 elections to the Seimas.⁶¹ The changes were made nationwide on the basis of an objective criterion, namely to ensure a more equal number of voters in each constituency in the light of demographic developments. Despite these boundary adjustments, constituencies covering areas traditionally inhabited by substantial Polish national minority communities were retained, and the political representation of national minorities remained ensured following the 2024 elections to the Seimas.

Article 17

1. The Parties undertake not to interfere with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish and maintain free and peaceful contacts across frontiers with persons lawfully staying in other States, in particular those with whom they share an ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, or a common cultural heritage.
2. The Parties undertake not to interfere with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate in the activities of non-governmental organisations, both at the national and international levels.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

The freedoms of expression, dissemination of information, association and peaceful assembly enshrined in the Constitution provide the legal basis for national minority communities to operate independently, establish organisations, maintain contacts with other communities, international organisations, cultural and educational institutions, and diaspora organisations abroad. These rights are also linked to the right of citizens belonging to national communities, enshrined in Article 37 of the Constitution, to foster their language, culture and customs.⁶²

In Lithuania, persons belonging to national minorities and their organisations are free to maintain contacts with persons and organisations in other states with whom they share a common ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious heritage, and to participate actively in the activities of international non-governmental organisations.

National minority organisations continuously develop international co-operation in the fields of culture, education, human rights and civil society. Polish organisations in Lithuania cooperate with research and cultural institutions, foundations and academic organisations in Poland. The Association of Polish Scientists in Lithuania regularly organises international academic

⁶¹ Boundaries of the Single-Member Constituencies for the 2024 Elections to the Seimas, [Boundaries of the Single-Member Constituencies for the 2024 Elections to the Seimas – vrk.lt](#)

⁶² Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, Articles 25, 35, 36 and 37, as well as Article 42, [KONST Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania](#)

conferences attended by researchers from Lithuania, Poland and other countries. In co-operation with Polish institutions and researchers, the Association annually organises the international interdisciplinary academic conference *Lietuvos ir Lenkijos vieta regioninės ir euroatlantinės integracijos procesuose* (The Place of Lithuania and Poland in the Processes of Regional and Euro-Atlantic Integration). In 2026, the thirteenth edition of the conference was held at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Vilnius. This demonstrates the active co-operation of Polish organisations in Lithuania with academic and cultural institutions in both Lithuania and Poland.

Representatives of the Lithuanian Tatar community maintain long-standing contacts with Crimean Tatar organisations, international Tatar institutions and other Tatar communities abroad. A representative of the Lithuanian Tatar community serves in the World Congress of Crimean Tatars, while Lithuanian Tatar organisations regularly participate in international events dedicated to the preservation of Tatar history, culture and heritage, as well as issues relating to Crimean Tatar culture, history and human rights. The community maintains contacts with the Tatar community in Poland, including the historic Tatar settlements of Bohoniki and Kruszyńiany, and with the Tatar community in Romania. These contacts facilitate the exchange of good practices, strengthen the shared cultural memory of the Tatar people, promote the heritage of Lithuanian Tatars internationally, and foster co-operation in the fields of culture, history, religion and youth activities.

The Estonian, Latvian and Greek communities in Lithuania also maintain contacts with the institutions, embassies, cultural organisations and diaspora organisations of their respective countries of origin. The Estonian community in Lithuania cooperates with Estonian institutions and diaspora representatives and participates in activities promoting Estonian statehood, language and culture. The Latvian community in Lithuania maintains close contacts with Latvian institutions and Lithuanian and Latvian organisations, and takes part in events dedicated to Baltic co-operation, Baltic Unity Day, and the promotion of the Latvian language, culture and traditions. The Greek community in Lithuania maintains cultural ties with institutions in Greece and Greek diaspora organisations and contributes to promoting the Greek language, history, and religious and cultural traditions in Lithuania. These activities demonstrate that persons belonging to national minorities in Lithuania are free to maintain transnational and inter-community contacts, participate in diaspora networks, and engage in joint initiatives relating to culture, education and the preservation of identity.

Representatives of Karaite communities from various countries participated in the programme for the Year of the Karaites of Lithuania in 2022.⁶³ Karaite representatives from Poland,

⁶³ *Tautinių bendrijų naujienos* (National Communities News), No. 3, 2022, https://tmde.lrv.lt/uploads/tmde/documents/files/TBN-zurnalas-Nr82_WEB-1.pdf

the United Kingdom, France, Germany and other European countries took part in the events and international gatherings held in Trakai. The Karaite community also maintains contacts with Karaite organisations in Poland and Ukraine.⁶⁴

Roma community organisations are particularly active in the field of international co-operation. Roma organisations and community representatives maintain contacts with Roma organisations and cultural initiatives abroad and participate in international events dedicated to Roma history, culture, identity, Holocaust remembrance and human rights. These activities contribute to increasing the international visibility of the Roma community in Lithuania, facilitate the exchange of good practices, and strengthen co-operation in the fields of Roma culture, education, social inclusion and non-discrimination.

The Baltic Region Roma Women Association (hereinafter referred to as the BRRA) cooperates with partners from Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia and other European countries. The organisation maintains partnerships with the Hungarian organisation MRGE, the International Women Business Network in Croatia, the Centre for Sustainable Communities Development in Bulgaria, the Estonian Roma Forum, the Latvian Roma Cultural Centre and other partner organisations. Representatives of the Roma community in Lithuania also participate in the activities of international organisations, including the International Romani Union.

2. Other significant developments in legislation, policy, case law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

Lithuania continued to strengthen the capacity of national minority organisations to participate in international activities and implement co-operation projects.

The DNM and other institutions promoted cultural and educational exchanges, international projects and co-operation with partners abroad.

In 2024, the BRRA, together with international partners, implemented the project *Inequality Does Not Solve Itself – Improving the Position of Roma Women in Society and the Labour Market*, funded under the MARIO programme. As part of the project, training was organised on advocacy, participation in decision-making and non-discrimination; round-table discussions were held with non-governmental organisations and public authorities; and consultations were provided to Roma women on human rights, non-discrimination and access to public services.

⁶⁴ The Year of the Karaites begins in Lithuania: the programme is aimed at both the community and the wider public, Trakai District Municipality, 2022, <https://trakai.lt/naujienos/lietuvoje-prasideda-karaimu-metai-programa-skirta-tiek-bendruomenei-tiek-placiai-visuomenei/4006>

In 2025, the Baltic Region Baltic Roma Women Association (BRRA) implemented a project aimed at strengthening its institutional capacity and competences, as well as co-operation with the business sector. As part of the project, training sessions for Roma women were held in Vilnius, Panevėžys and Marijampolė, 50 hours of individual consultations were provided, and a methodological guide was developed to strengthen Roma women's competences in leadership, networking and active participation in public life.

In 2026, BRRA is participating in the international project *I'm Roma Woman – I'm European: a Manifesto for Identity, Freedom and Dignity* funded by EVZ, Ergo and the European Union. The project includes creative workshops, leadership training, an international Baltic States conference and the preparation of the Roma Women's Manifesto. The aim of the project is to strengthen Roma women's participation in civil society and international advocacy networks.

Since 2026, the BRRA has also participated in the international HER Democracy project under the CERV programme, coordinated by partners from Hungary. The project aims to strengthen women's leadership, civic participation and democratic competences at the international level.

The DNM also strengthens co-operation with Lithuanian municipalities and presents awards in recognition of the support provided and projects implemented by municipalities and State institutions in the field of national minorities.⁶⁵

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

National minority organisations operating in Lithuania regularly cooperate with partners in other countries in the fields of culture, education and civic activities.

National minority communities participate in international projects, cultural festivals, youth exchange programmes, conferences and co-operation networks involving partners from various European countries. For example, the BRRA cooperates with partners from six to seven European countries (Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Moldova and others), implements projects under the MARIO, ROVA and CERV programmes, and is a partner of the International Romani Union and other international networks.

National minority organisations actively exercise their right to maintain contacts with their kin communities abroad and to participate in the activities of international non-governmental organisations. During the reporting period, the Association of Polish Scientists in Lithuania organised annual international conferences bringing together the academic communities of Lithuania and Poland. The Lithuanian Karaite Cultural Community maintained contacts with

⁶⁵ Information on the awards presented to municipalities, including municipal reports, <https://tmde.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys-1/departamento-apdovanojimai/apdovanojimas-uz-savivaldybiu-ar-valstybes-istaigu-teikiama-parama-ir-vykdomus-projektus-tautiniu-mazumu-srityje/>

Karaite communities in Poland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, France and Germany, while international Karaite events held in Lithuania attracted more than 200 participants from various European countries. The Union of Lithuanian Tatar Communities continued its co-operation with Crimean Tatar organisations and the World Congress of Crimean Tatars. Roma organisations participated in international projects and networks involving partners from Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria, Latvia, Estonia, Moldova and other European countries. These examples demonstrate the active participation of Lithuania's national minorities in international networks in the fields of culture, academia, human rights and civil society.

State and municipal authorities continue to cooperate with national minority organisations in strengthening international co-operation and promoting intercultural dialogue.

Article 18

1. The Parties shall endeavour to conclude, where necessary, bilateral and multilateral agreements with other States, in particular neighbouring States, in order to ensure the protection of persons belonging to the national minorities concerned.

2. Where relevant, the Parties shall take measures to encourage transfrontier co-operation.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

Lithuania continues to develop bilateral and multilateral co-operation with other States in the fields of the protection of national minorities, culture, education, youth, social inclusion and historical remembrance. In addition to the agreements already referred to in the fifth report, new inter-State and inter-institutional co-operation instruments were signed during the reporting period, providing a framework for practical projects in the fields of culture, education, youth and academic exchanges, as well as co-operation between communities.

International agreements

On 27 June 2024, the Agreement on Security Co-operation between Ukraine and the Republic of Lithuania was signed in Brussels.⁶⁶ Although the main purpose of this agreement is security co-operation, it also reflects the broader strategic co-operation between Lithuania and Ukraine, which is relevant to measures concerning the integration, education and social protection of Ukrainian citizens in Lithuania, including children, young people and families who have fled the war.

On 2 March 2023, the Programme for co-operation in the fields of education, science, culture, youth and sports between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the

⁶⁶ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/71b065e1c90511efa5ddd96c482819f5>

Government of the State of Israel 2023–2026 was signed. The Programme provides for co-operation in the fields of education, science, culture, youth and sports, the promotion of bilateral cultural projects and academic exchanges, the strengthening of direct contacts between research and higher education institutions and cultural institutions, as well as co-operation in international organisations. The Programme is also important for initiatives relating to the history, culture and remembrance of Lithuanian Jews and to education about Jewish heritage.

On 16 September 2022, the Programme of Cultural Co-operation between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Estonia and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia for the Years 2023–2026 was signed. The Programme promotes regional exchanges in the fields of culture and the creative industries, as well as exchanges between artists, cultural organisations and experts.⁶⁷ It provides a framework for developing cultural co-operation among the Baltic States, which is also relevant to the cultural links of the Latvian and Estonian communities in Lithuania.

Inter-institutional agreements and co-operation plans

Following the Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine on 24 February 2022, Lithuania stepped up practical co-operation with Ukraine in the fields of culture, youth, education, social protection and the protection of children's rights. Lithuania also provides expert support to Ukraine in its pursuit of membership of the European Union.

On 11 April 2022, the Agreement between the MSSL and the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine on Co-operation in the Field of Protection of Children Affected by the War in Ukraine due to the Russian Federation's Armed Aggression was signed in Kyiv. This agreement is important in ensuring protection and assistance for children affected by the war and safeguarding their interests.⁶⁸

The Minister of Social Security and Labour and the Minister of Youth and Sports of Ukraine also signed a co-operation plan in the field of youth policy. The plan aims to contribute to improving young people's well-being, strengthening their competences and self-confidence, and developing joint activities in the fields of national and civic identity. The activities provided for in the Plan were implemented until the end of 2025.

Lithuania also takes an active part in initiatives of the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the United Nations and the European Union aimed at strengthening the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, intercultural dialogue and inter-State co-operation. At the

⁶⁷ [https://lrkm.lrv.lt/uploads/lrkm/documents/files/Baltic%2BProgramme%2B2023-2026%20\(tran%20lation%20LT\).pdf](https://lrkm.lrv.lt/uploads/lrkm/documents/files/Baltic%2BProgramme%2B2023-2026%20(tran%20lation%20LT).pdf)

⁶⁸ https://socmin.lrv.lt/uploads/socmin/documents/files/veiklos-sritys/tarptautinis/susitarimai/Agreement_Protection%20of%20Children_LT_UA_2022_04_11.pdf

practical level, joint projects in the fields of culture, education and youth are implemented with institutions in neighbouring and other States, cultural and educational institutions and national minority organisations.

The specific forms of implementation of these agreements and co-operation measures in the individual fields are discussed in greater detail under other Articles of the report: education, teacher training, textbooks, higher education and teaching in national minority languages under Articles 12 and 14; culture and the funding of national minority cultural centres and community activities under Articles 5 and 15; and international contacts with communities sharing a common ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, diaspora organisations and cultural institutions abroad under Article 17.

2. Other significant developments in legislation, policy, case law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

Since the fifth monitoring cycle, Lithuania has continued to strengthen international co-operation in the field of national minority policy. The LNM, which entered into force on 1 January 2025, strengthened the legal framework for the protection of national minorities and created further opportunities to develop international dialogue and exchanges of good practice with other States and international organisations.

The DNM actively co-operates with authorities of other States, diplomatic missions and international organisations, organises bilateral meetings and expert visits, and participates in international forums on the protection of national minorities.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

During the period 2023–2026, bilateral cultural and academic exchange projects between institutions in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine and Israel continued. Joint cultural initiatives, educational events, academic exchanges and youth projects contributed to strengthening intercultural dialogue, raising awareness of Jewish cultural heritage and developing international co-operation.

The participation of Lithuanian authorities in the activities of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other international organisations provides opportunities to exchange good practice in the field of the protection of national minorities and to strengthen regional co-operation.

Article 19

The Parties undertake to respect and implement the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention making, where necessary, only those limitations, restrictions or derogations which are provided for in international legal instruments, in particular the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, in so far as they are relevant to the rights and freedoms flowing from the said principles.

1. Legal, policy and practical measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers and the Advisory Committee relating to this Article

The Republic of Lithuania respects the principles of the Framework Convention and implements them in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, international human rights provisions and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.⁶⁹

The constitutional principles of human dignity, the rule of law, proportionality, equality and non-discrimination ensure that restrictions on human rights and freedoms may be prescribed only by law, must be necessary in a democratic society and proportionate to the legitimate aim pursued.

The rights and freedoms of persons belonging to national minorities in Lithuania may be restricted only in the cases and to the extent provided for by national and international law, in accordance with the principles of legality and proportionality.

In implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, Lithuania continued to strengthen the human rights protection framework, anti-discrimination measures and the human rights expertise of law enforcement authorities.

2. Other significant developments in legislation, policy, case law and practical measures since the adoption of the Fifth Opinion

Since the fifth monitoring cycle, Lithuania has continued to strengthen the legal framework for the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and measures to safeguard human rights.

The LNM, which entered into force in 2025, further developed the system for the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and strengthened the legal safeguards for their cultural and linguistic rights.

⁶⁹ <https://tm.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys-1/atstovavimas-eztt/europos-zmogaus-teisiu-konvencija-ir-kiti-europos-tarybos-dokumentai/konvencija-ir-jos-papildomi-protokolai/>

Training on human rights, non-discrimination and the protection of national minorities continued to be provided to staff of State authorities, law enforcement officials and public sector professionals.

At the practical level, measures to combat discrimination, hate speech and hate crime continued to be implemented.

3. Relevant data, statistics or other information

Lithuania has an institutional human rights protection framework comprising the courts, the OEEO, the PORL and other competent authorities.

State authorities regularly cooperate with organisations representing national minorities, human rights experts and the non-governmental sector on matters relating to the protection of human rights and the implementation of the Framework Convention.

Organisations representing national minority communities play an active role in consultations and public policy-making processes relating to human rights and the protection of national minorities.