

# Lithuania

Virginija Aleksejūnė and Margarita Jankauskaitė (Centre for Equality Advancement) (June 2016)

## Overview

The first and only Lithuanian National Action Plan (NAP) ran from 2012 to 2014<sup>1</sup>. The Foreign Affairs Minister approved it on 28 December 2011, designating the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) as coordinator. The responsibility to implement the NAP fell to the Ministries of Health, Social Security and Labour, National Defence (MND), Interior, and the Police Department within the Interior.

The NAP's main goal was: *'increased influence of women's contribution to international peace, security and democracy processes both at a national and international level,'* which should be achieved by:

- Motivating women to work on conflict prevention within national, regional and international institutions;
- Presenting the NAP to Lithuanian society
- Educating institutional personnel on UNSCR 1325-related issues;
- Contributing to international initiatives supporting and implementing UNSCR 1325.

While the NAP has 14 measures, no budget allocation exists for implementation. The document's introductory portion highlights that the majority of objectives shall be implemented using diplomatic actions that do not require separate funding.

The NAP's internal focus addresses the insufficient female presence in military and police forces. The NAP states that this insufficiency could be attributed to women's lack of motivation, their inefficient career planning or inadequate service conditions. Gender bias within organisations does not appear as one of the reasons that hinder progressive developments.

The NAP includes actions to commission research (by the Ministry of National Defence) regarding the possible spread of sexual or gender-based harassment in the Lithuanian Armed Forces, as well as research with regards to the defence and security sector soldiers' and employees' attitudes towards equal career opportunities for women and men. However no measures are foreseen for how to combat these problems.

The NAP includes no special measures addressing or involving men and boys. It mentions neither women nor men as specific targets, and discusses neither on vulnerability, nor its varied, intersecting aspects. The NAP does not address problems related to sexual and gender based violence. The wording regarding gender-based violence refers to the "contents of the UNSCR 1325" and lacks the ability to address gender violence's diverse forms.

Since the NAP monitoring report is not public it is difficult to evaluate the implementation achievements. A NAP implementation agreement was signed between three ministries; the Social Security and Labour, National Defence and Foreign Affairs. This agreement does not commit the Ministries to report to the Government. While the MFA has published an NAP implementation report on its website<sup>2</sup>, other ministries have not given any official reports.

---

See

<sup>1</sup>[http://www.kam.lt/lt/tarptautine\\_humanitarine\\_teise\\_628/tarptautines\\_humanitarines\\_teises\\_saltiniai/saugumo\\_tarnybos\\_rezoliucija.html](http://www.kam.lt/lt/tarptautine_humanitarine_teise_628/tarptautines_humanitarines_teises_saltiniai/saugumo_tarnybos_rezoliucija.html)

<sup>2</sup>[http://www.kam.lt/lt/tarptautine\\_humanitarine\\_teise\\_628/tarptautines\\_humanitarines\\_teises\\_saltiniai/saugumo\\_tarnybos\\_rezoliucija.html](http://www.kam.lt/lt/tarptautine_humanitarine_teise_628/tarptautines_humanitarines_teises_saltiniai/saugumo_tarnybos_rezoliucija.html)

The main challenge to mobilizing Lithuania's EU-level activity on UNSCR 1325 is the lack of importance regarding gender equality issues. The national government refuses to recognize the priority behind sufficiently funding or allocating other necessary resources.

Initiated by the MFA, a consultation with CSOs regarding the new NAP took place in October 2014. Unfortunately, no further actions were taken, as this topic was not a priority at that moment.

## **Design**

CSO involvement in NAP development and implementation is rather limited and fragmented. CSO representatives have been invited to take part in informal meetings and share ideas on NAP framework-related activity. Even though CSOs were allowed to comment on the NAP's draft and submit suggestions, they were not actively involved in the NAP's implementation.

The Government invited no CSOs to sign the NAP, probably because Lithuanian CSOs possessed neither direct association to UNSCR 1325 implementation nor strong area expertise. Most CSOs have built expertise in human rights and development. CSOs are therefore reluctant to be more engaged in the NAP processes. If the Government defined NAP measures more specifically (for example projects to address masculinity norms or gender stereotypes) instead of the current broad approach of "trainings on the content of the UNSCR 1325," local CSOs would increase their activity with the NAP.

## **Implementation**

Two ministries, the MFA and the MOD, were the main NAP implementers, without CSO involvement.

The Government implemented the following measures:

- The General Adolfas Ramanauskas Warfare Training Centre of the Lithuanian Armed Forces has included a 1-hour lecture on UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions in its Individual Skills Course curriculum;
- Joint Headquarters of the Lithuanian Armed Forces representatives have delivered 8 lectures (1 hour each) on UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions to the Lithuanian Armed Forces General Adolfas Ramanauskas Warfare Training Centre's soldiers on official missions/international operations. The lectures discuss general information on gender concepts, the importance of gender in international operations and the situation of women and children in armed-conflicts. 140 soldiers attended the lectures, all of who will perform international operations in Afghanistan, Mali, Somalia, Kosovo and Turkey.
- The Ministry of National Defence's training programmes intended for civilian personnel abroad include a course on UNSCR 1325. Since Lithuania reduced its contributions in Afghanistan, the need for such training has decreased.

## **Reporting**

The Inter-Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men includes representatives of all ministries, as well as the Statistics Department. The Commission is the main body responsible for gender mainstreaming policies but does not report on the NAP. The Minister of Social Security and Labour holds the Commission accountable, while the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman can monitor its activities. The Commission co-ordinates the National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men's implementation alongside other ministerial-level gender-related issues. Every year each ministry should report on progress achieved in gender mainstreaming policy implementation within their ministry and related institutions. The Ministry of National Defence also reports on UNSCR 1325 implementation in the national defence system.

No unique, official monitoring report of Lithuania's NAP exists, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs annually sends the UN Security Council voluntary reports on UNSCR 1325 implementation.

Lithuanian CSOs did not take any steps to independently monitor NAP implementation due to lack of specific expertise as well as human and financial resources.

### **Conclusion**

More active CSO involvement at all stages of the NAP, including drafting, implementing and monitoring would help push forward the NAP implementation process. It would also aid in strengthening governmental and nongovernmental cooperation through exchanging knowledge, expertise and know-how. CSOs possess reach expertise on gender-based violence and combating gender stereotypes, which they could convey to both national and international audiences. Governmental institutions have the leverage to facilitate and embed the crucial systemic changes that ensure sustainable results for UNSCR 1325 implementation.

The Government should approve the next NAP, which could help ensure productive cooperation between different ministries, as well as guarantee periodical reporting.