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**ACTION PLAN
FOR ROMA INTEGRATION INTO THE LITHUANIAN SOCIETY
FOR 2015–2020**

**CHAPTER 1
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. The Action Plan for Roma Integration into the Lithuanian Society for 2015–2020 (hereinafter referred to as the “Action Plan”) is aimed at reducing social exclusion of Roma, promoting the participation of Roma in public life and increasing public tolerance.
2. The Action Plan was drawn up with a view to implementing the European Commission’s Communication of 5 April 2011 on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 (COM(2011) 0173) and having regard to Lithuania’s international commitments under the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, and other international treaties.
3. The measures of the Activity Plan were planned on the basis of the study “Situation of the Roma National Minority and Evaluation of Its Integration” carried out by Dr. Vita Petrušauskaitė in 2014, the study entitled “Study on and Assessment of the Situation of Women, including the Implementation of the Recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for Lithuania” conducted in 2013, the sociological survey “Roma Children in the Educational System: Cases in Vilnius and Ukmergė Municipalities” and in accordance with the consultations with public administration institutions and non-governmental organizations, representing the interests of Roma national minority.

**CHAPTER 2
SITUATION ANALYSIS**

**SECTION 1
DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF LITHUANIA’S ROMA**

4. Based on the 2011 Population and Housing Census, there were 2,115 Roma living in the country. Since 1989 the number of Roma in the country has been decreasing; based on the 1989 Population Census, there were 2,718 Roma living in Lithuania, whereas, in 2001, the resident Roma population was 2,571. The decrease in the number during the 1989–2001 period corresponded with the general decrease in Lithuania's population (the number of Roma, just like the entire Lithuania's population, declined by 5%) and during the 2001–2011 period, it exceeded the overall average of the country – the number of Roma fell by 18 percentage points, whereas Lithuania's resident population decreased by 13%.

5. Based on the 2011 Population and Housing Census, 81% of Roma resided in urban areas, whereas 19% of Roma lived in rural areas. The majority of Roma lived in the counties of Vilnius (38% / 814 persons), Kaunas (23% / 482 persons), Šiauliai (11% / 224 persons), Marijampolė (10% / 214 persons) and Panevėžys (7% / 145 persons).¹

6. The age structure of the Roma national minority is exceptional in the national context. In this group, a substantial percentage, i.e. even 49% of all Roma, is comprised of children and young people under 20 years of age. In the case of Lithuania's resident population, children and young people (aged 0–19) account for 22% of the total population. To compare with the 2001 Population and Housing Census, the share of children and young people in the Roma group grew by 3%, whereas the opposite trend was observed in the whole of Lithuania – the share of the residents in this age group in the total society structure dropped from 27% to 22%.²

7. There is around one third of Lithuania's Roma (29% / 619 persons) residing in the city of Vilnius, the majority of them (approx. 400) live in Kirtimai neighbourhood. To compare with the data of the 2011 Population and Housing Census (i. e. the entire Roma ethnic group of Lithuania) and the social survey of the Kirtimai Roma conducted in 2011, it can be seen that children and young people in Kirtimai neighbourhood make up a particularly large share: children and young people under 20 years of age account for 54% and children under 16 years of age account for 46% of the entire Roma population residing in Kirtimai.³

¹ Statistikos departamentas (2013). *Gyventojai pagal tautybę, gimtąją kalbą ir tikybą*. Vilnius: Statistikos departamentas. [Statistics Lithuania (2013). *Population by nationality, native language and religion*. Vilnius: Statistics Lithuania.]

² Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Ne)lygios galimybės švietime: ankstyvo romų vaikų pasitraukimo iš ugdymo sistemos Vilniaus mieste analizė. // *Etniškumo studijos 2014/1*, Vilnius: Lietuvos socialinių tyrimų centras. [Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Non)Equal opportunities in education: analysis of dropping out of Roma children from the educational system in Vilnius city.]

³ Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Ne)lygios galimybės švietime: ankstyvo romų vaikų pasitraukimo iš ugdymo sistemos Vilniaus mieste analizė. // *Etniškumo studijos 2014/1*, Vilnius: Lietuvos socialinių tyrimų centras. [Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Non)Equal opportunities in education: analysis of dropping out of Roma children from the educational system in Vilnius city.]

SECTION 2

PARTICIPATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

8. The data of the 2001 and 2011 Population and Housing Censuses revealed significant changes in education. There was a substantial improvement in the educational attainment among Roma in 2011. There is a positive change in the reduction of illiteracy rates – the number of illiterate persons and persons who failed to attain primary education in the Roma group decreased several times (from 26% to 10%) in 2011, whereas the percentage of persons who attained primary education increased from 31% to 42%. The number of persons who attained basic education grew as well (from 15% to 29%). However, negative trends can be observed as well. To compare with the 2001 data, the percentage of persons who attained secondary and higher education in the Roma group decreased from 28% to 20%. The indicators of educational attainment among the Roma population still differ greatly from the national average, and as the overall education level of the country's population has been improving, the educational attainment among Lithuania's Roma has improved only at the lowest level, i. e. primary and basic education. During the 2001–2011 period the percentage of Lithuania's population who attained secondary and higher education grew, whereas these indicators in the Roma group decreased.⁴

9. Compared to the 2001 data, the educational attainment among Roma children underwent marked changes – the level of illiteracy and incomplete primary education in this group was reduced by 36% (47% in 2001 and 11% in 2011) and the number of persons who attained basic education increased (7% and 26% respectively). In 2011, the difference between the educational attainment of Roma children (10–19 years of age) and that of their counterparts in Lithuania was more visible at the level of secondary education, whereas the indicators of primary and basic education differed by 1–5% only (the differences in 2001 made up 11–36%).

10. In Lithuania, pre-school and pre-primary education is not compulsory. Statistical data show that in 2013 66.1% of children aged 1–6 studied under pre-school and pre-primary education programmes in Lithuanian educational institutions, whereas 89.5% of the country's six-year olds participated in pre-primary education.⁵ In 2014, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman conducted a survey to collect information about Roma children attending pre-school and pre-primary education institutions in different municipalities. The survey revealed that a very small number of Roma

⁴ Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Ne)lygios galimybės švietime: ankstyvo romų vaikų pasitraukimo iš ugdymo sistemos Vilniaus mieste analizė. // *Etniškumo studijos 2014/1*, Vilnius: Lietuvos socialinių tyrimų centras. [Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Non)Equal opportunities in education: analysis of dropping out of Roma children from the educational system in Vilnius city.]

⁵ LR Švietimo ir mokslo ministerija (2014). *Lietuva. Švietimas regionuose 2014. Lygios galimybės*. Vilnius: Švietimo aprūpinimo centras. [Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (2014). *Lithuania. Education in regions 2014. Equal opportunities*. Vilnius: Education Supply Centre]

children attended pre-school and pre-primary education institutions in Lithuania. In 2013–2014, a total of 18 Roma schoolchildren (10 of whom studied in the Roma Community Centre (RCC) based in Vilnius) studied under pre-school education programmes and 33 of them (22 of whom studied in the RCC) studied under pre-primary education programmes.⁶ This information shows that the participation of Roma children in pre-school and pre-primary education significantly differs from the national average, and there are only around 20% of Roma children aged 1–6 years who are taught under pre-school and pre-primary programmes.⁷

11. The survey conducted by the Ombudsman for Children's Rights in 2014 revealed that 50 Roma children study in 11 special schools. The largest number of Roma schoolchildren study in the Dabikinė special school, Akmenė district, and Žagarė special school, Joniškis district; 11 children are enrolled in each of them.⁸ To compare the number of Roma children studying in special schools with the total number of Lithuania's Roma schoolchildren, 8.7% of Roma children study in special schools. During the survey conducted by the Ombudsman for Children's Rights, the single fact of the ungrounded enrolment of a Roma child in a special school was established; therefore, it should be stated that in the cases analysed during the survey children study in special schools legally, i. e. having regard to the procedure for the referral of children to special schools and determination of special educational needs regulated by the legislation, parents' request, etc. Nevertheless, the Ombudsman for Children's Rights noted that the special education system partially encourages Roma parents to allow their children attend special schools; however, if the needs for social assistance are satisfied by different methods, at least some of the schoolchildren who currently attend special schools could be integrated into the general education system.

12. The current level of educational attainment among Lithuania's Roma and the qualification requirements set for employees in the Lithuanian labour market will determine that (formal and non-formal) adult education will remain a significant measure of Roma integration into the Lithuanian society. Municipalities and their network of adult education providers could play an important role in this process. The available data of non-governmental organisations and municipalities show that the members of the Roma ethnic group take advantage of the opportunity to attain primary, basic and secondary education through distance learning mode in adult education centres (in the districts of Akmenė and Panevėžys and in the city of Vilnius); however, the access to these services for the members of the Roma ethnic group should be expanded.

⁶ Survey conducted by the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, 18 June 2014, Certificate No. 14-SN-65.

⁷ Calculated on the basis of the 2011 Census data (number of Roma children aged 1–6 years in Lithuania) and the information collected during the survey conducted by the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman's Office in 2014.

⁸ Survey by the Ombudsperson for Children's Rights "Ensuring the Right to Education of Roma Children", 19 August 2014, Certificate No. (6.1-2013-329) PR-156)

SECTION 3

PARTICIPATION IN THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

13. Roma persons incur a higher risk of being included in the category of persons who are not covered by the compulsory health insurance and thus being deprived of the possibilities to receive all personal health care services provided by the legislation. Based on the 2011 Population Census and the data of the Register of Persons Covered by the Compulsory Health Insurance, it was calculated that the share of Roma persons who are not covered by the compulsory health insurance makes up one fourth (24%), whereas the share of non-insured persons in the country equalled 9% during the same period (in 2011). The data of this derivative indicator are also confirmed by the information provided by the Naujininkai Clinic based in Vilnius indicating that 32.5% of Roma people were not covered by the compulsory health insurance in Kirtimai neighbourhood in 2014.

14. The compulsory health insurance covers all children under the age of 18 years and women who have been granted a maternity leave under the procedure prescribed by the law and unemployed women during the period of pregnancy 70 days before the child birth (after 28 pregnancy weeks and over) and 56 days after the child birth. There is no reliable information available as to whether Roma persons (men and women) take advantage of the provision entrenched in the Law on Health Insurance, under which the persons insured by the state include one of the parents/adoptive parents raising a child under 8 years of age, also one of the parents/adoptive parents or guardians raising two or more minor children, and persons supported by the state and provided with a social benefit. Although, under the provisions of the Law on Health Insurance, a major share of the Roma people could be insured by the compulsory health insurance by the state, the failure to process the necessary documents in a timely manner results in the deprivation of the right to receive personal health care services. With a view to ensure access to health care services for Roma, the services provided by social workers or crosscultural intermediaries are of great importance.

15. Minor attention has been paid to the health care field in the Roma integration programmes, which have been implemented since 2000. Without having carried out additional studies, it is impossible to assess the vaccination extent (coverage) of Roma children and adults, what are the main diseases among the Roma population, and whether this indicator is different from the country's morbidity indicator, what is the subjective evaluation of the health status of Roma people, and what are the main problems encountered in the health care system. The data of the 2011 Population Census show that the share of persons who are unemployed because of their disability is

significantly larger in the Roma group – 16% of economically inactive persons were unemployed because of their disability in the Roma group, where the national average stood at 4% only.

16. Based on the data of the Vilnius Centre for Addictive Disorders, 121 Roma patients visited the mobile clinic of the Vilnius Centre for Addictive Disorders in 2013 (136 in 2012 and 91 in 2011). Although these data cannot be considered as sufficient in order to evaluate the prevalence of addictive disorders among Roma (the services provided by the mobile clinic in Kirtimai neighbourhood of Vilnius city are used not only by people who are addicted to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances), harm reduction programmes are important for reduction of negative medical and social consequences related to the use of drugs and risky behaviours for persons living in Kirtimai neighbourhood.

SECTION 4 PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET

17. When analysing the data of the 2001 and 2011 Population and Housing Censuses, significant changes can be seen in the main sources of income of Lithuania's Roma. During the past ten years, the share of Roma whose main source of income is non-formal individual activity or non-formal trading has substantially decreased from 27% in 2001 to 5% in 2011.⁹ During the same period, the share of Roma, whose main source of income is benefits grew twofold from 13% in 2001 to 26% in 2011. The share of Roma whose main source of income is from wages grew slightly from 1% to 5%. These data show that during the recent years the number of Roma whose major source of income is non-formal (non-taxable) individual activities has been decreasing; however, the integration into the official labour market still remains complicated.

18. In 2011, the unemployment rate among Lithuania's Roma stood at 34% (the national average was 11%). Based on the data of the survey conducted in 2007, the majority of the working-age Roma registered in the Lithuanian Labour Exchange applied to the Labour Exchange with the hopes to receive job offers (68%) and a smaller share (21%) applied to the Labour Exchange for other services (for example, to obtain coverage of the compulsory health insurance). Unemployment among the Roma population is often related to other social problems such as illiteracy, debts, lack of general occupational and social skills, lack of appropriate qualifications, lack of Lithuanian language knowledge, resistance of close family members to their job search, etc. Therefore, when

⁹ Calculated on the basis of the data of the 2001 and 2011 Censuses, considering that Lithuania's Roma engaged in non-formal individual activities / trade are those who indicated their main source of income classified under the following categories: another source of income, did not specify, income from one's own or family business. These calculations are confirmed by the data of the survey conducted in 2007, during which 29.4% of the respondents indicated that their main job from which they receive income is non-formal individual activities / trade.

working with Roma, individualised mediation services for finding employment or starting up a business are of vital importance, having regard to individuals' need for social services, training courses or employment. Implementing the projects funded within the EU Structural Support programming period to help Roma experiencing the social risk and social exclusion to integrate into the labour market, the employment models for Roma were devised and tested, training programmes and methodological recommendations for mediators who offer recruitment mediation services were prepared during the 2004–2014 period.¹⁰ With a view to achieve positive changes in the field of Roma integration into the labour market, the commenced work should be further continued by ensuring consistent, high-quality and efficient recruitment mediation services for Roma.

19. Compared to other groups, persons maintained by family, the absolute majority of whom are children under the age of 18 years, account for a particularly large share in the group of Lithuania's Roma (50% in 2011, the national average equals 33%). The exceptional age structure of the Roma national minority is determined not only by the fact that there is a larger number of dependants per adult but also by the fact that there is a relatively large share of economically inactive residents, the majority of whom are schoolchildren (34%) and housewives (householders) (29%) in the Roma group (60% in 2011, the national average is 43%).

20. When developing active labour market measures for Roma, particularly for women, it is necessary to take into consideration potential problems of reconciliation of work and family life. In Roma families, there is a particular large share of persons maintained by family; therefore, a family member who wants to participate in the labour market often needs additional services (for example, purposeful engagement of children learning activities such as doing homework, artistic education, care for children under the age of 12 years after school and catering for children), and the possibility to reconcile work and family life.

21. The data of the 2011 Census show that the educational attainment of Lithuania's Roma youth (aged 20–29 years) is still significantly lower than the national average, particularly, in the field of attainment of secondary and higher education, which is important for successful economic and professional integration – only 20% of Roma youth attained secondary and higher education, whereas the share of persons with secondary and higher education stood at 85% in this age group. With a view to further reduce social exclusion, the possibilities of Roma youth to seek secondary and higher education should be improved.

¹⁰ European Roma Culture and Business Park Bahtalo Drom 2012–2015, Contract No. VP1-1.3-SADM-02-K-03-120, the main project promoter is the Lithuanian Gypsy Association “Gypsy Fire”.

“Turn to the Roma People” 2009–2012, Contract No. VP1-1.3-SADM-02-K-01-045, the main project promoter: United Nations Development Programme in Lithuania.

“Development of Support Mechanism of Roma Integration into Labour Market” 2005–2008, Contract No. 190-ESF/2004/2.3.0-01-01/02-05, the main project promoter: public institution Roma Community Centre.

22. Lithuania's Roma find it hard to compete in the official labour market; therefore, they face a larger risk of poverty and are more dependent on the social security system than the majority of Lithuania's population. In 2013, the country's at-risk-of-poverty rate was 20.6%. In the same year, the poverty threshold was LTL 811 per resident per month and LTL 1,703 per family consisting of two adults and two children under the age of 14 years. Children under the age of 18 years are most often at the risk of poverty; the at-risk-of-poverty rate for them was 26.9% in 2013. In the same year, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for households with children equalled 21.8%.¹¹ The at-risk-of-poverty rate in the Roma ethnic group is difficult to calculate; however, taking due account of the composition of Roma families (50% of persons, mainly children, are maintained by family) and complicated participation of Roma in the labour market, it should be concluded that the level of poverty in the Roma group is several-fold higher than in the whole country.

23. When improving the possibilities for Roma integration into the labour market, it is particularly important to form a positive opinion among employees and the public about the participation of Roma in public life. With a view to ensure successful inclusion of Roma into the labour market, it is important to encourage employers to recruit employees from the non-traditional cultural environment, to create preconditions for staff diversity, and to create a tolerant workplace. The results of the public attitude surveys carried out in 2011–2013 show that approximately half of Lithuania's population (42–48%) is not willing to work with Roma at the same workplace. It is noteworthy that the opinions about Roma were more favourable when replying to the questions about the work at the same workplace rather than about the living in the same neighbourhood.

SECTION 5 ROMA WOMEN

24. In the group of Lithuania's Roma, women accounted for a larger share (52% / 1,101 persons) than men (48% / 1,014 persons). Particularly uneven distribution on the basis of gender can be observed in the 30-year-and-older Roma group. In this age group, women account for 57% and men make up 43% of the total number of Lithuania's Roma.¹²

25. The differences in the educational attainment of Roma women and men are recorded; however, they are minor – the number of women who are illiterate and who have not attained primary education (the difference is 1%) or who are only with primary education (the difference is 3%) is

¹¹ Statistics Lithuania. 2014. *Household income and living conditions, risk of poverty*. Press Release of 28 August 2014, available online at: <http://osp.stat.gov.lt/pranesimai-spaudai?articleId=2780372> [last accessed on 17 December 2014].

¹² Statistikos departamentas (2013). *Gyventojai pagal tautybę, gimtąją kalbą ir tikybą*. Vilnius: Statistikos departamentas. [Statistics Lithuania (2013). *Population by nationality, native language and religion*. Vilnius: Statistics Lithuania.]

slightly larger, whereas there are slightly more men who have attained basic education (the difference is 4%). More distinct differences in educational attainment by gender are recorded in Kirtimai neighbourhood, Vilnius; there are more women who are illiterate or who have not attained primary education than men (the difference is 8%), and there are more men than women who have achieved the level of basic and higher education (the difference is 12%).¹³

26. In 2014, the “Survey and assessment of the situation of Roma women in the fields of employment, education and culture and of their possibilities to receive various services and participate in the decision-making process” was conducted. The survey revealed that the situation of Roma women in terms of employment is worse than that of men. The researchers have observed that the lower level of activity among women has been determined not only by the entrenched stereotypes regarding their role in public life and in the family but also by the rigid attitude of employers and the lack of public care services.¹⁴ The integration of Roma women into the labour market is also encumbered by early marriages – approximately one fourth (25%) of Roma girls give birth to their first child while being under age (under the age of 18 years).¹⁵ In order to enhance the possibilities for Roma women to participate in the labour market, it is necessary to improve children’s and adult education, to implement active labour market measures satisfying women’s needs, and to create a favourable work environment allowing them to reconcile their occupational and family obligations.

27. Although the number of Roma women who actively participate in public and political life is not large, the activities carried out by them are very important in strengthening the integration of the Roma national minority in Lithuania. Currently, three out of eight Roma non-governmental organizations established by women are actively operating. In the Council of National Communities, the Roma national minority is represented by the Chair of the Roma Integration House.

SECTION 6

¹³ Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Ne)lygios galimybės švietime: ankstyvo romų vaikų pasitraukimo iš ugdymo sistemos Vilniaus mieste analizė. // *Etniškumo studijos 2014/1*, Vilnius: Lietuvos socialinių tyrimų centras. [Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Non)Equal opportunities in education: analysis of dropping out of Roma children from the educational system in Vilnius city.]

¹⁴ The survey was conducted under the project “*Reduction of differences in the situation of women and men in economic decision-making in Lithuania*”, Financing Agreement No. JUST/2012/PROG/AG/4118/GE implemented under the EU Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity PROGRESS (2007-2013). Further information is available at: <http://progress.lygus.lt/romiu-padeties-tyrimas-ir-vertinimas/>.

¹⁵ The indicator was calculated on the basis of the data of Kirtimai neighbourhood, Vilnius. The indicator of Roma residing in other areas of Lithuania may slightly differ. Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Ne)lygios galimybės švietime: ankstyvo romų vaikų pasitraukimo iš ugdymo sistemos Vilniaus mieste analizė. // *Etniškumo studijos 2014/1*, Vilnius: Lietuvos socialinių tyrimų centras [Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Non)Equal opportunities in education: analysis of dropping out of Roma children from the educational system in Vilnius city.]

ENSURING THE RIGHT TO HOUSING

28. The data of the 2011 Population and Housing Census revealed that the dwelling of Roma is of a worse quality than that of the majority of Lithuania's population. Roma more often tend to live in dwellings which are not provided with hot water (49%, the national average is 25%), lavatories (45%, the national average is 24%), bathrooms or showers (49%, the national average is 24%). Seventeen per cent of Roma have no access to water supply. Roma tend to live in small dwellings. For comparison, there was, on average, 26.2 sq.m. of floor space per capita in Lithuania, while 52% of Roma lived in dwellings where the living space was 1–19 sq.m. per person.¹⁶

29. Roma more often live in state or municipally owned dwellings (14%, the national average is 1.4%).¹⁷ Such situation may be determined by the fact that a smaller percentage of Roma own their dwelling by the right of private ownership but also because it is hard for Roma to rent a dwelling from private persons as a result of discrimination and negative public attitudes towards them. The results of the public attitude surveys conducted in 2009–2013 show that around two thirds of Lithuania's population (65–71%) are not willing to rent a dwelling to Roma.¹⁸

SECTION 7 PUBLIC ATTITUDE TOWARDS LITHUANIA'S ROMA

30. As there are no detailed statistics on equality, one of the measures to estimate the extent of discrimination experienced by a certain group is surveys of public attitudes in Lithuania analyzing the social distance of the population in respect of different social groups.¹⁹ When analyzing the results of public opinion polls, it can be seen that the negative attitudes towards the Roma national minority during the Independence period remained high and underwent only minor differences: in 2005–2013, at least 57% of the residents (mostly from all ethnic groups) stated that they would not be willing to live with Roma in the same neighbourhood. Particularly negative attitudes in respect of Roma were recorded during the 2005–2006 surveys, when 75–77% of Lithuania's population indicated that they would not be willing to live with Roma in the same neighbourhood. Since 2010 there has been a significant increase in negative attitudes towards Roma in Vilnius city. In 2010–

¹⁶ Statistics Lithuania. 28 June 2013. *Dwellings and their characteristics. Results of the 2011 Population and Housing Census of the Republic of Lithuania*. Vilnius: Statistics Lithuania.

Data submitted by Statistics Lithuania to the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, 4 October 2013.

¹⁷ Statistics Lithuania. 28 June 2013. *Dwellings and their characteristics. Results of the 2011 Population and Housing Census of the Republic of Lithuania*. Vilnius: Statistics Lithuania.

Data submitted by Statistics Lithuania to the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, 4 October 2013.

¹⁸ Public attitude surveys conducted by the Institute for Ethnic Studies (Ethnic Research Centre) of the Lithuanian Social Research Centre in 2009–2013.

¹⁹ Beresnevičiūtė, V., ir Leončikas, T. 2009. Diskriminacijos suvokimas Lietuvos visuomenėje. *Filosofija. Sociologija*, 20(4), p. 335–343

2013, the social distance of Lithuania's population in respect of Roma varied only slightly; however, particularly negative attitudes towards Roma were recorded in Vilnius city – 67–83% of the city's residents indicated that they would not like to live with the representatives of this group in the same neighbourhood.²⁰ Negative public attitudes towards Roma show that the discrimination against the members of this group is more justified and / or unnoticed in society.

31. Although discrimination experienced in the labour market, when renting a dwelling or in the educational system is reported by both the organizations representing Roma and Roma individuals, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman's Office receives only a small number of complaints regarding the discrimination experienced by Roma: one complaint in 2011 and three complaints in each year of the 2012–2014 period. With a view to reduce discrimination against Roma, it is necessary to raise awareness among Roma of their rights, duties and possibilities to defend their rights as well as public awareness of the right of Roma to non-discrimination.

SECTION 8 REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION OF ROMA IN PUBLIC LIFE

32. The first public Roma organisation was established in 1992 (the Lithuanian Roma Association, which was reorganised into the Vilnius Roma Association in 1996). Currently, there are 18 Roma non-governmental organizations registered in the Register of Legal Entities; however, only eight of them are actively operating: the Vilnius Roma Association, Lithuanian Roma Association "Gypsy Fire", Šalčininkai district division of the Lithuanian Roma Association "Gypsy Fire", Roma Integration House, public institution Sare Roma, Roma Integration Centre, Romane Women and Lithuanian Roma Community. The Roma national minority has its representative on the Council of National Communities under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, which represents national minorities in the matters related to coordination of Lithuanian national minority policy.

CHAPTER 3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTION PLAN

33. The goals and objectives of the Action Plan are as follows:

33.1. To promote the integration of Roma people into the educational system:

33.1.1. to develop and improve pre-school and pre-primary education for Roma children;

²⁰ Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Ne)lygios galimybės švietime: ankstyvo romų vaikų pasitraukimo iš ugdymo sistemos Vilniaus mieste analizė. // *Etniškumo studijos 2014/1*, Vilnius: Lietuvos socialinių tyrimų centras. [Petrušauskaitė V. 2014. (Non)Equal opportunities in education: analysis of dropping out of Roma children from the educational system in Vilnius city.]

- 33.1.2. to improve general education for Roma children;
- 33.1.3. to improve non-formal education for Roma children;
- 33.1.4. to improve education for adult Roma.
- 33.2. To increase access to health services for Roma people – to strengthen the awareness of health services available to Roma people.
- 33.3. To promote employment of Roma people — to provide services and implement measures promoting integration of Roma people in to the labour market.
- 33.4. To seek the empowerment of Roma women – to improve the opportunities for Roma women to participate in public life.
- 33.5. To improve housing conditions of Roma people – to strengthen the implementation of the right of Roma people to housing.
- 33.6. To promote intercultural dialogue:
 - 33.6.1. to enhance the openness of Romani culture and public tolerance;
 - 33.6.2. to reduce discrimination against Roma people.
- 34. With a view to implementing the goals and objectives of the Action Plan, the measures of the Action Plan for Roma Integration into the Lithuanian Society for 2015–2020 were prepared, and the time limits, allocations and persons responsible for the implementation thereof (Annex No. 1) were scheduled.

CHAPTER 4

MONITORING OF THE ACTION PLAN

- 35. The implementation of the measures of the Action Plan is coordinated by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania or any other institution responsible for the implementation of national minority policy. The monitoring of the measures of the Action Plan is carried out by a standing interinstitutional working group formed by order of the Minister of Culture.
- 36. The interinstitutional working group convenes at least twice per year; it analyzes the implementations of the measures included into the Action plan, evaluates achievement of the criteria and make proposals for an adjustment of the Action plan.
- 37. The interinstitutional working group consists of representatives of the state and municipal institutions implementing the measures of the Action Plan, academic community, Roma and organisations working with Roma.
- 38. The measures of the Action Plan may be revised according to recommendations of the interinstitutional working group.

39. The evaluation criteria for the Action Plan are set forth in Annex No. 2.

40. The criteria for evaluation of the progress (result) of Roma integration are provided for in Annex No. 3 to the Action Plan.

CHAPTER 5

FUNDING OF THE ACTION PLAN

41. The measures of the Action Plan set forth in Annex No. 1 are financed from the state and municipality budgets as well as from the EU financial support and other receipts of international financial support funds.

42. The measures of the Action Plan set forth in Annex No. 1, which funding is not indicated, are financed from the state and municipality budgets as well as from the EU financial support and other receipts of international financial support funds.
