The National Equality and Diversity Forum (NEDF) is a national communication network uniting non-governmental organizations which represent discrimination-vulnerable groups of the population in order to reach common goals in the fight against discrimination on the basis of gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion and beliefs, race or ethnic origin.

The members of NEDF work together to make equality and assurance of human rights a reality in Lithuania both in the national policy and practice.

In its work, NEDF cooperates with national institutions and agencies and other non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academics and lawyers.

Participation in the activities of the forum gives wider opportunities to:

• contribute to educating society and increasing information on equality, diversity, anti-discrimination and other issues related to defending human rights;
• encourage activities directed towards the mutual understanding of individuals and groups with different experiences and acknowledgement of human rights and diversity in the society;
• participate in developing and nurturing anti-discriminative political means and improving such means.

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EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE NGO SECTOR

GOOD PRACTICES OF INTEGRATION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN LITHUANIA
This publication is supported by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - PROGRESS (2007-2013).

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The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA, EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

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INTRODUCTION

The National Equality and Diversity Forum (NEDF) is a national communication network uniting non-governmental organizations which represent discrimination-vulnerable groups of the population in order to reach common goals in the fight against discrimination on the basis of gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion and beliefs, race or ethnic origin.

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- encourage activities directed towards the mutual understanding of individuals and groups with different experiences and acknowledgement of human rights and diversity in the society;
- participate in developing and nurturing anti-discriminative political means and improving such means.

In 2012, NEDF took active part in the implementation of the project “C.A.F.E. Changing Attitude Fostering Equality” under the EU programme PROGRESS. The project activities were organized in three work groups. The goal of the first group was to increase the information of the society and its understanding about discrimination and equal opportunities, the goal of the second was to solve educational problems of Roma children, and the goal of the third was to collect and accumulate information, carry out research and improve the skills of NGOs in reaching for equality and diversity.

You are holding one of the results of this project in your hands. This is the first time a collection of good practices of equality and diversity in the NGO sector has been compiled in Lithuania. We hope it will be useful for both formers of the national equal opportunities policy and activists of non-governmental organizations working with groups of people vulnerable to discrimination. It is important for us that these examples of good practice encourage expanding interactive approaches to the prevention of discrimination in Lithuania. This integrated, comprehensive approach should contribute to effective communication between different social groups and a strong partnership of NGOs in order to reach common goals in the field of implementation of equality and diversity policy.
NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
VILNIUS COMMUNITY OF BOČIAI, THE LITHUANIAN UNION OF PENSIONERS

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
Inclusion of generations by creating, nurturing and promoting traditions of healthy nutrition and an active lifestyle

(1) DESCRIPTION

The goal of this project is to establish healthy lifestyle habits in groups of people of different ages by encouraging communication between the generations of pensioners and school-age children.

This project, encouraging communication between generations in the area of wellbeing, was prepared in accordance with Decision No 737 of the Government of Lithuania on 14 June 2004 “On the approval of the national strategy for overcoming the consequences of an ageing of population”. Clauses 173.1.3, 173.3 and 173.5.4 of this decision aim to encourage communication between different generations, improving the understanding of the society, especially young people, that the contribution of elderly people to the society is especially important and the use of their experience, especially in terms of health care and strengthening, can be very valuable because its application in the society remains one of the most relevant modern problems. The aim is for this project to contribute to the solution of this problem.

According to data of the World Health Organization, just 10% of human health is determined by medicine, 40% by genes and environment and 50%
by lifestyle choices. The basis for a healthy way of life consists of healthy nutrition and an active lifestyle, and therefore the project focuses on these aspects of health.

(2) GOALS

The programme aims to implement the following goals:

1. To promote healthy nutrition and emphasize its benefits at the Vilnius community of Bočiai.
2. To encourage and educate pupils about healthy eating habits.
3. To encourage solidarity between generations and establish healthy nutrition as one of many topics connecting young and elderly people.
4. To promote active communication between young and elderly people and foster their physical health.
5. To give periodic lectures to elderly people and pupils about the importance of balanced nutrition for health, and nutrition in case of certain illnesses and in preventing them.
6. To organize joint sports classes and competitions for pupils and elderly people.

(3) TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES

- Members of the Vilnius community of Bočiai, the Lithuanian Union of Pensioners, aged 50 and over. About 700 Vilnius residents took direct part in the programme (200 pupils and teachers of Šv. Kristoforo secondary school and more than 500 members of Bočiai).

(4) MOTIVATION

The importance of implementing the programme “Inclusion of generations by creating, nurturing and promoting traditions of healthy nutrition and an active
“lifestyle” stems from the problem of a growing number of school-age children living with their grandparents and other relatives due to increasing emigration. Such children often eat at public catering institutions or buy ready-made food and fast food. Society is becoming alienated from traditions of healthy eating and obtaining new harmful eating habits. There is also a lack of knowledge about healthy lifestyle choices and nutrition. For this reason, children often do not receive the kind of food needed for their physical and psychological development, but instead are content with food that is prepared faster and simpler, that is more popular or that is enriched with artificial flavourings, but is not nutritionally valuable. During this programme, the experience and influence of elderly people will be used with the aim of persuading school-age children to reject non-valuable and inadequate nutrition that is harmful to the health of the society and plant habits of healthy nutrition.

The goals of this programme are also directed to solving problems between the younger and older generations. Because the implementation of the programme is related to direct communication between elderly people and pupils through attending common lectures and sports classes, it is expected that there will be a closer relation between these age groups, which will help to create a more understanding and sincere dialogue.

(5) RESOURCES

The Municipality of Vilnius city gave 7000 Litas for the implementation of this programme and the Vilnius community of Bočiai and Šv. Kristoforo secondary school covered the costs of about 2000 Litas.

The programme was implemented in the premises of the Vilnius community of Bočiai, Šv. Kristoforo secondary school and the Municipality of Vilnius. The Municipality offered premises and took active part in the programme, especially during the preparation of the final conference.

(6) RESULTS / CONSEQUENCES OF PROJECT

1. Contacts were made between the Vilnius community of Bočiai and Šv. Kristoforo secondary school by signing a mutual cooperation contract.
2. Two seminars related to wellbeing were organized at Šv.Kristoforo secondary school and the Municipality of Vilnius, gathering 172 people (82 from Šv. Kristoforo secondary school and 90 from the Vilnius community of Bočiai).

Speakers at the seminars included respected health specialists such as Chairperson of the Vilnius City Health Committee Vitalija Kliukienė, professor of Vilnius University Rimantas Stukas, representative of the Department of Drugs Control under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania Rimantas Šagždavičius and other people working in the health care system.

3. Joint badminton trainings and competitions for young and elderly people were held with over 30 players from both organizations.

4. Members of both organizations were constantly informed about the progress of the project at sessions organized by leading members of the community and employees of the school, and on the website of the school.

5. A platform for further cooperation between the groups of people of different ages at the Vilnius community of Bočiai and Šv.Kristoforo secondary school was created.

Both the members of Bočiai and pupils and pedagogues of Šv. Kristoforo secondary school participated in wellbeing lectures. For example, in the final seminar of the project in the Municipality of Vilnius on the 27th of December 2010, the director of the school Aldona Grušnienė spoke on the topic “Problems of wellbeing in pupils and ways to solve them”.

The goal of the project was to encourage communication between different generations. Communication between the generations in the Vilnius Bočiai community was used for the first time at the project level although some similar activities had been carried out before. The relevance of this kind of activity has increased in Lithuania, like in the whole EU, because of global ageing of society. Important issues in the life of the community’s members include strengthening wellbeing, creative art activities, training on computer literacy and organization of purposeful leisure time. Lectures held during the project and attended by both pupils and elderly people covered aspects of nutrition in relation to young people and pensioners, with special attention paid to the threats to health caused by fast food. An increase in the number of visitors to the school canteen and elderly people paying more attention
to food choices after the seminars can be considered positive results of the project activity.

During the implementation of the project, there was a close relation between the leaders of the Vilnius community of Bočiai and the administration of the secondary school. It was decided to continue the communication with the Šv. Kristoforo secondary school on issues of strengthening wellbeing, i.e. aim to continue the wellbeing project, conclude cooperation agreements for the development of badminton training and give amateur art groups of the Bočiai community the possibility to use the school premises.

In the opinion of the staff of the school and members of the Bočiai community, the project was useful for both parties that participated in it. There was a connection between pension-aged people and learning young people and pedagogues, and some knowledge on strengthening wellbeing was obtained and shared. Furthermore, the health of participants was improved through physical exercise classes. In addition to a mutual wish to continue started activities, the usefulness of the project activities for strengthening the relations between the generations, there were also other agreements, i.e., the agreement on the use of the school sports hall for the creative and artistic activities of Bočiai.

An expectation of the project was to conserve the biggest human wealth – health. Young people in school obtained some valuable knowledge on how to strengthen their health with the help of proper nutrition and means of physical activity, and also familiarized themselves with the main threats to the growing body, such as not attending to personal hygiene and the use of psychotropic substances. Moreover, they got some useful advice about how elderly people, primarily their relatives and family members, can help them to eat healthily and avoid other harmful habits.

Elderly representatives, whose number is increasing both in Lithuania and other European and world countries, familiarized themselves with and had a possibility to try means of physical activity with representatives of the younger generation in practice, share knowledge and experience in the field of wellbeing through communication with young people and get useful consultations on issues of information technologies, foreign languages, scientific and technical achievements and wellbeing.
ADVANTAGES / SUCCESS INDICATORS

During the implementation of the project, contacts were made with Šv. Kristoforo secondary school and cooperation agreements were concluded with the administration of the school in order to establish a continued relationship.

Šv. Kristoforo secondary school both created a basis for the development of badminton practice and started popularizing this kind of sport among young people; they also obtained a possibility to play with sportspeople of different ages and capabilities at four badminton courts simultaneously. The cooperation with the school with respect to cultivating this kind of sport is successfully continued by the Vilnius city sports club “Badminton Virus” that teaches skills in this sport to both the children of the members of the adult club and pupils of the school.

Continuing traditions of communication with the young generation, the badminton players of Bočiai also give lessons to representatives of the younger generation. At the end of last year, on the 28th of December, they organized a New Year’s tournament in pairs with peers and representatives of the young generation from the Vilnius City badminton club. 16 players participated in the tournament.

DISADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS

Šv. Kristoforo secondary school and the Vilnius community of Bočiai both have many continuous activities, so the introduction of a new kind of activity (communication between the generations) into both organizations caused additional organizational and material difficulties.

The participation in seminars took place during the training process both at Šv. Kristoforo secondary school and the Municipality of Vilnius, so not all pupils and teachers who wanted to were able to participate in the events.

Lack of premises for sports events. The gymnasium uses its sports hall for the training process and events and trainings of traditional kinds of sport (basket-
ball, volleyball). Limited attention was paid to the kinds of sport proposed by the Bočiai community: badminton, table-tennis, checkers and chess because of high competition of other kinds of sport.

9) PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE GOOD PRACTICE

Communication between generations can be further improved by:

1. further strengthening the relationship established with Šv. Kristoforo secondary school.

2. applying the obtained experience, expanding the project to other school-age youth organizations of the city, applying voluntary support of functional services of Vilnius city for this purpose more widely.
NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
LITHUANIAN YOUTH COUNCIL

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
Youth Days 2012

(1) DESCRIPTION

Since 1999, the International Youth Day has been celebrated on the 12th of August observing the recommendation of the conference of the Ministers of the United Nations. Challenges faced by young people and encouraging participation in social life are usually the main topics of activities organised to mark the day.

In spite of their education, experience and ability to speak many languages, young people are one of the most discriminated groups today. This is particularly evident in the fields of employment and other areas such as family and establishing an independent life. In addition, there is much non-inclusion between generations: older people often think that young people are passive and not involved in the solution of social problems to a wide extent.

When the Lithuanian Youth Council commemorated the International Youth Day and organized Youth Days 2012 on this occasion, they paid most attention to the inclusion of groups of different ages into discussions about problems which young people face today. Methods of good practices and examples of participation were also demonstrated by youth organizations and young people. All the events of Youth Days were based on wide inclusion of the society and attractive methods which converted observers into active participants. The goal of these activities was to pay attention to the challenging situation for young people, especially in terms of age discrimination, and to the diversity and activities of young people.
The locations for the planned activities were chosen considering the fact that most young and elderly people go to the seaside in August. It is very important to attract a wide audience and reach more passive young people by trying to encourage them to express and draw attention to their problems and opinions.

(2) GOALS

One of the most important goals of this project was to commemorate the International Youth Day that is celebrated on the 12th of August. Namely for this reason, the events of Youth Days 2012 were organized on the 10-13th of August.

Another goal is reflected in the description of the project itself—it is an attempt to draw the attention of different social groups to the diversity and different forms of discrimination, especially on the ground of age. This goal is also seen in the assessment of the activities of Youth Days 2012. Film evenings were held during which films were shown about the discrimination of the disabled, bullying at schools or dialogue between different generations. During one of these film evenings, films of young creators were presented, drawing attention to the fact that young people can also express themselves. A lecture was organized about searching for work and the most frequent mistakes and how to avoid them; attention was paid to the lack of self-confidence in young people. People of different age groups participated in these activities.

One more goal is to encourage young people to do voluntary non-paid activities and become interested in events near them. In order to reach this goal, a blood donation campaign, a photo exposition entitled “Young and Active”, kite production workshops and a session entitled “Help other people and help yourself. Be a volunteer!” were organized. Thanks to these means, young people were familiarized with voluntary activity and even had the possibility to immediately get involved in it.

(3) TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES

Youth Days 2012 were targeted at young people, but they were intended for all the inhabitants of and visitors to the town of Palanga. Thus, people of
different ages were invited to the majority of events. This was done in order to reach one of the main goals of this project – draw the attention of different social groups to the diversity of young people and frequently occurring discrimination.

Thus, it is possible to distinguish two target groups, the primary and secondary. The primary group consists of young, not necessarily active people who came to Palanga on holiday and could easily get involved in the activities proposed by the project in addition to their holiday activities and obtain new knowledge, discuss interesting questions or raise issues. The second group consists of elderly people who could familiarize themselves with the activity of young people at close range and see that young people are able to organize, participate and be equal partners in various activities.

There was no clear difference between the primary and secondary groups because there were also young people observing the activities passively and elderly people being involved in the activities actively during the project. However, the communication of the project is organized namely for these audiences.

(4) MOTIVATION

Discrimination on the ground of age is a relevant topic in all the countries of the European Union in spite of whether they have laws on anti-discrimination or not. It is a sore point requiring the development of an adequate legal basis and changing the attitude of most people towards certain related questions.

This form of discrimination is different from other ones, especially in the sense of a wide range of its subjects, reasons and consequences. Every person can suffer from discrimination in every period of his/her life.

In terms of discrimination on the ground of age, two vulnerable age groups are mostly distinguished – young and elderly people or pension-aged people. According to a secondary analysis of studies carried out in Lithuania, most Lithuanians recognize a low status of elderly people in the labour market: they agree unanimously that older age (50 and over) is a significant risk factor in the labour market. Meanwhile, young age (under 25) is assessed ambivalently as a time of involvement in the labour market and career building – some advantages and some disadvantages are noticed (Mikulioniene, 2008). It is also confirmed by activity reports of the Equal Opportunities
Ombudsperson in 2005-2010, which show that complaints about discrimination on the ground of age are the most prevalent among all complaints. In 2005, complaints about discrimination on the ground of age made up 22 per cent of all complaints, i.e., just by one per cent less than complaints about discrimination on the ground of gender.

Later this percentage started to decrease: in 2006, complaints about discrimination on the ground of age made up only 19 percent, in 2007 the share was 10 per cent and in 2008 just 7 per cent of all per cent complaints.

However, the number of complaints about discrimination on the ground of age increased again in 2009. According to the report, “it is likely that this increase was influenced by the consequences of the crisis: as unemployment grew, more employees were discriminated against because of age” (report of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, 2009:9).

Considering the statistics and seeing a big need, the Lithuanian Youth Council as the biggest non-governmental structure uniting youth organizations aimed to draw the attention of different social groups to the above-mentioned situation and arising problems through this project. Being the biggest organization uniting young people also comes with the obligation to be interested in and constantly follow trends of discrimination, especially on the ground of age. In addition, the organization needs to be outspoken about this issue and encourage more passive parts of society to engage in dialogue. This was the second reason for the implementation of the project.

(5) RESOURCES

Implementing the project Youth Days 2012 required different resources. In terms of human resources, a large number of people with various competences were needed because of the abundance and diversity of activities. Thus, the involvement of volunteers from the members of the Lithuanian Youth Council was the one of the main factors in the successful implementation of the project. The volunteers performed different tasks from distributing information booklets in town to assisting with arrangements for film screenings.

To ensure sufficient human resources and needed competences, it was very important to include in the team a coordinator of the whole project to be in charge of distributing tasks and negotiations with partners and sponsors, a
head of communications to be in charge of disseminating information about 
the event and organizing a press conference, and a designer to take care of 
the promotional material.

The main source of finances was through the project “C.A.F.E. Changing At-
titude Fostering Equality”. However, it must be noted that the project also 
received a lot of non-financial support through bartering. The cultural space 
of Palanga (the “I Love Palanga” project) and the city’s summer reading room 
can be mentioned here. These spaces were given for free for project activities 
in exchange for sponsor status.

In other words, both financial and barter support are important, especially if 
the latter does not require any extra expenses from the sponsors.

(6) RESULTS / CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROJECT

To assess the qualitative results of the project, we should take a look at its 
content. The following activities were carried out during Youth Days 2012:

- A press conference to present the concept and activities of 
  Youth Days 2012, discuss problems of discrimination and award well achieved 
  individuals from Palanga;
- Film evenings to screen and discuss about films related to 
  discrimination;
- Photo exhibition entitled “Young and active” with photos of 
  various activities organized by young people in different locations in Lithu-
  ania and works of young artists;
- Sessions providing information on voluntary activities and 
  advice for young people searching for work;
- A blood donation campaign and concert of young musicians 
  aiming to activate passers-by;
- Kite production workshops inviting participants to make a 
  kite as a symbol of liberation from stereotypes.

In terms of qualitative results, it should be noted that the activities were quite 
different, but united by a common topic. Thus, how actively participants were
involved in each event varied. Due to the different formats of events, quite a high number of people participated in the activities and were able to find the most suitable way for them to think about discrimination on the ground of age and other problems as well as make their own contribution to finding solutions. It should be mentioned that both young and elderly people participated in the activities.

Considering the above reasons, we can state that the project was successful and the audience was reached. Youth Days 2012 can be considered a good practice also because the inhabitants of and visitors to Palanga were offered varied activities, so everyone wanting to get involved was able to do so in a way that suited them best.

(7) ADVANTAGES / SUCCESS INDICATORS

One of the success indicators is the project’s visibility in regional media. One national television station also participated in the press conference.

Another success indicator can be called “involvement”. As was mentioned above, people of different age groups were involved because of the different formats of activities. The town that was chosen for the implementation of the project is another important factor. Considering that lots of people, including young ones, go on holiday to the seaside in August, Youth Days 2012 formed an alternative to annual traditional entertainment options. As visitors to a town are more likely to be interested in various campaigns and attractions, it is easier to involve them in various activities.

(8) DISADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS

One of the main limitations of the implementation of the project was also one of its advantages – the diversity of passers-by and visitors to the town. On one hand, many people of different regions and ages were involved in the activities of the project, but there were also some obstacles to getting people involved: the language barrier (for holidaymakers from other countries) or just the indifference of passers-by.
One more disadvantage is that the activities of the project were based on “here and now” involvement, i.e. there was no advance registration, limitations of places etc. which may have helped to involve more people or plan the success/failure of future activities and take preventive measures.

One more challenge was to manage the team of organizers and ensure that all activities were carried out according to plan. This challenge was caused by the fact that the team of organizers of Youth Days 2012, especially the volunteers of different organizations, did not know each other in advance, and there was some risk of disagreements which may have had an impact on the effectiveness of work.

**Proposals for Improving the Good Practice**

Aspects that should be improved are mostly related to the organization of project activities and quality assurance. One proposal could be to hold a meeting of the whole team of organizers at least once during the preparation stage and discuss any possible critical project management points and foresee possible threats in advance.

In addition, more attention should be paid to the psychographic parameters of the audience of the project. In this case, the diversity of the audience was especially wide, so it should be divided more carefully. How to involve as different people as possible (for example, by providing an information booklet in English or Russian) should also be considered.
3

NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
LITHUANIAN FORUM OF THE DISABLED

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
Encouraging new employment initiatives for the disabled at national institutions and municipalities

(1) DESCRIPTION

The aim of the sub-project for encouraging new employment initiatives for the disabled at national institutions and municipalities is to encourage integration of the disabled into the labour market with the help of a new, more effective method of employment.

Various studies have shown that the model for vocational rehabilitation and employment of the disabled in 2009-2010, when this sub-project was being prepared and implemented, was completely ineffective. Although the state gave large amounts of money for professional rehabilitation programmes intended for the disabled, these programmes did not help them find a job. The disabled felt a lack of motivation to work and preferred receiving benefits, which were similar in size to the minimum salary. When the economic decline started, the problem became even worse: employment of the disabled decreased and the financial burden for the state became even bigger.

The Lithuanian Forum of the Disabled had a two-pronged task: 1) to persuade potential employers that the disabled can, are able and know how to work; 2) to persuade national organizations dealing with employment of the disabled to reorganize the way vocational rehabilitation and employment of the disabled is arranged.
One potential group of employers was chosen for this project: the municipal institutions of the Republic of Lithuania. They participate in the organization of public work and implementation of projects. The aim was for municipalities to take some functions of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour and provide the disabled with rehabilitation services since 2011.

For this reason, the need for human resources will grow and the disabled will be able to satisfy it. The aim was for Lithuania’s municipalities to become examples for other national institutions, private companies and non-governmental organizations.

A review of employment of the disabled carried out by the Lithuanian Forum of the Disabled revealed advances in this area made in Norway, and thus the decision was made to adopt these good practices. Earlier, no such project had been implemented in Lithuania and most people had not heard of the Norwegian method of employment of the disabled. The Lithuanian Forum of the Disabled chose the Norwegian non-governmental organization Mangfold i Arbeidslivet (Diversity at Work) that has long-term experience in the implementation of projects for ensuring diversity in the labour market.

The sub-project consisted of three main stages:

1. Trainings for adopting the Norwegian practice in the field of vocational rehabilitation and employment of the disabled. 15 representatives of disability organizations participated in three-day trainings in Norway to learn about the country's social policy and, in particular, methods of vocational rehabilitation, employment programmes and creation of work positions. In addition, they visited companies that have employed disabled people successfully. Compared with Lithuania, it is more difficult for disabled people in Norway to receive state benefits because of efforts made to integrate them in the labour market. In Norway, vocational rehabilitation is mandatory for all disabled people, and benefits are paid only to people who are genuinely unable to work. In Lithuania, a disabled person can choose either to participate in vocational rehabilitation programmes or receive an unemployment benefit.

In order to consolidate the knowledge obtained during the first trainings and get new knowledge, representatives of the disabled also participated in trainings in Lithuania. They were also led by experts from Norway. The trainings combined theoretical and practical classes, and recommendations were given on how to disseminate information to municipalities and national institutions.
2. Seminars in 50 municipalities of Lithuania. The goal of these meetings was to present the abilities of the disabled to work, discuss the positive aspects of their employment and present the Norwegian method of vocational rehabilitation and employment of the disabled and its advantages. The seminars were led by representatives of disability organizations who participated in the trainings.

On average, 10-15 representatives of municipalities, local department of the Labour Exchange and local disability organizations participated in each seminar. It emerged that in certain municipalities there was a particular lack of cooperation between the local authorities and representatives of the disabled, so these meetings helped to start a dialogue between them. The seminars aimed for as informal and open communication as possible through interactive games and allowing sufficient time for discussion.

3. The purpose of the final conference was to present the model of employment of the disabled and how it could possibly be adopted in Lithuania. Over 100 participants – politicians and representatives of the Labour Exchange, educational institutions, municipalities and representatives of other national institutions – participated in the two-day conference. The conference programme included lectures, discussions and group work. Working in groups, the participants of the event created a new model of employment of the disabled. After discussing each proposal and assessing its advantages and possible disadvantages, a new model for encouraging disabled people into employment was formed.

During the project, much attention was paid to disseminating information. An information booklet was prepared for participants of meetings at municipalities and participants of the final conference, explaining the problems related to employment of the disabled briefly and clearly. A press conference was also held, and received a lot of attention from the media. Articles were produced throughout the project and published on the websites of the Lithuanian Forum of the Disabled and its members.

The project lasted one year, during which cooperation was developed on two levels: on the regional level (between disability organizations and local authorities) and on the international level (between Lithuanian and Norwegian organizations).
(2) GOALS

1. To assimilate good practice from Norway in the field of vocational rehabilitation and employment of the disabled.

2. To develop a model for encouraging the disabled into employment based on the Norwegian example.

3. To establish direct cooperation between disability organizations and municipalities (as potential employers).

4. To increase the awareness of society about problems related to the employment of the disabled and possible means to solve them.

(3) TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES

The activities of the project are targeted at the following groups:

1. Representatives of disability organizations. They directly took the experience from their Norwegian partner in the field of vocational rehabilitation and employment of the disabled. The obtained knowledge is especially useful in encouraging the employment of the disabled and defending their rights and interests in the labour market.

2. Specialists of municipalities. They were familiarized with the needs and abilities of the disabled and suggested changes in the field of employment.

3. Representatives of national institutions (Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Labour Exchange etc.). They were familiarized with the practice of employment of the disabled applied in Norway and included in the development of the model for encouraging the employment of the disabled in Lithuania.

4. The disabled – indirect target group of the project. As the disabled will be started to be considered potential employees, they will be more motivated and be able to integrate themselves into the labour market more easily.

5. Wider society – indirect target group of the project which also includes employers and present or future colleagues of the disabled. Raised
awareness about the involvement of the disabled in the labour market will contribute to a change in the attitude of society towards the disabled as potential employees and colleagues.

(4) **MOTIVATION**

Lithuania’s joining the European Union brought lots of positive changes to the policy on employment of the disabled. These changes, however, were more of a legal nature and do not reflect the real situation in the labour market. As a result of adopted new laws and support of the EU Structural Funds, the employment of the disabled consistently grew from 2000 to 2007. The situation changed with the economic decline, when it became difficult even for healthy people to find a job.

In 2010, during the implementation of the project, just 12 per cent of employment aged disabled people had a job, approximately 2.5 less than in other EU states. They were then encouraged to wait for the end of the economic decline. However, long-term unemployment of the disabled brings new problems: their motivation for work decreases, they lose professional skills, their social relationships suffer and they experience a growth in poverty and exclusion. Because of the financial burden of paying out benefits, the unemployment of the disabled is not useful to the state, either.

After looking at previous studies carried out before this project, it was determined that the models of employment of the disabled applied in Lithuania were ineffective. After completing vocational rehabilitation courses, disabled people still do not find a job, and benefits which are similar in size to the minimum salary reduce their motivation to work.

In order to contribute to the solution to the above-mentioned problems, the project “Encouraging new employment initiatives for the disabled at national institutions and municipalities” was prepared and implemented.

(5) **RESOURCES**

The project was implemented by specialists of different fields: the head of the project organized trainings in order to take good practice from Norway, meetings at municipalities and the final conference; the public relations spe-
cialist organized the press conference and prepared the information booklet, articles and other information related to the project. There were separate specialists to carry out book-keeping and public procurement.

A very important role of the project was held by the representatives of disability organizations who participated in trainings in Norway and Lithuania and disseminated obtained knowledge to representatives of municipalities.

The costs of the project amounted to 285,497 Lt. The project was financed by the fund of financial mechanisms of the European Economic Area and Norway according to the subsidiary scheme “Strengthening experience sharing and cooperation between partners at the local, regional and European level in Lithuania and Norway”. The biggest part of the project costs consisted of fees for lecturers and transport costs (international and national trips).

(6) RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

The main results of the project are as follows:

1. Representatives of disability organizations received training. They were familiarized with the method of employment of the disabled applied in Norway, which was presented at the final conference in the municipalities. The obtained new experience and knowledge enabled working consistently in order to increase the integration of the disabled into the labour market both during the project and after it.

2. The competence of Lithuanian municipalities and local departments of the Labour Exchange was improved. After the meetings held, most people assessed the working abilities of the disabled more objectively (they changed their negative view that the disabled do not know and cannot do almost anything), understood the importance of employing the disabled better, and received certain recommendations on what actions they could take in this field.

3. A new model for promoting the employment of the disabled was developed. It was presented to the participants of the final conference, including many representatives of national institutions responsible for the employment of the disabled, which could initiate structural changes.
4. Information about occupational rehabilitation and employment of the disabled, and possible solutions in these areas, was increased among the target groups and society.

5. Cooperation between disability organizations and municipal authorities was started and strengthened. This cooperation is especially important for solving problems of the disabled in an effective way. Before the implementation of the project, this cooperation was sporadic.

Changing the model of employment requires long, consistent and focused work. The implemented project is only the first step in a long process of changing the attitude of municipalities towards the disabled as potential employees, drawing attention to problems of the employment system of the disabled and the necessity to solve them, and preparing a new model for promoting the employment of the disabled.

The significance and benefit of the project is shown by the fact that the national institutions responsible for issues related to the disabled acknowledged the importance of the identified problems and joined the efforts to create a new model for promoting the employment of the disabled. The work carried out can be successfully applied to initiating amendments to laws in order to change the way in which employment of the disabled is organised.

The results reached will have a long-lasting effect. At present, concerns about an approaching new economic crisis are growing, and so the Lithuanian Forum of the Disabled is going to continue the work started in this project.

(7) ADVANTAGES / SUCCESS INDICATORS

The success of the project is shown in the high level of interest by municipalities, local departments of the Labour Exchange, local disability organizations and other institutions, and in active participation in the events. The Lithuanian Forum of the Disabled received a lot of positive feedback stating that the issues of employment of the disabled identified during the project were especially relevant and the proposals for solving them were universal and concrete.
Employees in municipalities were satisfied with the established cooperation, which was continued after the completion of the project by implementing other initiatives.

The project was also very interesting to the media. Problems related to the employment of the disabled received attention in the biggest newspapers and websites in the country.

(8) DISADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS

Although most municipalities showed interest, there were some that doubted the benefit of the seminars and refused to participate in them.

The seminars also showed that the experience of the municipalities in the employment of the disabled was very different and revealed their real attitude towards this social group, some of them being rather sceptical. Some participants in meetings thought that speaking about employment of the disabled was only a waste of time because of the high level of unemployment. Some ideas expressed included: “The disabled should not work – they are poor, anyway”, “People come to our town on holiday and have a good time – what happens if they see working disabled people?”, “The disabled get some money, pension, but what should be done to these people who do not get anything?”, “The disabled cannot work” etc. These ideas showed that some municipalities needed additional courses to increase their understanding of tolerance and diversity at work.

It also became clear that the representatives of some municipalities were badly informed about what the disabled know, are able and want to do and what support is given by the state in order to establish and maintain an employment position for a disabled person. Moreover, some of them were disappointed with the low level of education of the disabled which does not meet modern needs and with their lack of motivation to work. Although most participants stated that they understand that it is important to employ the disabled, they avoided taking any responsibility for their employment and wanted other institutions and organizations to take care of it.

Representatives of the municipalities as potential employers had various fears. For example, they were worried that a disabled worker could cause inconvenience to other people or more obligations for the employer.
The content of the seminars was adjusted on the basis of the level of information, fears and worries of the representatives of the municipalities. Sometimes, much more time was spent on basic questions about the abilities and responsibility of the disabled than on discussing changes to the employment model.

(9) PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE GOOD PRACTICE

The project could be expanded by including extra meetings with representatives of municipalities to facilitate strengthening the cooperation, analyzing how employment positions for the disabled have been established and organized etc. In order to demonstrate that the disabled really can and are able to work, we propose to organize occupational traineeships for the disabled in municipalities.

During the implementation of a similar or follow-up project, a questionnaire should be carried out among the employees of municipalities, asking whether their attitude towards disabled workers changed after the meetings, which fears remained and what they would need more information on. Based on the obtained results, we recommend each municipality to prepare individual information material.

In addition, we propose to pay much more attention to cooperation with the highest authorities in Lithuania responsible for the employment of the disabled. In order to reach the best results, a plan should be drawn up including the obligations of each party and terms of their implementation.

During the development of the project, practices for promoting the employment of the disabled in other countries could be analyzed and other potential employers could be involved.
NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
LITHUANIAN YOUTH COUNCIL

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
Information campaign “I care”

(1) DESCRIPTION

In Lithuania, young people have a special role in participating in and strengthening processes based on democratic principles and building up the information society. Active participation of young people in civil life is one of the most important challenges in Lithuania and the European Union. According to the results of a study on young people in 2004, over 52% of the respondents indicated they were not interested in political life of the country at all. According to a study from 2007, only 25% of the respondents thought that a young person is civil in case he/she takes responsibility (not only in terms of his or her closest people) and participates in organized activities and social processes. Very few young people agree that society can influence the decisions of the government in Lithuania.

One of the main ways to encourage the participation of young people in political life is to indicate which means and solutions are important for young people themselves and contribute to the improvement of their situation. Another means to involve young people in political life of the country is informing them about the importance of participating in elections in a way that is understandable and attractive to them. In this regard there exists a certain discrimination of young people. Election programmes of politicians are often difficult to understand and complicated, so just a small part of the electorate reads them.

Younger citizens essentially assimilate information differently from older ones, and are often unwilling to go deep into long programmes. We can as-
sume that efforts are not made to present these programmes in a simpler way because they are targeted more towards older voters with established political views which are not affected by constantly renewed political programmes. Meanwhile, the opinion of young people can vary over time as they receive more information.

However, encouraging young people to participate in civil life cannot be limited to promoting participation in elections and interest in election programmes. Constant means for encouraging the civil spirit in young people are necessary. One of the most effective means are youth organizations that promote aware and active citizenship through their activities and create conditions for young people to directly express their opinion about relevant issues. However, youth organizations presently only unite a small part of young people, so continuous campaigns organized by the youth organizations and young people themselves are necessary in order to involve as many people in the civil life of their country as possible and encourage young people to express themselves and take responsibility.

One of such activities is the information campaign “I care”. It is a youth campaign with the aim of reducing discrimination and encouraging young people from all around Lithuania to participate in civil life actively, express their opinion bravely and become active citizens of Lithuania.

The goal of this campaign is to encourage young people to participate in civil life and presidential, parliamentary and local elections actively. Through raising awareness, the campaign encourages young people to vote and draws attention to the passiveness of young people in civil life.

(2) GOALS

The main goal of the information campaign “I care” is to encourage active participation of young people in social and civil life and improve their knowledge and interests in processes taking place at the national level. A few essential tasks have been identified for reaching this goal:

- To encourage young people and youth organizations to create and participate in activities related to promoting civil spirit;
- To inform young people about the importance and possibilities of participating in civil life;
• To educate young people to be aware and able to critically assess the principles of active participation in society;

• To encourage young people to actively participate in the campaign and combat the stereotype of apolitical and inactive youth.

Looking at these tasks, we can see that the key concepts of the campaign are: inform, encourage and educate. All the goals and tasks of the campaign aim for active and responsible youth who are able to express themselves. The aim is to inform young people about present possibilities and educate and encourage them to be active in society.

In addition, the goal of the campaign is to draw the attention of politicians to the information provided from their side, complicated programmes and growing apathy of young people.

(3) **Target Groups / Beneficiaries**

The information programme “I care” essentially involves two target groups: primary and secondary. The primary target group is 16-29-year-old people from different Lithuanian regions and different social and cultural groups. Most activities of the campaign are targeted at this group.

The secondary target group consists of all Lithuanian citizens who have the right to vote. The activities of the campaign are not purposefully targeted to this group, but partial overlapping with the primary group is possible.

It is important to pay attention to the fact that the primary target group of the campaign does not look very wide in the demographic aspect, but it is very different in the psychographical aspect. Young people just over the limit of the voting age are often very different in their psychographical parameters from people who are older by 10 or more years and still fall into the limits of the age parameter of the primary group.

(4) **Motivation**

The campaign was first implemented in 2004 before the election of Seimas (parliament) of the Republic of Lithuania. Beside the main goal of the campaign, the aim was also to contribute to the formation of a positive image
of young people and encourage non-governmental youth organizations to be more active in the field of civil spirit. The encouragement of cooperation at the local level was also an important aspect. All these goals together also help to reduce the social separation, especially in regions where members of the target groups have fewer possibilities. The problem of apathy among young people was also assessed because young people often just do not have any information or knowledge about political life of their country and avoid looking for that information because it is often difficult to understand and intended for “serious people”.

Although it is difficult to measure the direct impact of the campaign, it can be generally stated that the campaign was prepared and implemented in order to contribute to the solution of these problems.

(5) RESOURCES

The campaign was first carried out for more than one year, and continues to be implemented. Assessing the human resources needed for the campaign is difficult. In terms of competences, the campaign needs a leader with organizational experience – a coordinator and communications specialist who could both plan and implement and assess the communication of the campaign. In addition, it needs a technical specialist – a designer who could realize the visual ideas for the campaign. Other workers and volunteers are also important during various stages of the campaign, but this need varies according to the activities carried out during the campaign.

The financial resources needed for the campaign are not easily defined, either. Every year the campaign is planned anew, following the above-defined goals and tasks. In other words, the contents remain similar, but the form is different every time. As the primary target group of the campaign is very different in many parameters, various communication channels and means are applied – from TV or radio messages to street actions.

Considering the fact that the “I care” campaign does not aim to make any profit and the campaign itself is not political, various barter agreements and discounts are often possible. In this case, the costs and value of the campaign can differ by four or more times, i.e., the real costs can be four or even more times lower than the implementation of the campaign at usual prices. Nev-
ertheless, financing is necessary for these real costs and it depends on the contribution of sponsors every year.

The resources disposed by the Lithuanian Council of Youth Organizations for the campaign could also be valued in a monetary expression, but this was not done.

(6) RESULTS / CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROJECT

The results can be assessed in two ways – the number of citizens reached during the information campaign and increase in the number of the members of target groups who voted.

In the first case, the reached number of citizens is different every time, but it is approximately calculated that over 200,000 members of the target group are reached.

In the second case, there is no reliable statistical data enabling to determine at least an approximate increase in the activity of young voters, but it can generally be stated that the civil spirit of young people is growing. This conclusion is based on the fact that there are more and more projects and individual activities encouraging the civil spirit of young people in the general sense.

Attention should be paid to the fact that the campaign, implemented for the eighth year, also reduces discriminative phenomena in civil life. It can be noticed that the political parties and individual politicians increasingly often look for ways to communicate their programmes, goals and tasks in a simpler and more understandable form to voters.

(7) ADVANTAGES / SUCCESS INDICATORS

It is quite difficult to define the success indicators of this campaign and their changes. However, it can be stated that quite an important success indicator is the fact the campaign, first organized in 2004, has since been organized. Also, the name of the campaign “I care” has become quite a recognizable brand.
The logotype was changed, but the name remained the same. The name has been interpreted in various contexts for eight years since the first campaign and contributed to the consolidation of the words “I care” in the consciousness of the members of the target group. The slogan and form of the campaign are a little different every time, so the name and conception of the campaign are adapted to different young people and “speak their language.”

**Disadvantages / Limitations**

One of the biggest challenges and limitations during the implementation of the campaign is passivity among young people. Even active young people do not always get involved in proposed activities. The success of the campaign in general depends on the civil spirit of the target groups and their turning out to vote on the election day. It also depends on the will and personal motivation of the target groups. The campaigns have provided information and encouraged participation in elections. Another big challenge is how to come up with new forms and ways of providing information to encourage young people to act. In most cases, the primary stages are especially important and it is not always possible to generate ideas to the end and they are later corrected. This kind of change management requires much professionalism and organizational flexibility.

One of the limitations is also the difference between the target groups. Although various channels and methods of disseminating information are often used during the campaigns, it is impossible to adapt messages to appeal to all members of the target groups.

**Proposals for Improving the Good Practice**

The campaign “I care” can be improved in various ways. Firstly, the campaign can be improved in terms of its organization processes. The organizers of the campaign should not have any other activities during the campaign or these activities should be reduced to the minimum.

This would enable managing the organization and identifying and controlling critical points more effectively.
Fund-raising is another area that could be strengthened. While planning and preparing ideas for a campaign, it could be possible to search for possible sponsors and involve interested parties from various sectors because the campaign itself is targeted to a very diverse audience.

Stronger support for the campaign would also help to organize the activities of the campaign on a larger scale. However, it is also possible to use the available information channels with the present support and look for new, untraditional ways to provide information. More attention should be paid to this aspect.

Finer segmentation of target groups and an attempt to adapt information for each segment would be useful for the campaign, but this possibility has not yet been analyzed. This could also be implemented by including people from different social groups in organizing the campaign.
NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
BOČIAI – THE LITHUANIAN UNION OF PENSIONERS

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
Diversity of communication forms of elderly people at Bočiai – the Lithuanian Union of Pensioners in Vilnius and the Ukmergė district

DESCRIPTION
The Lithuanian Union of Pensioners (LPS) Bočiai was founded in 1991. At the beginning of 2012, this organization united 54 communities, 18 divisions, 9 clubs and 43 artistic collectives and had over 45 thousand members. Elderly people form a large part of the population of Lithuania and can successfully share their experience with younger people even though most of them have retired from active labour activities. Presently, many pensioners suffer from social separation because low incomes do not allow them to participate in social, societal and cultural life to a full extent. However, divisions and subdivisions of Bočiai have organised about 1800 different events targeted at this group.

Activities are developed by most communities, but their form differs across communities. The community of Vilnius with over 1500 members consists of various territorial divisions (Antakalnis, Naujamiestis, Žirmūnai, Lazdynai etc.) and a few collectives with thematic activities. Meanwhile, the community of LPS Bočiai, with which the inhabitants of Vilnius have especially close relations, unites about 350 members, but the type of activity of these subdivisions is rather thematic.

There are circles with different activities both in Ukmerge and its surrounding district – Jonava, Deltuva and Inkilai village.
In the biggest union of pensioners in the country, Bočiai, pensioners and people approaching pension age participate in various activities and share experience with the aim of improving their life quality.

The Vilnius community of the Lithuanian Union of Pensioners Bočiai started its activity in 1995. There are 16 divisions in separate communities of the city with 11 artistic collectives, the folk ensemble Rasoda and two clubs – a mixed choir and national dance collective Ainiai and “Life is Beautiful”. Over 300 people participate in the activity of these collectives and organize about 140 various concerts per year. The folklore ensemble Rasoda alone organizes over 20 concerts per year.

The community undertakes social-cultural activities, organizes concerts, meetings with elderly people, youth, children’s and nursing homes, commemorates important historical dates, organizes leisure time activities for seniors, organizes educational excursions and develops the skills of pensioners. In the last few years, more attention has been paid to developing medical, social and economic knowledge and promoting a healthy lifestyle.

The Bočiai community of Vilnius has been continuing and nurturing Lithuanian choir traditions. One of the first choirs, which recently celebrated its 15th anniversary, is the mixed choir of the Antakalnis division, which has given concerts both in Lithuania and abroad.

Song festival traditions are revived at an annual song festival at the Vilnius Teachers’ House, where other collectives of the community also participate. The folk ensemble Rasoda actively gives concerts both in Lithuania and abroad. The members of the club Ainiai often hold performances at children’s and nursing homes. The community organizes about 200 various events every year.

Educational excursions are organised regularly. Seniors especially enjoy excursions around Lithuania and meeting with members of communities in other districts and towns. Excursions have been made from Biržai and Rokiškis to Ventės Ragas, and from Druskininkai to the Šventoji resort. Traditional pilgrim trips are made to Šiluva, the Hill of Crosses and Žemaičių Kalvarija every year. The initiators of pilgrim trips are often the divisions of Naujamiestis and Fabijoniškės, whereas the division of Šnipiškės organises trips focusing on wellbeing and the division of Naujamiestis skyrius annual trips to the Baltic Sea. Trips to Ignalina are organized by the division of Šeškinė. In order to develop the relationship with pensioners from Belarus and Poland, the division of Vilkpédė organized some
trips for Lithuanians in Gardin and got in touch with the community Tėviškė, travelled around the former locations of the Great Duchy of Lithuania and visited Punsč. The division of Karoliniškės organized an excursion to the Latgalia district in Latvia. In addition, seniors in the capital enjoy trips to Turkey, Croatia, Italy, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway and Austria. About 800-900 members of the community in Vilnius go on excursions and educational trips every year.

The Bočiai community in Ukmergė, established almost two decades ago, has an especially close relationship with counterparts from Vilnius. The chairwoman of the community Valerija Naraškevičienė has significantly contributed to the activation of the community. She was awarded the 3rd Class Medal of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas. Activities in the Ukmergė district are organized considering the hobbies of its members. There are 16 different groups in the community: women’s ensemble Lyra, dance circle Rudenėlis, drama circle Kuparas, knitting circle Kraitė and other collectives undertaking different activities. The community of Ukmergė organizes over 80 concerts and 60 other interesting events every year. Various other classes are also organized, for example the group Sveikuolai meets twice a week in order to do exercise.

The Bočiai community in Ukmergė makes a lot of trips and is interested in the experience of seniors from other countries: they got in touch with a club of elderly people from Unstrut-Hainih in Germany, participate in St. John’s festivities in Latvia and show artistic programmes in Belgium, Estonia, Poland, Switzerland and Sweden.

The community also commemorates national and personal festivities, does charity work, participates in art expositions and attends theatre performances and concerts.

(2) GOALS

1. To encourage employment of elderly people.

2. To integrate elderly people into social life by combining passive and active employment and increase their work ability.

3. To encourage the motivation of elderly women to work.

4. To create conditions for the interest of elderly people in business and encourage dissemination of information among peers.
5. To contribute to the education of elderly people and encourage life-long learning.

6. To contribute to promoting a healthy lifestyle, provision of psychological help and solutions to personal and social problems.

7. To contribute to strengthening informal non-professional education of adults.

(3) **TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES**

- Members of the communities of the Lithuanian Union of Pensioners Bočiai and their family members who are 50 or older.
- Over 13000 elderly people in Lithuania directly participate in the good practice.

(4) **MOTIVATION**

Motivation of the good practice:

1. To encourage and strengthen inclusion between generations and their cooperation in a form of a project and various programmes and nurture respect of the new generation for elderly people.

2. To actively develop programmes and organize various events uniting groups of people of different ages.

3. To propagate healthy and active old age and emphasize its value.

4. To nurture mutual respect through personal example.

5. To popularize and develop voluntary activities and help families taking care of old and sick people.

(5) **RESOURCES**

The events and dissemination of good practice have been funded by resources received from NGO projects under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, local municipalities, and private donations.
The most important resources are human ones – organizers whose enthusiasm and organizational abilities bring together tens of thousands of elderly people and inspire them to live a full-fledged life.

(6) RESULTS / CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROJECT

- The diversity of events and forms of their implementation enriched the daily life of elderly people and expanded possibilities to participate in various activities, which had a positive emotional impact on this group of people. Meetings between Lithuanian pensioners’ communities with foreign counterparts, sharing experiences and discussing future perspectives, encouraged them to expand their horizon and enjoy new experiences.

- Thanks to these projects, participants had a possibility to familiarize themselves with the historical heritage of Lithuania both in the theoretical and practical sense. New experiences, especially those gained through intercommunication, change the way of thinking, and strengthen health and tolerance.

- Although communication with young people is not very active, there is some place for mutual understanding and enrichment of leisure time with purposeful activities. By communicating with seniors, young people gain positive experiences, have the opportunity to express themselves and participate in events of a big community of elderly people.

Conclusion: it is purposeful to encourage and strengthen inclusion and cooperation between generations and use various projects and programmes to reach this goal more actively.

It is important to show respect to others’ opinions through example, and listen to and help other people.

- Dissemination of activities of this project in the virtual space to peers in Lithuania and abroad, including articles in newspapers, magazines and regional press; radio and television programmes; photo reportages and exhibits of filmed material during various meetings.

- Elderly people, whose share in the population is increasing in many parts of the world due to demographic changes, have the chance to
meet each other, have hobbies, share experiences and communicate with young people. Young people's knowledge, innovation, wishes and abilities to communicate challenge the belief often held by elderly people about an unbridgeable generation gap.

(7) **Advantages / Success Indicators**

The main success indicator of this activity is the abundance of participants. Any problems arising in the modern world are solved much faster collectively.

(8) **Disadvantages / Limitations**

- Insufficient financing and a lack of premises, especially for sport classes and bigger meetings, were serious challenges during the implementation of the project.
  
- There were various obstacles in each of the above-mentioned activities – lack of financing, lack of premises for events, need for transport etc. However, positive results were reached in most cases thanks to innovative solutions.

(9) **Proposals for Improving the Good Practice**

- It would be purposeful to renew discussions on the equalization of age limits of organizations for elderly people because only pensioners can become members of certain organizations presently, while there is a wider view in respect of this issue both in Lithuania and other EU countries.
  
- Elderly people do not lack ideas and ingenuity – only bigger financial support is necessary for their development into certain activities. In addition, there is a need for establishing a house for elderly people for holding classes and events. Communities of seniors hope for better conditions.
and more respect from governmental organizations, based on the example of Scandinavian and other foreign countries.
NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
THE HOUSE OF NATIONAL COMMUNITIES

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
National Language Teaching Centre at the House of National Communities

(1) DESCRIPTION

The House of National Communities focuses on fostering the identity of national minorities of Lithuania and encourages and supports processes of integration of national minorities into the Lithuanian society. The House of National Communities provides support for social organizations of national minorities of Lithuania and for the process of their full integration into the Lithuanian society; researches social, economic and cultural problems of national and social organizations of national communities; organizes and implements historical, demographical and sociological research into national minorities living in Lithuania. It analyzes societal, national and social problems of the population of Lithuania, implements research on the public opinion, and generalizes and systemizes collected information. In addition, it organizes and prepares books and other teaching material for people wanting to learn Lithuanian and initiates national Lithuanian courses.

Since 1992, the House of National Communities has organized various means of teaching for members of national groups and leaders of non-governmental organizations of national communities in order to encourage the integration processes. One of these means is Lithuanian courses. These courses enable members of national communities to learn Lithuanian, prepare them for the national language qualification examinations and increase their opportunities to join the labour market. As national Lithuanian courses are a marketable and effective means of integration of people belonging to national
communities, the National Language Teaching Centre was established at the House of National Communities on the 3rd of February, 2005.

(2) GOALS

The main goals of the project are to establish a constant means of social integration in the form of national Lithuanian courses for the members of national minorities, reduction of social separation in Vilnius and the Vilnius district, and fostering new abilities and skills of members of national communities giving them a possibility to integrate into the labour market.

Realizing the importance of this activity, the House of National Communities established the National Lithuanian Centre with the support of the Department of National Minorities and Emigration under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and National Lithuanian Commission.

(3) TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES

The target group of this project consists of members of national minority communities who do not speak or speak little Lithuanian.

Lithuanian courses are organized for people from different national minority communities who need Lithuanian classes for different reasons, most often for improving their status in the labour market:

- Employer requires knowledge of Lithuanian – 35%;
- Employer requires a certificate of knowledge of the national language – 39%;
- Wish to become a citizen of Lithuania – 10%;
- Wish to communicate with people (relatives of spouse, friends etc.) – 74%;
- Interest in the history and customs of Lithuania – 52%.

The questionnaires conducted by the House of National Communities do not support the stereotype that only people with primary or secondary education do not speak Lithuanian. The national language courses and certificate in the national language also help people with higher, further or vocational education to return to the labour market.
Cooperation with the Labour Exchange in Vilnius helps to involve unemployed people in trainings in order to obtain new competences or a formal document proving knowledge of the national language.

Participants in the project are from diverse countries of origin, mostly from the CIS countries but also some from other EU countries. Migrants from the United States of America, Turkey and Hungary are also interested in the possibility of participating in these trainings. The trainings are carried out in Russian, and people interested in taking part are directed to immigrant integration centres which receive support from the European Integration Fund (EIF).

Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania representing national minorities have always been the biggest and most significant part of the target groups of the project. When the decision to grant civil rights to the population of Lithuania was adopted in 1990, some citizens faced the problem of not being able to speak Lithuanian, the national language, because of historical or regional reasons. The need for national Lithuanian courses significantly increased in the Vilnius district, Šalčininkai district, City of Vilnius and Visaginas.

Recently, the number of people with permanent residency permits in Lithuania has grown among the beneficiaries of the project. It should be mentioned that the largest proportion of new immigrants do not arrive from China or Turkey although this is often stated on the basis of stereotypes. Most people with work visas come from Belarus or Ukraine – countries which are closely related to Lithuania both in the historical and cultural sense.

The National Lithuanian Centre provides invaluable support for these people. They are provided with the basics of the language and information about the country, its culture, history and national customs and helped to get social contacts. They are given a unique opportunity to join the activity of non-governmental organizations of national communities at the House of National Communities and foster their own culture in order not to lose their national identity.

MOTIVATION

In 1999, a questionnaire was conducted in Vilnius, Visaginas, Šalčininkai and Trakai in order to determine the need for the national language courses and identify problems. 33 respondents participated in the questionnaire. The following conclusions were made based on the results:
1. National language courses are one of the most important ways of learning Lithuanian.

2. Most participants of national language courses are middle-aged, with higher education and occupations which are important to the economy of Lithuania.

3. The main reason for these people to learn the national language is economic and work-related.

4. In the national language teaching process, more attention should be paid to Lithuanian orthography.

5. People who want to learn and have been learning Lithuanian experience a lack of teaching literature and technical means of teaching. According to the research data on employment, in 2002 the unemployment rate among national minorities was much higher than the average unemployment level in the country. The total unemployment level was 13.8 per cent, with 12.8 per cent of unemployed Lithuanians, 20.3 per cent of Russians, 17.8 per cent of Polish and 17.4 per cent of other nationalities. The research carried out showed that the unemployment level was higher among Russians compared to Polish or Lithuanians although most Russians had higher education. Although the reasons for unemployment in certain regions could be objectively explained by the economic state and lack of initiative of the authorities, it became clear after comparing the data of various questionnaires that the establishment of the National Lithuanian Centre was a necessary and urgent measure to reduce social and economic separation. Thus the National Lithuanian Centre was established in 2005 at the House of National Communities with the support of the Department of National Minorities and Emigration under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the National Lithuanian Commission.

(5) **RESOURCES**

Presently, the activities of the National Lithuanian Centre are governed by the teaching coordinator and Lithuanian teacher. This number of employees is sufficient, although additional human resources would be necessary if the number of target group members increased.

The project has minimum financial resources, which ensure the salary of the Lithuanian teacher.
Rooms are also necessary for carrying out the project activities.

( 6 )

**RESULTS OF THE PROJECT**

From 1992 to 2012 (semester I), 2029 participants learned the national language at the House of National Communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992–1994</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>177</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>114 + 94 Implementation of the Equal project “Development and trial of the support mechanism for integration of national minorities into the labour market”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>120 + 80 Implementation of the Equal project “Development and trial of the support mechanism for integration of national minorities into the labour market”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 I semester</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since 2005 after the establishment of the National Lithuanian Centre, 792 participants have completed Lithuanian courses and taken Lithuanian examinations in order to get a national language certificate.

Although the number of participants has been decreasing since 2009, the number of people wanting to attend Lithuanian courses has grown.
The House of National Minorities has been forced to reduce and limit the number of participants in the trainings because of the economic situation, reforms made by the Government in the policy relating to national communities, largely reduced programme financing and lack of other financial sources.

The activities of the National Lithuanian Centre enable solving problems related to the integration of national minorities or new immigrants. First, it is a wonderful possibility to learn about the Lithuanian language, customs and traditions of the country. Second, activities of the centre enable fostering the social welfare of national communities. Third, cooperation with the local labour exchange is an excellent tool to integrate or return a person into the labour market.

The National Lithuanian Centre provides invaluable support for people representing national communities through teaching the national language and knowledge about the country, culture, history, customs and relevant social relations. People are given a unique opportunity to join the activities of the national communities and non-governmental organizations acting within the House of National Communities and foster their own culture in order not to lose their national identity. They are able to share their experience of life in Lithuania with other people of the same nationality. The Centre is also important in terms of the local community, city and state. Integrating people into the labour market through trainings organized in the context of this project supports the economy, reduces various social tensions and combats xenophobic stereotypes, which are most often not based on facts.

**ADVANTAGES / SUCCESS INDICATORS**

According to a questionnaire conducted in 2012, participants in national language courses found out about Lithuanian courses at the House of National Communities from the following sources: 39% from friends, neighbours, colleagues etc., 39% from the Labour Exchange in Vilnius, and 22% from advertisements in the press or on the internet. It is very important to note that the House of National Communities has publicized this project minimally, and people who want to improve their competences get information from other people or the Labour Exchange. This shows there is real continuity of the project activity and trust among the target groups in the work of the National Lithuanian Centre.
58% of participants in national language courses chose the Lithuanian courses organized by the House of National Communities because they knew the Lithuanian teacher to be a highly qualified specialist. In addition, 26% knew that the participants of these courses pass the national language examination with good marks. This information is not publicized by the House of National Communities or the National Lithuanian Centre in it.

One of the most important success indicators of this project is dissemination of positive information about the project among the target groups and the interest of the members of these target groups. According to the results of the questionnaire conducted in 2012, 68% of participants in national language courses would like to increase the number of hours of the Lithuanian training programmes, 32% would like to spend more hours on practical classes, and 65% would like to get more information related to the history of Lithuania, its traditions, customs etc. during the courses.

(8) **Disadvantages / Limitations**

The biggest challenge during the implementation of the project for the House of National Communities is to ensure continued funding of activities at the Centre. The activity of this Centre was supported by the Department of National Minorities and Emigration in 1992–2009, the National Lithuanian Commission in 1997–2012 and the Ministry of Culture in 2011–2012. However, the continuation of activities of the Centre and constancy of activities of the House of National Communities depend on possibilities to obtain funding for the implementation of activities.

(9) **Proposals for Improving the Good Practice**

Other regions of Lithuania and other EU countries could take this good practice for working with national minorities and migrants. The language courses are not an innovation as such, but combining the experience and capabilities of the labour exchange and local non-governmental organizations in teaching the national language is unique. The language courses become a source of obtaining new social and cultural experience and new possibilities of integration and adaptation to the labour market. This makes for an excellent tool to reduce discrimination and social separation.
NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
WOMEN’S ISSUES INFORMATION CENTRE

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
“Let’s do business!” (Encouraging women in the Vilnius, Klaipėda and Utena districts into business in order to ensure equal opportunities in the fields of business and employment) and “Let’s do business 2009” (Encouraging women in ten Lithuanian districts into business in order to decrease social separation)

(1) DESCRIPTION

Both projects are united by similar ideas, but they are not identical and the duration of their implementation, target groups and geographical distribution are different.

“Let’s do business!” was one of the most successful projects of the Women’s Issues Information Centre (MIC) in 2008, and led to the follow-up project “Let’s do business 2009”. The goal of the project “Let’s do business!” was to give women a possibility to learn from some of the best business specialists and participate in a training programme developed specially for them.

First, we will discuss the goals, training structure and target group of “Let’s do business!” and good practice created in the project.

Two training modules were organized during the project:

– The training module “Be enterprising” was targeted at women who have just started or are going to start the own business and want to gain certain knowledge, information sources, competence or self-confidence. 100 women
from the Lithuanian districts of Vilnius, Klaipėda and Utena participated in this module. The topics of the trainings were: financial management and bookkeeping, integration of gender equality, leadership, communications and information management, modern HR management methods, legal aspects of business.

– The training module “Reach for the stars” was targeted at women who have already reached quite a high position in business, but have not filled the highest positions due to certain reasons (lack of certain qualifications or knowledge, the “glass ceiling effect”, stereotypes etc.). 40 businesswomen participated in this module. The trainings were organized in the Vilnius and Klaipėda districts. The topics of trainings were: leadership, communications and information management, legal aspects of business, modern HR management methods, financial management and integration of gender equality.

Various methods were applied to implement the goals of this project: trainings, a special journal, a virtual club of businesswomen, dissemination of information in the media and an electronic forum for sharing good experience. In total 142 women took part in the trainings, which was more than expected.

This project was selected as one of the most successful examples of encouraging women into business in Lithuania. In addition, it was one of the best projects in this field in Europe.

During the trainings, women who were thinking of starting their own business obtained knowledge about business processes, financial management, sales and marketing.

More experienced businesswomen had the opportunity to improve their financial, business law, management and other skills during seminars which took place over several days. Participants heard lectures on topics such as communicating with the public and e-communication, which was particularly useful because some businesswomen participating in the seminars have created websites and are currently doing e-business. During the project, a virtual self-help club for businesswomen was established within the project website, providing a space where women could share their business experience and look for partners and investors.

Participants in the trainings stated that “Let’s do business!” helped them gain confidence to do things that had seemed impossible before. One participant said she obtained enough knowledge during the trainings to be able to manage the finances of her company by herself. Sharing experiences and making
contacts was especially important for the participants, some of whom have remained in contact after the trainings.

Inspired by the success of the project implemented in 2008, the Women’s Issues Information Centre implemented the project “Let’s do business 2009” (Encouraging women in ten Lithuanian districts into business in order to decrease social separation) in 2009–2012. The aim of this project was create equal opportunities in the labour market for Lithuanian women who feel social separation by providing them with necessary knowledge and encouraging them to start or to develop their own business or find a desirable job. During the trainings, participants in Druskininkai, Jonava, Skuodas, Pasvalys, Rokiškis, Marijampolė, Jurbarkas, Mažeikiai, Visaginas, Šalčininkai and Kretinga districts were encouraged to become financially strong, find a desirable job, develop or start their own business and create new jobs. The project was implemented from the 6th of March 2009 to the 30th of April 2012.

Training structure of “Let’s do business 2009”:

1. General 3-day trainings were organized in order to discuss general, cognitive topics which are relevant to all participants. Topics of the general trainings were: integration of gender equality, legal aspects of work, leadership, development of self-confidence, modern labour market and business world – challenges and reality.

2. Special trainings were organized one month after the general trainings. Participants could choose from two different options:

   • “Be enterprising” – 4-day trainings for women wanting to start their own activity or business, providing them with information necessary to start up a business. Topics of the trainings were: professional finance management – guarantee of the company’s success, human resource management, aspects of business and commercial law, marketing, internal and external business communication, drawing up a business plan, business risk.

   • “Be visible to the employer” (3-day trainings) – these trainings helped participants to integrate themselves into the labour market by forming necessary social skills, encouraging activeness in social life and developing abilities to use general employment support services. Topics of the trainings were: communication in the labour market, the labour market and job opportunities today, self-analysis – a profession for me.

3. Round-table discussions and inter-regional seminars.
3.1. Round-table discussions were organized at the end of the trainings with the aim of sharing experience, creating networks and facilitating informal communication to support looking for work or starting a business. During the round-table discussions, members of the target groups had the possibility to solve various types of management tasks by acting in a competitive environment. Through solving these challenges, the participants assessed their knowledge, found out interesting facts about business, tested their negotiation skills and assessed their abilities to make strategic business decisions. During the simulation, the teams competed in the market and showed their enterprise skills by trying to make the maximum profit, putting into practice knowledge obtained during the general and special trainings.

3.2. Inter-regional training seminars. At the end of the trainings and consultations, four training seminars were held for the most active participants of the trainings at the inter-regional level in order to consolidate their knowledge and skills and share experience among the participants of the projects.

4. Individual and group consultations of specialists. Participants in the trainings had the possibility to take part in individual consultations with the trainers on relevant issues. These consultations enabled participants to solve problems more effectively, develop the own business more easily or integrate themselves into the labour market.

5. 5-day digital story trainings were classes which helped the participants to use their creative potential by applying information technologies. Trainers taught the participants to use video, audio and image editing software. They also provided knowledge on how to make a creative and attractive advertisement. This training module helped future and present businesswomen to create a film/advertisement presenting their company which will be used for the publication of the company and its services to attract potential investors in the future. 29 business presentation films were created during the trainings.

2) GOALS
The goal of both projects was similar – to give the possibility to Lithuanian women feeling social separation to take an equal position in the labour market by providing them with necessary knowledge and encouraging them to start or develop their own business or find a desirable job.
(3) **TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES**

“Let’s do business!”:

- Participants in the “Be enterprising” trainings were women who had started or wanted to start their own business.
- “Reach for stars” trainings were intended for women with demonstrable experience in the business.

“Let’s do business 2009”:

- Women returning to the labour market after a longer absence (over 12 months at the local labour exchange or without any income);
- Single mothers (raising a child/children alone);
- Large families;
- Women over 50;
- Women from the Druskininkai, Jonava, Skuodas, Pasvalys, Rokiškis, Marijampolė, Jurbarkas, Mažeikiai, Visaginas, Šalčininkai and Kretinga districts.

(4) **MOTIVATION**

The motivation to initiate the project “Let’s do business!” implemented by MIC in 2008 arose from the experience gained in the Centre’s activities and the needs of women that had been analyzed over many years. It was noted that it was more difficult for women to participate in the labour market because they are not self-reliant, cannot combine family and work, bear various responsibilities etc.

Women are increasingly entering business despite the fact that it is traditionally considered a man’s world. Lithuania is distinguished from other EU states by a high rate of independently working women, but their number is still lower compared with men. The policy of the European Union mentions encouragement of new kinds of business created by women as a way to encourage innovations and raise the work quality level in the economy. This step would also be very important both from the economic and social point of view for our society, which has stereotypical attitudes towards the social role of women.
Women encounter difficulties when starting or developing a business in Lithuania related to a complicated business environment, lack of information and contacts, discrimination and stereotypes, difficulties in combining family and business or work as well as different attitudes of women and men towards business.

(5) RESOURCES

- Head and financial manager of the project. Three mediator-consultants responsible for organizing the trainings and communication with the participants. Experts and trainers leading the trainings and giving individual consultations to participants.

- Financial resources for the implementation of this activity were needed for the salaries of the experts and project team, renting facilities, travel expenses, catering and renting equipment for the trainings.

(6) RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

Thanks to the project “Let’s do business 2009”, 91 women found a job and 3 business projects and 29 promotional films were created presenting the present or future business of the participants.

The results of the project exceeded expectations: all the participants of these trainings obtained some knowledge that is necessary for them and will be useful in the labour market or business world in the future. The obtained results show that the projects contributed to the encouragement of women into business to a significant extent. Women entering the business world obtained some knowledge necessary for the successful development of their business and created advertisements to help them publicize their business among customers and future investors.

The concept of this project was developed for six years and transferred to foreign countries successfully (in 2011, a pilot variation of these projects was used for the implementation of the project “Let’s do business” in Belarus), showing that the format of the project is suitable and easy to adapt both in the national and international context. It shows that projects of this type are a suitable means for the encouragement of employment and enterprise of women.

This practice can be considered good because the developed training programme is suitable for women of different levels of education and ages; in
addition, it can be applied both at the national and international level. The quality of the program and the fact that it served its purpose were proved by the reached indicators and assessment by experts.

(7) ADVANTAGES / SUCCESS INDICATORS

The success of the project is reflected by the reached results and the fact that the project has been implemented since 2008 and was also implemented in other countries. The pilot variant of these projects was used during the implementation of the project “Let’s do business” in Belarus in 2011.

The project “Let’s do business 2009” was also nominated for a “European sails” award for the encouragement of social integration, took second place in Lithuania and was presented during the final event of the “European sails” awards in Hungary.

(8) DISADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS

During the project, members of the target groups encountered difficulties in combining their family and work (lunch preparation for families, children’s illnesses, picking up children from school etc.), some of which prevented them from participating in all the stages of the trainings and seminars or staying for the entire duration of the seminars.

(9) PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE GOOD PRACTICE

The training programmes developed during this project could be improved by better adapting them to the needs of women. An analysis of needs should be carried out for this purpose, and additional research is needed into the reasons preventing women from participating in the labour market actively or starting their own business, into which knowledge they lack in order to be self-reliant etc. In addition, in order to avoid any difficulties in combining family and trainings, care for small children should be arranged in future projects to allow members of the target groups to fully concentrate on the trainings and participate in the full programme.
(1) **DESCRIPTION**

Various projects for reducing social separation of national communities have been carried out. However, only one of them has been able to significantly change the social and economic status of people belonging to national communities. Moreover, the good experience and proposals of this project are intended for the Ministry of Social Care and Work; when they were adopted, they were able to change the economic status of two Lithuanian districts. As the unemployment level among national minorities was and still is higher than the average of the country (it is illustrated by Šalčininkai district in the best way), the House of National Communities along with its partners (Department of National Minorities and Emigration under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Municipality Administration of Šalčininkai district, Labour Exchange of Vilnius, Labour Exchange of Šalčininkai, Charity Support Fund, Polish Cultural House of Vilnius, Institute of Work and Social Researches, Coordination Council of National Organizations of Lithuanian Russians and division of Vilnius of the Union of Lithuanian Polish) started implementing the project “Development and testing of the mechanism of integration of national minorities into the labour market“.
During intermediate communication with non-governmental organizations of national communities (NVO) which number in Lithuania was about 270 in 2004, it was noticed that these non-governmental organizations pay the main attention to the conservation of the national culture, customs and traditions in their activity, but they pay too little attention to the solution of problems of reduction of social separation of the members of national communities in the society.

Insufficient activity of the members of national communities in the labour market was also determined by the lack of enterprise skills both in non-governmental organizations and at the individual level, a very low level of knowledge of the national language, lack of organizational abilities and general management knowledge of the heads of non-governmental organizations and ineffective contacts in separate regions among the authorities, businesspeople and non-governmental organizations while solving the issues of integration into the labour market. The project was implemented in three stages.

During the first stage of the project (December 2004 – May 2005), a team of the development community (VB) was formed and workers of the project activities and external experts were selected.

During the second stage of the project (June 2005 – February 2008), sociological researches were performed in order to determine possibilities of integration of the representatives of national minorities into the labour market, legal acts were analyzed and obstacles were found which prevent successful integration of the representatives of national minorities.

The leaders and patrons recommended by national minorities and non-governmental organizations were prepared according to special training programmes and the qualification of the employees from the municipalities working with the representatives of national minorities was improved. The patrons of the project activated and motivated the unemployed – representatives of national minorities for who the national Lithuanian courses and trainings were organized according to additional trainings programmes for the unemployed. On the basis of the methodology of creation of communication networks (BT), cooperation networks of interested organizations (municipalities, non-governmental organizations, training institutions, employment institutions and employers) were developed. The mechanism of integration of national minorities into the labour market was prepared.

During the third stage (June 2007 – August 2008), the partners of the project aimed to consolidate the developed model in practice considering the good
practice and accumulated during stage II and project products by partially transferring it to another region (Visaginas) and creating conditions and assumptions for its functioning in the future. Beside these tasks, it was also aimed to politically consolidate and practically support the implementation of the means of competence strengthening of human resources of non-governmental organizations of national communities during the third stage. With the help of activities of the third stage of the project, it was aimed to contribute to the common goal of the project – to develop and try the mechanism of integration of national minorities into the labour market and consolidate full application of this model and/or its individual components for various programme documents and/or standard acts and practical implementation.

G O A L S

The goal of the project to develop and try the mechanism of integration of national minorities into the labour market and cooperation networks by using the human resources and influence of non-governmental organizations of national minorities.

On the basis of social organizations of national minorities, their influence and effect on the development of the society, the aim was to develop cooperation networks for the organizations participating in the process of integration into the labour market with the help of the project by applying the experience of foreign partners and develop, try and assess the mechanism of integration of national minorities into the labour market in the City of Vilnius and Šalčininkai district. In addition, it was necessary to improve the competence of human resources of non-governmental organizations of national minorities and qualification of the staff of institutions participating in the integration process as well as develop and try the mechanism of integration of national minorities into the labour market.

T A R G E T  G R O U P S / B E N E F I C I A R I E S

The target group of this project is representatives of national minorities encountering various problems of integration into the labour market. According to the data of the population census taken in 2001, 83.45 per cent of
the Lithuanian population consisted of Lithuanians. The rest of the population – 576.7 thousand – consisted of the following nationalities: Polish (6.74 per cent), Russians (6.31 per cent), Belorussians (1.23 per cent), Ukrainians (0.65 per cent) and other nationalities (1.62 per cent).

(4) Motivation

At the beginning of the project (in 2002), the unemployment among national minorities was much higher compared with the average unemployment in the country according to the data of the research of the inhabitants’ employment. While the total unemployment was 13.8 per cent, there were 12.8 per cent of unemployed Lithuanians, 20.3 per cent of Russians, 17.8 per cent of Polish and 17.4 per cent of other nationalities. Performed researches showed that the unemployment among Russians was higher compared with the Polish or Lithuanians although most of them have higher education. It shows that national dependency has an influence on possibilities of employment although legal acts prohibit discrimination because of race, gender or religious beliefs. There has been no research of possibilities of integration of national minorities into the labour market. This situation caused the preparation of the EQUAL project of the initiative of the European Communities “Development and testing of the mechanism of integration of national minorities into the labour market”.

(5) Resources

During the period of the project implementation, from 3 to 90 people worked on the project in individual stages.

The Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the European Union gave about 2 million Litas for a four-year period.

(6) Results / Consequences of the Project

During the implementation of the project, 44 leaders and 45 patrons representing over 300 non-governmental organizations of national minorities
of our country obtained the abilities and competences which can be con-
sidered a baseline for their further education and education of represented
non-governmental organizations. 94 unemployed people, representatives
of national minorities, took national Lithuanian courses, 22 of them passed
the qualification category examinations of the national language, 60 took
additional training programmes for the unemployed prepared during the
project. The trainings and cooperation between the leader/patron helped
the representatives of national communities increase the competitive abili-
ty in the labour market – 25 unemployed people, representatives of national
minorities started working.

With the help of the training programme prepared during the project, the
qualification was improved for 58 workers communicating with the repre-
sentatives of national minorities in their working activity.

The database of interested persons and service provided was accumulated
which can be used in the future both for continuation of work with the repre-
sentatives of national minorities and other social groups. The experience of
leaders/patrons can be applied in order to help to find a job for immigrants
and refugees and integrate them into the society, and the leader training
programme and its individual parts can be adapted for the activity of other
non-governmental institutions. Two contracts were concluded for the devel-
opment of cooperation networks. The cooperation networks (BT) were devel-
oped for the solution of problems of social separation of national minorities,
but it emerged during the period of the project implementation that there
were assumptions for the solution of other problems.

The cooperation networks were able to convert into cooperating parity net-
works enabling the optimization of provided services in various target groups
and help to various target groups (representing organizations) by becoming
equal network partners.

During the research “Possibilities of integration of the representatives of
national minorities into the labour market”, the obstacles were identified
which prevent successful integration of national minorities into the labour
market. It was thought that the conclusions and recommendations could
help to solve issues of reduction of social separation of the representatives
of national minorities and increase of their employment both at the level of
the municipalities and non-governmental organizations.
An analysis of legal acts was prepared in order to affect the practical activity and policy; there were researches of barriers of legal acts for integration of the representatives of national minorities into the labour market which will help to realize activities of non-governmental organizations more successfully and affect the practice and policy.

The most important success of this project is preparation of the mechanism of integration of national minorities into the labour market enabling non-governmental organizations of national minorities solving issues of reduction of social separation of their members on their own.

The model consists of separate components supplementing each other:

- Enabling of non-governmental organizations of national minorities to solve problems of social separation by increasing the competence of human resources of non-governmental organizations (provision of new enterprise competences to the most active members of non-governmental organizations);

- Development of the cooperation network among the representatives of municipal/national (governmental) institutions, non-governmental organizations (national communities), potential employers, training institutions etc. in order to solve problems of reduction of social separation of the representatives of national communities in the region.

Stages of the model implementation:

1. Non-governmental organizations make a compound of a leader and a patron which members are representatives of non-governmental organizations of national communities (representatives of the same national community) and their functions are to help the representatives of national minorities to integrate themselves into the labour market.

2. The competence of human resources of non-governmental organizations is increased by using the training programmes developed during the project (training of leaders, patrons and extra training of the unemployed), improving the enterprise of non-governmental organizations, increasing their abilities to use the available unique peculiarities (unique/different culture, speaking another language that is rare in our country, national culinary heritage, national handicrafts etc.), solving problems of social separation and helping the members of non-governmental organizations to integrate themselves into the society.
3. Cooperation networks are developed with the goal to interconnect governmental and business structure, other organizations and the non-governmental sector while solving the issues related with the reduction of social separation of the representatives of national minorities in the region. The members of BT solve arising problems expediently and flexibly which cannot be solved by one institution for certain reasons; they use the available resources. The leaders of non-governmental organizations having obtained necessary competences of help provision during the trainings use their communicative abilities and become both equal members of BT and initiators who are able to affect the solution of issues of employment of national minorities in positive ways.

4. Activity performed by prepared leaders and patrons: they look for potential working positions or create new working positions, look for the most suitable candidates, test and prepare them.

5. Working plan in the new working place: the learning process is observed and supported both at the trainings organized by the employment exchange and with the help of the training programmes prepared during the project; there is help during the employment and care helping to consolidate people in their new working place.

6. Non-governmental organizations of national minorities are enabled by implementing the leader training programme prepared during the project which has the following innovations: construction of the programme oriented into the nurturance of the intellectual capital of non-governmental organizations of national minorities, contents designed in the context of the knowledge society (11 interrelated modules) and flexibility; the training modules can be realized all together and separately on the basis of assessment of the learners’ experience, considering their needs, interests and motivation, mobility expressed by the abilities of assimilation so that the adapted programme reaches a certain target group and the maximum approach to the dwelling place of learners.

7. The cooperation networks unite activities of local authorities, teaching institutions, business structures and non-governmental organizations during the solution of problems of integration of the representatives of socially separated groups into the society when the integration process requires individual care of the integrated person and cooperation between different institutions.
8. The mechanism of integration of national minorities into the labour market was developed considering the needs of benefit receivers and solution users. The representatives of national communities participate in the development and implementation of the project actively. Non-governmental organizations of national communities are the project partners – members of the development community. During the trainings organized in the project, the benefit receivers and solution users obtained some competences enabling planning the vision of the future activity of the own organization by relating it with the increase in enterprise and development of employment between the members of the own community and looking for possibilities of cooperation in Lithuania and abroad. The leader training programme enables designing future trainings of the leaders of non-governmental organizations by choosing individual training modules which enable people developing their competences intended for the increase in their competitive abilities in the labour market. The cooperation networks enable all their participants (municipal/governmental authorities, employers, training institutions, non-governmental organizations etc.) to solve various problems of development of the region considering the interests and aims of each participant of the network by working with the groups of social separation, using the available resources for that purpose and encouraging and developing the cooperation among various institutions. BT can become a tool helping non-governmental organizations of national communities to use their intellectual potential in order to solve various problems of activity in the socio-cultural, educational and labour market space.

(7) ADVANTAGES / SUCCESS INDICATORS

During the project, cooperation networks were created without any external support and initiatives; they functioned for a year on the basis of the cooperation system created during the project. The foreign partner of the House of National Communities “Projekt Region Braunschweig GmbH” implemented the project PAMIR SON during which it applied a similar method of employment means and reached good results, thus, it is proposed to take the good experience of this project for the agencies performing the functions of employment exchanges now. The adaptation of this methodology
enabled reducing the amount of financial costs by a few times and increasing the number of successful cases of employment of the members of target groups.

The cooperation with the German partners enabled taking various experience of German national communities/associations of immigrants, training institutions and institutions which administrate social projects by integrating the representatives of national minorities into the labour market and solving problems of reduction of their social separation, modifying this experience and adapting to the Lithuanian conditions.

(8) DISADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS

During the implementation of this project, the biggest challenge was administration of the project. There were constant problems combining activities, their changes and planning of activities with the employees of the lowest level from the European Social Fund (ESF) agency. The unbelievably fast change of workers in the ESF agency caused serious threats to the timely implementation of the project activities.

During the implementation of the third stage of the project, certain proposals were submitted to the Ministry of Social Security and Labour which could have changed the economic state of the target groups or even regions. These proposals were not considered. As the proposals are valuable both in their contents and amount of expenditures and accumulated experience is unique, we think that the experience of this project should still be used.

(9) PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE GOOD PRACTICE

The model is mobile and easily movable to other regions because presently there is a possibility in Lithuania to use functioning structures of the organizations of national communities and their human resources. This model can be applied to every group suffering from discrimination or social separation.
NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
WOMEN’S ISSUES INFORMATION CENTRE

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
“Youth for youth – together we can combat violence against girls and women”, “Future leaders” trainings

(1) DESCRIPTION

The project aims to educate young people on the topics of gender equality, violence in relationships and its prevention, while creating a safe environment among young people. During the project, young people learn about gender stereotypes and their connection to gender-based violence. They are also encouraged to create a safe environment where equal opportunities of men and women are a priority and violence is not tolerated in relationships.

The idea for this project was developed during preparing a project for the Daphne III programme under the European Commission. During the project, partners from Cyprus, Greece, Lithuania, Italy and Spain cooperated by conducting an international questionnaire and creating a special training programme for pupils. This handbook of good practice presents the structure of the project’s training modules with a focus on reducing discrimination on the ground of gender.

During the first stage of the project in 2011, a quantitative and qualitative survey of pupils was carried out. The main goal of this survey was to ascertain the attitudes of young people towards violence in relationships and its links with gender stereotypes. Over 3000 pupils from all the project partner countries participated in the survey. Experts then generalized and presented the results of the survey in all these countries.
After performing a comparative analysis of the countries, the team of experts developed training modules and prepared their structure and tools. In Lithuania, the training module was adapted considering the needs of Lithuanian pupils and teachers.

The training programme “Future leaders” uses positive methods which appeal to young people and help to maintain their interest throughout the trainings.

Practical examples and discussions are used to support presenting theoretical material. Through discussions, presentations and creative tasks, young people are able to absorb and interpret information and theoretical knowledge.

The structure of the training module is described below.

**Module I “Equals sign”**

Gender inequality is at the root of violence in relationships. The main goal of the module is to reveal gender discrimination and gender inequality in today’s society and to analyze the reasons for and consequences of these problems.

In the theoretical part of the training module, the trainers presented gender roles prevalent in our society, expectations placed on genders, definitions of sex and gender, and the connection between gender inequality and violence in relationships. Participants in the trainings learned about these issues through practical examples. The following means were used during the classes in order to reach these goals:

1. **Presentation of theoretical and academic material;**
2. **Presentation of the results of the quantitative and qualitative “Youth for youth” questionnaire;**
3. **Social promotions;**
4. **“Martians” - a practical exercise.**

1) **Theoretical material** – examples of gender stereotypes from real life were presented and the concepts of sex and gender were defined and explained. Young people were encouraged to express their opinion and discuss openly. The theoretical information was illustrated by the latest sta-
tistical data from Lithuania and foreign countries as well as insights of various experts. A non-formal approach was used to create an atmosphere where nobody is afraid to express their opinion.

Possible formats of discussion:

• Questions and answers. Trainers ask questions related to discrimination on the ground of gender in order to find out the attitudes of young people.

• Agree-disagree. Trainers present a statement about men and women and ask the audience to say whether they agree with this statement or not. The audience is then divided into two groups, those who agree and those who don’t, and asked to discuss the topic.

• Simulations. Trainers present situations where men and women are treated unequally and the audience is asked to discuss the situation, identifying the reason for inequality.

The aim of this part of the training module is to familiarize young people with theoretical aspects.

2) Presenting the results of the quantitative and qualitative questionnaire showed the attitude of Lithuanian young people towards gender stereotypes and discrimination on the ground of gender. During the presentation, the trainers emphasized the difference in the attitudes of young people compared with the older generation, but also stressed the fact that young people still behave and think stereotypically. At the beginning of the discussion the pupils thought that young people are tolerant and do not discriminate, but after the presentation most of them agreed that discrimination exists also among young people. The presentation of the results stimulated a discussion during which the young people spoke about forms of discrimination which they encounter in daily life, at school, at home or among friends. After the discussion, the young people became more motivated to contribute to the reduction of discrimination on the ground of gender.

Possible formats of discussion:

• Real-life situations – the trainers describe problems using examples and encourage young people to discuss and express their own opinion.

• Share – this format of discussion is based on the stories of
pupils and their analysis. The format should be used carefully and the pupils should not be pressured into sharing their experience; sharing should be voluntary.

3) **Social advertisements** along with educational films attracted the attention of young people during all trainings. They supported presenting the problem of discrimination on the ground of age and the influence on gender stereotypes on our daily life in a simple, understandable and snappy way. It is easier and more understandable to explain the differences between sex and gender with the help of social promotions. Various forms of social promotion were used, for example posters, short films from both Lithuania and abroad. This method helped to prepare the participants for the last stage of the trainings, where the pupils themselves created social promotions for their school.

4) “Martians” - a practical exercise: the aim was to reveal attitudes towards social roles and gender stereotypes. The participants were divided into groups from 4 to 8 pupils depending on the size of the group. The groups were given the following task:

Imagine Martians coming to Earth. They see two Earth beings who are called a woman and a man, but do not understand the difference between these two beings. Your task is to present these two beings to the Martians so that they understand the difference between them. Time allowed: 20 minutes.

Then all teams present the woman and the man to the Martians. After each presentation, the pupils are encouraged to consider whether they presented the woman and man in the framework of stereotypes, and if so, why. The discussion ended with an introduction to the next training module: “Formers of opinion”, “Violence in relationships”.

Results of the training module:

1. Young people understand and identify sex and gender and how gender stereotypes are formed in society.

2. Young people are familiarized with the problem of discrimination on the ground of gender.
3. Young people recognize the negative influence of gender stereotypes and gender discrimination on society.

**Module II “Formers of opinion” and “Violence in relationships”**

In this module, the trainers presented factors forming gender stereotypes and analyzed the problem of violence in relationships more deeply. The main goals of this module were to foster critical thinking of young people, familiarize them with the problem of violence in relationships and encourage them to contribute to the reduction of gender discrimination and fight against violence in relationships.

The following means were used to reach these goals:

1) Theoretical material. The trainers presented and explained factors forming stereotypical attitudes towards the roles of women and men in society and revealed the influence of educational institutions, media etc. on society’s opinion on what is suitable or not suitable for women and men.

   Young people learned about violence in relationships and the prevalence of violence in Lithuania and foreign countries. The trainers presented the connection between gender discrimination and violence in relationships.

   2) Social advertising enabled presenting the reality of this problem in an illustrative way and show what means of prevention are in place in Lithuania and other countries.

   3) Short films about violence in relationships. Screenings were followed by discussion about the situations shown in the films, during which young people had the opportunity to reflect on the reasons behind violence.

**Module III “We create together”**

Young people who participated in the training programme had the opportunity to create a social advertisement for their school. The main goal of the module was to develop the critical attitude of young people towards the problem of gender discrimination and violence in relationships and come up
with preventive means. The main task of the module was to create a social advertisement.

During this module, the trainers took the backseat, allowing the young people to develop and implement their ideas by themselves. During the first stage, the pupils chose the topic of their advertisement – gender discrimination, violence in relationships or violence at school. They then prepared scenarios and methods to make their advertisement. The main goal was to encourage young people to fight against discrimination on the ground of gender and violence in relationships.

During this module, the young people used their creativity to make social advertisements using different formats.

Results of the module:

1. The young people gained a deeper understanding of the theoretical information provided during the first modules.
2. Various social advertisements were created: films, posters, articles.
3. The young people expressed themselves in a creative way and contributed to the prevention of social problems.

Example of a social advertisement created in the module:

A usual Monday morning in the family of two advertising managers who work for different companies, but do the same kind of work. She gets up at six a.m. She makes breakfast for her husband and son. She wakes them up. Later, she spends an hour doing her make-up, getting dressed and doing her hair. While the husband reads the newspaper, she clears away his dirty coffee cup and gives him an ironed suit. She helps the son to get dressed. She takes him to school on her way to work. When she returns home after a long and stressful working day, she takes off her heels and starts to prepare dinner for her family. Although the stew looks tasty, she eats just a leaf of lettuce as she is watching her figure. After dinner, the husband leaves the kitchen; when he shuts the door, there is silence at home. The son starts making a noise, she asks him to stop, but he does not obey. He only shuts up when the father’s head bursts into view ominously. She has asked him not to treat their son so strictly, but he has always replied: “When
you start earning money, you can start making the rules." However, she does not earn the same amount as he does even if she works harder.

Kamile Kambynaité, 16

(2) GOALS

The main goal of the training programme “Future leaders” is to educate young people about gender equality and its importance in our society and about the problem of discrimination on the ground of gender and violence in relationships. In order to implement the programme as effectively as possible, the Lithuanian experts raised the following tasks:

1. To encourage a positive attitude of young people towards equal opportunities of women and men and familiarize them with theoretical and practical information related to the topic.

2. To educate young people about discrimination on the ground of gender and create a safe environment among young people.

3. To create ways to prevent violence that can be used at school.

4. To use language that is easy for young people to understand and implement the goals of the programme in a positive and effective way. To apply the 20/80 principle: 20 per cent of the training should be theoretical and 80 per cent practical exercises and discussions.

(3) TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES

13-18-year-old young people, teachers and representatives of the school community are direct beneficiaries of the project. Indirect beneficiaries are institutions or enterprises that will have the possibility to use the training methodology developed during the project.

(4) MOTIVATION

 Discrimination on the ground of gender and violence in relationships are some of the most pressing social problems both in Lithuania and worldwide.
The Women’s Issues Information Centre has been working for many years in order to ensure equal opportunities of women and men in Lithuania and prevention of violence in relationships. This project and the training methodology developed within it created one of the first steps towards working with young people as a target group. Methods to prevent violence in relationships and discrimination on the ground of gender are often undiversified and only directed to adults (as illustrated by existing programmes and experience of non-governmental organizations).

However, young people should also be involved in the fight against gender discrimination and violence in relationships. Young people are open to information and ready to learn, so an attractive training programme allows reaching them and starting the prevention process of social problems early on.

This supports the development of an open society, where people are not restricted by stereotyping and discrimination and where violence in relationships is not tolerated.

(5) RESOURCES

Successful implementation of the project required a head of the project, a financial manager and two trainers to carry out the training programme.

Financial resources were needed for the salaries of employees and experts, renting premises, catering and renting equipment (computer, projector, video camera, camera etc.).

(6) RESULTS / CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROJECT

More than 80 pupils completed the training programme successfully. Three schools participated in the preparation of the training and implementation of the training programme. The participants created 17 social advertisements about discrimination on the ground of gender and violence in relationships. Teachers and experts will in the future be able to use the methodology which was developed and adapted to the Lithuanian context.

At the beginning of the trainings, the students were asked to fill out a questionnaire to assess their attitude towards gender stereotypes, gender dis-
crimination because of gender and the problem of violence in relationships. At the end of the training programme, the pupils were asked to fill out the same questionnaire. The experts were then able to compare attitudes before and after the training. This comparison showed that after the training most pupils had a more positive attitude towards the importance of gender equality in society and a more negative attitude towards violence in relationships. This indicates that the training module has a positive influence on the attitudes of young people.

The young people created social advertisements which were then shown or distributed among their peers, ensuring dissemination of the results of the training.

Young people are not often chosen as a target group for projects or activities aiming to fight against gender based discrimination or violence in relationships. However, attitudes towards these issues are formed at a young age. There is a lack of education on social problems and young people are not involved in social life actively. “Future leaders” presents a training programme which is attractive to pupils and can be easily adapted to different educational institutions. The training modules are formed so that teachers can choose the most relevant topics for their pupils and the most suitable methods for presenting these topics. The proposed duration of one seminar is 1 academic hour, and the entire programme 8-12 academic hours. Due to the diversity and flexibility of the training programme, it can be used by a wide range of specialists. Thus the trainings and methodology are an example of a good practice.

(7) ADVANTAGES / SUCCESS INDICATORS

More than 50 pupils completed the training programme. 17 social advertisements were created. A methodology was developed which can be adapted and used in all Lithuanian schools after the completion of the project. Pupils showed interest in the training, which gave added value for the entire school community.

All pupils who participated in the training were very motivated and participated in all modules actively. The young people completed the training
successfully and the results of the questionnaire showed that they became more sensitive to social problems and more motivated to contribute to their solution.

(8) **DISADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS**

As the target group of this training was school pupils, we encountered the problem of integrating the training programme into the regular school curriculum. As pupils from different classes sometimes participated in the training programme, the planning of training modules became even more complicated.

Because pupils have a busy schedule of lessons, examinations and after-school activities, the duration of one seminar should not exceed the length of one lesson, i.e. 45 minutes.

The training programmes and their length should be coordinated with schools well in advance. The support of teachers and their positive attitude towards the training programme and its goals are very important.

(9) **PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE GOOD PRACTICE**

The methodology developed during this project can be improved according to the specific needs of schools. The training modules or parts of them can be included in the non-formal educational programme. When organizing trainings, it is recommended to involve student bodies, which could contribute to the consistent and systematic preparation of trainings for the school community. In the future, the training modules could also be included in the formal educational process.
NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
ASSOCIATION LGL

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
Rainbow Days

(1) DESCRIPTION

The 17th of May is commemorated as the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO). On this day in 1990, the World Health Organization removed homosexuality from its list of illnesses.

In Lithuania, this date was commemorated by Rainbow Days, a week-long series of events organized by the Lithuanian Gay League (LGL) on the 15th – 22nd of May during the project of the EU PROGRESS programme in cooperation with the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson’s Office and the National Equality and Diversity Forum. Society was encouraged to accept homosexual, bisexual and transgender people and their equal opportunities. In addition, the aim was to pay attention to difficulties encountered by people of different orientations and identities in their personal life and at work and encourage the heterosexual majority to better understand sexual minorities.

Rainbow Days involved various events: a seminar about the changing face of the LGBT movement in Lithuania during which a book was presented about Baltic Pride in Vilnius in 2010, documentary films and discussions in cooperation with "Inconvenient cinema", a press conference at the Parliament and a public campaign "We are for all colours of life". In addition, volunteers of LGL organized two lessons of openness at the LGBT Centre in Vilnius where participants had a possibility to ask questions and break prevalent stereotypes, meet and communicate with people who are often discriminated and feel social separation.

Six EU embassies organized a reception for the representatives of the country’s LGBT community, politicians and defenders of human rights. During a
public campaign in Vilnius, a thirty-meter-long rainbow flag was rolled out in order to show the importance of inclusion, unity and support. The week ended with the event “Rainbow cafe for everybody” with performances by popular Lithuanian musicians. There were events in Vilnius and Kaunas. Rainbow Days have been organized in Lithuania since 2007 in order to make this event a yearly tradition.

There is a dedicated page in the social network Facebook where it is possible to see the complete programme of events: http://www.facebook.com/lgl.lt/app_208195102528120.

In addition, there is a booklet of the event (http://www.atviri.lt/uploads/files/dir207/dir10/14_0.php) as well as a promotional poster (http://www.atviri.lt/uploads/files/dir207/dir10/13_0.php); there are also T-shirts, flags and balloons with the symbols of this event.

(2) G O A L S

The goals of this event were the following:

– To draw the attention of the society to the problem of discrimination of LGBT people;

– To improve the information and knowledge of the society in the field of sexual orientation and provide information of LGBT issues, homophobia and its consequences;

– To encourage the participation of the LGBT community in social life;

– To familiarize the LGBT community with the policy of equal opportunities and equal rights and laws;

– To emphasise the benefit and importance of the diversity of people.

The society was encouraged to accept homosexual, bisexual and transgender people and their equal opportunities. In addition, attention was drawn to difficulties encountered by people of different orientations and identities in their personal life and work and encourage the heterosexual majority to better understand sexual minorities.
(3) **TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES**

This event was directed to the wide society. The situation of LGBT people in Lithuania depends on it. The aim was to draw people’s attention by various means and increase their awareness and information about discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation and its effect on LGBT people. Moreover, the aim was to get in closer touch with other non-governmental organizations working in the field of equal opportunities. At the end, there were possibilities for a direct target group (LGBT people) to better know their rights and participate in the civil society. About 200 representatives of the LGBT community participated in seminars and film screenings in connection with Rainbow Days 2007. In 2012, the number increased three times. Because of the diversity of applied means (use of television, radio programmes, lectures and seminars) and wide promotion of the event in the media as well as public discussions, a very wide audience was reached.

(4) **MOTIVATION**

Although the main focus and goal of the campaign was reduction of discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation, various problems of discrimination are unavoidably encountered when talking about the importance of equal opportunities for everybody. During Rainbow Days 2007, the issues of homosexuality, homophobia and its harmful effect, and discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation and gender were emphasized. According to research carried out in Lithuania, homosexual men and homosexual women are essentially treated in quite different ways; homosexual women often encounter discrimination because of sexual orientation and are humiliated as women. Thus, it is important to consider all components of discrimination in order to reach the goals of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All and effectively reduce discrimination encountered by homosexual people.

(5) **RESOURCES**

For the implementation of activities, three coordinators and 10 volunteers are necessary. In 2007, the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, 20 thousand Litas was assigned to all the activities of the campaign in Vilnius.
A separate budget was intended for social promotion on trolleybuses and it was used for promotion on internet websites. In 2012, the budget of Rainbow Days reached 35 thousand Litas.

(6) **RESULTS / CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROJECT**

As it was mentioned, the event Rainbow Days was targeted both at the wide society and the LGBT community.

Considering the goals of the project, possibilities were created for educating and informing separate target groups of the project (politicians, non-governmental organizations and young people) and the wide society as a target group on issues of equal opportunities, awareness of the negative effects of discrimination, respect and tolerance of LGBT people were encouraged.

In order to inform the society about homophobia and its negative effects, discrimination of LGBT people and their right to equal opportunities, 2 seminars and 1 press conference were organized, an art and photo exposition was opened and film screenings were held. Certainly, thanks to these different means, the issue of equal opportunities of LGBT people was emphasized, which often remains concealed and ignored as insufficiently important and worth political discussions. It can be hoped that Rainbow Days provided some positive information about homosexuality, emphasized the benefit and importance of diversity and gave a possibility to at least a part of the society to reflect on, look critically and question negative stereotypes of homosexual people which are formed and strengthened by the media and politicians.

Realizing the importance of validation and involvement of LGBT people in social life, a separate seminar was organized just for LGBT people; moreover, a cultural programme was prepared which reflected the experiences, interests and needs of LGBT people. This miscellaneous attitude towards homosexuality, active involvement of LGBT people in cultural life, provision of information on issues of equal opportunities and a critical attitude towards homophobia rooted in society should certainly have touched and expanded the self-image of LGBT people and their experience as well as helped to understand their own environment and themselves.
During Rainbow Days 2007, a press conference was organized at the Parliament as well as the seminar “Homophobia: reasons and consequences” where the representatives of the target groups were familiarized with the concept and phenomenon of homophobia, scientific explanation of motives of homophobia and certain cases of homophobia-based practice. The seminar also touched upon the important issues of the mental health of LGBT people, homophobic environments and consequences of discriminative experiences on the mental health of a person. About 40 people representing the LGBT community and journalists participated in the seminar.

At the seminar round-table “LGBT people in Europe: rights, representation, recognition, respect”, representatives of LGBT organizations from Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Finland and Sweden discussed the situation of LGBT people in different countries, shared experience, looked for a solution how to improve the situation and established ways of cooperation. In addition, there were rainbow culture evenings where films and photos were shows along with discussions about cultural life of LGBT in other countries. In order to inform the society, booklets were prepared which presented the programme of Rainbow Days 2007 and gave a short explanation of homophobia, its causes and consequences. It was also possible to find all the information on the official website of the event. The culmination of the event was a Rainbow Party where everybody was able to participate regardless of sexual orientation. During the event, a rainbow flag was raised which had not been rolled out during the intended public campaign. Booklets were prepared especially for this event as well as a radio promotion which aired on Power Hit Radio throughout the week.

Rainbow Days 2007 received attention both in Lithuania and outside. Considering the abundance of articles on the 15-25th of May in the Lithuanian media, comments of readers and speeches of politicians, the event really had a huge impact on the wider society. Discussions and reactions arising in the media during the course of the event and arising difficulties and discussions were full of various and contradictory emotions. Although the events were often reflected unfairly and homosexuality was often pathologized, a big stream of information and public discussions really drew the attention of the society to the problem of discrimination of LGBT people, increased the
visibility of the LGBT community and raised the issue of equal opportunities of LGBT people, something that is often ignored and concealed.

The events of 2007 also emphasized the lack of democratic principles. The decision of the mayor of Vilnius to prohibit the public campaign and prevent rainbow trolleybuses from riding on the streets was based on obviously homophobic and discriminative attitudes contradicting the ideas of the European Year of Equal Opportunities and laws of Lithuania. The reactions to these statements and decisions of the mayor of Vilnius were very contradictory in Lithuania, but sufficiently united outside Lithuania. The decision of the mayor of Vilnius was condemned by the European Commission, European Parliament, and the International Lesbian and Gay Association. Member of the European Parliament Michael Cashman stated that the decision of the mayor of the capital of Lithuania not to allow buses to display the EU campaign “For diversity. Against discrimination” should help to better understand what the members of the LGBT community feel and how strong homophobia is in Lithuania. Other members of the Parliament criticized the heads of the EU for an insufficiently strict reaction to the prohibition of the government of Vilnius. In Lithuania, a worry about the non-issued permission was expressed by the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson’s Office. Rainbow Days 2007 were supported by Member of the Lithuanian Parliament M.A. Pavilionienė and the Swedish ambassador M. Karre.

**DISADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS**

One of the most important activities of the campaign was launching trolleybuses with social promotion defending the rights of LGBT people. However, the trolleybuses did not appear in Vilnius or in Kaunas because of the refusal of trolleybus drivers, decision of the director of Imbela to terminate the contract and disapproval of the Municipality of Vilnius. The slogans “A gay may serve in the police”, “A lesbian may work in a school” which were intended to be displayed on trolleybuses caused lots of outrage and hostility and were treated as propaganda of homosexuality.

The intended public campaign on the 25th of May 2007 did not take place, either. The Vilnius authorities still delayed giving permission for the intended campaign of the European Commission “For diversity. Against discrimination” one week before it was supposed to take place as it was scared of the
participation of LGBT people and the homophobic reactions of society. Finally, the permission for the planned event on the square of the Municipality of Vilnius was not issued. The Administration of the Municipality of Vilnius city motivated its decision on a possible danger to the safety of the state and society, peace, health and morals.

The Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson's Office started an investigation on its own initiative on the refusal of the municipality to issue the permission for this campaign. The Lithuanian Gay League wrote a letter to the Parliament Commission of Human Rights and asked to react to this situation and decision of the municipality not to issue the permission for the public campaign.

Finally, one of the responses to Rainbow Days 2007 was the programme Srovės, which openly taunted homosexual people. Homosexual people as a group were demonized and assigned exceptional features which were assessed just negatively. During the reportage, the journalist defined homosexuality as a form of sexual perversion. A complaint was made to the Commission of Journalistic Ethic. When the Commission assessed all the information, it decided that the programme had been prepared hurriedly and the viewers were provided with not completely correct information, but the Commission did not agree that the norms of the Code of Journalistic Ethics had been violated.

There were only two obstacles during the event of 2012 – unwillingness of one transport company to rent a bus for the campaign in the centre of Vilnius and an attack planned by the Member of Parliament P. Gražulis during the press conference. It was only possible to rent a bus for the public campaign in the city streets thanks to the intermediation of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson's Office. And the Member of Parliament caused disruption at the conference just for a few minutes, but he left before the officers arrived.

(9) PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE GOOD PRACTICE

It is important to see representatives of the LGBT community both in Vilnius and other towns of Lithuania. Thus, the aim is to look for possibilities to make this event in Kaunas and Klaipėda too.
NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
LITHUANIAN FORUM OF THE DISABLED

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
Social campaigns “It is stupid to be afraid of a loose screw” and “They want and are able to work”

(1) DESCRIPTION

The public institution “Global initiative in psychiatry” organized two big social campaigns in 2006-2008 which can be classified as “protest” campaigns. They were initiated as it was believed that the integration of the disabled into the labour market was only possible after changing largely stigmatized awareness of the society. For this reason, spreading ideas of tolerance is an important component of the project. The project intends various activities encouraging changes at the macro and micro level and involving people with psychical and mental disability in the labour market which are directed to different target groups.

The social campaign “It is stupid to be afraid of a loose screw” was carried out in April-August 2006, and the social campaign “They want and are able to work” in February 2008. Radio and video clips were aired, external promotion was shown and by-passers were given information material.

(2) GOALS

Goals of the campaigns: to draw attention to problems caused by intolerance, to spread information which is based on facts and not rumours, to encourage
awareness and openness, to break prevalent stereotypes and to improve possibilities of involving people with mental disabilities in the labour market.

(3) **TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES**

The addressee of both campaigns was society, which is intolerant towards the groups of these people although it does not have reliable information about mental disorders and the abilities of these people.

(4) **MOTIVATION**

The public institution “Global initiative in psychiatry” (GIP) is an international organization working in the field of mental health.

Countries in the post-soviet region are reproached by national and international non-governmental organizations working in the field of mental health for the lack of political will to reform the mental health care system based on the philosophy of separation. According to a report on human rights in closed mental health care and protection institutions (Germanavičius et al., 2005), the regional governments still lack the political will to start the deinstitutionalization process in spite of an obvious need to reform the mental health care system and unambiguous recommendations of international organizations; a powerful centralized system of institutions for children and adults with mental health problems (both psychological disorders and mental illnesses) is reluctant to reforms.

For this reason, the public sector in this region is not an initiator of social campaigns, but one of the targets of these campaigns. Meanwhile, non-governmental organizations often take the initiative to determine, investigate and try to combat stigma against various social groups in society. Another argument for social campaigns initiated and implemented by non-governmental organizations lies in their nature. The public sector directly depends on the will of electors and its decisions are mostly oriented to the interests of the majority; meanwhile, social groups which belong to minorities mostly feel this stigma. Non-governmental organizations are not afraid to oppose and confront the opinion of the majority.
Both social campaigns were made during the implementation of the EQUAL project of the initiative of the European Communities “Employment of people with mental and psychological disorders”. This 2.5-million-LTL-value and three-year-long social project acted in three directions – it directly affected the target group of the project, tried to convince politicians, representatives of the government and ministries to start changes and affected the environment surrounding the disabled, changing the attitudes of the society.

The target group of the project was the disabled and their family members who did not have a possibility to work because of nursing and caring for a member of their family; they were encouraged to look for a job and work and were given full support while looking for a job as well as at the beginning of work (trainings were organized and the position of a labour assistant-manager was established); some working positions were established at the disabled pension.

Politicians, ministries and authorities were also presented an economic research performed during the project which showed the national budget had lower costs when employing people with mental disorders, i.e. patients became tax payers and buyers of goods and services and not passive benefit receivers. In addition, the costs of treatment, medicaments and other health needs also decreased. A profit is also made in a ten-year period. Politicians were invited to round-table discussions and meetings during which the economic research, prognostic calculations and benefit of employment of the disabled to the national budget were presented.

The attitudes of the society were changed by means of campaigns, articles in the press and there were trainings for journalists on how to provide information about the disabled in a correct way without insulting their dignity, distorting data and information and how to form a positive image of a disabled person.

(5) RESULTS / CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROJECT

As the initiators and organizers of campaigns performed researches of effectiveness of the campaigns, certain generalizations about their effect can be presented. Since 2006, the joint-stock company Spinter Omnibus performed a longitude study “Opinions of the society about the integration of people
with mental disorders into the labour market”. The goal of study was to find out the attitudes of the population about the integration of people with mental disorders into the labour market (their possibilities to do paid work); tolerance/attitudes of the population about the employment of people with mental disorders and positions which they can occupy. The study was performed four times: in January-July 2006 and in February-April 2008.

The research into the opinions of the society about the integration of people with mental disorders into the labour market (2008) shows significant positive changes. In January 2006, 40 per cent of the researched thought that people with mental disorders could do paid work and the share of people with this opinion constantly grew.

The biggest changes are noticed between the first, second and third researches; meanwhile, the share of respondents holding the opinion that people with mental disorders could do paid work increased by 12 and 9 per cent, respectively (by 3 per cent between the third and fourth researches). In April 2008, 66 per cent of people held this opinion. The share of people thinking that people with mental disorders could not do paid work was 57 per cent in January 2006 and just 31 per cent in April 2008.

It can be assumed that active anti-stigma campaigns of that period had determined positive changes in the opinion of the society. Of course, other factors, such as the general situation in the labour market and lack of workers as well as various projects financed with the assets of the structural funds of the European Union and different information about the encouragement of involvement of the disabled also influenced it.

The data of the last research performed in April 2008 shows that the major part of the participants of the research (66 per cent) agreed that people with mental disorders could do paid work; being employers, over one half (51 per cent) of the participants of the research would employ a person with mental disorders to do physical work which does not require any qualification. The respondents mostly assign the responsibility to the state (36 per cent) and society (34 per cent) for the fact that it is difficult for people with mental problems to find a job. 14 per cent of the participants of the research mentioned employers and 10 per cent people with mental problems themselves.

Although the respondents were not directly asked about the performed social campaigns and the way they had changed the attitude of the respondents
during the research, it can be stated that they reached the addressee and had the intended effect considering the fact that the researches were representative and quite a big positive change in the opinion was noticed.

A questionnaire of Lithuanian employers performed during the implementation of the project by the market research company Apklausos.LT provided some important information on the analyzed topic: the social group was appealed which directly made decisions on the employment of a certain person in a certain company and they were asked about changed attitudes towards people with mental and learning disabilities. During the questionnaire, the following questions were analyzed: (1) whether the respondents had seen social promotions about the employment of people with mental problems; (2) whether these promotions had affected their opinion about the right of this group of people to work; (3) what the respondents thought about the benefit of employed people with mental problems for the company managed by them.

The research showed that the social promotions ("It is stupid to be afraid of a loose screw" and "They want and are able to work") had reached their addressee – over one half of the research participants (52 per cent) had seen and remembered them. These social campaigns had a positive influence on almost one fifth of the researched (17 per cent) who said they supported the right of people with disordered psychics to work more since then.

Obvious differences in opinions between the people having seen the social promotions and those having not seen them become clear during the assessment of the benefit of employment of people with mental disabilities and learning disorders to the disabled themselves, companies and the society. The people who saw the promotions supported the opinion about the positives aspects of employment of the disabled much more. A T test of independent samples confirmed that the differences in statements between the people having seen the promotions and those having not seen them were statistically significant.

During the research, the respondents were also asked what prevented them from employing people with mental disorders. The answers to this question were calculated by applying the balance – difference between the negative and positive answers. According to the respondents, the main obstacle for the employment is employers – the group to which they...
also belong (+73 points). In the second position – an objective obstacle (inability to work determined by illness +58 points). The respondents considered disabled people motivated and willing to work; this is shown by the negative balance (-43 points assessing the statement “these people do not want to work themselves”).

• It should be noted first that the answers to this question got very high assessments, i.e., they were indiscrete. It shows that the opinions of the respondent employers differed little from each other and were categorical.

• Assessing the answers to this question, it can be stated that employers realize the benefit of integration of the disabled into the labour market for the disabled themselves (especially high balance – +94) and the general society (+73). The benefit of this employment to the company is categorically denied (-67 points). These answers reveal important information: first, employers quite unanimously do not consider people with mental disorders and learning disabilities only as benefit receivers and emphasize the benefit of employment to the disabled person; they are understood as being able to participate in the labour market. Second, the benefit of employment of the disabled to the society is recognized, but if employers think about their own company, they do not see any certain benefit from the employment of disabled persons.

(6) ADVANTAGES / SUCCESS INDICATORS

The described social campaigns are valuable as they were the first ones to start confronting negative attitudes in society in respect of people with mental disabilities in a public and brave way. During the implementation of these campaigns, various means of dissemination of information were used (posters, newspapers, television, internet), so they were noticed by many members of the society including people with mental disabilities, their family members, specialists of this field, employers etc. The slogan of the first campaign “It is stupid to be afraid of a loose screw” caused a lot of discussion among specialists and organizations of this field. Some of them stated that campaigns like this could even increase the stigmatization in respect to people with mental disabilities (Monteith et al, 1998).
It is difficult to believe in the context of our highly stigmatizing society that two social campaigns could noticeably change the existing attitudes towards this sensitive topic, but the research of the opinion of the society showed that the social campaigns had been noticed and had an influence on the changes desired by the organizers of these campaigns. A significant result of this campaign was a decrease in employers that have a negative attitude towards people with mental disabilities. However, the research did not show any changes in the behaviour of the researched group, as the employers would not like to employ any of these persons in their company (cf. Penn and Couture, 2002).

Disadvantages / Limitations

Stigma is one of the main reasons limiting the involvement of people with mental disabilities in society and especially in the labour market. As society does not have information, does not understand and is often afraid of people with mental disabilities, it puts labels on them, thus stigmatizing them and causing social separation. Labelling causes lots of negative consequences, which are both painful to those who are labelled and society itself, which tries to deny and reject an especially vulnerable part of it – people with mental disabilities.

The involvement of the disabled in Lithuania is identified with participation in the labour market – ability to work and disability are related to the law. The state exalts the ability to work although it does not do it directly; it makes disabled people not participating in the labour market dependent on others because they have limited ability to work and depend on various benefits, payments, concessions etc.

The effectiveness of presently applied “traditional” methods – anti-discriminative views consolidated in the law, benefits, pensions, concessions, support to employers etc. – as well as efforts to return people with mental disabilities to the labour market do not give any desirable results. Social campaigns aiming to educate society and confront existing negative attitudes and stereotypes are one of the most popular strategies for defeating stigma.

Negative attitudes towards people with mental disabilities also determine a lack of will to create and develop community services and ensure real involve-
ment of people with mental disabilities in society. Representatives of the public sector limit themselves to separate initiatives which often contradict each other and do not encourage the disabled to participate in the labour market. Thus, social campaigns which are mostly initiated, financed and performed by the public sector in Western Europe are organized by non-governmental organizations in Lithuania and the authorities which are responsible for the care of the disabled are one of the targets of these social campaigns.

The two anti-stigma campaigns in Lithuania were successful. Research into their effectiveness showed that society had noticed these campaigns and attitudes towards the employment of people with mental disabilities became more positive.

However, changed attitudes of employers did not affect their behaviour: the number of employers having a negative attitude decreased, but the research did not show any changes in the behaviour in the researched group.

(8) PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE GOOD PRACTICE

There is often a lack of political will for the implementation of innovations, especially if these innovations contradict established views and beliefs. We can just wish strength and perseverance for the implementation of innovations.

National regulation of calculation of the effectiveness of social models is necessary. It is impossible to change old and economically ineffective models with new ones without proving their non-effectiveness. Old models are automatically financed both at the national level and local level and there is little money for financing innovations. Thus, a decision to calculate the effectiveness of old models will allow performing a mature social reform and initiate innovations.
NAME OF ORGANIZATION:
ASSOCIATION LGL

NAME OF PROJECT OR GOOD PRACTICE:
Project “Rights and health of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women”

(1) DESCRIPTION

The Association Lithuanian Gay League (LGL) supported by the embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the embassy of the United States of America in Lithuania implemented the project “Rights and health of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women” in 2011–2012. The aim of the project was to increase the understanding of lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBT) women and society about the rights of LBT women, draw the attention of society to problems encountered by LBT women in Lithuania, provide LBT women with necessary knowledge and abilities in the fields of initiatives, education and advocacy and encourage them to represent their own rights and take better care of their health. The project focused on advocacy of LBT women and the improvement of their mental, sexual and reproductive health. The activities were organized on the basis of four components: 1) advocacy for the rights of LBT women; 2) education of health care providers and politicians about the needs of LBT women; 3) support to LBT women: development of safe space and communication networks; 4) voice activation: encouragement of LBT women to represent their rights.

Means for reaching the above-mentioned goals within the 18-month project included seminars, advocacy campaigns, other events e.g. film screenings on relevant topics, questionnaires and articles. In order to increase the visibility and combat prevailing stereotypes, promotional materials, postcards and posters
with the slogan “Let’s start speaking” were used, the campaign “Day without stereotypes” was organized and the brochure “10 things about LBT women’s health” was distributed to health care organizations and LBT women.

The achievements and experiences obtained during the project were recorded and presented on websites, the social network Facebook, a dedicated blog and YouTube site and at the end of the project in the publication “Let’s start speaking: readings for LBT women”.

(2) GOALS

The aim of the project was to reach the following goals:

– To inform society about the rights and needs of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, increase their visibility and reduce social separation of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women in the Lithuanian society;

– To increase the understanding of LBT women about their rights and needs and strengthen their abilities to advocate for them;

– To increase the understanding of LBT women about health, encourage them to take better care of it, strengthen the mental health of LBT women and improve their sexual and reproductive health;

– To inform health care providers (especially gynaecologists, family doctors and specialists of mental health) about homosexuality and the specific needs of LBT women in the field of health, especially related with their sexual, reproductive and mental health, and encourage a more friendly and open environment for LBT women in health care institutions;

– To encourage social dialogue among non-governmental organizations, health care providers, the academic community and other groups of society in order to reach changes in the field of women’s rights.

(3) TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES

The main benefit receivers of this project are lesbian, bisexual and transgender women in Lithuania. Direct benefit receivers are also health care
providers (especially individual specialists – gynaecologists, family doctors and specialists of mental health).

Indirect benefit receivers are the community of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons (LGBT), women in general and non-governmental organizations, politicians and the academic society in Lithuania. As the project promotes women’s rights and tolerance, it is also useful for the whole society.

(4) MOTIVATION

Lesbian, bisexual and transgender women have not been the target group of big projects, researches or policy in the last decade and there are no statistics about the position of LBT women in Lithuania. Homosexual and bisexual women are invisible in Lithuania – most women are reluctant to reveal their sexual orientation because they are afraid of possible discrimination or another negative reaction, such as rejection.

Moreover, their invisibility strengthens the stigmatization of the whole LGBT community and the negative attitude of the society towards it; finally, the problems of LGBT people are seen by society as those of homosexual men alone.

There is also a view in society that homosexuality and bisexuality is a rare phenomenon, caused partly by the fact that LBT women decide not to be open about their sexual orientation and remain invisible.

LBT women experience different discrimination because the discrimination encountered by them is related to both their sexual orientation and gender. Meanwhile, there are lots of problems to be solved in the field of equality for men and women in Lithuania: low involvement of women in decision making processes, differences in salaries, discrimination at work, the problem of violence against women, difficulties in combining family life and work, lack of educational topics on reproductive and sexual health and general topics on women’s rights and rooted gender stereotypes which are also strong in such fields as science and education etc. All these problems require separate attention and a consistent solution.

Many LBT women can feel social separation, rejected by their own families and other close people after coming out.
Another complicated problem encountered by LBT women is internalized homophobia, which often causes low self-esteem and lack of self-confidence in these women. It is important to realize how important it is for everyone to come to terms with and accept their sexuality as an integrated part of themselves.

Forming one’s identity as a lesbian or bisexual woman is also a complicated process. Thus, strengthening the psychosexual identity of lesbian and bisexual women, fostering positive thinking and creating conditions to develop and improve interpersonal relations are essential for every LBT woman.

It is also important that both aspects of health are very significant – both mental health and reproductive and sexual health: beside psychological risk factors, there are sexual health risk factors encountered by LBT women.

Although no research of this kind has been carried out in Lithuania, research from other countries show that lesbian and bisexual women use contraceptives and use the services of health care providers much more seldom; moreover, they are afraid to speak about their emotional and sexual life. They have medical check-ups more seldom than other women although it would help to diagnose breast or cervical cancer as well as sexually transmitted diseases or HIV earlier. Conditions of socialization are not favourable to LBT women, either: many go to bars or clubs where the use of alcohol and smoking are a part of communication and familiarization.

As LBT women are not open about their sexual orientation, they remain invisible in society, causing myths and misconceptions about homosexuality and homosexual women. Prevailing discrimination and intolerance often prevents these women from being open and feeling safe with their doctors or trusting them. As sexual education is not included in the training of health care specialists, they often lack understanding about the diversity of gender identity and sexual orientation. The absence of research into the health of LBT women also shows the lack of will to acknowledge existing differences. This gap must be filled because there are certain aspects and needs of LBT women’s health which are different from the needs of heterosexual women. Health care specialists should know any aspects of the personal life of their patients relevant to their treatment in order to provide them with the best and suitable help in every case.
5) **RESOURCES**

In order to implement this project, the following human resources were necessary: employees – project manager and project publication coordinator.

There were also additional human resources: a volunteer under the project of the European Voluntary Service (Youth in Action programme) that especially helped with English publication activities as well as the contribution of LGL in the form of voluntary work of a bookkeeper and a team of volunteers (work of 5 volunteers on separate activities, seminars, public campaigns, film screenings and organization of discussions as well as preparation of articles about events).

The financial resources of the project consisted of the support from the embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (34528.00 Lt) and support from the embassy of the United States in Lithuania (26832.00 Lt).

6) **RESULTS / CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROJECT**

Practical classes, seminars and thematic film evenings and discussions organized during the project increased the understanding of the community of LBT women about their sexuality, helped to obtain self-confidence and improve self-assessment. There was active participation in the events and they were accompanied by interesting discussions, enabling the participants to share their ideas, views and experiences.

There were lots of positive responses to the events, the activity of the participants did not decrease during the project and the group of active women formed among the volunteers of LGL became stronger, with activities continuing after the completion of the project.

The public campaign “Day without stereotypes”, the campaign “Let’s start speaking” during which the group of volunteer women sent postcards to members of Parliament aiming to draw the attention of politicians to problems of LBT women in Lithuania, open discussions with the society at the cinema Skalvija during film screenings in co-operation with “Inconvenient cinema” on the occasion of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia and in November 2011 both showed stronger voices of LBT women representing their rights and interests and helped to inform and edu-
cate society and politicians about human rights including the rights of LGBT and women’s rights in general. The media paid much attention to the events (sending postcards to members of Parliament was reported in the biggest online news portal in Lithuania DELFI.LT as well as a few foreign websites), the campaign was also mentioned in one television programme. In addition, the campaign encouraged independent authors to write and talk about problems of LBT women – soon after the above-mentioned campaign, a few articles on related topics appeared in the media and stimulated discussion in the society. The organization of film screenings, discussions and common campaigns helped to strengthen relations with other non-governmental organizations.

After publishing and distributing the brochure “10 things about LGBT women’s health” to health care specialists (the brochures were sent to the management of over 60 health care institutions in Lithuania) and the community of LBT women, the understanding of these groups about the needs of LBT women which should be considered in health care provision became better. A few institutions having received the brochure reacted in a very positive way and asked to send more brochures for distribution and promised to share this information with their colleagues. During the project, relationships were established with individual non-governmental organizations giving consultations on issues of mental health and sexual health; the contacts of these friendly institutions were given to the community of LBT women and the community was encouraged to take better care of its health without being afraid of a hostile reaction and rejection.

After publishing and distributing the final book of the project “Let’s start speaking: readings for LBT women”, LBT women got more information about their rights, advocacy and sexual and mental health.

Finally, the project encouraged Lithuanian women not to be indifferent about their rights and interests, but express and voice their worries, opinions and needs.

(7) ADvantages / success indicators

The success of the project is shown by active involvement of the main target group – LBT women – and their participation in the events of the project
(seminars, trainings, film screenings, discussions, public campaigns), their positive assessment as well as the popularity and successful distribution of the publications published during the project – the brochure and book. The success of the project is also shown by the formed and strengthened group of LGL women that also continued its activity after the completion of the project – film screenings and discussions were organized again, a few applications were filled out to continue work in the field of LBT women’s rights, representatives of the group of women continued to participate in the events of “Living Library”, went to international conferences and represented the interests of LBT women by participating in other events. It is also important that there were positive reactions from representatives of certain health care institutions that received the brochure of the project and relationships were established and strengthened with other non-governmental organizations.

In addition, the success of the project is shown by attention of the media – articles in some of the biggest Lithuanian internet websites, a TV programme mentioning the campaign implemented during the project and a few articles on foreign websites.

(8) DISADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS

Different levels of information of the target groups participating in the seminars and trainings of the project on different topics was noticed, so it was sometimes difficult to retain the interest of all participants – some participants of the seminars knew well the activity and rights of LBT women and tended to discuss deeper, wider and more complicated theoretical issues about the rights of LBT women and other general issues; meanwhile, some participants did not even have any general knowledge and were interested in certain things which could rather be adapted in practice.

Although there were a few positive answers from over 60 health care institutions that received the brochure prepared during the project, most of them did not react and did not show any interest; this shows that the problem to be solved with the help of this project was not considered enough.

Moreover, as the opinion of the society of Lithuania towards LGBT is still quite negative, it was not always possible to control the attention of the media and direct it towards a positive trend; although the information campaign
targeted at politicians organized during the project – sending postcards to the members of Parliament – got a lot and positive attention of the media, a pulp TV programme also prepared a reportage about the campaign and may have diminished the importance of the problem and had a detrimental effect.

(9) PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE GOOD PRACTICE

The project could be developed and expanded with bigger financial support – it would be purposeful to continue the activities of the community centre intended for LBT women by creating a positive and safe place for them to socialize and building capacity. In addition, it is necessary to continue the work by establishing co-operation with health care institutions and specialists and other non-governmental organizations, women's organizations etc. and increase their information about problems encountered by LBT women.

Separate attention should be paid to the solution of problems of transgender women and transgender people in general because the situation of this social group in Lithuania remains especially complicated because of legal gaps. It would be purposeful to give suggestions on the protection of rights and interests of LBT women to the Ministry of Health and encourage this institution to pay attention to and solve problems of LBT women.

Moreover, it was noticed that there was a lack of statistics and research on the state of LBT women in Lithuania, so it would be purposeful to perform a research in Lithuania in order to find out the health risk factors of LBT women, the effect of hostility and homophobia of the society on the mental health of these women etc.
The problem of discrimination on the ground of religion, beliefs or faith does not yet receive enough attention in the Lithuanian society. This is caused by a few reasons. First, the number of complaints about discrimination because of religion or beliefs is statistically low. For example, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson’s Office received 6 complaints in 2008, 4 in 2009 and 2 in 2010. They made up from 1.3 to 2.7 per cent of all the complaints investigated by the service, respectively. Second, scientific investigation in this field is low. The first comprehensive sociological research of discrimination on the ground of religion or beliefs in Lithuania was carried out in 2007. An important reason why there is silence around this issue is the unwillingness of victims to publicize their problems and absence of a unanimous position of religious communities in this aspect.

NAME OF PROJECT: “Conscious choice”

DESCRIPTION

During the project “Conscious choice”, a few activities were performed: the people who were interested in new religious movements were consulted and booklets about various religious movements were prepared and distributed. At the beginning, the project “Conscious choice” was implemented by com-
municating directly with these people, in the premises of the Franciscan Monastery of Vilnius at a set time in the presence of advisors.

These consultations were held twice a week: on Monday and Tuesday, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. A few years later, these consultations were stopped for various reasons and consultations were given instead at an agreed time and place. This year, the most popular way of consultation was online correspondence and meetings with interested people as necessary.

15 booklets about different religious movements raising the most questions were prepared and printed during the project “Conscious choice” and were later placed on the website www.religija.lt: these movements are Jehovah’s Witnesses, Krishna Consciousness Organization, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), Unification Movement (Munists), Scientology Church, Sahaja Yoga, Life Art Organization, New Apostle Church, Brahma Kumaris Spiritual University, Parapsychological Academy, Pope Pius X Fraternity (Lefebrists), Osho Meditation Centre, Satja Sai Baba’s Organization etc. Both the people coming to consultations and visitors of the website were interested in these booklets. They were especially popular among teachers who were given seminars about phenomena of modern religiosity by specialists of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions.

The booklets published during the project “Conscious choice” were prepared based on a model of the Information Centre of New Religions under the London School of Economics and Political Science in the United Kingdom INFORM (The Information Network on Religious Movements) because this organization had prepared such booklets before. All the booklets published during the project have the same structure that allows allocating information about the analyzed religious group consistently and clearly. In the booklets, the religious movement, its name/s, founder/s, truths of faith, places of the organization’s activities and principles of membership are presented, i.e., in what way the movement attracts new members as well as what problems or controversies are related with its activity. The booklets about different religious movements were prepared by expert researchers of religions from the public institution Research and Information Centre of New Religions who prepared the text of each booklet after critical assessment of all available information sources, checking all information and consultation with present or previous members of the movement. In this way, the most objective information about a certain religious movement was published in the booklets and was available during a certain event.
Foreign experience based on the implementation of a similar project in the United Kingdom shows that the dissemination of objective information about new religions decreases tensions in society related with the activity of these group, contributes to the development of an open society and creates an atmosphere of religious tolerance and non-discrimination.

(2) GOALS

The goal of the project “Conscious choice” it to provide objective and comprehensive information about new religious movements in Lithuania and help people who have any questions or worries because they or their family members have encountered a certain religion or religious movement and need a consultation of specialists (religion researchers, psychologists, lawyers).

(3) TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES

The target audience of the project “Conscious choice” is very wide: the present or previous members of new religious movements or their family members (parents, children), educators, social workers, lawyers, police officers, doctors etc.

(4) MOTIVATION

When the Research and Information Centre of New Religions started its activity, there was a need to give direct consultations to people who have encountered new religions and do not find answers to their questions about these groups, their activity and possible consequences of participation. The urgency of this need was confirmed by calls and letters of people asking to explain the religious movement they or their friends and family had encountered. Considering these requests, it was decided to implement the project “Conscious choice”.

(5) RESOURCES

Three people participated in the implementation of the project “Conscious choice” since its establishment and there were more people in certain stages, for example, 7 specialists participated in the preparation of booklets.
The expenditures of this project are low because most activities were performed with the help of volunteers. The preparation of the text of the booklets required some financial resources (carrying out research) as well as publication (purchase of paper and printing).

One of the challenges encountered during the implementation of the project was lack of premises and money. As it was mentioned at the beginning, the Bernardine Parish of Vilnius gave premises for the implementation of the project, but it was necessary to discontinue using these premises due to a decrease of participants. Online consultations were requested more often, and some people wanted to meet outside the church premises. Other interested people went to the consultation with a hope to get some advice from the perspective of the Catholic Church, but the project was not oriented to a certain denomination. Because of lack of money, it was not possible to ensure that the booklets could be renewed or new ones prepared according to the needs of people.

(6) RESULTS / CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROJECT

The success of the project “Conscious choice” is evident in people's interest in consultations even after transferring them to a virtual space.

It can be stated that the project “Conscious choice” is an example of good practice on the basis of tolerance and non-discrimination on the ground of religion and beliefs in Lithuania because it responded to sectophobic moods of the society by means of individual work, i.e., every person who was interested in various religious communities, teaching of their faith, practices and principles got some information. It enabled decreasing the tension formed in society in relation to the above-mentioned moods.

NAME OF PROJECT:
Website www.religija.lt

(1) DESCRIPTION

Another example of good practice related to tolerance and non-discrimination on the ground of religion in Lithuania is the website www.religija.lt.
This website was established by the Research and Information Centre of New Religions in 2004 and it has constantly been supported and renewed by specialist volunteers (2-3 people).

(2) **GOALS**

The goal of the website www.religija.lt is to inform the society about religion and new religious movements. For this purpose, news about Lithuanian and world religions and thematic articles about studies of religion, religious tolerance and non-discrimination are published. In addition, the website analyzes other associated information, for example, what to do if a close person has joined an unknown community that is often called a sect in society. It is also possible to ask specialists of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions about religion and new religious movements. Visitors often use this service on the website.

Visitors of the website www.religija.lt are both interested in issues of religion and faith and certain religious movements, teachings of their belief and practices. For example:

“I am a Catholic and I would like to get married in a church very much, but my fiancée refuses to get baptized although he would like to get married in church, too. It is possible to get married in church if one of the spouses has not accepted the sacrament of baptism?”

“Can the organization ‘Art of life’ that promotes yoga and breathing exercises be classified as a sect? If yes, why is it dangerous?”

“Hi, I would like to ask you about the differences between a Christian-Catholic and a Christian-Adventist. I am a Catholic; could I keep company with a girl who is an Adventist?”

After receiving a question from a visitor of the website, the question is sent to a specialist of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions who prepares an answer.

If the question is relevant, the answer is sometimes prepared and published in the “Frequently asked questions” section of the website.

For example:

K: How to prevent involvement of young people in sects?
A: I suppose all parents worry about their children – what way they will choose, what occupation they will go into, how they will earn a living etc. The crossing of choosing a belief is also unavoidable. It is sudden and unexpected for some people and others accept it simply. It is accepted in Lithuania that a Lithuanian is a Roman Catholic and it is a problem if a young person decides to choose another religion. But if parents decide to bring their children up as Roman Catholics, they have all conditions to do it and even schools teach this religion. Most new religions in Lithuania ask the minor to come with parents before inviting them to their meetings because they try to protect young people and protect themselves from false accusations. Thus, I think parents should pay more attention to the leisure time of their children, be more interested in their interests and experiences and try to listen to them if they have any questions and listen to their arguments while choosing one or another religious community.

The answer was prepared by M. Ališauskienė
responses are included in scientific research on religious phenomena carried out by the public institution.

(3) **TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES**

The website www.religija.lt is the only website in Lithuania providing this kind of information. Various websites can be found which publish information on a certain religious community (for example, katalikai.lt, liuteronai.lt, btz.lt) or reflect its attitude towards daily events (for example, bernardinai.lt), but there is no other website covering and interpreting events of Lithuanian and world religions and religious movements. The rage of visitors of the website and benefit receivers of this project is very wide – pupils and students, teachers and lecturers, members of communities of new religions and their family members as well as representatives of occupations encountering new religions at their work – social workers, policemen, employees of municipalities etc.

(4) **MOTIVATION**

It can be said that there were no discussions on discrimination on the ground of religion or religious beliefs in the first decade of independence of Lithuania, but there was a discourse on religious freedom, mostly applying to Catholicism and other traditional religious communities. Meanwhile, new movements or religions were often understood as intruders causing additional problems and considered non-noteworthy phenomena. Popular media has often formed a negative image calling these groups sects and publishing negative stories about these religions to attract readers. On the other hand, certain new religious groups and their leaders were not able to act in a socially responsible and mature way. These factors encourage an increase in social tension which was often transferred to families when one of their members was involved in the activity of new religions. When one of the family members becomes involved in a new religious community, its other members experience social (financial, isolative) and psychological problems (worry, sense of fault).

In 2000, sectophobic moods were prevailing in Lithuania and there were frightening articles about uncontrolled expansion of sects and reportages in television programmes.
As a response to these sectophobic moods prevailing in the Lithuanian society, the public institution Research and Information Centre of New Religions (RICNR) was established in 2001 with the purpose to provide the society with objective information about modern religious phenomena and new religious movements and develop the discourse of religious freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination on the ground of religion or beliefs. The founders of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions were specialists of different fields, i.e., experts in religion, lawyers, church historians, theologians, psychologists and sociologists. The website www.religija.lt was launched in 2004 and has helped the organization to implement its goals.

The Research and Information Centre of New Religions constantly receives questions about various religious movements and a need for information about new religious movements is felt. This was also confirmed by the data of a questionnaire of the population of Lithuania in 2007 which showed that about 60 per cent of respondents of this research did not have enough information about religious movements.

Source: Report of the questionnaire of the population of Lithuania about religious movements. The research was carried out by the company Baltijos tyrimai commissioned by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania in 2007.

RESOURCES

The resources for the maintenance of the website www.religija.lt were minimal – purchase of the internet address, yearly address fee, server fee and technical updating and servicing fees. These amounts were mostly covered by funds of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions which were received as support for the activity. The money for the maintenance of the website was given from the funds of other projects implemented by the above-mentioned institution, and it was emphasized that no donations of religious communities were accepted while reaching for the goal of providing objective information about religious phenomena. Although the website still exists, it should be emphasized that a constant lack of money and search for volunteers hinders the possibilities of development of its activity. The optimum solution may be a certain amount of money for the website which
would be disposed by the editorial office ensuring constant maintenance and renewal of the contents. In this case, it could be possible to improve the website by introducing new rubrics and enabling visitors to participate in the creation of the website etc.

(6) Results / Consequences of the Project

The website www.religija.lt is an example of good practice because it has contributed to the development of an open society and dissemination of information about religion and new religious movements. In addition, it has fostered tolerance to representatives of different religions by preventing discrimination on the ground of religion or beliefs. During the period of its activity, the website www.religija.lt has become an important information source for journalists writing on religious topics as well as pupils, students, teachers and lecturers who are interested in religious topics. An important push towards tolerance and non-discrimination on the ground of religion which was affected by the website www.religija.lt is the fact that journalists use the concept sect less and less often as it was replaced by the concept used on the website – new religious movement.

(7) Advantages / Success Indicators

An important success indicator of the website www.religija.lt is its number of visitors.

Considering the fact that it reflects the needs of the audience with more specific interests, it can be stated that the number of 10,000 unique addresses per month is evidence of success, popularity and necessity of the website.

(8) Disadvantages / Limitations

One of the aspects of the website having slowly lost its previous significance because of lack of possibilities is forums of the website. The discussion forums of the website were developed in 2006 and immediately became liked
among users. There were 24 different topics in the forums enabling people to discuss various religion-related issues by concentrating on these fields which coincided with the fields of activity of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions. The forums were moderated by one of the volunteers of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions.

However, later, approximately in 2009, there were fewer and fewer people discussing in the forums for different reasons including the lack of time spent on the forum moderation. At the end of 2010, the forum hardware was updated (the forums were transferred from Joomlaboard to the PhpBB forum platform which was more comfortable and had more possibilities) but it did not help to enliven the activity of these forums.

It is supposed that the conception of the forums should be rethought in order to renew these discussion forums (it is likely the aims of people participating in discussions have changed in the six years of the activity of the forums) and more organizational resources should be given to the forums.

NAME OF PROJECT:
Seminars for religion and ethics teachers and employees of national and municipal institutions

(1) DESCRIPTION

The specialists of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions started organizing seminars for religion and ethics teachers and workers of national and municipal institutions almost at the beginning of their activity. During these seminars, the specialists of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions introduced the phenomenon of modern religiosity, its diversity, challenges to the society and topicality of tolerance and non-discrimination according to a pre-prepared programme. As needed, thematic seminars were organized, for example, about the phenomenon of New Age, about religious tolerance in Lithuania etc. During the seminars, the lecturers of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions present the results of research into modern religiosity and discrimination on the ground of religion or beliefs in Lithuania.

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(2) **GOALS**

The goal of this project is to inform people who directly encounter new religions at work on this topic.

(3) **TARGET GROUPS / BENEFICIARIES**

The audience of this topic is targeted, i.e. people who encounter new religions, their members or their family members at work.

These are, for example, teachers who have pupils from families belonging to new religions or employees of municipal or national institutions who encounter representatives of new religions at work during the implementation of various social projects. A few hundred teachers from different towns of Lithuania and several employees of national and municipal institutions have already participated in seminars organized by the Research and Information Centre of New Religions.

(4) **MOTIVATION**

The teachers of seminars and employees of municipal and national institutions were encouraged to implement the project by a need for information about new religions in the society and constant requests about various religious movements to the specialists of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions from teachers and employees of municipal and national institutions.

(5) **RESOURCES**

Seminars are often organized and led by two or three specialists of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions. The main financial resources needed for such seminars are fees to lecturers and costs of travelling, which are often paid by the organizers. In addition, booklets about various religious movements and other distributable material prepared by specialists of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions were distributed during
seminars. The costs of preparing distributable material were mostly covered with the money of the Research and Information Centre of New Religions collected as support to the organization.

(6) **DISADVANTAGES / LIMITATIONS**

The main challenge of this project was objective and psychological preparation of lecturers to speak to people with different attitudes, experiences and stereotypes about new religions simultaneously at the seminar. The most frequent limitations are time and financial capacities because the seminar lasts for a certain number of hours and is not sufficient in order to discuss all arising questions.

(7) **PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE GOOD PRACTICE**

In the future, seminars could be improved by expanding their audience and adapting the contents of seminars to it. For example, it would be purposeful to prepare such seminars for social psychologists and social workers working at schools or other institutions. Another kind of important audience of future seminars is journalists who write on religious topics. It is quite difficult to reach this audience and make it interested because religion still remains a topic of scandalous or criminal news more often than a topic of comprehensive research.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE NGO SECTOR
GOOD PRACTICES OF INTEGRATION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN LITHUANIA

Authors:
Milda Ališauskienė (chapter 13),
Aurimas Bružas (chapters 2 and 4),
Jūratė Šedvilienė (chapters 7 and 9),
Rasa Kavaliauskaitė (chapters 3 and 11),
Laima Okunevičiūtė-Neveikienė (chapters 1 and 5),
Vilius Mikulėnas (chapters 6 and 8)

Compiler and editor
Eduardas Platovas

Photos
Associative photos by Vytautas Valentinavičius

Cover and design
Ieva Bernotaitė

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The National Equality and Diversity Forum (NEDF) is a national communication network uniting non-governmental organizations which represent discrimination-vulnerable groups of the population in order to reach common goals in the fight against discrimination on the basis of gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion and beliefs, race or ethnic origin.

The members of NEDF work together to make equality and assurance of human rights a reality in Lithuania both in the national policy and practice.

In its work, NEDF cooperates with national institutions and agencies and other non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academics and lawyers.

Participation in the activities of the forum gives wider opportunities to:

- contribute to educating society and increasing information on equality, diversity, anti-discrimination and other issues related to defending human rights;

- encourage activities directed towards the mutual understanding of individuals and groups with different experiences and acknowledgement of human rights and diversity in the society;

- participate in developing and nurturing anti-discriminative political means and improving such means.

www.nlif.lt