

Report on activities of the public institution
Center for Equality Advancement (CEA)
2007

The public institution Center for Equality Advancement (CEA) was founded in July 2003. The Center as non-profit public organization continues activities of Women's Program under Open Society-Fund Lithuania (1997-2002) and implements various projects on equality advancement.

CEA's main goals:

1. To promote the enforcement and implementation of equal rights for women and men.
2. To develop tolerance in society, encourage individuals to combat discrimination due to sex, age, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and reduce social exclusion in Lithuanian society.
3. To enhance democracy by promoting the equal representation of the interests of both women and men in the decision-making process.
4. To advance the economic independence of both women and men by providing equal and appropriate conditions for both to fulfill the right to work and to reconcile family and work responsibilities
5. To promote values of an open democratic society by encouraging gender dialogue.
6. To develop and promote gender equality ideas and change negative stereotypes of women and men, age groups, national and ethnic minorities, the disabled and other social groups in the society.
7. To advance and popularize ideas on gender equality.
8. To encourage dialogue and cooperation between NGOs and governmental institutions on projects and programs on equal opportunities.

From January 1, 2007, the Center had a staff of four people.

Financial sources for CEA's work come from project activities.

In 2007, CEA implemented following projects and activities:

1. GENDER MAINSTREAMING

1.1. Equality for Local Development: Gender Mainstreaming in Municipalities

Project goal:

- To encourage the equal participation of men and women in several spheres, including the

economic and social spheres and to strengthen gender equality in municipalities.

Project duration:

- October 2006 to December 2007 (15 months)

Target groups:

- Decision makers in municipalities, career municipal officials;
- Regional press;
- Society;

Project activities:

- The center participated in the training of municipal workers, applying the 3R method, to generate a separate analysis of the gender equality situation and to include gender aspects when evaluating the present situation, devoting resources and foreseeing in action plans how the present situation can be changed.
- From January to September of 2007 three seminars were held in Širvintai, Utena and Šiauliai with municipal workers who have a real ability to influence local political decisions and the development of services and other structures, as well as for carrying out these plans. Having participated in a lecture and learned about skills for applying the 3R method at work, participants were tasked with carrying out a small research project on their own using the 3R method and with presenting the project's results and an action plan about gender equality integration into their municipality's daily work.
- In April, along with Estonian and Bulgarian partners, workers from five municipalities participated in an on-site training visit to Swedish municipalities.
- In November / December a seminar / round table discussion was held to share and disseminate experiences with other municipalities that had not participated directly in the project.
- On November 19 and 20, 2007, the international conference "Gender Equality in Local Municipalities: Facts, Means and Perspectives" was held. Ten participants from each of the countries involved in the project, including partners from Estonia and Bulgaria, took part in the conference.
- CEA prepared the project "Municipalities Responsible for Gender Equality" and obtained financing from the Open Society Institute's East-East program for 15 participants from Central and Eastern Europe to participate in the final international conference "Gender Equality in Local Municipalities: Facts, Means and Perspectives." The project's objective was to familiarize participants with examples of good practices from Bulgarian, Estonian and Lithuanian municipalities that were putting into practice gender equality, to disseminate these countries' experiences in Europe and to strengthen international cooperation, while reinforcing gender equality aspects and changing gender stereotypes.
- This project's results and good practices were disseminated in Ukraine in 2008.
- A manual, prepared and published in English, Bulgarian, Estonian and Lithuanian, provided theoretical materials to municipalities for gender aspect integration and information about the research performed by project participants in the three partner countries.

- *Gender Equality Manual for Local Authorities/* Ed. Indrė Mackevičiūtė, Magdalena Delinesheva, Tatyana Kmetova, Reet Laja, Margit Sarv, Virginija Aleksejūnė and Margarita Jankauskaitė. 2008
- *Lyčių lygybės vadovas savivaldos institucijoms/* Sud. Indrė Mackevičiūtė, Magdalena Delinesheva, Tatyana Kmetova, Reet Laja, Margit Sarv, Virginija Aleksejūnė ir Margarita Jankauskaitė. 2008 m

Project coordinator:

Office of the Ombudsperson for Equal Opportunities

Project partners in Lithuania:

Ministry of Social Security and Labor

Center for Equality Advancement

Municipality of Siauliai

International project partners:

Centre of Women's Studies and Policies, Sofia, Bulgaria

Gender Equality Commission, Tallinn, Estonia

1.2. Innovative Educational Strategies for Social Partners: Towards Practical Implementation of Equal Opportunities

The project is sponsored by the Lithuanian Republic; it is partly financed by the European Union.

Project duration:

- August 2005 to July 2008

Target groups:

- Employers
- Representatives of trade-unions
- Representatives of labor market institutions in Lithuania
- Representatives of labor market training offices
- Social and employment policy makers
- Women returning to the labor market after an extended period
- Elderly women

Beneficiary:

Society in general

Project goals:

- To raise awareness in society and to build opposition for discrimination due to gender.
- To promote social dialogue on the prevention of discrimination against marginalized groups.
- To change stereotypical views on the roles of men and women in society and about marginalized groups.
- To increase women's motivation and professional qualifications in the labor market.
- To encourage men to assume the same responsibility as women for childcare and in that manner to help change employers' attitude that women constitute a "risky" and "unattractive" labor force.
- To support employers' innovative management strategies allowing the reconciliation of professional and private spheres for both women and men.
- Promote social policies that encourage the reconciliation of private and professional life.

Project activities:

- From February to December of 2007, CEA organized 20 trainings on gender equality and related issues in all of Lithuania's regions. More information about the seminars on <http://www.gap.lt/lt/nodi>
- Performed scientific research which aimed to analyze public opinion about gender stereotypes and evaluate experiences in labor market.
- A public informational campaign was prepared. The campaign included billboards and postcards in which brief information and statistics about the spheres most often affected by gender-based discrimination was provided. More information about the campaign on <http://www.gap.lt/lt/vikpl>
- Information television and reporting cycle: 52 subjects were prepared for the television show "Jeigu" ("If"), which analyzed discrimination due to gender, age, ethnic/racial origin, disability, and social status.
- CEA prepared 25 social advertising reports, which were televised once a week. For each broadcast, comments and articles were prepared and posted on the www.alfa.lt website.
- At the time of each "If" broadcast, an instantaneous social survey about issues related to gender equality and employment was conducted.
- Prepared and published a manual for employers, *Improvement of the Labor Relationship and Environment*, edited by Margarita Jankauskaitė and Aistė Paškauskaitė, 2007 (*Darbo santykių ir darbo aplinkos gerinimas/ sudarytojos Margarita Jankauskaitė ir Aistė Paškauskaitė, 2007*).
- Prepared and published a compact disc, *Equal Opportunities: Rhetoric and Practice*.

Project coordinator:

Kaunas Women's Employment Information Center

Project partners:

Office of the Ombudsperson for Equal Opportunities
Center for Equality Advancement

1.3 Gender Roles Stereotypes in the Employment Sphere: Wider Monitoring and Educational System

Project goals:

- To deepen knowledge about gender equality.
- To foster professional qualifications that allow individuals to successfully balance work and family life.

Project duration:

September 2006 to December 2007

Project activities:

- Deliver seminars and lectures on the topic of gender equality to specialists in the sector of employment working in the regions of Alytus, Panevėžys, Šiauliai, and Vilnius.

Project coordinators:

Vilnius University Gender Studies Center

Project supporters:

European Social Fund, Program *Social Exclusion Prevention and Social Integration*

1.4 Assuring Equal Opportunities to Both Genders, Changing Stereotypes

Project duration:

April 2007 to December 2007

Target groups:

- NGO activists
- Specialists of labor force
- Trade-unions

Project goals:

- To change stereotypical attitudes about women's and men's roles at work and in society.

- To provide information about equal opportunities for women and men to participate in the labor market, to succeed in their careers, to get equal pay for equal work, to seek further professional development, and to participate equally and to attain equally valued roles in the political and decision-making process.
- To improve the professional competency of non-governmental organizations, professional unions, and labor force specialists.

Project activities:

- Prepared a training program on the topic of gender equality in the employment sphere.
- Deliver four seminar cycles to NGO, trade-unions and labor force specialists.

Project coordinators:

Kaunas Region Women's Crisis Center

Project partners:

Vilnius Women's and Children's Shelter

City of Alytus Women's Crisis Center

Anykščiai Social Center

Project supporter:

European Social Fund, Program *Social Exclusion Prevention and Social Integration*

1.5 Teacher's Educational Qualifications Improvement Reform

Project duration:

August 2007 to November 2007

Target groups:

- Teachers
- Educators
- Schools administrators

Project goals:

- To foster teachers' qualifications on the issue of equal opportunities for all and to encourage a more critical assessment of stereotypical mass culture images.
- To provide information about multiple discrimination, paying special attention to discrimination due to gender and ethnic origin and their connection to social exclusion and discrimination.

- To provide information about the principles of equal opportunity for all and about the European Union's and Lithuania's policies on this issue.
- To provide practical skills to recognize the manifestations of multiple discrimination, to recognize and interpret stereotypical mass culture images, and to pass this knowledge on to schoolchildren.

Project activities:

- Prepared an equal opportunity training program *Equal Partnership and Gender Stereotypes*
- Delivered 10 seminars to educators in all of Lithuania's Teacher Qualification Centers.
- Distributed information prepared by CEA between 2005 and 2007 to educators.

Project Coordinators:

Youth Career Center



Project supporters:

Teacher Qualification Centers

1.6 Petitions to the Lithuanian Parliament

- CEA supported a petition to the Lithuanian Parliament about the amendment to the Equal Opportunities Law and about the discriminatory Family Political Concept Law.
- Ten NGOs and citizens' groups urged the Lithuanian Parliament and the President to oppose the unconstitutional bill to amend the Equal Opportunities Law. Article 3 of the bill that was introduced did not uphold the principles of Gender Equality, creates the conditions for discrimination, and provides exceptions and privileges on religious grounds to religious establishments, institutions and organizations. The amendments would make it possible for religious communities, religious establishments, institutions and organizations to refuse employment to applicants or to fire workers who are divorced, are unmarried, are living with someone out of wedlock, or have children out of wedlock. The law would have also made it legal for these employers to require applicants or employees to open their private lives and religious loyalty for public examination. The amendments to the Equal Opportunities Law would also have granted legal protection for the dissemination of anti-Semitic, xenophobic, homophobic, and racist ideas, as such actions from religious establishments and institutions could be considered as educational, under the amended law. Once the amendments are adopted, they would counteract the Equal Opportunity Law, and they would negate the law's basic principle: to fight against such discrimination. The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania foresaw the primacy of human rights and freedom over the right to profess and disseminate faith. Approving these changes to the Equal Opportunity Law would infringe upon five articles of the Constitution of Lithuania and would run afoul of more than 10 international agreements signed by the Lithuanian government. The appeal, which was drafted by the Association of Tolerant Youth, was also signed by CEA, the Liberal Club of Vilnius, the Liberal Movement, the Initiative of Women of the New Generation, In Corpore, the Middle of the Road Intellectual Movement, the New Left 95, the Lithuanian Liberal Youth, and the Lithuanian Organization of Young European Federalists. These groups

encouraged the government, which was preparing the bill and the amendment, to uphold the Lithuanian Constitution and all international agreements to which Lithuania is a signatory.

- CEA also signed onto the Human Rights Monitoring Institute's petition concerning the Political Concept of Family, which discriminates against families that are not composed of a married man and woman and against single parents raising their children outside of marriage.

1.7 March 8: Arithmetic of Power

The Center for Equality Advancement initiated an action to declare March 8 as the Day of Consideration and Enactment of Laws Important to Women by the Lithuanian Parliament. The goal of this would be to revive the tradition of citizens' participation in an independent Lithuania and to express a strong political will to solve important gender equality issues. Towards this goal, the Center issued a booklet with statistics that confirmed that the ratio of women to men in decision-making positions in Lithuanian government institutions is 1:10. The Center encouraged the Lithuanian Parliament to pay closer attention to the fact that the social political breach creates the tendency to ignore women's experience in government life. The full layout of this publication is on website: <http://www.gap.lt/index.php?cid=71>

This problem was discussed in a conference on March 8, sponsored by Parliamentarian M.A. Pavilionienė.

1.8 Gender Equality in Municipalities

During the run up to municipal elections in February of 2007, CEA performed a statistical analysis of all decision makers in Lithuania's municipalities based on performance on gender measures and prepared an electronic map of each municipality and region which displayed unequal gender-based representation. (<http://www.gap.lt/index.php?cid=292>). This material was sent to all municipalities, NGOS and human rights organizations.

2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

2.1. Recognize Diversity!

Prepared a project and began to carry it out in 2007, which was declared by the European Union as the *European Year of Equal Opportunities for All* and which was designated as a year to combat exclusion and inequality.

Project goals:

- To direct society's attention to existing forms of multiple discrimination and to concentrate joint efforts to eliminate them.

Project activities:

- Film festival on the theme of human rights.
- Public campaign against discrimination.
- In May of 2007, organized three-day seminars for NGOs, labor union members, and municipal and community group representatives.
- Organized round tables between November and December of 2007.
- Prepared and published the manual *Equal Opportunities for All*

Project coordinator:

Lithuanian Human Rights Center

Project partners:

Office of the Ombudsperson for Equal Opportunities
Center for Equality Advancement

2.2. Open and Equal at Job.lt**Project goals:**

- To reduce workplace discrimination against sexual minorities.
- To improve professional and legal competencies of the target group.
- To enhance public and civil engagement of the target group.
- To foster tolerance in society and to train society to combat homophobia.

Project activities in 2007:

- Developed the website www.atviri.lt.
- Prepared 12 radio broadcasts on the topic of preventing discrimination.
- Participated in meetings with the target group.
- Prepared three academic articles.
- Virginija Aleksejūnė, member of the European Union's EQUAL oversight committee, participated in committee activities, evaluating reports and action plans.

Project coordinator:

Office of the Ombudsperson for Equal Opportunities

Project partners:

- Lithuania's Gay League
- Center for Equality Advancement
- Vytautas Magnus University, Department of Sociology
- European Social, Legal and Economy projects
- Gaumina, Ltd.

2.3 "Draša kalbėti, laisvė gyventi: Lesbiečių gyvenimo patirtys"- Getting a Voice, Changing Minds: Lesbian Life Stories**Project goals:**

- To increase lesbians' visibility in Lithuanian society.
- To provide a detailed study of lesbians' experiences and challenges and change derisive images of lesbians.
- To change homophobic stereotypes, encourage the development of an open society and carry out measures that aim to prevent discrimination due to sexual orientation.

Project activities:

- Gathered stories of Lithuanian lesbians and published the book *Getting a Voice, Changing Minds: Lesbian Life Stories*
- The book's presentation took place at the Lithuanian Gay League in October of 2007 and at the ILGA Conference at the Conti Hotel on November 27 – 28, 2007.

Project supporter:

Mama Cash

Network of East-West Women

2.4. EU Anti-Discrimination Policy: Gender Equality – Challenges and Consequences**Project goals:**

- To provide theoretical information about gender equality integration into the EU's anti-discrimination policy.
- To present good practices from EU countries, seeking to enact gender equality principles in the employment and social policy areas.

Project activities:

- Prepared a two-day international conference.

- Presented research, analyzing Lithuania's and the EU's policies for addressing and solving problems in the gender equality area.
- Provided examples of good practices.

Project supporters:

European Commission, Directorate-General Development – Technical Assistance and Change Information Office

2.5. Multiple Discrimination and Intolerance in the Everyday Environment

Project goals:

- To inform society about the phenomenon of multiple discrimination, paying special attention to discrimination due racial/ethnic origin and religion and to encourage social dialogue.
- To provide society information about the experiences of vulnerable groups/individuals and about the consequences of discrimination, as well as to foster sensitivity to the idea of equal opportunity.
- The project furthers the undertaking of the goals of the *Year of Equal Opportunities for All*

Project activities:

- Mini film festival.
- Concurrently with the film festival, discussions were organized to provide information in the different regions about the *Year of Equal Opportunities for All* and to spotlight this project's goals.
- Broadcast ads about multiple discrimination on television.

Project partner:

Lithuanian Human Rights Center

Project supporters:

European Commission

Lithuanian Republic – National Anti-Discrimination Program

2.6. ENAR (European Network against Racism)

In 2006, Lithuanian NGOs working in the field of human rights and anti-discrimination created the national coordination network ENAR-Lithuania. CEA joined this initiative and appointed Project Coordinator Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovič to represent it. Along with ENAR's Lithuanian coordinator, Edita Ziobiene (Lithuanian Human Rights Center director) Ms. Pilinkaite-Sotirovič represents ENAR-Lithuania at the EU level.

Project goals:

- Promote tolerance, equality and non-discrimination.
- Promote close cooperation of Lithuanian NGOs working in the field of human rights and equal opportunities.

Project activities:

- Training seminars.
- Analysis of the situation in Lithuania.
- Dissemination of EU good practices.

Project coordinator:

Lithuanian Human Rights Center

Project partners:

Center for Equality Advancement

Center of Civil Initiatives

Roma Community Center

3. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**3.1. Training on the Issue of Violence against Women for Department of Prisons (Ministry of Justice) officials****Project goals:**

- To provide information about the prevention of violence against women.
- To increase sensitivity to the problems of gender inequality.

Project activities:

- Prepared 16 hours of training on the subject of the prevention of violence.
- Organized and led a two-day seminar for officials from the Department of Prisons.
- The following training topics were included in the seminar: gender equality problems, gender stereotypes and violence against women, violence prevention, and adaptation strategies in society.

Project supporters:

Department of Prisons – Ministry of Justice

3.2. Violence against Women Prevention Program

In 2007, CEA continued the collaboration with the "Stop Violence against Women" (**StopVAW** www.stopvaw.org) international campaign and website, administering Lithuania's page in Lithuanian and English and regularly updating information about the legal situation in Lithuania, as well as actions taken and projects planned in the area of combating violence against women. The Lithuanian page can be viewed at the following address: <http://www.stopvaw.org/Lithuania2.html>.

In 2007, CEA staff member Vilana Pilinkaitė-Sotirovič participated in the Lithuanian Parliament's work group drafting the Concept of Safety from Domestic Violence.

4. OTHER PROJECTS

4.1. The Power of Gaze. Image of a Woman in 19th – 20th Century Painting

Project goal:

- Based on modern art interpretation, to critically examine women's stereotypical representations in contemporary culture.

Project activities:

- Assisted with the exhibition's preparation at the Art Museum:
 - Generated the exhibition's concept.
 - Assisted with the selection of Lithuanian and foreign works.
 - The exposition was made of up selections from the Lithuanian Art Museum.
- Prepared and published the booklet *The Power of Gaze*

Project supporter:

Lithuanian Ministry of Culture

4.2. Envisioning Europe: Quality in Gender+ Equality Policies

Since 2007, CEA staff member Vilana Pilinkaitė-Sotirovič has participated in the European Union financed research project FP6 "QUING: Quality in Gender+ Equality Policies." Between February and April of 2007, a research study of academic literature was conducted, analyzing common gender equality policy, unemployment, intimate citizenship and gender violence problems. Between May and July of 2007, an exhaustive and historic analysis about laws and political changes between 1995 and 2007 in the same four areas was conducted. Furthermore, between September and December of the same year, an analysis of 49 selected documents was conducted to analyze policy and civil society documents on gender and equality problems.

4.3. Electronic Catalogue of CEA library

CEA jointly with the Office of the Ombudsperson for Equal Opportunities has developed an electronic catalogue that includes approximately 3000 documents: books, periodicals, methodological materials, research, reports, video materials, booklet and pamphlets on the topics of Human rights, Violence against women, Feminism history, Gender theory, etc. The library is constantly renewed and updated. (http://www.gap.lt/library_search).

5. PARTICIPATION IN SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

May 16. Conference on Equal Opportunities, organized by the M. Romeris University Department of Sociology. Lecture *Center for Equality Advancement: Experience and Lessons* by V.Pilinkaite-Sotirovič.

July 12 – 13. Seminar on EU Anti-discrimination policies, funded by European Commission, Directorate-General Development – Technical Assistance and Change Information Office. Lecture delivered by M.Jankauskaitė *Gender and Social Development*

November 4. Participated in the international project "Encouraging Active Training in the Field of Social Work" meeting, which was organized by the Social Work Department of M. Romeris University. CEA participated as a social partner in the meeting and agreed to work with the students from the partner countries in 2008. with the objective of acquainting them with the particulars of working in a specific equal opportunities area.

September 20. At the *Ideas Fair*, organized by the Citizen Responsibility Fund, CEA presented a training module on gender equality for employers.

November 26. Conference "Violence and Media". Lecture delivered by M.Jankauskaitė, *From Erotica to Violence*

CEA participated in the REGINA network, opposing initiatives by Parliament members to make abortion illegal.

CEA joined the NGO platform on development cooperation (Vystomojo bendradarbiavimo platforma) and actively participates in its activities.

6. BOOKS PUBLISHED IN 2007 BY CEA

Improvement of the Labor Relationship and Environment. (Darbo santykių ir darbo aplinkos

gerinimas.) Edited by Margarita Jankauskaitė and Aistė Paškauskaitė, 2007

Getting a Voice, Changing Minds: Lesbian Life Stories (Draša – kalbėti, aistra gyventi). Edited by Margarita Jankauskaitė, 2007

Gender Equality Manual for Local Authorities. (Lyčių lygybės vadovas savivaldos institucijoms) Edited by Indrė Mackevičiūtė, Magdalena Delinesheva, Tatyana Kmetova, Reet Laja, Margit Sarv, Virginija Aleksejūnė and Margarita Jankauskaitė. 2008

Equal Opportunities for All. (Lygios galimybės visiems) Edited by Laima Vengalė, Danguolė Grigolovičienė and Lina Mališauskaitė. 2007

Equal Opportunities: Rhetoric and Practice. (Lygios galimybės: retorika ir praktika) CD. 2007

Arithmetic of Power. (Valdžios aritmetika.) Edited by Vilana Pilinkaitė-Sotirovič and Augustas Čičelis. 2007

Virginija Aleksejūnė

Director, Center for Equality Advancement