

Report on activities of the public institution
Center for Equality Advancement (CEA)
2010

The public institution Center for Equality Advancement (CEA) was founded in 2003 by the Ministry of Social Security and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania, the Office of the Ombudsperson of Equal Opportunities, and the NGO Kaunas Woman's Employment Information Center.

CEA's main goals:

1. To promote the enforcement and implementation of equal rights for women and men.
2. To build the tolerance level of society, encourage individuals to combat discrimination due to sex, age, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and reduce social exclusion within Lithuanian society.
3. To support the ideals of 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 women and men by providing equal and proper 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 the sexes, age groups, national and ethnic minorities, the disabled and other social groups in 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 which promote equal opportunities.

From January 1, 2010, the Center had a staff of four people.

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

In 2010, CEA implemented the following projects and endeavors:

1. GENDER MAINSTREAMING

1.1. Flexible work for family success and economic development (SUCCESS)

Project goal: to build an in-depth understanding of the reconciliation of family and work culture in a working environment. CEA involved employers and municipal administration in trainings and developed a model of services and consultations needed for the families to reconcile familial obligations and employment needs.

Project duration: August 2009- August 2012

Project activities in 2010:

- ← CEA conducted a total of 30 seminars for municipal administrations and employers throughout Lithuania:
 - o There were 12 seminars for municipal administrations on the role of metropolitan areas in developing policies of the reconciliation of family and work. 93 municipal civil servants were involved in training from October 1, 2009 to November 30, 2010
 - o 18 seminars were conducted for employers on the benefits of introducing family-work balance in the workplace. 148 employers were instructed from October 1, 2009 to November 30, 2010

Project coordination: Kaunas Women's Employment Information Centre
Project funding: European social fund

1.2. Complex response to problems

Project goal: to introduce the measures necessary for solving the problems of social exclusion by training and consulting the staff who directly work with individuals and families at risk of poverty, unemployment and/or social exclusion.

Project duration: May 2009 – June 2011

Project activities in 2010:

- ← CEA prepared the programs as well as the content for the cycles of seminars for social workers, volunteers and personnel working with the individuals and families at risk
- ← CEA organized and conducted cycles of professional training and built the capability of the staff, volunteers and other personnel of social services providers from 5 municipalities
- ← CEA experts contributed the drafting of the methodological tool for social workers which focuses on a complexity of approaches to social work.
- ← CEA contributed to building the network of the social workers and social service providers to work more effectively with the individuals and at risk families.

Project coordination: UNDP-Lithuania

Project funding: European Social Fund

1.3. Resisting and Challenging Religious Fundamentalism – Lithuanian case

Project goal: to convey new and important knowledge on the growing Catholic religious fundamentalism in Lithuanian public and political life. It's deteriorating effect on women's rights plus strategies employed by women's rights activists and organizations to resist and challenge the institution in order to support and strengthen responses to religious fundamentalism by women's rights activists and advocates.

Project duration: 2008-2009

Project result:

Publication prepared by CEA staff is published on the website

http://www.awid.org/eng/About-AWID/AWID-Initiatives/Resisting-and-Challenging-Religious-Fundamentalisms/CF-Case_Studies

Project funding: AWID

2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

2.1. Developing open and socially inclusive dialogue between Lithuanian society and third country nationals. "A School For ALL"

Project goal: to build interactive communication and confident relations between Lithuania society and third country nationals, along with building capacities to accept challenges of diversity and multicultural environment. CEA promoted intercultural dialogue and integration of the third country national within schools.

Project duration: January 1 –December 31, 2010

Project activities:

- ← CEA organized and conducted three two-day seminars for 75 teachers from 6 Lithuanian cities (Alytus, Klaipeda, Kaunas, Panevezys, Siauliai and Vilnius).
- ← CEA coordinated 10 workshops in the participating schools involving trained teachers and their students.
- ← CEA helped to organize 10 meetings of the participating schools with the third country nationals.
- ← CEA staff drafted text on theories of intercultural training and collected interactive exercises and good practices on integration of tolerance education at school. This was published as a teacher's manual and distributed to all of the schools in Lithuania
- ← CEA organized and prepared the content for the final conference which was attended by 200 teachers from all Lithuania
- ← CEA staff members composed 6 press releases on the project as a dissemination tool of its activities and results

Project partner: Social partnership fund "Magnum Bonum"

Project funding: European Fund for the Integration of the Third Country Nationals

2.2. 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 Project Coordinator Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovič was appointed as a substitute representative for ENAR-Lithuania. Along with ENAR's Lithuanian coordinator, Gediminas Andriukaitis (Lithuanian Human Rights Center director) Ms. Pilinkaite-Sotirovič represents ENAR-Lithuania at the EU level.

Project goals: to promote tolerance, equality and non-discrimination along with close cooperation of Lithuanian NGOs working in the field of human rights and equal opportunities

Project activities:

- Participation at the ENAR General Assembly meeting in Brussels June 24-26, 2010
- Composition of a letter to protest against Roma expulsion from France by the French government and appeal to EU state members to introduce effective institutional mechanisms to solve Roma integration problems. This letter was signed by Lithuanian Roma and human rights organizations and was sent to EU Commissar Vivien Reding, the French embassy in Lithuania and the Government of Lithuania
- Promotion of EU good practices in solving the problems of social exclusion and adaptation by racial and ethnic communities.

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. Trauma and empowerment

Project goals: to provide support for women-victims of violence through empowerment and building-up of self-confidence; to offer necessary space for group collective activities which stimulate the post-traumatic healing process and develop a pilot model for survivors' community building.

Project activities:

- ← 6 workshops organized in the Vilnius Mother and Child Shelter. These workshops provided a space for women to build a community of survivors of domestic violence through collective craft activities.
- ← Round-table discussion of women's NGOs discussing crises centers and shelters that will be organized to give lessons learned during implementation of the pilot model for survivors' community building and discuss the possibilities of its integration in other social settings.

Project funding: US Embassy in Lithuania

3.2. Meeting with the President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaite

CEA undertook the initiative to organize a meeting of women's NGOs with the President of the Republic of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaite, to discuss the problems of gender inequality and domestic violence against women. The meeting was organized on April 30, 2010 on the eve of Mother's day in Lithuania. The meeting was attended by the most active leaders of Women's NGOs from Vilnius and Kaunas, women MPs, representatives of the Ministries of Social Security and Labor, Justice and Interior, and a representative of UNDP. The main questions discussed with the President were:

Inadequate state policies to the raising problems of gender inequality
Violence against women and absence of legal acts on protection against domestic violence
Inadequate state support for NGOs in solving the problems of gender inequality and gender based violence.

The President addressed these issues to the representatives of the Ministries and requested reporting on the solving these issues. As a result of the meeting, the President assured the representatives of women's NGOs that she would take the responsibility to veto the law on protection against domestic violence if the private prosecution practice in the case of domestic violence would not be withdrawn

3.3. Advocacy work on drafting the Law on Protection against Violence in Private Sphere

The CEA member, Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic, has participated in the debates on the draft law against violence in private sphere since autumn 2010. In September, the critical opinion about the draft law which does not integrate three main human rights principles was presented in debates at the Committee of Human Rights of the Parliament of Lithuania.

CEA expert Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic was a member of the working group established by the Human Rights Committee at the Parliament of Lithuania. The aim of the working group was to revise the prepared draft law and improve it. Ms. Pilinkaite-Sotirovic participated in the meetings of the group and provided her expert's knowledge in the revision process.

Additionally, CEA in cooperation with the expert, Jolanta Samuolyte, from Human Rights Monitoring Institute translated the Lithuanian draft law on Protection against Violence in Private Sphere to the English language and applied to the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights for an expert evaluation and opinion on it. The response from Sheryl Thomas, Director of Women's Human Rights Program, was received on November 11, 2010 and was presented to the working

group on revising the draft law against domestic violence. The draft law was improved following comments of the international experts.

In November 25, Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic participated in a press conference on the international Day on Elimination of Violence Against Women organized by the Human rights committee of the Parliament of Lithuania.

4. OTHER PROJECTS

4.1. Work and engagement at the International Gender Policy Network (IGPN)

In January 2010 IGPN organized a meeting in Istanbul, Turkey, to develop a strategic plan for the IGPN activities. During the meeting CEA director Virginija Aleksejune was elected as a Board member of IGPN.

As a Board member Virginija Aleksejune took part in the September IGPN strategic meeting in Turkey to discuss upcoming project activities and make future connections for the AWID conference in October.

In October, 2010, Virginija Aleksejune participated in AWID feminist strategy meeting under the title “Resource Mobilization for Women’s Rights Organizations & Movements in the SEE/CEE/CIS Region” in Tbilisi, Georgia. This meeting provided a space for participating organizations to reflect on the connection between the status of women’s rights organizing and resources available. It also allowed them to network and share experiences in activist organizing and mobilizing resources, discuss opportunities and challenges women’s groups encounter in the process of mobilizing resources with donor agencies, and develop common strategies for future resource mobilization. In this context, participating women’s rights activists from the region could both celebrate their successes and propose concrete strategies to further build and reenergize the movement. Virginija Aleksejune presented the IGPN, along with its goals, mission, strategy and networking results.

In September – October, CEA supported the initiative of the IGPN Board to apply to the international donors on organizing trainings on women’s leadership. CEA in cooperation with IGPN director drafted proposal on trainings for women’s leaders from Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan) and submitted to the Oxfam Novib foundation. CEA prepared the rationale for the trainings, content of trainings and expected results of the trainings. The proposal for workshop on women leaders training was approved by Oxfam foundation. The selection process of the workshop participants is currently going on. CEA drafted the application for participants and letter of invitation. The workshop is planned for January 2011. Its aim is to empower women leaders to build new policy discourse in community affairs by shifting the priorities from short-term community needs towards developing complex long-term policy strategies.

In December, as IGPN member CEA is invited to conduct trainings for trainings on gender equality by Ukrainian Women’s Center. Joint funding is secured for the training, including IGPN and Ukrainian Women Fund

4.2. Cooperation with Delegation of the European Commission

CEA was invited to conduct a seminar for the employees of the European information centers of Lithuania. There were around 80 participants in the two-day seminar on March 4-5, 2010. The aim of the seminar was to raise sensitivity on the issues of discrimination, intolerance and inequality in everyday life and generate project ideas for Europe’s Day in May. As a result the Europe information centers drafted concrete projects which they implemented in May.

4.3. Cooperation with embassies located in Lithuania

In 2010 the embassy of the United States of America organized a number of initiatives and called upon CEA experts for participation. The US ambassador invited CEA staff for lunch to get broader information about contextual issues on institutional gender equality mechanisms, implementation practices, civil society voices and obstacles for policies of gender equality in Lithuania.

In May 2010 the US embassy organized a seminar on social campaigning and invited the US speaker to introduce theoretical and practical approaches for Lithuanian NGOs. CEA helped the staff of the US embassy in the process of inviting other human rights NGOs.

Additionally, the US embassy invited the CEA staff for the “Women-leaders lunch” and “What it means to be a female leader in current climate” discussion. This lunch and discussion was organized on behalf of the US Major General Jessica L. Wright who visited Lithuania in September 1-3, 2010.

In March 3, 2010 Swedish embassy invited Margarita Jankauskaite to discuss the situation in Lithuania in preparation for Baltic Pride.

4.4. Cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

May 6-7, CEA director Virginija Aleksejune participated in the OSCE Human dimension meeting on gender equality in Vienna. During the meeting Ms. Aleksejune presented a brief overview of institutional mechanisms on gender equality along with good practices and challenges of transformative policies on gender equality.

CEA director Virginija Aleksejune together with gender experts Ms. Zulfia Kochorbaeva, Kyrgyzstan, and Ms. Tatyana Kmetova, Bulgaria, were contracted by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in their capacity of Gender Equality Experts to implement the last phase of the joint EC-OSCE/ODIHR program “Promotion of Human Rights and Democratization in Eastern Europe”. One of the key objectives of the program was to promote the capacity of locally elected councilors to integrate gender aspects in local policy-making processes and support the increased participation of women in political life.

During the project the experts visited Kirovograd, identified opportunities and methods for introducing gender-impact assessments at the various stages of local policy-making. They also developed the curriculum for the ODIHR training workshop on gender-equality methods and strategies. This included two-day training workshop on strategies and methods for promoting gender-equality in the local decision-making process in Ukraine to strengthening the expertise of elected councilors in gender-impact assessment methods as well as strategies for promoting women’s political participation.

In November 3, 2010 Jamila Seftaoui, senior advisor on gender issues at the OSCE visited CEA to discuss the cooperation possibilities in 2011 – the year of Lithuania’s chairmanship in OSCE.

4.5. UNDP Equal Opportunities and Women’s Rights (EOWR)

CEA expert Margarita Jankauskaite participated in the project by UNDP –Ukraine to promote education without gender bias and to integrate gender knowledge and gender sensitivity into the educational system. Ms. Jankauskaite organized study-visits for civil servants, teachers and university gender experts from Ukraine to Lithuania. She periodically travels to Kiev, Ukraine, to provide assistance and consultation for local gender experts.

4.6. Membership at the Platform of Development Cooperation

Since 2007 CEA has actively participated in the Platform of Development Cooperation activities.

← In February, 2010 Virginija Aleksejune participated in the conference of the Platform of the Development Cooperation and presented a brief paper on importance of gender mainstreaming in

development cooperation policies.

← In June 6-8, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite had participated in the study-visit to Brussels to meet representatives of European institutions which deal with the issues of development cooperation

← In November 16, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite held a lecture on development cooperation and gender equality.

4.7 Participation in the 10th Informal Asia-Europe Foundation seminar on Human Rights

In July 7-9, 2010, CEA director Virginija Aleksejune was invited by the Asian-Europe Foundation to participate in the 10th Informal seminar on Human Rights "Human Rights and Gender Equality". Seminar took place in Manila, Philippines. The seminar aimed to identify the cross-cultural experiences on gender equality policies and women's empowerment in the diverse contexts. Virginija Aleksejune took part in the working group on solving the problems of women's social exclusion.

4.8. 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. The library is constantly renewed and updated. (http://www.gap.lt/library_search)

4.9. New LOGO and website

CEA has developed and activated a new logo as well as a web site for the organization.

4.10. Drafted new project proposals

CEA is constantly involved in search for new projects in the sphere of gender equality, antidiscrimination, and equal opportunities.

CEA together with the Office of the Ombudsperson of Equal Opportunities drafted the project Gender Mainstreaming for Better Governance for 2011-2012 and submitted it to the European Commission. The project was approved by the EC and was started December 1, 2010.

CEA together with national partners drafted and submitted two projects on facilitating conditions for integration of third country nationals in Lithuania. One of the projects "School for All 2" continues the work with Lithuanian schools on strengthening the connection between different cultures. Another project "My student is a foreigner" concentrates on teachers working with migrant students. Projects were submitted to the European Integration Fund and are currently in the process of evaluation.

CEA participated in the call for a proposal under the program on building language ability, business competences and implementing innovative education methods. The drafted project was not approved for funding by the Ministry of Education.

The informal education association, Youth Academy, invited CEA to partner in the call for proposal under the Ministry of Education. The drafted project "Open Code-Citizen" was submitted and approved for funding.

5. PARTICIPATION IN SEMINARS, CONFERENCES, PRESS COVERAGE, OTHER PUBLIC EVENTS

In January 7-8, and 12-13, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite and Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic conducted training sessions on gender equality for the staff of the Department of Prisons.

On March 8, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite participated in the TV show “Labas Rytas” on International Women’s Day.

On March 9, 2010 Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic participated in the discussions on violence against women in the radio “Žinių radijas”

Since April 2010, CEA participated in the activities of National Equality and Diversity Forum on the basis of observer’s rights. The Forum aimed to create informal network of human rights NGOs for cooperation, exchange information, share experiences, and contribute any other possible information.

On April 12, 2010 Virginija Aleksejune and Margarita Jankauskaite participated in the meeting of the working group on Gender Equality and Women’s rights under Community Democracies. The group was led by co-chairs of the working group Melanne S. Verveer, Ambassador-At-Large, Office of Global Women’s Issues, the United States, Evaldas Ignatavičius, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, and Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of the Republic of Lithuania. During the meeting the working group discussed the objectives, modalities, and timetable of its activities and agreed on four broad thematic priorities: women and governance, women and economic development, women and violence and women, peace and security.

On April 30, 2010 CEA along with 15 other human rights NGOs joined a public statement declaring their withdrawal from any policy debates on family policies with the Parliament of Lithuania until the discriminatory act defining family in wedlock as state subject is eliminated.

May 5-8, 2010. CEA participated in the events of the first Baltic Pride in Lithuania. Margarita Jankauskaite conducted seminars on high education without discrimination for an international group of students and participated in a press conference about it. On May 6, Margarita Jankauskaite took part in TV show “Valanda su Ruta” on the issues to Baltic Pride. May 7, 2010, CEA staff participated in a conference on Baltic Pride and marched in the Baltic Pride Parade in Vilnius.

May 11, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite moderated a workshop on equal opportunities for youth coordinators in the summit by the State Department of Youth Affairs.

May 12, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite conducted a public lecture on gender equality to the students of the Institute of International relations and political sciences.

June 19, 2010 CEA staff participated in the opening EU Institute on Gender Equality, cooperated in drafting the informal program, and actively participated in presenting the civil society directly involved in gender issues.

June 28, 2010 CEA staff participated in the seminar and discussions on the Jakarta principles.

June 30, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite conducted a seminar on equal opportunities for NGO representatives

July 2-4, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite participated in a working group on Gender Equality under the Community of Democracies in Krakow, Poland, and presented basic strategic guidelines for improving practical implementation of gender equality policies globally. The meeting in Krakow aimed to contribute to the debate on women for democracy.

July 22-23, 2010 Virginija Aleksejune's participation in the International Republican Institute Women's Democracy Network Chair of the Community of Democracies Eurasia Regional Conference "Coalesce for Success" in Vilnius, Lithuania

October 1-2, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite conducted lectures on gender equality for the seminar organized by the Association of HIV affected women and their families.

October 11, 2010 Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic was a committee member for the Journalist award under the EC campaign for diversity against discrimination

October 18, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite conducted a lecture on gender based violence in a conference on trafficking organized by the Missing People organization

October 29, 2010 Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic participated in the public discussion on gender equality policies organized by the Lithuanian Center for Human Rights during the AD HOC: Inconvenient film festival.

November 4-8, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite participated in the international Istanbul women's meeting (WOMANist).

November 12, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite presented a paper on women's representation in mass media in a conference organized by Lithuania's Art Critics Association

November 16, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite gave comments on tolerance in society for Lithuania's national radio station.

November 17, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite participated in public debates on marriage, family and society organized by the Ministry of Social Security and Labor

November 25, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite participated in discussions on human rights held by the local radio stations

December 3-4, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite conducted seminars on gender equality for university students organized by the Lithuanian Students Unions Association.

December 10, 2010 Margarita Jankauskaite conducted a seminar on gender equality for medical doctors.

6. PUBLICATIONS OF CEA STAFF IN 2010

Įvairovei atvira mokykla. Kodėl ir kaip siekti kultūrų dialogo (Vilnius, 2010). School open for diversity: why and how implement cultural dialogue.

Verslas už įvairovę. Geros praktikos pavyzdžiai verslo įmonėse (Vilnius, 2010). Business for diversity. Good practices in business.

Margarita Jankauskaite. 2010. „Kairo veiksmų programos įgyvendinimas Lietuvoje: žingsnis pirmyn, du atgal.“ („Implementation of Cairo Action Plan in Lithuania: One step forward, two – backward) in Conference materials on 15 Years anniversary of the UN Cairo Conference Action Plan compiled by M. Pavilioniene.

Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic. „Multikultūrinis ugdymas bendrojo lavinimo mokyklose“

(„Multicultural education in schools“) review article in Tolerancija ir multikultūrinis ugdymas bendrojo lavinimo mokyklose (Vilnius, Kaunas, 2010)

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