

**ACTION PLAN FOR LITHUANIAN PARTICIPATION
IN THE INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVE
“OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP”**

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Vilnius

INTRODUCTION

Significance of Open Government in Lithuania

It is important to develop Open Government Partnership initiatives in Lithuania in order to encourage public administration authorities to make a bigger contribution to a more transparent and effective public administration. The openness and transparency of public administration processes, the provision of services in line with public needs, and the education of a socially responsible society are the most important initiatives and goals of an Open Government. Achievement of these goals requires consistency and joined efforts. The main measure of quality of the initiatives – the changes of public administration authorities which are actually felt by the public, and increased public confidence in these authorities. Hence, this Action Plan will adhere to the priorities established in the previous Action Plan, focusing on the most urgent objectives of today and possible ways of accomplishing them in order to implement a socially responsible public policy.

Areas of implementation of Open Government initiatives

The Government's Programme, approved by Seimas Resolution No XII-51 of 13 December 2012, envisaged to consistently bring public administration closer to the satisfaction of the needs of Lithuanian citizens. The aim is to consistently modernise the public sector by involving citizens in governance processes, to restore the effectiveness of public administration authorities and increase the transparency and openness of their activities. It is planned to intensify, through the development of e-democracy solutions, the interaction between the society and public administration authorities, and promote, by employing information and communication technologies, the civic activity of the public in making influence on Government's political decisions. The priorities set in the Government's Programme reflect not only the strategic goals of the State but also the importance of Open Government initiatives. An Open Government has to ensure that the public receives services that meet its needs and are easily available to it. With a view to raising society's confidence in public administration authorities, Open Government initiatives will be used to promote a more active cooperation between the public and these authorities and to encourage the public to participate in the solution of issues important to it.

- Improvement and development of services

It is important to orient the provision of public services to the user and seek higher level and maximum availability thereof. Within the framework of the 2013-2015 Action Plan for implementing the Programme for the improvement of public administration 2012-2020, an inventory of the public and administrative services supplied to the public will be made and the conditions of their provision will be assessed, and public and administrative services of better quality and easier accessibility will be created. In developing the provision of e-services, public awareness of new technologies used for

service provision will be raised and the abilities of the public to use e-services will be developed. To this end, various educational projects aimed at disseminating e-services will be carried out and other initiatives related to e-service development will be implemented.

Both the availability and the use of e-services have increased since 2012. The number of visitors on the website offering e-services (www.epaslaugos.lt) grew from 695 000 in 2012 to 1.017 million in 2013; equally, the number of public administration authorities providing e-services increased. In further development and improvement of the structure of information and communication technologies (ICT) it will be aimed to keep increasing the availability of e-services and use thereof.

- **Public participation in public administration**

It is important to enable the public to participate in decision-making processes and initiate consultations with the public. In order to encourage a more active participation of the public in public governance it is important to develop its civil consciousness and strengthen the initiative of communities. The development of civil consciousness is one of the most important goals set for education in Lithuania's progress strategy "Lithuania 2030". This strategy presents a vision of smart Lithuania – a creative empowerment of each and every member of the society, a conscious citizen, focusing on ideas that would help Lithuania to become a modern, energetic country, embracing differences, and with a strong sense of national identity; and proposes to gear the general education system to creativity, citizenship and leadership skills. To provide conditions for the formation of a responsible and open individual, strategies for maintaining the development of his citizenship are worked out (National Education Strategy for 2013-2022).

In order to encourage the public to take a more active part in public administration processes, programmes for the development of a socially responsible society will be implemented and methods for consultations with the public will be developed.

- **Public openness of the activities of public administration authorities (open data)**

Increasing the transparency of the activities of public administration authorities and the accessibility of public information to the public is an important Open Government initiative. In 2013 the National Audit Office of Lithuania determined that Lithuania had no consistent policy on open data and therefore their management was not always efficient. In order to increase the accessibility to the public of data in the information files processed by public administration authorities as well as their repeat use, it is planned to develop an open data supply model. It is one of Lithuania's progress tasks envisaged in 2014. The publishing of the information on the activities of public administration authorities that is relevant to the public would ensure a bigger openness and transparency of these activities. It is important to regularly enhance the quality of supply to the public of the information

held by public information authorities – to provide it to the public in a clear and user-friendly form and content by using the opportunities offered by new technologies.

- **Combating corruption in the public sector**

Corruption is one of the most dangerous social phenomena, endangering human rights, democracy, rule of law and public morality. Corruption can distort social justice. Based on the results of an annual survey on the Corruption Perception Index carried out by the organisation Transparency International, in 2013 the Lithuanian Corruption Perception Index was 57 points (100 points – very clean, 0 – highly corrupt state). With that in view, it is important to ensure an efficient system for corruption prevention in the country. Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Basics of National Security and the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Prevention of Corruption, and evaluating corruption as a threat to political system, civic society and national security, the Lithuanian National Anti-corruption Programme 2011–2014 was adopted and is being implemented. In order for public administration authorities to pursue a purposeful and efficient anti-corruption policy, it is important to ensure the continuation of implementation of this Programme. Therefore, the development of the 2015-2025 long-term measures, geared to essential changes, implementing the National Anti-corruption Programme was started in 2014.

Drafting of the Action Plan

This Action Plan was drafted by a work group comprising representatives from the institutions concerned, approved by Order No V-18 of Chancellor of the Prime Minister of 21 February 2014. The parties concerned were enabled to take an active part in the drafting process of the Action Plan. Proposals and observations with regard to the Action Plan were submitted during public consultations. Furthermore, direct consultations on the Plan's provisions were held with the representatives of non-governmental organisations.

IMPLEMENTED OPEN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES: CURRENT SITUATION

2012–The following four priority areas implementing changes and initiatives were envisaged in 2013:

1. Transparency of the activities of public administration authorities

- The State Information Resources Interoperability Platform (hereinafter – the SIRIP), which is necessary for data exchange between public administrations as they provide electronic services through e-Government Gateway (www.epaslaugos.lt), is systematically developed. Currently, SIRIP services are used by 165 public administration authorities; the portal has more than 353 links to online services.

2. Simplifying the existing and/or developing new (more accessible to the public) procedures for public involvement in the process of public administration

- The Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Non-governmental Organizations was passed on 19 December 2013. The Law provides for a mechanism for NGO information and consultation with various organizations and institutions.

- NGOs are involved in Monitoring/Supervisory Boards for the examination and decision-making on NGO funding from e.g., EEA NGO Fund, Lithuanian and Swiss Cooperation Fund.

- The government has created the State Progress Council, which since 2011 has been coordinating Lithuania's progress strategy "Lithuania 2030".

- The Ministry of Social Security and Labour has been a partner in seven NGO projects out of the total of 18. They are implemented according to implementing measure VP1-4.1-VRM-08-V "Collaboration and partnership between the government and non-governmental sector" of Priority Axis 4 "Fostering Administrative Competence and Increasing Efficiency of Public Administration" of the Human Resources Development Operational Programme for 2007 to 2013.

- With a view to engaging residents and communities and promoting their voluntary and consistent participation in self-government, also seeking more efficient work of local authorities, in 2012, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour started the implementation of the Programme for Self-Government of Local Communities. The purpose of the Programme is to encourage local communities to take active part in adopting decisions related to them, also in decision-making on the use of funds for meeting public needs.

- The Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Legislative Framework was adopted on 18 September 2012 and came into effect on 1 January 2014. The Register of Legislation is the main national register. It is the first and only freely available official Lithuanian source of laws in electronic space.

3. Increase of the online availability of all the services provided to the public by maximising the use of the existing and new information and communication technologies

There has been a growing number of major public and administrative services brought online. In 2012 it stood at 87 per cent (81.5 per cent in 2011).

- Lithuania boasts the e-services delivered at the highest level of electronic maturity in the following fields: personal income declaration, job search, issuance of driving licenses, reporting to the police, registration of the place of residence, declaration of social contributions for employees, corporate tax declaration, value-added tax declaration, opening up a business, customs declarations, and public procurement.

- Lithuania, along with other 19 EU Member States has been involved in a large-scale pilot project STORK2 – *Secure idenTity acrOss boRders linKed* (www.eid-stork2.eu). The core aim of the project is to develop and test solutions for the identification of legal persons across the borders in e-banking, e-health, e-business and e-university.

- In order to ensure easy public access not only to public sector information, but also to the provided services, many services important to the population have been brought online. Thanks to the project “Development of Information System of Electronic Social Assistance Services for Families (SPIS)”, people may electronically submit 26 types of social support requests to the municipality as of January 2014.

4. The most innovative methods implementing the principles of open government

- The Government’s Office has introduced an e-signing information system for work with electronic documents (ELPAS) (submission of documents for signing, quick review of document content, quick signing of documents), which has been successfully running for more than a year. This system ensures a more efficient formalisation and distribution of adopted legal acts. Secure electronic signature is created by a secure device for signature creation and is certified by a valid qualified certificate. All users, including the Prime Minister, ministers, vice-ministers, chancellors, and civil servants, have electronic certificates provided by the Population Register in the form of smart cards.

- In June 2013, a new system for selection of civil servants was introduced. It involves two phases:

Phase I: the Department of Civil Service makes centralised screening for general skills, and leadership skills during an interview with recruitment specialists/ psychologists, when applying for managerial positions. Phase II: an interview is held at the organisation holding a vacancy and the best applicant for the position of civil servant is selected during that interview.

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan envisages the main Open Government initiatives, implementation areas, actions, authorities responsible for these actions, and expected outcomes.

Initiative 1: customer-focused public services

Area	To improve the quality of services
Action	To make an inventory and catalogue of public and administrative services
Responsible authority	Ministry of the Interior
Date of implementation	2014
Expected outcome	- An inventory of the public and administrative services administered and provided by public administration authorities has been made, a list/catalogue of these services has been compiled and a methodology and indicators for measuring their provision have been created.
Action	To ensure the monitoring and assessment of the quality of services.
Responsible authority	Ministry of the Interior
Date of implementation	2014–2016
Expected outcome	- Studies have been carried out by ministries on the assessment of the appropriateness of the public and administrative services provided and/or administered by them and on the conformity of these services with public needs. - Quality performance criteria for service providing institutions have been laid down, serving the basis for the assessment of these institutions; publication of the results of the assessment. - Methodological recommendations for measuring user satisfaction with public services (service quality) have been developed for public administration authorities. - Studies aimed at determining the activity of public administration authorities as regards assessment of indicators for user satisfaction with services have been carried out.
Action	To develop service quality standards.
Responsible authority	Ministry of the Interior
Date of implementation	2014–2015
Expected outcome	- Minimum quality standards for services regulated by ministries have been developed and posted on the ministries' websites. - Recommendations for drawing up citizens' charters have been prepared. - A standard for the provision of public services at public administration authorities has been developed.

Area	To develop and promote e-services
Action	To carry out projects for online service dissemination at public libraries.
Responsible authority	Information Society Development Committee under the Ministry of Transport and Communications
Date of implementation	2014–2016
Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The capacities of the people to use electronic services have been enhanced, together with their awareness of new technologies and e-services. - Digital exclusion across Lithuania has been reduced – people are encouraged to learn more and develop their skills towards a successful application of the ICT. The share of individuals using electronic public and administrative services in 2014 has accounted for 46 per cent, in 2015 – 50 per cent, in 2016 – 52 per cent.
Action	By employing new technologies, to develop solutions for improving public and administrative services geared to promote the use of e-services and the provision of services through a centralised portal, e-Government Gateway (www.epaslaugos.lt).
Responsible authority	Information Society Development Committee under the Ministry of Transport and Communications
Date of implementation	2014–2016
Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public and administrative services have been brought online to the maximum extent possible. In 2014, the share of major public and administrative services brought online (at the highest level of electronic maturity) has accounted for 83 per cent, 2015 – 90 per cent, 2016 – 93 per cent. - A high level of bringing services of public relevance online has been ensured, electronic solutions are being developed and implemented making it possible to receive services at one contact point. The number of e-service users has been growing, while ensuring the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination. A year-on-year growth in the number of visitors at e-Government Gateway (www.epaslaugos.lt): in 2014 – 737.4 thousand, 2015 – 759.5 thousand, 2016 – 782.3. -The quality of life of Lithuania’s population and the productivity of enterprises have grown up by using opportunities offered by the ICT. The goal is to make sure that by 2020 at least 85 per cent of the Lithuanian population use the Internet (75 per cent in 2015) and 100 per cent of enterprises use high-speed internet (50 per cent in 2015) .

Initiative 2: public participation in public governance

Area	To encourage public administration authorities to have consultations with people
Action	To ensure public consultations and facilitate public involvement in public governance processes.
Responsible authority	Ministries
Date of implementation	2014–2016

Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal regulation of public consultations has been improved –main consultation principles, terms and standards have been established. - Proposals received and implemented through public consultations are made public, new technologies are employed for consultations. - With a view to enhancing public involvement in public administration, information is provided, already at the school level and extending to other levels of the education system, about opportunities for accessing information held by the State, and public involvement in the processes of public governance (Ministry of Education and Science). - To enable the public to express its opinion on the quality of provided services, efforts are made to ensure the greatest possible public involvement in the administration of institutions providing education, health, social security and public security services, thus enhancing the role of the councils in these institutions (Ministry of Education and Science). - The Council of Non-governmental Organisations (and advisory institution) has been set up to ensure the participation of NGOs in establishing, shaping and implementing NGO development policy (Ministry of Social security and Labour).
Action	To implement a measure promoting active involvement by local communities and individuals in decision-making as regards responding to public needs in the fields of local community relevance.
Responsible authority	Ministry of Social Security and Labour
Date of implementation	2014–2015
Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2014 at least 90 per cent of the total activities approved by the decisions of the Local Community Council, involving all municipalities, have been implemented. - Capacities of the people, community organisation managers and the most active community members to represent community interests in finding best solutions to the problems have been enhanced. Community self-governance increased. In order to evaluate the efficiency of communal participation in public administration processes, developments in their involvement in these processes have been observed, best practices of cooperation between public administration authorities and communities have been shared, and the effectiveness of decisions adopted together with the public has been analysed.
Action	To develop and implement measures encouraging people and local communities to participate in local decision making.
Responsible authority	Ministry of the Interior
Date of implementation	2014 – 2016
Expected outcome	<p>An informational-methodological publication has been developed for the representatives of local communities (<i>seniūnaičiai</i>), which provides information about the rights of the people and the possibilities of participating in local decision making, other information of local relevance (e.g. safe neighbourhood, emergency telephone number 112 etc); relevant legal information is provided in a simple, reader-friendly form.</p> <p>All the representatives of local communities (<i>seniūnaičiai</i>) will receive necessary information in the manner acceptable to them.</p> <p>The results of the monitoring of popular surveys will be made public.</p>

Area	Raising civic awareness
Action	To update civic and historical education at school
Responsible authority	Ministry of Education and Science
Date of implementation	2014–2020
Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing the quality and competitive capacity of general and higher education systems: civic and historical education has been updated at schools. Civic and national identity education projects have been implemented. Arrangements have been made for educational civic activities and personal development across the country, various organisational forms thereof are being developed, thus encouraging the strengthening of local and national organisations of pupils and students. -The growth of the Civic Empowerment Index in 2012 was 35.0, in 2017 – 40.0. - Growth of the Civic Empowerment Index for pupils and students in 2013 was 46.0, and in 2014 – 46.7.
Action	To develop a model for the National Civil Society Fund.
Responsible authority	Ministry of Social Security and Labour
Date of implementation	2014
Expected outcome	- Several versions of the model for the National Civil Society Fund have been designed. They have been discussed with social partners and the selected version has been presented at the Government Strategic Committee.

Initiative 3: openness to the public of the activities of public administration authorities (Open Data)

Area	To make information held by public administration authorities accessible to the public
Action	To develop an Open Data supply model.
Responsible authority	Ministry of Transport and Communications
Date of implementation	2014
Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An Open Data supply model has been developed: - Guidelines for public administration authorities have been developed defining the Open Data concept, terms and conditions and methods for data opening; - Alternative ways for opening data have been presented.
Action	To encourage data supply in open formats
Responsible	Ministry of Transport and Communications

authority	
Date of implementation	2014
Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendations have been developed for public institutions and agencies as regards the preparation of investment projects aimed at creation or modification of information systems; provisions have been made for the adjustment of information systems to provide data in open formats (.csm. xml, and others). - adjustment of information systems to provide data in open formats has been listed among investment priorities for 2015

Initiative 4: corruption prevention, transparency promotion

Area	To reduce the scale of corruption
Action	To ensure publicity and transparency in public decision-making, enhance public access to draft legislation.
Responsible authority	Ministry of the Interior, Special Investigation Service
Date of implementation	2014 – 2016
Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All draft legislation is made public (www.lrs.lt). - Reorganisation of the system of the authorities overseeing economic operators has reduced preconditions for corruption as a result of lower administrative and supervisory burden. - Reduced motivation for illegal payments in the field of healthcare. - Improved procedures for the provision of administrative and public services and for their administration by increasing the transparency and effectiveness of public services; improved system for civil servant selection, career, service, training and evaluation. - Training of legislative drafters on evaluation of draft legislation considering the aspect of anti-corruption, consultations given to legislation drafters on anti-corruption aspect in the evaluation of draft legislation).
Action	To promote anti-corruption education by employing mass media and other means.
Responsible authority	Ministries
Date of implementation	2014 – 2016
Expected outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased public intolerance to corruption, and public involvement in anti-corruption has been encouraged; anticorruption education programmes have been developed and implemented. - Declining share of population thinking corruption is widespread according to Special Eurobarometer (in 2014 – 95 %, in 2015 – 94%, 2016 – 93%). - Growing Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (in 2013 – 57, in 2014 – 58, in 2015 – 59, in 2016 - 60). - Anti-corruption initiative “Clean hands” has been carried across health institutions in Lithuania (Ministry of Health, Q2/2014).