

## Lithuania 2025

### Information from: The Parliamentary Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania

## Independence, effectiveness and establishment of NHRIs

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### International accreditation status and SCA recommendations

The Parliamentary Ombudsperson's Office of the Republic of Lithuania was last reaccredited A-status by the Sub-Committee on Accreditation in [May 2024](#).

The SCA noted that despite the recent increase of the Lithuanian NHRI's budget, it is not sufficient to properly carry out its broad mandate. Therefore, the SCA recommended further advocacy for an adequate level of funding to effectively carry out the full breadth of its current and additional mandates effectively, especially the mandate to promote human rights.

Additionally, the SCA noted that the participation of civil society in the selection & appointment process is not formalized. In this regard, the SCA recommended that the NHRI continues to advocate for the formalization and application of a process which includes requirements to publicize vacancies broadly and to promote broad consultation and/or participation of civil society organizations in the application, screening, selection and appointment process.

Further, the SCA noted that the grounds for Parliament to initiate a no-confidence vote are not explicit in the enabling law. It recommended the NHRI to advocate for amendments to the enabling law to provide for an independent and objective dismissal process, including by providing express criteria on the no-confidence vote against the Ombudsperson or to remove this ground for dismissal.

Finally, the SCA encourages the NHRI to continue interpreting its mandate in a broad manner and to advocate for amendments to its enabling law to have an explicit mandate encouraging the ratification or accession to regional and international human rights instruments.

### Follow-up to international and European actors' recommendations on NHRIs and relevant developments

There are no relevant updates concerning the SCA recommendations since the Parliamentary Ombudspersons' Office's (hereinafter referred to as "the NHRI") reaccreditation with "A" status in 2024. The NHRI observes that the SCA recommendations were submitted in June 2024, and the parliamentary elections were held in October 2024, so this issue was not a priority for politicians. In addition, it was reasonable to wait until the new composition of the parliament was clear. However, the SCA recommendations were presented during the meeting of the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee on 11 December 2024.

As regards the follow-up on the recommendation concerning the NHRI, the NHRI notes that the [2024 EU Rule of Law report](#) concluded that there has been significant progress in providing adequate financial resources for the NHRI, taking into account European standards on resources for Ombuds institutions and the UN Paris Principles. No new recommendations directly related to the Office were submitted.

## Regulatory framework

The national regulatory framework applicable to the NHRI has changed since January 2024.

On 7 November 2024, the Parliament adopted the [Law on the Parliamentary Ombudspersons No VIII-950 amending Articles 1, 3, 4, 24 and Section III of the Law on the Parliamentary Ombudspersons and supplementing the Law with Article 19-3](#), which provides that from 1 January 2025 the NHRI will take on the role of National Rapporteur on trafficking in human beings. The 2025 budget allocates funding for two additional positions to support the implementation of the new mandate.

Otherwise, the NHRI's mandate to contribute to access to justice for individuals has not been strengthened since 2022 (see [2022 national baseline report](#)).

However, the NHRI highlights that the SCA recommendations should be implemented. In the 2024 Report, the SCA noted that the formal participation of civil society organizations in the application, screening and selection of Ombudsperson is not enshrined in the Law on the Parliamentary Ombudspersons nor in any other binding administrative documents. Considering this, the SCA recommended that involvement of civil society organizations should be formalized, for example by directly soliciting proposals from civil society; or allowing civil society to directly participate in the evaluation process.

As it was mentioned, the grounds for Parliament to initiate a vote of no-confidence in the Parliamentary Ombudspersons are not explicit in Article 9 (1) of the Law on the Parliamentary Ombudspersons nor is such ground specified

in the Parliament (Seimas) Statute. The SCA highlighted that the grounds for dismissal must be clearly defined and appropriately confined to those actions that impact adversely on the capacity of the members to fulfil the institution's mandate. Where appropriate, the legislation should specify that the application of a particular ground must be supported by a decision of an independent body with appropriate jurisdiction. The dismissal must be made in strict conformity with all the substantive and procedural requirements as prescribed by law and it should not be based solely on the discretion of the appointing authorities.

It is also important to mention that the NHRI carries out activities relating to encouraging ratification of human rights instruments. However, the Law on the Parliamentary Ombudspersons does not explicitly vest the Parliamentary Ombudspersons with this function. The SCA encouraged the Parliamentary Ombudspersons to continue interpreting its mandate in a broad manner and to advocate for the appropriate amendments to its enabling law to have an explicit mandate to encourage ratification or accession to regional and international human rights instruments.

## **NHRI enabling and safe space**

According to the NHRI, the relevant state authorities do not have good awareness of the NHRI's mandate, independence and role. Members of the Parliament and politicians confuse the NHRI with the National Audit Office of Lithuania, and the title "Parliamentary Ombudsperson" in Lithuanian is misleading ("Controller of the Parliament", whereas the Lithuanian name for National Audit Office is "State Controller"). Executive authorities are often unaware of the specifics of the Parliamentary Ombudspersons' Office's status and do not understand that it is not an executive authority, but, as the [Constitutional Court](#) has clarified, a body that is neither the legislative, executive nor judicial. The NHRI is formed based on civil service, and the same rules and requirements apply to it as to the executive authority institutions. State authorities are often unaware that the Parliamentary Ombudspersons' Office is also an NHRI, this function is believed to be held by non-governmental organizations (the Lithuanian Human Rights Centre and the Human Rights Monitoring Institute). Therefore, the NHRI experiences difficulties in obtaining information about relevant human rights related initiatives. To improve the situation, awareness-raising campaigns could be organized, but funding is never allocated for this.

Furthermore, the NHRI does not have adequate access to information and to policy makers and is not involved in all stages of legislation and policymaking with human rights implications. The NHRI notes that in general, it is necessary to take a proactive interest, asking for information about ongoing reforms, working groups, etc. As regards participation in the legislative process, the NHRI can obtain information on the consideration of draft legislative acts from the social partners working in specific areas, and it is also possible to find this

information on the Internet. Only very occasionally is the Office notified about the prepared draft laws by the parliamentary committees. The Office can then issue an opinion, commenting on the draft legislation under consideration. These comments are discussed in parliamentary committees. Involvement in the decision-making process largely depends on the personal relations that have been established with the decision-makers; since the composition of the Parliament has changed, all contacts have to be renewed. The national regulation ([Seimas Statute](#)) currently does not provide for the mandatory opinion of the Parliamentary ombudspersons (or NHRI) when considering issues related to human rights. Article 138 (3) of the Statute only provides for the non-binding general possibility, after registering the draft law to request that other institutions (not specifying which institutions might be addressed) present to the Seimas their conclusions on the draft under consideration. According to Article 147 (7) of the Statute, the appointed responsible committee to consider a draft law forwards the draft law to interested state institutions and, where necessary, to public organisations, local authorities, and political parties to send their evaluations. However, there is no provision obliging such a committee to take into account the opinions provided.

Moreover, the NHRI does not have adequate resources to carry out the full breath of its mandate, as there are no resources allocated to NHRI's promotion mandate, as state authorities do not fully understand its significance and necessity. However, from 2025, additional funding has been allocated for the mandate of the national rapporteur on combating trafficking in human beings (2 new positions covered).

The NHRI notes that there were no changes in legislation, state measures or practices to ensure timely and reasoned responses to NHRI recommendations. However, the NHRI also notes that such legislative changes are not necessary, as the NHRI almost always receives replies from the bodies to which recommendations have been made, following the obligation enshrined in the article 20, par. 3 of the Law on Seimas Ombudspersons, stating that "Seimas Ombudsperson shall be informed forthwith upon the adoption of the decisions on measures to be taken in the light of the proposal (recommendation) of the Seimas Ombudsperson, but not later than within 30 days from the receipt of the proposal (recommendation)". If necessary, information on the implementation of specific recommendations can be requested again, follow-up actions are carried out and meetings are initiated.

As regards the issue of functional immunity, the NHRI notes that the leadership and staff do not enjoy functional immunity, however, there are sufficient measures to protect and support the NHRI, heads of institution and staff against threats and harassment and any other forms of intimidation in place.

Neither the Constitution nor the Law on the Parliamentary Ombudspersons provide for functional immunity for Parliamentary Ombudspersons or the

employees of the NHRI. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that since the beginning of the activities of the Parliamentary Ombudspersons in 1995, and even more since the accreditation of the Parliamentary Ombudspersons' Office as a NHRI in 2017, there were no attempts to interfere in the activities of the Ombudspersons nor in any other ways the independence of Ombudspersons was jeopardized. Regular procedural guarantees enshrined in the Constitution and the laws are considered to be sufficient in order to protect the independence of the Ombudspersons. It should also be noted that immunity is also not applicable to specialised Ombudspersons, i. e. Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, Ombudsperson for Children's Rights and Intelligence Ombudsperson, nor to other independent control or supervisor institutions or state officials, for instance, to the Auditor General, members of Central Electoral Commission, etc.

The NHRI also highlights that it has not faced threats in the form of intimidation or harassment. The only threats faced by the NHRI were related to inadequate resources. However, this threat was addressed by the Government after strong recommendations on the issue were included in the European Commission's 2023 EU Rule of Law Report.

## **NHRI's recommendations to national authorities**

1. The NHRI highlights that it remains important to follow up on the recommendations to allocate adequate financial and other resources, especially for the mandate of human rights promotion and awareness raising, also to allocate adequate resources if the new functions are attributed to the Office.
2. The NHRI recommends formalising the involvement of civil society organisations in the application, examination and selection of the Ombudspersons, and to clearly establish in law the grounds for Parliament to initiate a vote of no confidence in the Parliamentary Ombudsperson, or to abolish the no confidence procedure as such.
3. The NHRI recommends that the NHRI should always be informed about amendments to legislation related to human rights being considered in the Parliament.

## **Lithuania 2025**

**Information from: The Parliamentary Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania**

## **Human rights defenders and civil society space**

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## Laws and measures negatively impacting civil society and Human Rights Defenders

While the NHRI's human rights monitoring and reporting found no evidence of laws, policies and/or state measures that negatively impact freedom of association, freedom of assembly or freedom of expression, or challenges faced by women human rights defenders (WHRDs) or LGBTQ+ human rights defenders, the NHRI notes that should any unique challenges faced by WHRDs or LGBTQ+ human rights defenders be identified, the NHRI is ready take appropriate measures, e. g. bringing the issues to the attention of competent authorities and institutions including the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee, as well as raising these issues in public. The NHRI maintains close ties with NGOs operating in the relevant areas, e. g. in 2024 the Office has carried out a project on implementation of LGBTQ+ rights by Lithuanian municipalities in partnership with [Lithuanian Gay League](#) ("Lietuvos gėjų lyga") – a nongovernmental organization in Lithuania representing the interests of the local LGBTQ+ community. The Office also participates in relevant events and actively supports all initiatives aimed at improving the situation of the mentioned groups.

### Participation of NGOs in decision-making

The Seimas Ombudspersons' Office initiated a rapid survey of non-governmental organizations regarding their participation in decision-making processes. The survey revealed that, in some cases, Lithuanian non-governmental organizations are insufficiently involved in decision-making processes, particularly at the local government level. Municipalities are not always inclined to consult with the public and non-governmental organizations when making important decisions, regarding, for instance, decisions related to the rights of people with disabilities and ethnic minorities. Moreover, there are cases where non-governmental organizations are only formally included in the decision-making processes at the government level, such as being given an extremely short deadline to submit comments on draft legislation or where the comments are completely disregarded. As indicated by some survey participants, the reason for this could be that the law does not provide for an obligation to proactively consult with non-governmental organizations operating in the relevant field when considering legislation, nor does it require providing reasons when submitted comments are not taken into account.

## Practices negatively impacting civil society and human rights defenders

The NHRI's human rights monitoring and reporting found no evidence of practices that could negatively impact on civil society space and/or reduce human rights defenders' activities, such as negative attitudes/campaigns

towards/perceptions of civil society and/or human rights defenders by public authorities and the general public, online and/or offline threats or harassment, as well as intimidation, harassment or violence before, during or after protests.

On 29 March 2024, the Ombudsperson [issued conclusions](#) in the investigation into the incident when counter-protesters disrupted a peaceful assembly organised by an LGBTQ+ rights organisation and the police did not intervene in September 2023 (incident reported in the [2024 ENNHRI Rule of Law Report](#)). The Ombudsperson found that police officers failed to ensure the right of the LGBTQ+ community to hold a peaceful protest in front of the Parliament building in Vilnius. The inadequate reaction of the police officers did not guarantee the right to peaceful assembly of the participants of the gathering organised by the Lithuanian Gay League. The Ombudsperson issued a recommendation to the Police Commissioner General to take measures to ensure that in all cases the participants who have obtained a permit to organise an assembly are guaranteed a practical and effective exercise of their right to peaceful assembly, especially when the actions of provocateurs or hostile persons threaten the full enjoyment of this right.

Incidents have also occurred during the 2024 LGBTQ+ Pride event which took place on 8 June 2024 in Vilnius. A pre-trial investigation was launched into the [incident when an individual set on fire a flag](#) representing the LGBTQ+ community during the LGBTQ+ march. The pre-trial investigation was closed due to the absence of sufficient evidence to establish a criminal offence of incitement to hatred against any national, racial, ethnic, religious or other group of people, however, it was considered to hold the individual administratively liable. The same individual [burnt an LGBTQ+ community flag](#) again in front of the building of the Parliament on 18 July 2024.

Negative attitudes towards LGBTIQ+ community were also expressed by a public official. In July 2024, a mayor of the Širvintos municipality [circulated a public video in which she tore a letter](#) asking for information about services provided to LGBTIQ+ people, sent by researchers of the project implemented by Kaunas Technological University in partnership with the Lithuanian Gay League, the NHRI and Vilnius city municipality. In the publicly circulated video, the mayor of Širvintos, before tearing the letter, read out the names of the organisations participating in the project and made comments alleging that LGBTIQ+ community demands some kind of exceptional privileges, asked 'why LGBTIQ+ people cannot be like other people', and said that 'the municipality will not participate in the project'. Eventually, after repeatedly requested by the NHRI in September 2024, the municipality submitted the answers to the questionnaire.

In February 2024 a prominent HRD and politician Tomas Vytautas Raskevičius announced a submission of a complaint to the Prosecutor's General Office based on a comment calling for violence against LGBTIQ+ people. While the

exact scale of online threats is unknown there have been at least several instances when HRDs have publicly announced a submission of a complaint to Prosecutor's General Office in reaction to online comments inciting violence.

Intimidation was observed not only in the context of LGBTQI+ rights. In October 2024 [around 100 people marched](#) in the centre of Vilnius in support of Palestinians and Lebanon and against the actions of the Israeli military in Gaza. The march was initially blocked by several pro-Israel protesters who were repeatedly asked to leave by the police but eventually continued to walk in front of the participants of the march while [making hostile replicas and chants](#). No pre-trial investigation was initiated.

In June 2024, the exhibition RESONANCE BEYOND ESCAPE: QWORKAHOLICS ANONYMOUS III, curated by Party Office (Vidisha-Fadescha), opened at the Nida Art Colony (NAC) of the Vilnius Academy of Arts (VDA). The exhibition included statements such as "From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be Free" and "Pro BDS Only," as well as the flag of Palestine. Following pressure from the Embassy of Israel in Lithuania and the Jewish (Litvak) Community of Lithuania, who accused the organizers of anti-Semitism and complained to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who involved the Ministry of Culture that had provided the funding for the exhibition, these statements and the flag of Palestine were removed in August 2024. During the pressure campaign, the director of NAC was questioned by the police due to complaint that the exhibition incites hatred, but the investigation was discontinued.

The NHRI notes that threats or attacks specifically against human rights defenders are usually categorized as hate crimes and/or hate speech and carried out by non-state actors. However, the problem of hate speech towards vulnerable groups remains a pressing one. Victims of hate crimes or hate speech often lack adequate assistance and representation, do not trust law enforcement, and do not know where and how to seek help. The personal attitudes of law enforcement officers can hinder the recognition of hate crimes, influence decisions to refuse to classify an act as a hate crime, discontinue an investigation and increase the risk of secondary victimization.

Moreover, the NHRI's monitoring also found evidence of transnational repression of human rights defenders. On 12 March 2024 a prominent Russian political activist and outspoken critic of the current regime in Russia, Leonid Volkov, [was attacked near his home](#) in Vilnius by an unknown person with a hammer and briefly hospitalised. Lithuanian and Polish authorities subsequently made statements alleging that the attack was 'organised by Russia'. In April 2024, [Lithuanian Prosecutor General's Office confirmed](#) that several Polish citizens had been detained in connection to the attack by the Polish authorities and added that the attack was fuelled by Mr Volkov's 'beliefs and his views. In the immediate aftermath of the attack, the State Security Department, Lithuanian politicians and experts [blamed it on the Kremlin](#)

[regime and the Russian special services.](#)

According to the NHRI, the most important gap in the protection of HRDs nationally is that there are no specific initiatives, frameworks, or policies namely aiming for the protection of HRDs. In the case of HRDs, only general provisions apply, including anti-SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) rules (which are also not targeting HRDs specifically) provisions, introduced by the amendment of the [Lithuanian Code of Civil Procedure on 22 December 2022 \(with the amendments coming into force on 31 December 2022\) in article 95.](#)

The NHRI is ready to advocate for the improvement of the current legal framework and adoption of HRDs-oriented protections in cooperation with ENNHRI, in case relevant best-practices would be identified and published.

## **Activities of NHRIs to support civil society space and Human Rights Defenders**

The NHRI has taken several initiatives in 2024 to promote civil society space and human rights defenders, particularly in the form of organization of joint meetings and roundtables. The NHRI regularly organizes and (or) participates in meetings and roundtable discussions with civil society and representatives of NGOs operating in relevant fields. For example, in August 2024 the NHRI organised a discussion on LGBTQ+ rights protection, while in December 2024 - a meeting with the organisations fighting against human trafficking and providing support to the victims. During such meetings the objective is to address both relevant issues and developments in the field as well as issues and obstacles the NGOs and civil society representatives encounter while carrying out their activities. The NHRI also contributed (by providing funding and human resources) to the organisation of the National Human Rights Forum 2024 - the biggest annual event gathering academic, governmental and non-governmental sectors including HRDs and civil society to discuss selected human rights topics in Lithuania. Within the framework of the forum, Parliamentary Ombudspersons participated in panel discussions titled “Is there a place for LGBTI+ people in municipalities?” and “Lithuania in international organisations. What have we done in the field of human rights?”

In addition, the NHRI also protects civil society space and human rights defenders (HRDs) by monitoring, complaints handling, issuing recommendations & opinions and capacity-building.

The NHRI conducts regular monitoring of the human rights situation in Lithuania and issues annual reports on selected topics. In 2024 the Parliamentary Ombudspersons issued a [Report on monitoring the human rights situation in Lithuania 2023.](#)

The Parliamentary Ombudspersons also investigate complaints falling within the scope of the right to good public administration and related to actions or inaction by public state and municipal institutions. The NHRI encourages civil society organizations and HRDs to submit complaints if, for example, they are not included in public decision making, are prevented from accessing information or face other issues, also to inform Parliamentary Ombudspersons on the issues requiring attention and intervention.

Recommendations are issued by the Parliamentary Ombudspersons when it is identified that draft laws under consideration in the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania may have an impact on civil society space, as well as in connection to the investigated complaints or investigations carried out on the initiative of the Parliamentary Ombudspersons.

In September 2024 the Parliamentary Ombudspersons in cooperation with UNHCR office in Lithuania organized a training event on the European Migration Pact, aimed at capacity building and better understanding of ongoing legislative and policy changes related to the implementation of the Pact. The event gathered representatives of NGOs and civil society operating in the field of migration in Lithuania.

Moreover, the NHRI notes that it does not engage very actively with international or regional mechanisms in support of human rights defenders and civil society due to the lack of resources devoted to such activities.

## **NHRI's recommendations to national and regional authorities**

1. The NHRI recommends to national authorities to create opportunities for the civil society, NGOs, and HRDs to be involved in the decision-making. In that context it would be useful to conduct surveys gathering information on the main challenges and needs faced by the civil society, NGOs and HRDs. The involvement of non-governmental organizations should be formalized - the law should provide for an obligation to actively consult with non-governmental organizations when making relevant decisions and considering legal acts, as well as to provide reasons when the submitted comments are not considered.
2. The NHRI further recommends to national authorities to respond effectively to threats, harassment and crimes against civils society and HRDs, including through legal recourse and creation of a climate of intolerance against HRD harassment.
3. The NHRI also recommends to European actors to issue guidelines or recommendations on the design of national measures aimed at HRD protection.

## Lithuania 2025

### Information from: The Parliamentary Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania

## Functioning of justice systems

### Challenges affecting access to justice

Based on the NHRI's human rights monitoring and reporting, the NHRI identified significant challenges affecting access to justice and/or effective judicial protection in the area of access to legal aid. In general, the NHRI does not monitor access to justice in Lithuania. However, on 30 May 2024 the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania passed [Law No XIV-2673](#) (coming into force on 1 January 2025) amending, among other provisions, section 71 § 1 (4) of the Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners and providing that asylum seekers no longer have a right to state-guaranteed legal aid when appealing against a decision of a court of first instance on asylum application, thus restricting access to justice for the asylum seekers.

An additional challenge to the administration of justice that has been consistently raised by the courts themselves is a serious lack of resources for judicial assistants and court staff (who are not judges), as it undermines both expeditiousness and the quality of the decisions. The issue of low and uncompetitive wages of the court staff was most recently [raised by Dr. Danguolė Bublienė, President of the Judicial Council in December 2024](#).

### Follow-up and implementation by state authorities of European Court's judgments

On 12 December 2024, the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania passed a [Decision No. XV-58](#) on granting state recognition to the Ancient Baltic Religious Community "Romuva" thereby implementing ECtHR judgment of 8 June 2021 in the case of Ancient Baltic religious association Romuva v. Lithuania (Application no. 48329/19).

On 18 December 2024, The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Lithuania issued a [judgment No. KT101-N15/2024](#) on the compliance of section 4 § 2 (16) of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Protection of Minors against Negative Effects of Public Information (version of 22 December 2009) with the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania. The Constitutional Court found that the mentioned provision is unconstitutional thus depriving it of any legal effect. The constitutional decision contributed to the implementation of ECtHR judgment of 23 January 2023 in the case of Macaté v. Lithuania (Application no.

61435/19) where measures taken on the basis of section 4 § 2 (16) of the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Protection of Minors against Negative Effects of Public Information were found to be in violation of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Lithuanian authorities [took actions](#) in implementing the decisions of [Abu Zubaydah v. Lithuania](#) (Application no. 46454/11) and [al-Hawsawi v. Lithuania](#) (Application no. 6383/17). In particular, Lithuanian authorities continued bilateral consultations with the U. S. authorities and requested information from the U. S. Department of State regarding the situation and humanitarian concerns over Mr Abu Zubaydah and sought clarifications from the U. S. Department of State concerning the plea deal in the military commission proceedings in respect of Mr al-Hawsawi. Concerning an obligation to conduct an effective domestic investigation, Lithuanian prosecuting authorities have sought assistance from EUROJUST, which enabled a coordination meeting with their Polish counterparts to take place. Nevertheless, the pre-trial investigation, previously found by ECtHR to be ineffective, is still ongoing. The just satisfaction awarded by the Court in the al-Hawsawi case has been paid, respectively, on 30 April 2024 to the applicant's representatives. In October 2024 Lithuania submitted an Action plan regarding the execution of the judgment in al-Hawsawi v. Lithuania and [updated information](#) regarding the execution of the judgment in Abu Zubaydah v. Lithuania.

The full implementation of judgments by the ECtHR, especially concerning issues perceived as "sensitive" by conservative politicians and requiring legislative actions, usually is very complicated. This is a persisting rule of law issue. It is worth mentioning that, in the previous parliamentary term, the Parliament explicitly voted against draft laws that were introduced with the aim of implementing Court judgments in the cases of the Ancient Baltic Religious Community "Romuva" v. Lithuania (refusal by the Parliament to grant state recognition to a religious community despite a positive conclusion by the Ministry of Justice, violation of Article 9) and Macatė v. Lithuania (censorship of a book with fairy tales including same-sex couples, based on the Law on Protection of Minors against Negative Effects of Public Information, violation of Article 10).

Taking this into consideration, the NHRI also undertakes actions to support the implementation of the European Courts' judgments, namely through referring to the judgments of European Courts' in the reports and recommendations to state authorities, engagement with a national coordinator of the execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, awareness raising of the general public, human rights education. In October 2024 the Parliamentary Ombudspersons met with the delegation of ECtHR visiting Lithuania to discuss the measures of implementation of ECtHR judgments.

The NHRI regularly references relevant ECtHR judgements in its publications

including [reports on the human rights situation](#), [reports issued under OPCAT mandate](#) and findings of conducted investigations (for instance, [concerning the duty if the institution to provide all relevant information requested by the lawyer](#)).

The NHRI communicated with the Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights during the visits, also the NHRI has expressed its readiness to provide information related to the implementation of the ECtHR decisions in Lithuania.

The NHRI raised awareness through publishing [reports on human rights situation](#) and repeatedly emphasising the importance and necessity of implementing the ECtHR decisions which the Ombudspersons have also mentioned during the National Human Rights Forum 2024.

In addition, the NHRI held two training sessions for staff of social care homes in 2024, emphasising the importance of the State's obligations under the ECHR and addressing the risks of discrimination and ill-treatment of care home residents, as well as measures to prevent such violations in places of deprivation of liberty.

## **NHRI's recommendations to national and regional authorities**

1. The NHRI recommends to national authorities to provide adequate financial resources to the wages of the court staff (who are not judges) such as judicial assistants and other court employees as this has a significant impact on the efficiency and quality of the judicial system.
2. The NHRI also recommends to national authorities to take necessary steps to implement ECtHR judgments more effectively.

## **Lithuania 2025**

**Information from: The Parliamentary Ombudspersons' Office of the Republic of Lithuania**

## **Other challenges to the rule of law and human rights**

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### **Pushbacks of migrants**

In 2024 [the provisions to the law on State border and its protection](#) that legalised the pushbacks of migrants at the border during a state of emergency and state of national emergency were still in force and the pushback policy continued despite the flow of migrants from the Belarusian border decreased. Consequently, pushbacks of migrants pose a risk of denying the right to seek asylum and violating the principle of non-refoulement.

In 2024 the NHRI requested a leave to submit a third-party intervention in the ECtHR case C.O.C.G. vs Lithuania (app. no. 17764/22), related to the situation of migrants at the Lithuanian – Belarus border, concerning the conditions in the places of detention of foreigners. The ECtHR decision in that case is anticipated in 2025.

## **NHRI's recommendation to national and regional authorities**

The NHRI recommends to national authorities to reconsider the legislation in force concerning the push-back of migrants.

