



INVITATION

International conference

FAMILY AND MIGRATION IN THE BALTIC-NORDIC REGION: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

21 November 2014, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Gedimino pr. 53, Vilnius

On behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers Office in Lithuania and the Committee on Human Rights of the Seimas (Parliament) of the Republic of Lithuania, You are kindly invited to the international conference 'FAMILY AND MIGRATION IN THE BALTIC-NORDIC REGION: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS'.

The international conference will bring forward different questions, i.e., how the links between governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations in sending and receiving countries have to be strengthened and how these links could help in increasing social and psychological support for migrants and their families as well as ensuring the rights of children in family setting? How are sending and receiving countries addressing migration in relation to social (child and family) policies, equal opportunities and human rights? How are different actors and stakeholders (governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations) shaping the environment for integration in host countries and the environment for reintegration in the countries of origin on national and local levels? What linkages could be drawn to strengthen the international cooperation of such actors? Finally, what kind of measures should be taken to improve international and cross-sectoral cooperation, social and psychological environment for migrants and their families? *See Conference concept and Programme below.*

Working languages: Lithuanian and English (interpretation will be provided)

Registration to the international conference is obligatory. You are requested to fill an electronic registration form at www.gebu.lt until 18th of November. Only registered participants will be allowed to enter the Seimas Buildings. The entrance to the conference hall is via the entrances to Seimas Buildings 2 and 3, Gedimino pr. 53, Vilnius. Personal identification document (ID card or passport) is necessary for the entrance.

More information can be found at: www.gebu.lt, www.norden.lt





CONCEPT NOTE

International conference

FAMILY AND MIGRATION IN THE BALTIC-NORDIC REGION: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

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The two decades from 1990 to 2010 mark a period of intense migration in Europe. The expansion of the European Union in 2004 and the latest ratification of the Schengen Agreement in 2007 have changed the demographic situation and migratory behaviour of the societies in the European continent. The liberalisation of the freedom of movement within the EU has become an important factor encouraging international migration. It has influenced the emergence of new migration systems within the EU.

With regard to the challenges posed by international migration, the Baltic and Nordic countries are not an exception. These countries have gained rich migration histories and experiences. In the context of international migration, the Baltic States have played an important role as 'sending' countries. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Lithuania, Latvia and (to a certain extent) Estonia have witnessed a huge population outflow. At the same time, the Nordic countries have experienced intense immigration. Such a complex migratory behaviour has created diasporas and migrant communities, which, as a part of migration network, play an important role in shaping new paths of international migration.

Together with a growing trend of emigration, new challenges have emerged. On one hand, sending countries have become concerned about such social costs of migration as demographic decline, the welfare of transnational families and families living abroad, those left behind the migration processes (particularly, children and elderly people) and the rights of the child. On the other hand, receiving countries have started implementing a more complex set of social policy measures in order to address such migration-related challenges as migrant integration at the local level, migrant child and family support, working and living conditions, and more inclusive and tolerant society.

In the entire context of international migration, the conference will bring forward different questions: how the links between governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations in sending and receiving countries have to be strengthened and how these links could help in increasing social and psychological support for migrants and their families as well as ensuring the rights of the children in family setting? How are sending and receiving countries addressing migration in relation to social (child and family) policies, equal opportunities and human rights? How are different actors and stakeholders (governmental institutions and nongovernmental organisations) shaping the environment for integration in receiving countries and environment for reintegration in sending countries on national and local levels? What linkages could be drawn to strengthen international cooperation of such actors? Finally, what kind of measures should be taken to

improve international and cross-sectoral cooperation, social and psychological environment for migrants and their families?

These and other important questions will be addressed by the international conference, which will bring together politicians, practitioners, experts and key stakeholders from the Baltic and Nordic countries. The conference will be divided into two sections. During the first section, models of social policies with regard to migrant integration, family support and ensuring the rights of children will be presented and respective challenges identified. In addition, good practices in dealing with the above-mentioned challenges on national and local levels will be presented. During the second section, the key stakeholders will share experience and gain insights into best practice in providing social, legal and psychological assistance for migrants and their families, creating social and psychological environment for such families and ensuring the rights of children in order to deal with migration-related challenges. These two sections will contribute to a better understanding of the impact of migration on family, children and family members left behind. During the final discussion, linkages of international cooperation and indicators of successful integration will be debated; further steps to improve international and intersectional cooperation of governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations will be discussed.





AGENDA

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21 November 2014, Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, Gedimino av. 53, Vilnius

- 09:00 Registration.
- 09:30 Welcome speech by Rimantė Šalaševičiūtė, Minister of Health, a member of the Committee on Human Rights of Seimas (Parliament) of the Lithuanian Republic.
- 09:35 Welcome speech by Algirdas Šešelgis, Vice-Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania.
- 09:40 Welcome speeches by Cecilia Ruthström-Ruin, Ambassador of Sweden, and Dag Malmer Halvorsen, Ambassador of Norway.
- 09:50 *1st Keynote speech. Transnational families: policies to promote their well-being and to reduce the costs of migration.* Anna Platonova, Regional Labour Migration/Migration and Development Specialist, Regional Office for the EEA, EU and NATO, International Organization for Migration (Brussels, Belgium).
- 10:10 *2nd Keynote speech. Aspects of migration between the Baltic and the Nordic countries.* Rasmus Ole Rasmussen, Senior Research Fellow, NORDREGIO (Sweden).
- 10:30 *3rd Keynote speech. Child rights protection in international family dispute cases: practise of Lithuanian Central Authority.* Odetta Tarvydienė, Head of State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (Lithuania).
- 10:50 Q/A session (moderator: Dr. Karolis Žibas, Institute for Ethnic Studies at the Lithuanian Social Research Centre, Lithuania).
- 11:10 – 11:30 Coffee break
- 11:30 **PANEL 1: MODELS OF SOCIAL POLICIES CONCERNING MIGRANT INTEGRATION, RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AND FAMILY SUPPORT: GOOD PRACTICES IN DEALING WITH CHALLENGES ON NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS**

- 11:30 *Emigration, return migration and immigration in Latvia: current trends and family support policies to different migrant groups.* Inese Šūpule, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Latvia (Latvia).
- 11:45 *Migrant integration and the Child Welfare Service in Norway.* Oddbjørn Hauge, Director General, Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion (Norway).
- 12:00 *Gender equality in private and family life: from national to international legal framework.* Dalia Leinartė, UN CEDAW Committee expert (Lithuania).
- 12:15 *Protection of the Rights of the Child without borders: a primary consideration - the child's best interests.* Inga Juozapavičienė, Senior Adviser of the Ombudsperson for Children's Rights (Lithuania).
- 12:30 Discussion (moderator: Dr. Karolis Žibas, Institute for Ethnic Studies at the Lithuanian Social Research Centre, Lithuania)
- 13:15 – 14:30 Lunch
- 14:30 *4th Keynote speech. Raising children in Norway: children's rights, parenting practice, parent support and services.* Randi Talseth, Voksne for Barn, General Secretary (Norway).
- 14:45 *5th Keynote speech. Helping migrant communities to protect children's rights.* Jolanta Blažaitė, the Public Establishment "Community Change Centre" (Lithuania).
- 15:00 *6th Keynote speech. Migration and Integration Experiences in Södertälje Municipality - A Reality Report.* Paki Holvander, Municipality of Södertälje, Democracy and diversity officer (Sweden).
- 15:15 Q/A session (moderator: Aleksandra Batuchina, Klaipeda University, Lithuania)
- 15:30 **PANEL 2: SHARING EXPERIENCE AND GAINING GOOD PRACTICES IN PROVIDING SOCIAL, LEGAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE FOR MIGRANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES**
- Moderator: Aleksandra Batuchina, Klaipeda University (Lithuania)
- 15:30 *Support system for emigrant families from Latvia.* Kristine Dudina, "Latvia's Parent Forum" board member (Latvia).
- 15:45 *Lithuanians in Norway. E(im)migration, integration and child rights' protection.* Lina Baltrukonienė, Lithuanian Community in Norway (Norway).
- 16:00 *"Big Brothers Big Sisters" - one of the programs supporting children in migration situation.* Jūratė Baltuškienė, "Big Brothers Big Sisters" program Executive director, Children Support Centre (Lithuania).
- 16:15 Final discussion (moderators: Aleksandra Batuchina, Klaipeda University; Karolis Žibas, Institute for Ethnic Studies at the Lithuanian Social Research Centre, Lithuania)
- 16:45 End of the conference and closing speech by Bo Harald Tillberg, Director NCM Office in Lithuania.

