

Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania

Committee on Human Rights

Date of creation: 1990

Mandate: The Committee on Human Rights is competent:

1) to prepare and consider drafts of laws and other legal acts, as well as proposals on the issues related to the guarantees of civil rights and the regulation of relations of the nationalities living in Lithuania;

2) to present recommendations and proposals to ministries, State institutions, and other organisations, as well as Seimas committees on issues concerning the protection of civil rights and the improvement of relations of the nationalities;

3) to submit proposals in a prescribed manner concerning the structure, staff and funding of the Seimas ombudsmen institution;

4) to consider complaints, opinions and proposals referred to the Seimas concerning the work of the Seimas ombudsmen;

5) as necessary, to prepare a draft resolution on the vote of non-confidence in the Seimas ombudsman and to submit it to the Seimas for consideration, as well as to submit to the Seimas conclusions regarding the draft resolutions which are prepared by other committees;

6) to consider the material submitted by the Seimas ombudsman concerning a breach of law made by ministers and other officials answerable to the Seimas, and submit its conclusions to the Seimas for consideration;

7) to consider and prepare drafts of laws and other legal acts relating to the affairs of Lithuanians residing abroad;

8) to exercise parliamentary scrutiny of the institutions which settle the issues pertaining to the ensuring of human and civil rights.

Membership: the Committee is made up of seven members. The parliamentary groups, taking into consideration the interest and competence of their members, recommend to the Committee as many members as there are seats given to them. The composition of the Committee is approved by the Seimas by voting on the entire list of committee members and their substitutes. The Seimas members are elected for a four - year term.

Working methods: The Committee is responsible and accountable to the Seimas. It discusses and presents conclusions on the matters referred to it for consideration and performs other tasks assigned to it by the Seimas. It is responsible for judging whether there is a need for specific laws and other legal acts, to initiate their preparation, if appropriate, and to obtain opinions on the draft texts.

The Committee works in accordance with the plans approved by the committee itself, which must be co-ordinated with the work programme of a Seimas session.

In order to prepare issues for consideration, the committee may form preparatory working groups from among its members. These groups may include other Seimas Members with their consent, as well as representatives of State institutions, parties and public organizations, experts and scientists.

The Committee may invite to its meetings other Seimas Members, as well as municipal counsellors, representatives of ministries, other State institutions, parties, public organisations, and educational institutions, specialists, scientists and other necessary persons, having co-ordinated it with heads of these institutions or organisations.

The Committee meetings are generally open for representatives of the mass media, with the exception of closed meetings. Following each committee meeting, a report is prepared to the Seimas Press Service, in which the essence of discussions on the issues concerned and the decisions adopted are set forth.

The Committee, due to its competence, has the right to control how laws are observed and recommendations and proposals of the Committee are taken into consideration; on its own initiative or upon the instruction of the Seimas, to carry out parliamentary scrutiny of separate problems.

The Committee has the right to demand from the State institutions, except courts, and officials the documents, conclusions in writing, as well as reports and other necessary material.

The Committee decisions are adopted by open, simple majority vote of the members participating at the meeting. In the event of a tie vote, the vote of the chair shall be decisive. If the minority, which consists of at least three Seimas members, expresses a separate opinion concerning the issue discussed by the Committee, this opinion must be announced together with the decision of the Committee.

Topical issues: citizenship, ethnic minorities, equal rights, rights of the children, data protection, consumer protection, migration, rights of the aliens and refugees.

Members of the Committee on Human Rights (Seimas 2004-2008):

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