

**AGREEMENT ON TRIPARTITE COOPERATION
BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA,
TRADE UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS' ORGANISATIONS**

13 June 2005

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations (hereinafter referred to as "the Partners") pursue to continue and improve tripartite cooperation in the areas of public interest, labour and social security, as launched under the Agreement of 5 May 1995 and further developed under the Agreement of 11 February 1999.

Social partnership is fully justified as a universal and effective way for balancing the partners' interests, sustaining social cohesion, encouraging the economic and social progress. Social partnership should also contribute to overcoming new challenges which have emerged after Lithuania's joining the European Union (hereinafter referred to as "the EU"). Social partnership is being developed with regard to the main objectives set in the Lisbon Strategy for the EU to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, combining social and economic development with larger employment and stronger social cohesion. With a view to successfully implementing the objectives the Partners appreciate social dialogue as one of the most important instruments of civilized society, its principles being defined in the Conventions of International Labour Organisation and the importance of its development emphasized in the Lisbon Strategy.

Social dialogue will continue to be the main method of coordinating the partners' interests and seeking for most acceptable solutions to problems. Having estimated the necessity to incorporate the widest possible public levels into the dialogue, the Partners together shall pursue the delivery of partnership practice acknowledged in Europe and recommended to the new EU's member states with a view to create and develop the civil dialogue structure encompassing various organisations.

Using all appropriate measures the Partners agree to achieve the implementation of objectives set in the Revised European Social Charter.

The Partners agree on the main objectives and priorities of cooperation and also provide measures for supporting social partnership.

The most significant activity areas and measures are provided in the Agreement.

The Agreement defines general and individual obligations for each of the three partners. In so far as necessary each party may draw up and implement particular (more elaborate) action programmes, which measure up to or are compatible with provisions of the Agreement. The parties together confirm a provision that obligations set forth in the Agreement shall be applied to organisations at all levels operating in these structures, according to their competence. Disagreements between the parties shall be solved first of all by collective bargaining agreements, consulting and debating.

II. PRIORITIES

2. The Partners agree on these priorities:
 - 2.1. development of collective labour relations and tripartite cooperation;
 - 2.2. creation of civil dialogue structure;
 - 2.3. development of wage system;

- 2.4. developing and improving indexation mechanisms for wage and social security payments;
- 2.5. raising employment level and reducing unemployment;
- 2.6. development of vocational training and employees' qualifications;
- 2.7. creation of lifelong learning opportunities;
- 2.8. creation of equal opportunities in the labour market;
- 2.9. increasing and modernising financial viability and sufficiency of social insurance and pension system;
- 2.10. improvement of security in the labour market, work conditions and labour quality;
- 2.11. implementation of the *flexicurity* principle with regard to improve legislation regulating labour relations;
- 2.12. prevention of illegal employment;
- 2.13. improving development of national economy and competitiveness ability;
- 2.14. encouraging development at regional level, reducing economic and social inequalities;
- 2.15. promoting economic and social cohesion;
- 2.16. reducing social exclusion and poverty;
- 2.17. dealing with questions concerning Lithuanian membership in the EU.

III. MEASURES

3. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations agree to implement these measures:

3.1. Sharing of relevant information, consulting on suitable ways to solve these problems, drawing up and approximation of draft legislation on the tripartite principle, discussion of the most relevant problems at the Tripartite Council of the Republic of Lithuania;

3.2. Following tripartite agreements and resolutions in organizing its activities. Tripartite agreements are obligatory for the signatories.

3.3. Drawing up and implementing action plans of cooperation and partnership development.

3.4. Drawing up and implementing projects for mediation and conciliation procedures in regard of dealing with economic, social and labour conflicts.

3.5. Signing of a tripartite agreement on the minimum hourly wage and minimum monthly wage, non-taxable minimum and other relevant labour, social and economic issues in so far as necessary and if possible.

3.6. Drawing up and implementing tripartite cooperation programmes on perfection of legal framework for partnership, on education and training of social partners, on development of legislation framework.

3.7. Proceeding with the development of the structure of tripartite cooperation in counties and municipalities, increasing efficiency of their activities.

3.8. Cooperation, consulting and information exchange about Lithuanian representation on tripartite principle in international events and organisations.

3.9. Development of counselling and awareness of employers and employees on labour, economic, social and employment-related issues, support of training and qualification improvement of the social partners in every possible way, spread of information about the European Labour Councils.

3.10. Creation and development of a structure for civil dialogue in Lithuania (with a view to draw in the widest possible public levels into it), which measures up to the activity, practice and tasks of the European Economic and Social Committee due to the new challenges, which have emerged after Lithuania's joining the EU.

3.11. Cooperation and consulting in drafting of opinions to EU institutions with regard to standard regulations submitted by the mentioned institutions for approximation by the social partners as well as with regard to recommendatory projects of the European Economic and Social Committee.

3.12. Seeking that regulations of the Agreement are followed by organisations at all levels operating in partnership structures.

IV. OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTNERS

4. The Government of the Republic of Lithuania undertakes:

4.1. To provide the parties with information about drafted legislation on economic, employment, labour and social issues, drafts of basic programmes, reports and accounts to EU institutions on the fulfilment of membership obligations and to submit the same for consideration at the Tripartite Council of the Republic of Lithuania at a request of at least one of the parties.

4.2. To adopt decisions on relevant economic, employment, labour and social issues only having them analysed at the Tripartite Council of the Republic of Lithuania at a request of the parties.

4.3. To indicate the conclusions in the interpretative letters of draft legislation addressed for Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, which were considered at the Tripartite Council of the Republic of Lithuania.

4.4. To render in the established order the financial support to the measures set forth in the tripartite cooperation and partnership development plans.

4.5. To announce tripartite agreements in the public paper "Valstybės žinios" ("Official Gazette") by Decree of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania.

5. National associations of Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations declare:

5.1. To encourage bipartite bargaining with regard to entering national, sectoral and territorial collective agreements, trends of social and economic development, organisation of employees' work and remuneration for work, definition of labour and health safety conditions and establishment of social guarantees.

5.2. To abstain from initiating protest actions on issues where the Government of the Republic of Lithuania fulfils its obligations assumed under the tripartite agreements. In other circumstances protest actions (strikes) can be organized in the established order of the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania and other legislation.

5.3. In so far as necessary to draw up and implement particular action programmes which measure up to or are compatible with provisions of the Agreement.

V. TERMINATION OF THE AGREEMENT

6. The Agreement may be amended or supplemented on mutual agreement between the parties.

7. From the date of entry into force of the Agreement expires the "Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations on Tripartite Cooperation" (Žin., 1999, Nr.19-537) signed on 11 February 1999.

Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania

A.Brazauskas

Chairman of the Lithuanian Trade Union Confederation

A.Černiauskas

Director General of the Lithuanian Business Employers' Confederation
D.Arlauskas

First Vice-president of the Lithuanian Trade Union "Solidarumas"
P.Grėbliauskas

President of the Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists
B.Lubys

Chairman of the Lithuanian Labour Federation
V.Puskepalis