

Coronavirus pandemic in the EU – Fundamental Rights Implications

Country: Lithuania

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1 Measures taken by government/public authorities

1.1 Emergency laws/states of emergency

In **Lithuania**, the emergency state was declared by adopting the Resolution ‘On Declaration of State-Level Emergency (*Dėl valstybės lygio ekstremalios situacijos paskelbimo*)’¹ due to the threat of new coronavirus (COVID-19) adopted by the Government on 26 February 2020. The resolution was not revoked and there were no amendments to it, therefore the emergency state was valid during the reference period from 1 May 2020 to 31 May 2020. Furthermore, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania adopted 4 amendments to the Resolution ‘On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania (*Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo*)’² (further – Resolution) from 1 May 2020 to 31 May 2020. The duration of the quarantine regime was extended until 16 June 2020 while continuing to ease the restrictions. The measures adopted by the Government have had impact on numerous fundamental rights especially on more vulnerable groups of society despite relaxing lockdown rules in May 2020. To our knowledge, there were no court rulings concerning the legality of current quarantine measures.

1.2 Measures affecting the general population

1.2.1 Social distancing

In **Lithuania**, according to the updated version of the Resolution ‘On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania’³ article 3.1.10. people can visit open public places in groups not larger than 5 persons, except close relatives. They must keep safe distance (more than 2 meters) and limit the physical contact time while communicating with others (less than 15 minutes). Furthermore, people must avoid direct physical contact and comply with personal hygiene requirements. Every person older than 6 years must wear a face mask, respirator or any other means covering his/her nose and mouth in public places with exceptions while eating, exercising, or keeping a distance of 20 metres from other people. The social distancing restrictions were not revoked during the reference period.

In **Lithuania**, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas*) endorsed harsher penalties for breaking coronavirus quarantine rules adopted on 2 April 2020. Under the adopted amendment of the Code of Administrative Offences⁴, fines for breaking the quarantine rules ranges from 500 to 1,500 euros for individuals and from 1,500 to 6,000 euros for businesses. There were no changes of fines for breaking the quarantine rules during the reference period.

¹ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), Resolution ‘On Declaration of State-Level Emergency’, No. 152 on 26 February 2020. Valid from 26 February 2020 ([*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. vasario 26 d. Nr. 152 „Dėl valstybės lygio ekstremalios situacijos paskelbimo“*](#)).

² Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), Resolution ‘On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania’, No. 207 on 14 March 2020. Valid from 2020 March 15 ([*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimas Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“*](#)).

³ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), Resolution ‘On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania’, No. 207 on 14 March 2020. Updated version valid from 15 May 2020 ([*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimas Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“*](#)).

⁴ Lithuania, The Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas*), ‘Amendment of Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Lithuania Article No. 45, 46, 96, 506, 526, 589, and 608’, No. XIII-2830, on 31 March 2020. Valid from 2 April 2020 ([*Lietuvos Respublikos administracinių nusižengimų kodekso 45, 46, 96, 506, 526, 589 ir 608 straipsnių pakeitimo įstatymas Nr. XIII-2830*](#)).

1.2.2 Education

In **Lithuania**, pre-school, pre-primary education institutions were reopened from 18 May 2020⁵. Non-formal and primary education institutions were reopened from 25 May 2020. Pre-secondary and secondary education institutions were reopened from 30 May 2020⁶. Children can go and stay at schools, if health requirements are met. As regards primary and pre-secondary education in schools, a school manager and founders of each educational institution decide case-by-case as to continuing on the remote mode⁷. Secondary school exam session was extended⁸ until the August 2020 (usually it ends in July). Students will be assessed for entry to universities and colleges by passing state exams as usual. Candidate interviews to arts and pedagogical studies will be held remotely⁹.

In **Lithuania**, the Minister of Health adopted requirements for the organization of education in institutions after reopening.¹⁰ The Ministry of Education was responsible for implementing the requirements in educational institutions. According to the new requirements¹¹ number of interactions between students and staff has to be reduced as much as possible, the physical distance of 1 metre has to be kept during the lectures. It is recommended to keep 1 metre physical distance between students all the time while being at school. Classes must be ventilated before the students arrive and during each break. All equipment must be disinfected after use; all surfaces must be cleaned at least twice a day. The instructions for hand disinfection and personal hygiene has to be posted at the entrance into the educational institution.

1.2.3 Work

In **Lithuania**, according to the Resolution 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania' article 3.2.1.¹² state and municipal institutions shall organise their work and provide customer services remotely, except where the functions concerned must be performed at the

⁵ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), 'Amendment of the Resolution 14 March 2020 No. 207 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania', No. 451 on 6 May 2020. Valid from 7 May 2020 ('[Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimo Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“ pakeitimo](#)').

⁶ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), 'Amendment of the Resolution 14 March 2020 No. 207 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania', No. 475 on 13 May 2020. Valid from 15 May 2020 ('[Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimo Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“ pakeitimo](#)').

⁷ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), '[Relaxing lockdown rules](#)', press release published on 27 May 2020.

⁸ Lithuania, The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Švietimo, mokslo ir sporto ministerija*) (2020), 'On the Amendment of the Decree of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport 2006 December 18 No. ISAK-2391 'On the Approval of the Final Examinations and Lithuanian Language and Literature Exam Rules' No. ISAK-2391, 8 May 2020.

⁹ Lithuania, The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Švietimo, mokslo ir sporto ministerija*) (2020), '[Admission to Universities and Colleges Has Begun in Lithuania](#)', press release published on 1 June 2020.

¹⁰ Lithuania, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Sveikatos apsaugos ministerija*) (2020), '[Decisions of the State Commander of National Emergency Operations](#)', 2 June 2020.

¹¹ Lithuania, The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Švietimo, mokslo ir sporto ministerija*) (2020), '[Back to School: Requirements for the Organization of Educational Process Have Been Announced](#)' published on website on 21 May 2020.

¹² Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), 'Amendment of the Resolution 14 March 2020 No. 207 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania', No. 428 on 29 April 2020, updated version valid from 04 May 2020 ('[Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimo Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“ pakeitimo](#)').

workplace until the 31 May 2020. The performance of urgent and immediate functions shall be ensured. The private sector is recommended to organise its work in the same manner as the public sector. Pre-school, pre-primary, primary, pre-secondary, secondary, and non-formal education were reopened from 18 May 2020 to 30 May 2020. Measures to protect students and school staff in the workplace (1 metre physical distancing, personal hygiene rules, shift patterns to reduce number of staff's interactions with different classes during the day, etc.) were introduced¹³.

In **Lithuania**, the Minister of Health released a decree on the renewal of planned outpatient health care services¹⁴. The decree restricted ability of healthcare professionals' to work in more than one hospital (or any other medical institution) during the quarantine in order to avoid cross-contamination. NGO Lithuanian Medical Movement (*Lietuvos medikų sąjūdis*) released a concern statement 'On the Work Cycles of Healthcare Professionals'¹⁵ on 15 May 2020. In the statement was stressed that the decision to restrict medical staff working in several workplaces 'exceeds the legislative and public administration competences granted to the State Commander of National Emergency Operations'. Furthermore, the decision 'unjustifiably and illegally restricts patients' right to quality healthcare'.

1.2.4 Access to justice

In **Lithuania**, the Judicial Council¹⁶ restricted access to court facilities and stopped giving direct services to persons in the beginning of the quarantine. All scheduled hearings in oral procedure were postponed, except in cases of statutory urgency (for example, issues related to arrest, removal of a child from an unsafe environment). Direct court services and court hearings with some recommendations related to physical distancing and personal hygiene were renewed in May 2020 after the decision of the Judicial Council¹⁷ on 27 April 2020. The President of the Republic of Lithuania Gitanas Nausėda raised concerns about timely access to justice during the quarantine period. The President highlighted that during the state of emergency, the courts have a 'special responsibility to ensure the protection of human rights and timely decision-making'¹⁸.

¹³ Lithuania, The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Švietimo, mokslo ir sporto ministerija*) (2020), '[Back to School: Requirements for the Organization of Educational Process Have Been Announced](#)' published on website on 21 May 2020.

¹⁴ Lithuania, The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Sveikatos apsaugos ministerija*) (2020), Decree 'On Amendment to Decree No. V-1019 of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Lithuania - the State Commander of National Emergency Operations of 29 April 2020' "On Requirements for Preparation of a Plan for Gradual Renewal and Provision of Scheduled Outpatient Personal Health Care Services in a Personal Health Care Institution" No. V-1121, 11 May 2020. Valid from 13 May 2020 ([„Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos sveikatos apsaugos ministro - valstybės lygio ekstremaliosios situacijos valstybės operacijų vadovo 2020 m. balandžio 29 d. sprendimo Nr. V-1019 „Dėl Planinių ambulatorinių asmens sveikatos priežiūros paslaugų etapinio atnaujinimo ir teikimo asmens sveikatos priežiūros įstaigoje plano rengimo reikalavimų“ pakeitimo“](#)).

¹⁵ Lithuania, Lithuanian Medical Movement (*Lietuvos medikų sąjūdis*) (2020) '[On the Work Cycles of Healthcare Professionals](#)', released on 15 May 2020.

¹⁶ Lithuania, The Judicial Council (2020), '[Regarding the exercise of judicial functions during the quarantine period](#)' press release published on 24 March 2020.

¹⁷ Lithuania, The Judicial Council (2020), 'On the exercise of judicial functions after the softening of quarantine measures' No. 36P-78-(7.1.10), released on 27 April 2020. ([„Dėl teismų funkcijų vykdymo sušvelninus karantiną“](#)).

¹⁸ Lithuania, The Judicial Council (2020), 'The President of the Republic of Lithuania and the Chairman of the Judicial Council Discussed the Performance of the Judicial System', press release published on 5 May 2020. ([„Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentas su Teisėjų tarybos pirmininku aptarė teismų sistemos veiklą“](#)).

1.2.5 Freedom of movement

In **Lithuania**, according to the updated version of the Resolution 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania'¹⁹ article 3.1.5. persons who have returned or arrived from foreign countries shall fall subject to 14 days' isolation. Since 11 May 2020, the exception was made for citizens and residents of the Republic of Poland, returning or arriving for the purpose of work, business or studies, and the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania returning or arriving from the Republic of Poland, where they went for the purpose of work, business or studies and travelled only within the territory of the Republic of Poland. The exception was made for the citizens and residents of the Republic of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania returning or arriving from the Republic of Estonia and Latvia. Another exception as regards entry to the country has been made for journalists entering the Republic of Lithuania at the permission of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, 14 days' isolation will not apply to them. The article restricted leaving the country for the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania was revoked from 4 May 2020²⁰. Restrictions to enter the Republic of Lithuania for foreigners including asylum seekers was still in place from 1 May 2020 to 31 May 2020²¹.

In **Lithuania**, seafarers' transit through the country was enabled as of 15 May. This was possible only after the shipping company or the ship's agent has ensured their safe transportation. Regular passenger flights to international airports of the Republic of Lithuania was only allowed on the routes that have been permitted to resume by the Government at the recommendation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Non-scheduled flights carrying more than 10 passengers to international airports of the Republic of Lithuania shall fall subject to an individual permission to operate issued by the Lithuanian Transport Safety Administration²².

1.3 Impact of measures on particular groups

In **Lithuania**, according to the Resolution 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania' article 3.5.3.²³ activities in day care centres for children, persons with disabilities was prohibited until 18 May 2020. There was NGO concern to the violation of fundamental rights of persons with disabilities published on national media. Director of Human Rights Monitoring Institute and UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable

¹⁹ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), Resolution 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania', No. 207 on 14 March 2020. Updated version valid from 15 May 2020 (['Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimas Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“](#)).

²⁰ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), 'Amendment of the Resolution 14 March 2020 No. 207 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania', No. 428 on 29 April 2020, updated version valid from 04 May 2020 (['Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimo Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“ pakeitimo](#)).

²¹ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), Resolution 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania', No. 207 on 14 March 2020. Updated version valid from 15 May 2020 (['Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimas Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“](#)).

²² Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), ['Lockdown restrictions continue to relax'](#), press release published on 13 May 2020.

²³ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), 'Amendment of the Resolution 14 March 2020 No. 207 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania', No. 428 on 29 April 2020, updated version valid from 04 May 2020 (['Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimo Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“ pakeitimo](#)).

standard of health prof. Dainius Pūras stated that ‘children and adults with disabilities, and in particular mental and intellectual disabilities, suffer disproportionately from this desire to protect them’²⁴. The head of Lithuanian Forum of Disability Organizations (NGO) Henrika Varnienė stressed that ‘no assistance was provided to parents raising children with disabilities during the quarantine period and the pandemic showed a complete absence of a social system’²⁵. According to the decree²⁶ of the Minister of Health persons in stationary social care institutions are being tested and isolated if they have the symptoms of COVID-19, before arriving or coming back (from relatives, hospitals, etc.). There is no information on numbers of tested or infected disabled persons.

In **Lithuania**, according to the Resolution ‘On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania’ article 3.2.10.²⁷ visiting of prisoners and the arrested has been prohibited, except for meetings with the lawyers. Prisoners’ visiting will remain prohibited until 16 June 2020. According to the information from the official website of Pravieniškės Correction House-Open Prison Colony²⁸ visits, mass events, short-term trips to home, transfers of parcels (excluding parcels and small packages sent by post) are prohibited during quarantine. According to the Prison Department of Lithuania²⁹ staff members of prisons have been periodically tested. A set of preventive measures is applied, for example, the temperature of those entering the institution is measured and prisoners suspected for COVID19 are isolated. Disinfection takes place in the official and common use premises of the institutions and in the residential areas. COVID-19 tests were conducted 2193 staff members until the 5 May 2020. One positive test result among prison staff members was identified³⁰ on 19 May 2020. There was no information about infected prisoners.

²⁴ Pūras, D. (2020), ‘Dainius Pūras. Can We Agree that We Will Respect Human Rights in Lithuania?’, Lithuanian Radio and Television ([Lietuvos radijas ir televizija](#)) published on 31 May 2020.

²⁵ Platūkytė, D. (2020), ‘During the Quarantine, Children with Disabilities did not Receive Help - Business Was Preferred’, Lithuanian Radio and Television ([Lietuvos radijas ir televizija](#)) published on 31 May 2020.

²⁶ Lithuania, The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Sveikatos apsaugos ministerija*) (2020), Decree ‘On COVID-19 Disease (Coronavirus Infection) Prevention and Control of the Necessary Conditions for Stationary Social Care Institutions’ No. V-653, 1 April 2020. Valid from 19 May 2020 to 31 May 2020 ([‘Dėl COVID-19 ligos \(koronaviruso infekcijos\) prevencijos ir kontrolės būtinųjų sąlygų stacionariose socialinės globos įstaigose’](#)).

²⁷ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), ‘Amendment of the Resolution 14 March 2020 No. 207 ‘On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania’, No. 428 on 29 April 2020, updated version valid from 04 May 2020 ([‘Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimo Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“ pakeitimo’](#)).

²⁸ Lithuania, Pravieniškės Correction House-Open Prison Colony (*Pravieniškių pataisos namai-atviroji kolonija*) (2020), [Dating rules](#), official website, 2 June 2020.

²⁹ Lithuania, Prison Department of Lithuania (*Kalėjimų departamentas prie Lietuvos Respublikos teisingumo ministerijos*) (2020), [‘Information about the Situation in Prisons’](#), press release published on 5 June 2020.

³⁰ Lithuania, Prison Department of Lithuania (*Kalėjimų departamentas prie Lietuvos Respublikos teisingumo ministerijos*) (2020), [‘Information about Positive Case of COVID-19’](#), press release published on 19 May 2020.

2 Impact on fundamental rights of older people

2.1 Data/statistics

2.1.1 Share of persons 60+ in the total number of persons in the community infected, recovered and died in relation to COVID-19.

In **Lithuania**, there were 1675³¹ persons infected by COVID-19: 696 males and 979 females until 31 May 2020. Share of persons 60+ in the total number of persons in the community infected by COVID-19 was 32.66% (n=547), 33.75% males (n=214) and 34.01% females (n=333).

Table 1. Persons infected by COVID-19 in Lithuania (from 20 March 2020 to 31 May 2020)³²

Age	Male	Female	Both
0-9	9	10	19
10-19	20	23	43
20-29	106	110	216
30-39	110	98	208
40-49	109	158	267
50-59	128	247	375
60-69	104	145	249
70-79	63	74	137
80+	47	114	161
Total	696	979	1675
60+	214	333	547
Share of 60+	30.75 %	34.01 %	32.66 %

In **Lithuania**, there were 1236³³ persons recovered from COVID-19. There was no publicly available data on share of persons 60+ recovered from COVID-19. The National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health periodically publishes COVID-19 mortality statistics online. According to it³⁴, there were 68 deaths due to COVID-19 on 31 May 2020. Share of persons 60+ among all COVID-19 deaths was 95.59 % (n=65).

2.1.2 Share of persons 60+ in the total number of persons in institutional settings infected, recovered and died in relation to COVID-19.

In **Lithuania**, there was no publicly available data on share of persons 60+ in the institutional settings infected by COVID-19 and recovered from COVID-19. Mortality data³⁵ released by the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health shows that 72.06 % (n=49) of all persons who died from COVID-19 were infected in hospitals, palliative care institutions or nursing homes. Share of persons

³¹ Lithuania, the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health (*Nacionalinis visuomenės sveikatos centras prie Sveikatos apsaugos ministerijos*) (2020), [COVID-19 Statistics in Lithuania](#), released on 31 May 2020.

³² Lithuania, the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health (*Nacionalinis visuomenės sveikatos centras prie Sveikatos apsaugos ministerijos*) (2020), [COVID-19 Statistics in Lithuania](#), released on 31 May 2020.

³³ Lithuania, the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health (*Nacionalinis visuomenės sveikatos centras prie Sveikatos apsaugos ministerijos*), [COVID-19 Statistics in Lithuania](#), released on 31 May 2020.

³⁴ Lithuania, the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health (*Nacionalinis visuomenės sveikatos centras prie Sveikatos apsaugos ministerijos*), [COVID-19 prevalence](#), released on 31 May 2020.

³⁵ Lithuania, the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health (*Nacionalinis visuomenės sveikatos centras prie Sveikatos apsaugos ministerijos*), [COVID-19 prevalence](#), released on 31 May 2020.

who were infected in palliative care institutions or nursing homes was 33.82 % (n=23). All of them were persons 60+. Data on persons' sex were not provided.

2.1.3 Number and type of institutions affected

In **Lithuania**, according to COVID-19 mortality data³⁶ released by National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health hospitals, palliative care institutions or nursing homes were institutions mostly affected by COVID-19 pandemic. This issue was widely discussed in local media. The director of National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health announced³⁷ that all active COVID-19 outbreaks were related to hospitals and palliative care institutions. Two hospitals with palliative care units in Ukmergė (*Ukmergė Hospital*) and Klaipėda (*Klaipėda University Hospital*) became mostly affected institutions during the pandemic. *Vilnius City Clinical Hospital* and *Antaviliai Retirement Home* (both in Vilnius) also were heavily affected by COVID-19.

2.1.4 Do official statistics on mortality rates from COVID-19 include deaths of older persons in care homes? Has there been any critique of data collection with respect to care homes?

In **Lithuania**, official statistics on mortality rates from COVID-19 include deaths of older persons in care homes. Aggregated number of persons infected by COVID-19 by age and sex is published in official website of the Ministry of Health³⁸. Individual-level COVID-19 mortality data by age group and institution the person were infected is publically available online³⁹. To our knowledge, there were no critique of data collection with respect to care homes. However, the issue related how COVID-19 deaths were reported by public authority were discussed in the local media. Public authorities were announcing 60+ COVID-19 deaths by stating that the 'person was from the risk group'. Philosopher prof. Gintautas Mažeikis criticised such term used by public authorities. He stated that announcing that 'a person from the risk group has died from the COVID-19 virus', is 'offensive, destructive because it treats the victim as *number in statistics*'. The column by prof. Gintautas Mažeikis was published in opinion section on official website of Lithuanian Radio and Television⁴⁰.

2.1.5 Independent studies published on the situation of older persons with respect to the impact of and responses to COVID-19

In **Lithuania**, to our knowledge, there were no independent studies published on the situation of older persons with respect to the impact of and responses to COVID-19. However, there was NGO concern to the violation of fundamental rights of older persons published on official website of Lithuanian Radio and Television⁴¹. Director of Human Rights Monitoring Institute and UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health prof. Dainius Pūras

³⁶ Lithuania, the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health (*Nacionalinis visuomenės sveikatos centras prie Sveikatos apsaugos ministerijos*), [COVID-19 Statistics in Lithuania](#), released on 31 May 2020.

³⁷ Stankevičius, A., BNS, (2020). NVSC Representative: 'All Active Outbreaks of Coronavirus Are Related to Nursing Homes, Hospitals', released on 4 May 2020 ('[NVSC atstovė: visi aktyvūs koronaviruso židiniai susiję su slaugos įstaigomis, ligoninėmis](#)').

³⁸ Lithuania, the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health (*Nacionalinis visuomenės sveikatos centras prie Sveikatos apsaugos ministerijos*), [COVID-19 Statistics in Lithuania](#), released on 31 May 2020.

³⁹ Lithuania, the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health (*Nacionalinis visuomenės sveikatos centras prie Sveikatos apsaugos ministerijos*), [COVID-19 prevalence](#), released on 31 May 2020.

⁴⁰ Mažeikis, G. (2020), 'Gintautas Mažeikis. I Am a Person at Risk', Lithuanian Radio and Television ([Lietuvos radijas ir televizija](#)) published on 27 April 2020.

⁴¹ Pūras, D. (2020), 'Dainius Pūras. Can We Agree that We Will Respect Human Rights in Lithuania?', Lithuanian Radio and Television ([Lietuvos radijas ir televizija](#)), published on 31 May 2020.

highlighted the problem of 60+ discrimination and humiliation during pandemics. The issue was also raised by a former member of Parliament Nijolė Oželytė⁴² and political observer Kęstutis Girnius⁴³.

2.2 COVID-19 measures targeting older people

2.2.1 National guidelines/protocols in response to COVID-19 addressing older people

In **Lithuania**, the older people group concerned in national guidelines and protocol is 60+. It was described as risk group for COVID-19 in the context of organising education for children⁴⁴. A COVID-19 response strategy has been drawn up to contain, over the short term, the risk of the spread of the coronavirus and to equip for an effective response to a potential outbreak of the virus in the future. It has been approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. In the strategy⁴⁵ it is stated that ‘the risk of dying from the virus is significantly higher in people aged 60 and over. It is therefore necessary to take this into account when considering the conditions of the quarantine regime. At the same time, it is necessary to ensure that the decisions taken are proportionate to the potential risks to the health and life of this group of persons, and do not create preconditions for discrimination of this group in the labour market and other areas’. No specific strategy dedicated to older people have been adopted.

In **Lithuania**, according to the Minister of Health decree⁴⁶ on COVID-19 prevention and control of the necessary conditions for stationary social care institutions (residential care homes) there was no specific instruction addressing older people.

2.2.2 National guidelines/protocols on patient triage that apply age as the main and decisive criterion

In **Lithuania**, to our knowledge, there were no guidelines on patient triage related to COVID-19 that apply age as the main and decisive criterion.

2.2.3 Targeted testing of residents and staff in residential care homes

In **Lithuania**, the Minister of Health released a decree⁴⁷ on COVID-19 disease (coronavirus infection) prevention and control of the necessary conditions for stationary social care institutions. According to

⁴² Pocytė, K., Vasiliauskaitė, A. (2020), ‘Oželytė: I Didn’t Imagine Being 60+ Will Be So Humilliating’, Delfi.lt, published on 23 May 2020.

⁴³ Girnius, K. (2020), ‘Kęstutis Girnius. Older People – New Stigma’, Delfi.lt, published on 4 May 2020.

⁴⁴ Lithuania, The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Sveikatos apsaugos ministerija*) (2020), Decree ‘On the Necessary Conditions for the Organization of Pre-School and Pre-Primary Education’) No. V-1116, 11 May 2020. Valid from 18 May 2020 ([Dėl ikimokyklinio ir priešmokyklinio ugdymo organizavimo būtinų sąlygų](#)).

⁴⁵ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), [COVID-19 Management Strategy](#), press release published on 6 May 2020.

⁴⁶ Lithuania, The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Sveikatos apsaugos ministerija*) (2020), Decree ‘On COVID-19 Disease (Coronavirus Infection) Prevention and Control of the Necessary Conditions for Stationary Social Care Institutions’) No. V-653, 1 April 2020. Valid from 19 May 2020 to 31 May 2020 ([‘Dėl COVID-19 ligos \(koronaviruso infekcijos\) prevencijos ir kontrolės būtinųjų sąlygų stacionariose socialinės globos įstaigose’](#)).

⁴⁷ Lithuania, The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Sveikatos apsaugos ministerija*) (2020), Decree ‘On COVID-19 Disease (Coronavirus Infection) Prevention and Control of the Necessary Conditions for Stationary Social Care Institutions’) No. V-653, 1 April 2020. Valid from 19 May 2020

this decree staff members of residential care homes are being tested periodically (exact period is not specified in the decree). Residents in residential care homes are being tested and isolated if they have the symptoms of COVID-19, before arriving or coming back (from relatives, hospitals, etc.) to residential care homes, after recovery from COVID-19. The authors were not able to find any source of statistics on testing of residents and staff in residential care homes.

2.2.4 Restrictions/bans on visits to residential care settings, and any (conditional) lifting of these restrictions

In **Lithuania**, according to the Resolution 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania' article 3.5.1.⁴⁸ visiting all residential care settings was prohibited. To the authors knowledge no conditional lifting of these restrictions came into power until 31 May 2020. Restrictions had negative impact on fundamental rights of older people. On 8 May 2020, the Seimas Ombudsmen office organised an online workshop for social care workers on ensuring human rights and safety of residents and employees of social care institutions during the Covid-19 pandemic.⁴⁹

2.2.5 Restrictive measures for older people living in the community

In **Lithuania**, the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson concerned that quarantine restrictions on the elderly can lead to discrimination⁵⁰. The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson has received lots of complaints about the restrictions imposed on the elderly during quarantine. The complains were about signs on the doors in stores, cafes, hairdressers stating that it is not recommended (in some cases - prohibited) to visit the institution for persons over 60 years persons. People call these reports unethical and offensive to the dignity of older people. The compliance of legislation defining risk groups with non-discrimination laws is also raised, as well as the rights of older workers. The Ombudsperson for Equal Opportunities stressed that this can be considered as the discrimination on age. Local media announced some cases where older people faced restrictions because of their age in the workplace or at the store. The case of an information poster prohibiting the entry of "persons of older age" on the door of the store has been discussed widely in the media⁵¹. Most of restrictions were revoked due to social pressure.

Minister of Health released a decree⁵² on the requirements of reopening of pre-school and pre-primary education institutions. According to the guidelines in the decree it was prohibited for 60+ staff

to 31 May 2020 ([‘Dėl COVID-19 ligos \(koronaviruso infekcijos\) prevencijos ir kontrolės būtinųjų sąlygų stacionariose socialinės globos įstaigose’](#)).

⁴⁸ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), Resolution 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania', No. 207 on 2020 March 14. Valid from 2020 March 15 ([‘Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimas Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo’](#)).

⁴⁹ Lithuania, the Seimas Ombudsmen's Office of the Republic of Lithuania, [‘Online workshop for social care workers on ensuring human rights during the COVID-19 pandemic in social care institutions’](#), press release published on 12 May 2020.

⁵⁰ Lithuania, the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson (*Lygių galimybių kontrolieriaus tarnyba*) (2020), [‘Quarantine Restrictions on the Elderly Can Lead to Discrimination’](#), press release published on 20 May 2020.

⁵¹ Valiauskaitė, A. (2020), 'Older People Feel Discriminated Due to Quarantine', Lithuanian Radio and Television ([Lietuvos radijas ir televizija](#)), published on 17 May 2020.

⁵² Lithuania, The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Sveikatos apsaugos ministerija*) (2020), Decree 'On the Necessary Conditions for the Organization of Pre-School and Pre-Primary Education' No. V-1116, 11 May 2020. Valid from 18 May 2020 ([Dėl ikimokyklinio ir priešmokyklinio ugdymo organizavimo būtinų sąlygų](#)).

members to work with children at schools. After the social pressure and public concern⁵³ the prohibition for 60+ persons to work with children was changed to recommendation only before the validation of the decree on 18 May 2020. The recommendation was revoked from 26 May 2020.

2.2.6 Access to healthcare for older people for conditions unrelated to COVID-19

In **Lithuania**, according to the Resolution on declaration of quarantine⁵⁴ medical diagnostic services, elective hospitalisations, and surgeries were postponed or restricted. Therefore, access to healthcare for all people including 60+ age group for conditions unrelated to COVID-19 was restricted. This problem was discussed in national media⁵⁵. Only emergency services were provided during the beginning of quarantine. According to the media there is a large flow of patients after block-out and fewer patients can be admitted in compliance with safety requirements due to quarantine measures.

2.2.7 Support measures and promising practices targeting older people, including access to goods and services online and offline, social/psychological support, and use of digital tools and technology

In **Lithuania**, Vilnius municipality, the capital's municipality received more than 1 thousand requests for help from older people during the first few weeks of quarantine. Municipal staff, scouts, volunteers from the Lithuanian Red Cross (*Lietuvos raudonasis kryžius*), the Order of Malta (*Maltos Ordinas*), the Food Bank (*Maisto bankas*) and other NGO's are providing food and pharmaceuticals, emotional support for older people in Vilnius⁵⁶.

In **Lithuania**, local authorities (municipalities) and NGO's are organising support measures targeting older people, including access to goods and services online and offline, social/psychological support. According to head of psychological support line 'Silver Line' (*Sidabrinė linija*) Mantas Čiuželis the demand for such support has increased during the quarantine. Kristina Čiuželienė, the head of the 'Silver Line' call centre, said that 'the number of calls from older people seeking psychological and social support increased by as much as 116 percent when compared to the same period last year'⁵⁷.

⁵³ Murauskaitė, A. (2020), '60-Year-Old Teachers Will also Be Able to Return to Work in Kindergartens: a Prohibition Has Become a Recommendation', Lithuanian Radio and Television (*Lietuvos radijas ir televizija*), published on 14 May 2020.

⁵⁴ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), 'Amendment of the Resolution 14 March 2020 No. 207 'On Declaration of Quarantine in the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania', No. 428 on 29 April 2020, updated version valid from 04 May 2020 ('[*Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės 2020 m. kovo 14 d. nutarimo Nr. 207 „Dėl karantino Lietuvos Respublikos teritorijoje paskelbimo“ pakeitimo*](#)').

⁵⁵ Valiauskaitė, A., Karlonė, K. (2020), 'Quarantine Measures Pushed Patients to the Deadlock: Doctor Appointments Only in the Next Year', Lithuanian Radio and Television (*Lietuvos radijas ir televizija*), published on 30 May 2020.

⁵⁶ Vilnius City Municipality (*Vilniaus miesto savivaldybė*) (2020), '[Vilnius Volunteers Help Seniors: from Food and Medicine to Emotional Support](#)', press release, published on 3 April 2020.

⁵⁷ '15min.lt' (2020), '[Quarantine Causes Unprecedented Demand for Emotional Support in the Silver Line](#)', published on 6 May 2020.

In **Lithuania**, financial incentives for employers to keep 60+ workers were proposed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, approved by the Government and passed on to the Parliament in the end of May 2020⁵⁸.

2.2.8 Consultation of older people's organisations and/or other civil society organisations in the design, implementation and review of COVID-19-related measures

In **Lithuania**, according to the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson⁵⁹, there are only few older people's NGO active in national level: 'National Association of Third Century Universities (TAU)' (*'Nacionalinė trečiojo amžiaus universitetų (TAU) asociacija'*) and 'Lithuanian Union of Pensioners "Bočiai"' (*'Lietuvos pensininkų sąjunga „Bočiai“'*). None of them are active in the field of fundamental rights of older people. The authors of this report didn't find information on whether and how older people, their organisations and/or other civil society organisations are consulted in the design, implementation and review of COVID-19-related measures.

⁵⁸ Lithuania, The Government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė*) (2020), '[An incentive is proposed for employers who will retain 60 and older workers](#)', press release published on 27 May 2020.

⁵⁹ Phone communication with the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, 1 June 2020.