



SEIMAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

RESOLUTION No XII-51

**ON THE PROGRAMME OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
LITHUANIA**

13 December 2012

Vilnius

Pursuant to Articles 67(7) and 92(5) of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania and having considered the Programme of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, has resolved:

Article 1.

To approve the Programme of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, presented by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania Algirdas BUTKEVIČIUS (as appended).

Article 2.

The Resolution shall come into force as of the moment of its adoption.

CHAIRMAN OF THE SEIMAS

VYDAS GEDVILAS

APPROVED by
Resolution No XII-51 of the Seimas
of the Republic of Lithuania of 13
December 2012

PROGRAMME OF THE SIXTEENTH GOVERNMENT FOR 2012–2016

I. OUR CORE VALUES

1. The gained independence must bring better life for Lithuanian people here, in our historical homeland, rather than somewhere else. This criterion reflects the performance of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Government’), which has received the mandate from the nation’s representatives elected by the citizens of Lithuania. Thus the key goal of our Government **is to proceed along the path of building a welfare State**, so that the Lithuanian people would live in dignity, safety and happiness. We will pursue this end not by way of revolutions, but through sustainable and long-term solutions, taking into account the existing accomplishments and correcting what needs to be corrected. This responsibility has been bestowed upon us by the people of Lithuania.

2. **Seeing work as the main value and source of well-being**, we will extend full support to job creation, qualification advancement and requalification, education and life-long learning to maximise the employment of the population. A targeted employment promotion policy is the main tool in battling the economic crisis. Preservation of existing jobs and the necessary creation of new jobs are the essential pre-requisites for unemployment reduction and for stopping disastrous emigration. Jobs will be established everywhere, including industry, small and medium business, agriculture, services, science and innovation and the public sector.

3. **A social dialogue based on solidarity and social justice** is a must – no one may be forgotten. Employees and employers must reach an agreement by way of a dialogue so that the economy recovers faster and the fruits of its growth are enjoyed by everyone. We will support trade unions that are able to appreciate realistically the capabilities of the State and society and to represent the workforce adequately. It is important to introduce flexible forms of labour and to develop services that would reduce the risk falling out of

employment for working-age people (especially women) arising out of need to care for children or for other persons requiring supervision.

4. **Solidarity** means that the burden of the economic recession is shared by everyone, instead of being transferred solely onto the shoulders of common people, and that the benefits of improved living standards during economic growth periods are enjoyed by all members of the society, not just the strongest ones.

5. **Promotion of creativity** should ensure progress of the country. Lithuania must become a creative and knowledge society. Thus, we place special emphasis on **the sphere of education and science, on innovation, and on the technologies developed on the basis thereof.**

6. **Equal opportunities for all Lithuanian people, the guarantee of equal rights** and the fight against all forms of discrimination are the State's duties and a pre-condition for the welfare State. Uniquely valuable, every person must feel a full member of our society, whatever his or her gender, age, disability, nationality or sexual orientation.

7. **Personal integrity and the protection of dignity of humans** and the prohibition of torture, injury and humiliation of another human being are among the fundamental constitutional principles.

8. **Responsible business and social responsibility of enterprises** are essential prerequisites for sustainable development. Social responsibility should be ensured by a smoothly and efficiently functioning law enforcement system, preventing corruption and its implications.

9. **An adequate and universally accessible health care system, protecting our biggest value – the human being** is a distinguishing mark of a modern and responsible State and a matter of honour. Even in times of economic hardship, austerity at the expense of health care is unacceptable. Disease prevention and early diagnostics and appropriate organisation of public health promotion activities help people overcome illness and health disorders.

10. **Development of the Lithuanian culture, preservation of cultural heritage** and the cherishment of the Lithuanian language are the State's responsibilities to its citizens and the world community. The cultural activities pursued in Lithuania and its products must be available to all, regardless of income and nationality. Lithuania's cultural and artistic diversity, protection thereof, integration therein and interaction among the residents forming communities based on the place of residence, nationality or other criteria should evolve into a key strength in the development of creativity in the modern society.

11. **Respect for the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Lithuania** should be promoted among the public. The principle of justice should permeate the activities of all law enforcement authorities. Cherishing the principles of the rule of law, the public has every right to demand high moral standards from the law enforcement bodies and judicial authorities administering justice. Openness and efficiency of the judiciary represent an essential precondition for the rule of law.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE INHERITED SITUATION IN LITHUANIA

12. Before the Conservatives and the Liberals came to power in late 2008, the national economy grew steadily for eight consecutive years. Real income and pensions grew rapidly from 2004, and in the middle of 2008 employment was available to nearly everyone who desired it. At the end of 2008, Lithuania's debt was one of the lowest among the Member States of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as 'EU').

13. In the middle of 2008, the Conservatives promised in their programme for the elections to the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as 'the Seimas') to promote economic growth, to pursue large-scale building renovation, to at least match pension growth with the rising prices, and to improve the working and living conditions of medical professionals, pedagogues as well as workers in the spheres of culture and science. They promised to eradicate the emigration problem by raising the standards of living in Lithuania. That did not happen.

14. The main obligations assumed during the election campaign were forgotten by the new Government as soon as the first month of its term and their implementation has not begun even to the day:

14.1. instead of promotion of the economy – intimidation of the citizens and foreign partners, accompanied by tax increases;

14.2. instead of work based on scientific recommendations and public discussions – hasty decisions which were unsubstantiated by international experience and estimates and ignored constructive proposals;

14.3. instead of real work – talk of domestic and foreign enemies.

15. The hasty tax reform carried out in December 2008 antagonized the public and was an unsuccessful attempt to respond to the challenges brought by the world economic recession. Due the fifteenth Government's inability to come up with responses to the worldwide and regional challenges, the gross domestic product plummeted by 14.8 per

cent in 2009. In 2009, it failed to take advantage either of the experience of big countries (United States of America (hereinafter referred to as 'USA'), United Kingdom and Germany) concerning investment in infrastructure and national manufacturers to promote consumption or of the experience of the neighbouring countries (Latvia, Poland), which managed to borrow funds during the recession from international organisations at comparatively low rates. In 2012, Lithuania's industrial output is 5 per cent smaller compared with 2008, the trade volume is below the 2006 level, and the volumes of construction work do not even reach the 2005 level.

16. The outcome of careless borrowing without making appropriate investments will fall on the shoulders of the future generations of Lithuania. The national debt, now amounting to LTL 46 billion, compared with LTL 17 billion in 2013, will increase nearly threefold in 2013. As much as LTL 3 billion will have to be paid in interest on loans.

17. Since late 2008, the number of jobs has been rapidly declining and unemployment growing. From 5.9 per cent in the 3rd quarter of 2008, unemployment rocketed to 18.3 per cent in 2010. (300 000 people were out of work in 2010). In mid-2012, the labour market situation was worse than at any time during the 2005–2008 period, according to the main indicators (unemployment rate, youth unemployment, long-term unemployment).

18. Over 2009–2011, the Lithuanian population shrank by 130 000 as a result of emigration. 54 300 residents left the country in 2011, almost a half (44 per cent) of which were aged 20–29. Due to these dramatic losses, the Lithuanian population at the end of 2012 has fallen below three million.

19. From the start of 2009, real wages were decreasing. They edged up slightly in 2011, but this increase was overshadowed by the growth in prices, which reduced the purchasing power of the residents. A wage in 2012 can buy 12 per cent less compared with 2008.

20. In 2009, the system of wages and social benefits was disorganised and 2010 saw a reduction in pensions. None of the neighbouring countries resorted to such measures. The cuts in wages, pensions and social benefits increased poverty. Every third Lithuanian resident (as many as 35.5 per cent of children) lives in poverty.

21. Agricultural performance is down. The decrease in the number of cattle and poultry illustrates the general trend of disappearance of small farms, which has not been compensated for by the big ones. Dairies are forced to import raw material from other

countries. Although an insignificant increase in the crop area has been recorded, there are still 0.5 million ha of uncultivated land.

22. The former Government failed to manage efficiently the economic sectors providing social services. Enormous funds spent on the education system reform propaganda cannot hide the poor situation in the sphere of general education. The pupil's basket prevents municipalities from using education funds rationally, making them available to remote schools and preserving the optimum school network. School problems are exacerbated by the unjustified demands to split schools. The higher education 'reform' has made education hardly accessible. International agencies report that tuition fees in Lithuania are higher than in many Member States of the EU. The plan was to abolish the higher school autonomy guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania.

23. The former Government promised to combat corruption and to reduce the scale of shadow economy. They expected to supplement the State budget in 2011 by LTL 1 billion by squeezing these funds out of the 'shadow'. Those expectations, however, failed to materialise. In the new corruption index for 2011, Lithuania's score dropped to 4.8 points (to the level of 2002).

24. The foreign policy has lost the ambitions it had before 2008. Relations with Poland have deteriorated especially. As a result of the failed experiments with the new version of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania, the Polish national minority now feels discriminated against. Relations with the Nordic countries have cooled off. No high-ranking Russian officials visited Lithuania. Relations with Russia are maintained only at the lowest level. The development of relations with Germany has lost momentum.

III. MAIN ACTIVITY AREAS FOR THE GOVERNMENT IN 2012–2016

25. **Economic development will be ensured** by job creation and industrial development. For that purpose, we will mobilise all national resources, use EU and other international assistance funds, and promote foreign investment.

26. **The fullness of life for Lithuanian people will be ensured by productive work**, while those unable to work will receive social protection based on the principles of social solidarity. The State is obliged to help people defeat poverty. After active professional life, a person should remain a full-fledged citizen, enjoy a sufficient financial base, not experience social exclusion, and take an active part in public life.

27. **With economic recovery**, we will increase funding for the social sphere, health care, family support, as well as education, science and culture. We will try to make sure that investments in human resources return in the form of higher industrial innovation and labour efficiency as well as spiritual well-being and health of the national population.

28. **Tax system reform** will be aimed at the reduction of social exclusion, reinforcement of solidarity in society, and development of public finances of the country. The essence of this reform: a more equitable distribution of the tax burden between labour and capital, higher progressivity in income and property taxation, and application of only those tax privileges that are socially significant and purposeful.

29. **The future of Lithuania will depend on economic development that is environment and human friendly**. Eco-farming, transport, renewable energy sources, advanced biotechnologies and nanotechnologies all stimulate Lithuania's progress and open up a new path towards green economy and energy of the future.

30. **Modernisation of rural life** and creation of a better working environment for farmers represent significant tasks for the State. We will make sure that farmers receive fair compensation for their hard work. The State must contribute to the creation of better living standards in rural areas. Reinforcement of the activities of local authorities and communities is key to the development of our country.

31. **The public administration and local self-government system in Lithuania will be oriented towards meeting the needs of the public and social justice**, will operate efficiently and transparently and earn the trust of the public.

IV. TOP PRIORITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTIVITIES

32. Promotion of employment, reduction of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion, creation of the conditions necessary for increasing the real wages in the national economy, and rapid improvement of the investment and business environment.

33. Ensuring the financial sustainability of the national economy and consistent increasing of the income of the funds of public resources; combating smuggling and shadow business in the economy and reinforcement of the fight against corruption.

34. The country's preparation for the adoption of the single European currency, the Euro, and full membership in the Euro zone, when that becomes possible according to the established convergence criteria.

35. Effective and rational use of EU assistance funds to raise national competitiveness, to improve the living standards for people and to make appropriate and timely preparations for the European Union's new multi-annual financial framework 2014-2020.

36. A comprehensive review of the tax system to prepare for its reorganisation aimed at the objectives of public importance identified in this Programme.

37. Rectification of the consequences of the policies implemented by the right: reduction of the debt of the social insurance fund 'Sodra' and, upon economic recovery, consistent raising of the pensions and other social benefits.

38. Dealing with problems in energy, reduction of the heating prices, and universal renovation of apartment buildings. Reorganisation of the heat sector by extending assistance to municipalities and a wider use of renewable sources of energy.

39. Construction of a liquefied natural gas terminal to ensure higher competitiveness in the gas supply sector and to reduce the heating prices for residents.

40. Modification of the education and higher education policy, reduction of tuition fees, and improvement of the education and higher education quality.

41. An effective policy for scientific and technological development that promotes technological progress, establishment of conditions for the development of new innovative technologies, and promotion of cooperation between science and business.

42. Continuity of the foreign policy, while optimising cooperation with the neighbours, as well as stronger cohesion with the Member States of the EU and NATO. Observance of the agreement between the parties to regularly increase national defence funding in pursuance of Lithuania's international commitments.

43. Preparation for the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2013; adequate and responsible Presidency.

V. PROMOTION OF THE ECONOMY

44. The main goal of the 2012–2016 activities of the Government is Lithuania's economic growth. This goal can only be reached by implementing an active investment and taxation policy of job creation and, at the same time, the reduction of emigration. One of the tools of such a policy is an investment strategy based on economic priorities. Investment, first of all, must be directed at the increase of the efficiency of industry as a driving force of the economy as well as at industrial development. Small and medium-

sized business must recover. The state will observe fiscal and budgetary discipline, but will also actively work to ensure that the borrowed funds are not “eaten” but are used to increase state revenue.

45. We will seek to ensure that the system of state finances is directed towards increasing the employment and securing main social needs of the state (social security, education and health protection) as well as reducing social exclusion of the population. This system must be sustainable in terms of balancing revenue and expenditure; it must restore tax payers’ trust in the state.

Public Finances for the State’s Welfare and Economic Development

46. The country’s economy must grow and serve the welfare of all its population. We will implement measures to ensure that, as soon as possible, the results of a growing economy are felt by all, the disparities in the standard of living between the well-off and the poor are reduced and the quality of life of each person is increased. In order to achieve that, we will efficiently use the country’s public funds.

47. Future welfare can only be created by implementing the principles of a consistent budgetary policy coordinated with the structural policy of the country, by implementing stringent control of the system of state finances as well as transparent use of public funds which is also clear to the public. Higher budget revenue would be guaranteed by the development of business, in particular the manufacturing sector, improving tax administration as well as a rational and socially just tax policy. It is necessary to ensure rational use of budget expenditure coupled with the increase in financing intended for state investment, at the same time, keeping the ratio of the state debt to the GDP and the debt management expenses at the acceptable level.

48. While being well aware that the country’s macroeconomic stability is a safeguard of the increase in the standard of living, in particular in the face of a global economic and financial crisis, we will implement a careful budgetary policy as well as ensure stringent control of the public finances system and long-term sustainability of the finances of the government sector.

49. Provided that economic conditions are favourable, we will improve the balance indicator of the country’s government sector as well as adopt appropriate legislation of a higher status to provide for the budgetary discipline rules and implement mechanisms for the control of observance thereof.

50. We will appropriately prepare for Lithuania adopting the single European currency euro and becoming a fully-fledged member of the euro zone when it is possible for our country to do so according to the established convergence criteria.

51. We will implement the rule whereby, provided that economic conditions are appropriate, a stabilisation reserve is regularly accumulated by using a part of the revenue from privatisation of the state property, taxes and other sources. We will determine a procedure for the use of the funds of the stabilisation reserve taking account of the condition of the cycle of the economy.

52. We will guarantee a sustainable growth of income of the population and adequately paid employment, reduce, using all taxation and budget policy measures, a threat of the increase of inflation in the country as well as promote investment into the economy of the population's private savings.

53. We will ensure social guarantees to the lowest-income population of the country. We will reduce the budget deficit not by increasing the tax burden on people who make a living from their work and income but by receiving additional revenue to the budgets due to the promotion of the economy, an increasing number of those employed and increased consumption.

54. We will not focus on the reduction of the expenditure of the budget and other public funds but on the increase of the revenue by promoting economic recovery and entrepreneurship of the population.

55. We will promote economic recovery by actively using the support of the European structural funds as well as attracting the funds of natural and legal persons of the Republic of Lithuania, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Nordic Investment Bank and other international financial institutions.

56. We will increase revenue of the budget by imposing strict measures to reduce the share of the "shadow" economy. We will pay particular attention to the fight against smuggling by reviewing legislation, reforming, if need be, appropriate state institutions and creating an efficient officers' incentives system.

57. We will seek to reform the public procurement system to ensure transparency thereof, substantially reduce the burden of bureaucracy, avail of all opportunities provided by the electronic space and the centralised procurement system, focus on the efficiency of the public expenditure, more widely apply the cost-benefit analysis principle and prioritise

the principle of economic efficiency instead of the principle of the lowest price. We will promote “green” procurement.

58. We will base the saving of the budget expenditure on concrete priorities. The budget expenditure should not be reduced for certain areas, however, the funds must be used in a more rational manner. Once a sustainable growth of the economy is restored, we will increase the financing, by prioritising, to areas which ensure the appropriate level of services provided to the population and create new jobs.

59. We will implement the principles of centralised management of the state real estate (including centralised sales of the state real estate). We will determine the efficiency indicators for the management of the state real estate and create the system of control of such management based on the information technologies.

60. We will increase the efficiency of management of the state finances using the financial accounting data of the public sector based on the principle of accumulation.

61. We will conduct active supervision and audit of the use of the public funds focusing on the rationality and efficiency of the expenditure and the transparency of activities of the public sector.

Tax Policy

62. Tax policy will be geared towards promotion of social welfare of the population, reduction of social exclusion, increase of the income of the lowest-income persons, strengthening of the solidarity of the society and increase of the capacity of the public finances of the country, but it will not disrupt business and manufacturing. Therefore, the determination and implementation of state taxation measures must ensure the stability of the taxation environment and avoid such taxation which would painfully affect the poorest persons of pension age, the disabled or other people of Lithuania, or small business.

63. In the implementation of the proposed measures of the reform of the tax system, we will consider the principles of equality of persons and social justice, economic efficiency and productivity of taxation as well as the simplicity of tax administration. In the preparation of these measures, we will enlist the support of independent experts and representatives of associated business organisations and other social partners as well as conduct a thorough assessment of their impact on the country’s people, business and public finances.

64. We will correct the mistakes of the “night” tax reform of the previous authorities. We will increase the progressiveness of the taxation of income and property and carry out a comprehensive review of the taxation of labour with personal income tax and social insurance contributions. We will apply the non-taxable property size (the real estate tax for natural persons will depend on the value and purpose of property).

65. In conducting the comprehensive review of the tax system, we will examine a possibility to introduce a common real estate tax, which would replace and combine the current real estate and land taxes.

66. Having assessed social and economic viability of the tax privileges and other possible alternatives to achieving these objectives, we will apply the preferential VAT rate with regard to medicines, books, newspapers and other periodic publications, certain, the most necessary foodstuffs, heating, services of transport of passengers along the routes established by municipalities, hotel-type and special accommodation services used in the tourism activities, services provided by a writer, a composer or another performer as well as other intellectual activity.

67. We will implement concrete measures for the promotion of small and medium-sized business through the crediting system, a better access to the financing sources, targeted tax privileges and the reduction of the administration burden as well as by encouraging employers to create new jobs and providing better conditions for the establishment of new companies.

68. With regard to companies which do not have enough funds to meet their commitments to the state, we will apply mutual offsetting and other forms of support.

69. We will increase the financial capacity of municipalities and provide possibilities for them to receive additional income by leasing and selling the land and other property transferred to them by the state, using the revenue from the land and real estate taxes and investing into the creation of new jobs.

70. By improving the municipalities’ system of strategic planning and of the drafting and execution of the budgets according to the programmes as well as the control of execution thereof, we will provide preconditions for an economical and targeted use of the financial resources of municipalities as well as for making the municipalities’ activities more efficient.

71. We will only apply tax privileges which are reasonable from the economic point of view, which promote the development of the economy and which seek concrete

objectives, significant to the society, and with regard to such tax payers' income which is invested into the creation of new jobs and the implementation of innovations.

72. We will ensure fair payment of taxes and the transparency of transactions, in particular those of public procurement. For that purpose, we will use, as efficiently as possible, the possibilities provided by universal declaration of income and the state registers; we will also substantially reform the system of declaration of personal private interests (property).

73. We will implement a secure and well-balanced policy of regulation of lotteries and gaming, by state supervision of lotteries and gaming ensure fair and transparent conduct of lotteries and gaming, seek to protect the society, in particular minors and persons who have problems with regard to gaming, from possible adverse effect of gaming, ensure that gaming is not used for criminal purposes, seek to protect cultural and ethical values of the society from the adverse effect of gaming and ensure monitoring of lotteries and gaming.

Economic Growth for the Improvement of Life of the Population

74. We will make real steps to revive the economy by efficiently using all available resources of the state, natural and legal persons and foreign investors as well as EU and other international support funds.

75. We will seek to keep current jobs and create new ones by efficiently investing the resources possessed by the state into projects which give tangible economic benefit, namely, sustainable development of the infrastructure (roads and railways), renovation of buildings, construction of energy objects, etc.

76. We will extend the chain of added value creation in Lithuania by promoting cooperation of manufacturing sectors, ensuring export possibilities and seeking to use, for that purpose, EU and other international support funds.

77. The Government undertakes to manage, in a clear and transparent manner, the country's economy which would be competitive in the global market, serve the creation of public good and assist in the creation of private good as well as be environment-friendly. Reckless borrowing, inconsiderate management and short-term ambitions push the country's economy to the margins of the global market. Only balanced and responsible regulation as well as ambitious and global objectives may ensure sustainable development and international competitiveness of Lithuania's economy.

78. We will develop cooperation (partnership) of the public and private initiatives by implementing investment projects in the areas of activity which are assigned to the functions of the public sector and include public services.

79. We will perform renovation and modernisation of public and residential buildings. We will promote investment and the establishment of new companies and factories.

80. We will ensure favourable conditions for small and medium-sized business, in particular local business in the country's regions, to be established and develop by facilitating access to the capital at the stages of establishment and growth, provide all basic means which are necessary as a company makes its first steps, reduce bureaucratic requirements and provide more opportunities to procure a part of public procurement from small and medium-sized business.

81. We will ensure rational, transparent and efficient use of the funds of EU and other international support. We will not focus on the speed of using such funds, but on the final result and productivity, in particular the maintenance of current jobs and creation of new ones. We will simplify the requirements for applicants and develop a more flexible procedure for the implementation and accountability of supported projects. In all programmes, we will establish the main requirement of economic benefit to the state and people.

82. We will seek to regulate the activities of credit institutions so as to ensure the stability and reliability of their activities and further financing of the economy. We will encourage banks to contribute to a higher degree to cohesive and sustainable restoration of the economy and to conduct responsible crediting of the economy. We will seek to ensure the development of the capital market, including the establishment and activities of investment banks in Lithuania, so that possibilities of financing business are extended. We will review the policy of taxation of financial institutions.

83. We will examine the feasibility of the establishment of a state-managed national commercial bank or financial institution and, provided that the findings are positive, will establish it using state or mixed capital.

84. The priority part of the supported investment programmes will be linked to the increase of employment, namely, maintenance of current jobs and creation of new ones. The main priority is increasing employment and consistent approach to the creation of jobs, including traineeships, gaining first working experience, creation of new jobs, maintenance of current jobs and return of the long-term unemployed to the labour market.

In order to create new jobs, we will provide conditions for more active development of the local business in the country's regions.

85. As the economy recovers, we will consistently increase work pay of employees of the public sector and budget-funded institutions as well as the country's minimum wage (seeking to ensure that it approached 50 per cent of the average wage). We will amend laws to ensure the reduction of the difference in work pay in the public sector between managers and the employees receiving the lowest pay.

86. We will carry out an effective fight against poverty applying not only social assistance and employment programmes, but also measures to ensure more effective support of the worst-off citizens of Lithuania with food and other necessities. We will seek to ensure that all participants of the food supply chain, namely, farmers, producers, purchasers, traders and consumers, contributed to the support of the worst-off people with foodstuffs. We will encourage distributing, as charity, foodstuffs which are still appropriate for consumption, organise educational campaigns, promote the use of the best practice, conduct an analysis and start a social advertising campaign to stop food waste.

87. We will put forward ambitious objectives for state enterprises not only in terms of making their activities more transparent and seeking efficiency, but also becoming leaders of the region.

VI. BUSINESS AND INNOVATIONS

Improvement of Business Conditions

88. We will restore trust between the authorities and business entities, take into account the competitive conditions, improve the general business environment and reduce the administrative and regulatory burden in order to free the creative and innovation potential of business. We will improve the methods of operation of the business controlling institutions.

89. We will improve confidence of foreign investors in Lithuania's investment environment.

90. We will promote the development of business which were competitive in the domestic and foreign markets, based on innovation and information technologies and environment-friendly. We will develop e-government services for business. We will

improve access of business, in particular small and medium-sized business, to the financing sources using financial instruments.

91. We will increase the competitiveness of Lithuania's economy by attracting efficient investment and promote green-growing technologies and economic activity, which best meet long-term public needs, reduce costs, increase productivity and have a lesser impact on the environment.

92. We will remove the bureaucratic obstacles in the implementation of investment projects, namely, improve, accelerate and promote territorial planning processes. We will extend the list of cases where detailed plans are not necessary and simplify the procedures for the amendment of a detailed plan. We will reduce the abuse of the protection of the public interest. We will improve the procedures of land acquisition, alteration of the purpose of land, registration of construction, redemption of land for the purposes of the state and others.

93. We will ensure the participation of associated business organisations and other social partners in addressing issues relevant to the state and business as well as in drafting new laws and discussing them. We will seek to achieve the consolidation of business controlling institutions. Supervisory institutions should, first of all, become business consultants and only in cases of deliberate abuse – punishers. We will develop entrepreneurship of the society by starting already with schools. We will ensure the consistency of the taxation environment with regard to business – the introduction of new taxes would be announced not later than 6 months prior to their entry into effect.

94. We will seek to reduce the costs of setting up new companies and simplify the procedures.

95. We will apply strict anti-trust measures and fight unfair competition, distortion of prices and deliberate bankruptcies. We will regulate the conditions and prices of the services provided by the natural monopolies (supply of water and of heating, electricity energy transmission, wastewater treatment, etc.).

96. We will restore and strengthen business information centres which perform company registration procedures, draw up business plans and other documents required by the businessmen, advise on EU structural fund financing and prepare applications for EU structural fund support as well as provide various office and other business services.

97. In the regions, business will be promoted only in close cooperation with educational establishments, associated business structures and the local authorities. Such

cooperation will enable the provision of comprehensive assistance, involvement of young people and creation of new jobs.

98. We consider it one of the main priorities to withdraw the surplus requirements and reduce the bureaucracy in the areas of issue of licences and permissions. The procedure of issue of licences and permissions to small and medium-sized companies must become simpler.

99. We will develop local and incoming tourism and focus, in particular, on health, conference, ecological, cultural and entertainment tourism.

Innovation

100. In order to increase the competitiveness of Lithuania's economy, we undertake to conduct an active innovation promotion policy. Innovation can guarantee the survival and development of business. Innovation must become a part of the business thinking and culture and the main driving force of competitiveness so that the productivity and created added value of Lithuania's economy reach the EU member state average.

101. We will promote export of goods and services, in particular to new markets, and ensure all possible state support to the exporting companies.

102. We will implement a programme of science, technologies and business valleys. The creation of clusters, or innovation groups, and the development of free economic zones must be perceived as inevitable and one of the national priorities of economic management. We will promote cooperation between science and business.

103. We will support applied research promoting the development of innovation, the establishment and development of high value-added business as well as the participation in international innovation-related programmes and projects (the Framework Programme, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the activities of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology and the European Space Agency).

104. We will improve the legislative and taxation framework as well as the regulatory and other environment, which is conducive to the implementation of innovation. The state will share with business companies the risk of investment, which is taken on by business companies as they seek to become innovative, create new products, implement new technologies and modernise production.

105. We will develop a legal model of common activities of business and scientific institutions, which would enable the implementation of common projects necessary for

business and science as well as promote the transition from the provision of intellectual services to the creation and commercial use of intellectual property.

106. We will expand the possibilities for the cooperation of business and scientific institutions by applying various forms and models of partnership as well as commercialisation of innovation, more rapidly implementing good ideas for the creation of competitive products and attracting talented and resourceful young people. We will improve the processes of patenting and licensing.

107. We will focus on the development of ecologically clean technologies, “green” future energy, the creative industry and other areas which will determine the country’s welfare in the future.

108. New business will be developed by seeking to join the initiatives which have currently been put forward and creating a favourable system for the search of ideas and to ensure commercialisation and continuity of activities, with a special focus on youth entrepreneurship and technologies.

109. The creative industry sector should be given measurable objectives and clear guidelines so that this sector would create an ever increasing share of the gross domestic product.

VII. SOCIAL POLICY

110. We will improve the social dialogue among employers, the state and employees. We will increase the influence of the trade unions on decisions taken and promote the signature of sectoral trade agreements.

111. We will improve the legal framework ensuring the participation of employees in the management of companies.

112. We will improve availability and quality of social services as well as the working conditions of social workers.

113. We will provide more favourable conditions for the social integration and mobility of the disabled as well as comprehensively implement the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

114. We will follow, in an undeviating manner, the principle of gender equality, protecting human rights we will reduce the differences in the work pay of women and men for the same work as well as support targeted initiatives to strengthen gender equality. We will promote the development of non-governmental organisations.

115. We will achieve that the work safety requirements would remain a priority area and be complied with unconditionally. No savings at the expense of the health and life of employees may be allowed. The funds allocated for the prevention of accidents at work will not be reduced. Accident insurance contributions will be more linked to the situation of work safety in a company.

116. We will implement programmes to reduce the differences in income and standard and quality of living between different people and regions as well as measures to reduce poverty and social exclusion.

117. We will coordinate the guarantees of the purchasing power of social benefits with the financial sustainability of the state and municipal budgets.

118. We will provide conditions for persons who have returned from institutions of imprisonment to integrate into the society.

119. We will take care of the development and efficient management of social housing so that these investments promote the growth of jobs in the construction sector, which suffers most from the slowdown of the economy.

120. We will change the system for the crediting of the housing of the disabled so that each disabled person, regardless of his/her income, could acquire housing which meets his/her needs.

Sustainability of the Social Insurance System

121. We believe that social insurance secures a major part of the income of the country's population in old age, when having lost capacity for work, when on paternity or maternity leave or when having lost a job. Regardless of the situation of the country's economy, financial sustainability of social insurance must be unconditionally guaranteed as the basic right of the country's population to social protection.

122. We will strengthen the state social insurance. We will ensure efficient use of the funds of the State Social Insurance Fund budget.

123. We will amend the Law on State Social Insurance of the Republic of Lithuania to provide that benefits would compensate only for the income lost due to insured events on the basis of which contributions were calculated and paid. The rate of social insurance benefits will be linked to the rate of contributions paid and the time period for which they were paid.

124. We will ensure long-term stability of the state social insurance budget and appropriate provision for people in old age as well as assess the possibility to pay the basic part of the old-age pension from the state budget to all permanent residents of Lithuania according to the same principle as is currently used to pay the analogous pension (assistance pension) to a part of the residents of Lithuania who are not covered by the state social insurance.

125. By law, we will establish strict regulations for the formation and use of the reserve of the State Social Insurance Fund funds providing for the use of the funds of the reserve only under special circumstances.

126. While increasing social insurance pensions we will ensure financial sustainability of the pension system, but at the same time guarantee that the purchasing power of pensions would increase.

127. We will encourage further employment by pension-age workers, employees and officers. Those who will choose to stay in the labour market or office and thus retire later will receive higher pensions.

128. Taking into account the social insurance period we will seek to maintain a reasonable ratio of the former income from work to the rate of social benefits paid during the unemployment period.

129. We will make state social insurance contributions the same to the residents which have the right to receive state social insurance pensions and which receive income unrelated to the work relations. We will establish the minimum threshold for the income with regard to which such contributions are not to be paid.

130. Only having balanced out the state social insurance budget and assessed the operation of the pension funds, we will review a possibility to increase the rate of the contribution of the second-tier pension funds.

131. By legislation, we will establish a possibility to persons covered by state social insurance willing to do so, to return, once, from the second-tier pension funds to the state social insurance system.

132. We will promote the development of professional pension funds.

Family Policy

133. We hereby state that all children of the Republic of Lithuania are the children of our country regardless of the family they are born into and raised in. We will not

disseminate the ideology of “a culture war” directed against children and families which do not correspond with the concept of a traditional family. We will not teach families how they are to live, but will try to help them so that there is no longer violence, coercion and discord in families. We will unconditionally observe the principle of gender equality, namely, the principle that both parents’ rights and obligations with regard to their children are the same. We will not allow any open or covert discrimination of single mothers or fathers.

134. We seek to ensure that the country’s population would not decrease but grow and that families would be willing and able to support and appropriately raise as many children as possible.

135. We will seek to ensure that the birth of children would not reduce the family income and would not limit both parents’ professional ambitions, educational and career opportunities, cultural interests and the quality of life. We do not want women, as well as men, to be closed in a narrow circle of domestic obligations until children grow up. Instead of wasting money on expensive assessment of family income, we will seek to target funds to directly support families and assist persons raising children in coordinating family and work obligations.

136. We will increase incentives to form family relationships and bear children. The family and children will always be our priority. We will increase the state-supported income so that a share of family expenses, which covers heating costs and other services of housing maintenance, would not increase.

137. We will consistently revert to the payment of cash social assistance (“child’s money”) to all the residents raising children so that at least part of the expenses, which the family incurs upon the birth of a child, is compensated for.

138. We will restore the disrupted system of free meals to schoolchildren who are learning under primary education programmes as serious help to parents who are not able to take care of their children during the day due to work obligations. We will ensure that free meals do not turn into humiliation (stigmatisation) and harassment of pupils who live in poorer conditions.

139. We will expand the provision of social, psychological and other services to families and seek to improve quality, availability and appropriateness thereof. We will implement programmes whereby we will encourage municipalities to increase the number of kindergartens.

140. We will take care of pupils' extracurricular activities so that, after lessons, children would be able to develop their abilities and interests in hobby groups, engaging in sports or other developmental activities while parents would be easily able to pay for such extracurricular activities.

141. We will establish more day centres wherein children would be able to spend their time in a meaningful manner, we will also see to it that there would be more and better children summer camps, easily accessible to children from families receiving more modest income.

142. We will help families not only to raise children but also to take care of the older family members. We will expand social assistance and day centres for the disabled and the elderly so that it is easier for families to look after them.

143. We will improve the protection of children's rights, change the management of the protection of children's rights at the national and municipal level, guarantee the effectiveness of this system, improve the operation of offices of the protection of children's rights, increase the responsibility of such offices and strengthen the control of the operation of the offices.

144. Taking care of the protection of children's rights, at the same time, through the state institutions we will develop the feelings of patriotism, responsibility for their behaviour and duty of children and youth.

145. We will ensure the operation of and develop the Children's Maintenance Fund and seek the efficiency of the operation thereof.

146. We will create more favourable conditions for families to acquire or rent housing by providing state-supported housing credits and supporting the development of the social housing fund of municipalities.

147. We will defend the interests of children and ensure appropriate protection of children's rights. We will take care of the protection of children's rights as one of the most important priorities of the state. We will seek to ensure that children's rights are not violated, that violence is not used against children and that children are not involved into drug addiction or prostitution and do not commit crimes.

148. We will strengthen the work with problem families and improve quality and effectiveness thereof. We will promote adoption of children which lost the care of their parents by simplifying, as much as possible, the adoption procedure.

149. We will consider family life a part of a person's private life, therefore, the state's objective will not be to prescribe the model of common family life that persons are

to choose but it will be to regulate family relationships so that, regardless of the chosen model of life, mutual responsibility, proper performance of obligations and protection of property interests of persons living together as well as, when these persons have children, welfare and protection of children's rights of their children are equally ensured.

Youth Policy

150. We will draw up and implement the programme of the first life start for young people which would include fluent transition of a young person from the education system (accessible vocational training and higher education) to independent professional career (soft loans, start-of-career help and programmes of the acquisition of first housing) as well as accessible social housing.

151. We will support activities of youth non-governmental organisations as well as initiatives in the areas of employment, education and social integration put forward by youth.

152. We will open the doors of state institutions for youth professional traineeships necessary in order to acquire competence. We will review the public works programme so that it is appropriate to ensure youth employment and involve non-governmental organisations.

153. Taking into account the gap between youth and state institutions, we will more actively encourage youth to participate in the civil and political life.

154. We will provide more educational and employment opportunities for youth. We will promote the establishment of youth centres wherein a favourable space is found by a possibly wider circle of young people.

155. We will apply the principle of open work with youth. We will seek to ensure that youth centres, clubs and initiatives are supported across Lithuania.

156. We will strengthen the youth employment policy in regions focusing on young people who have fewer opportunities. Seeking to stop the spread of poverty and social exclusion from one generation to the next, we will draw up new programmes which will allow young people who have fewer possibilities (the disabled, those living in poverty and social exclusion) to be an active part of the society.

157. We will use the funds of the EU funds (in particular the European Social Fund) more efficiently and effectively to promote youth employment.

158. We will reduce youth unemployment seeking that possibly more young people acquired the necessary knowledge and professional skills, support training of youth and promote youth entrepreneurship.

159. We will promote migration of young specialists to the municipalities which are more distant from major cities and thus create a policy of sustainable regional development.

160. We will make active steps to stop youth emigration. By supporting youth mobility for the purposes of gaining experience and expanding horizons as well as mobility according to the European programmes under implementation and allocating the required resources, at the same time, we will provide appropriate life and work conditions for young people in this country and restore mutual trust between the state and youth.

161. We will review youth summer recreation programmes by focusing on non-organised youth and youth belonging to non-formal groups and suggest activities of the format acceptable to them in order to increase employment.

162. We will regularly conduct youth employment studies and, based on their findings, amend the youth employment policy.

163. We will continue the implementation of and improve the programmes which promote the development of the values of civic awareness and solidarity of the society.

164. We will promote a healthy lifestyle and amateur sports as a form of youth involvement by creating the required infrastructure.

165. We will draw up new programmes which will ensure that young people having fewer opportunities as well as the disabled do not suffer social exclusion and become an active part of the society.

166. While pronouncing only in favour of a professional and voluntary military service, at the same time, we will seek to ensure that a large part of youth could acquire skills necessary for national defence on a voluntary basis. We will develop the voluntary youth service.

167. We will improve the country's demographic situation by developing the necessary infrastructure, namely, kindergartens, and providing a possibility for parents to work part-time as well as promote the change in the employers' attitude towards parental obligations and young families.

168. We will ensure favourable conditions for young people to develop their own business.

169. We will perform the prevention of harmful habits and crime of children, adolescents and youth.

VIII. EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

170. The provisions of the currently implemented education and science policy will undergo fundamental changes. We intend to develop a flexible, open, high-quality and affordable system of education to meet individual and national economic demands of an open civic state, and to enable life-long learning and development.

Reforms in general education and vocational training

171. We will create opportunities for each child to attend a kindergarten through the development of pre-school facilities; we will seek to ensure an adequate number of high-quality child care and education establishments. We will promote the establishment of pre-school and pre-primary groups in primary schools.

172. We will seek to ensure that reforms in general education schools should not be driven by purely economic factors, instead focussing on the quality of services provided by a school and the importance of a specific school for the local community. We will promote the preservation of small primary schools and the establishment of new educational institutions in rural areas. We will create multifunctional centres providing for the implementation of pre-school, pre-primary, primary and other non-formal education and non-formal adult education programmes, and enabling the provision of cultural, social and other services of communal relevance.

173. We will guarantee safe transportation for every child living in a village, which is more than 3 kilometres away from the nearest school, as well as every child with special education needs, who have difficulties getting to school.

174. We will develop a modern, high-quality network of pre-school, pre-primary and general education establishments. It must focus on high-quality secondary education and ensure the best possible access for all to education.

175. The general education reform will be adjusted to prevent tearing down the established network of mainstream schools leading to a growing number of laid off teachers; to keep schools in rural areas, as well as junior gymnasiums and gymnasiums; and to take account of the established and successfully operating minority education

system. We will merge new primary schools, junior gymnasiums and gymnasiums into a joint network of schools.

176. School external evaluation and accreditation will change by applying a different school evaluation methodology, used in other EU Member States, which aims at actual, (not formalistic) improvement of school performance to be directly geared to quality education (self-development).

177. We will phase out the free-market-based funding principles of the “pupil’s basket”; provide more opportunities and greater freedom for local authorities as regards the disbursement of the pupil’s basket and reallocation of the saved funds for other educational needs; improve allocation methodology for schools, so as to keep schools in rural areas. We will provide more power and freedom to schools and school communities.

178. We will elaborate a pre-school funding methodology and ensure that preparation for classes should be included in teacher’s workload to be paid.

179. We will seek to establish the optimal learning load. We will pay a particular attention to after-school activities and non-formal education. We will support non-formal education establishments by keeping the network of arts, sports and music schools, by facilitating its development, and by encouraging opening of the branches of the above establishments in remote areas. We will run gifted child support and promotion programmes. We will upgrade the system for the funding of non-formal education through increased accessibility and equal opportunities.

180. We will eradicate violence and bullying in schools. To combat bullying and violence in schools, we will exhaust all possible programmes and initiatives. We will seek for each school to be lit, its area to be fenced, and equipped with video cameras. We will legally increase responsibility of parents whose children commit acts of violence.

181. We will modernize the education system by ensuring continued renovation of general education and vocational training establishments, provision of modern teaching aids, and by increasing state and municipal investments. We will seek that all the pupils at educational establishments have access to broadband Internet. School teaching material will be supplemented with video, audio recordings, and electronic textbooks. Through public procurement and direct supervision, we will regulate textbook publishing prices, and tame textbook publishing monopolies.

182. We will carry out child and youth socialization measures, particularly focussing on children with physical disabilities; we will promote child summer camps.

183. We will promote lifelong learning programmes to be implemented through formal, non-formal and self-development programmes, and increased student mobility. We will try to achieve that various levels of education and training would become more embracing and more responsive to the needs of the public and the labour market.

184. We will restore public reputation of teacher's profession, as it is the teacher who enables changes and ensures performance in education; we will strengthen teacher's status in society by providing for measures to prevent moral and physical violence against the teacher; we will ensure that the average teacher's salary is above the national average. We will change teacher certification procedures. We will seek objective and fair teacher salary calculation. Teacher's salary will depend on education, qualifications, expertise, work quality and length of service.

185. We will restore the uniform system for training and re-training of teachers, class masters, assistant masters and other educational personnel by trying to involve higher education establishments. We will support teachers' aspirations towards innovation, willingness to regularly update their knowledge; we will create a diverse, creative teacher incentive programme.

186. To achieve high competence in teaching, psychological fitness and motivation, teachers' training system will have to be upgraded. We will provide for adequate working, living and other conditions for teachers in rural areas.

187. We will develop a modern vocational education system to meet the demands of the learner, the society and the domestic market. We will try to make the vocational training attractive to the youth and beneficial to the region (the country) and the people (the public).

188. We will involve businesses and other organizations of employers in the vocational training, we will complete the development of a common framework of qualifications. Particular attention will be paid to building partnership between education and training and labour market.

189. We will promote the development of the sector of vocational training to achieve a balance of secondary school graduates across vocational training schools, colleges and universities. We will increase coordination of activities between colleges and vocational training establishments. Vocational training establishments will be linked with colleges, depending on their profile and geographical location.

190. We will bring closer together the general education and vocational training. We will enable every young individual to gain specific occupational skills while still in secondary education.

191. We will improve the image of vocational training, develop new programmes to meet the needs of the modern economy. We will seek to improve the vocational training funding system and make the use of public assets more effective in terms of vocational training. We will encourage business investment in vocational training. We will provide for conditions for vocational school students to take advantage of opportunities for obtaining an international learning experience offered by international education exchange programmes.

192. We will streamline the vocational training system by creating opportunities to acquire additional qualification in intensive training courses.

Higher education reform

193. We will elaborate a national strategy for higher education and science, outlining objectives, priorities and achievable outcomes of the Lithuanian science, R&D (applied research), innovations, studies, science, and business clusters.

194. We will abandon the purely free-market-based funding of the “student’s basket”, and in certain cases (for certain fields of studies) the state will place an order for a specific number of relevant professionals (doctors, teachers, engineers, etc.) or make a professional demand forecast. We will pursue regional policy in higher education in line with region’s social, cultural and economic interests.

195. We will conclude long-term contracts with higher education establishments that will set strategic objectives and high school commitments to achieve them. Private higher education studies will be publicly funded only in those cases when the state places an order for specific professionals.

196. We will create equal opportunities for all to seek higher education. We will allocate funds for studies to be adapted to the needs of people with disabilities, and we will pay particular attention to young people with health disturbances.

197. We will not make distinction between those who pay for their studies and those who do not. We will set an annual tuition fee for all, which will be the same for all programmes of study and will not exceed an average monthly salary. Academically talented students will be spared this obligation.

198. Loans for tuition and living expenses will be provided through the state education fund, rather than through commercial banks. We will ensure a fixed interest rate, as well as other favourable borrowing terms. Loan repayment will be linked with learning outcomes, employment and a salary.

199. We will devote particular attention to the quality of studies. We will oversee study programmes, we will prevent duplication of study programmes, and match study programmes with the demands of the labour market and future professional career of the students. We will increase the quality of part time studies to match that of the full-time studies.

200. We will increase the competitiveness of higher education establishments, encourage them to embrace changes and generate new initiatives. We will provide for an increased competitiveness of universities abroad.

201. We will create favourable working conditions for the most talented higher education staff. We will post information about job vacancies domestically, and, where possible – internationally.

202. We will arrange for a higher level of internationalization of study programmes. We will facilitate the introduction of joint study programmes, and encourage student and faculty exchanges. We will improve the system of quality assessment and assurance to meet relevant European requirements.

203. We will promote international student exchanges, openness of research and academic institutions to the world; facilitate placements of foreign scientists and teachers in higher education establishments, and free doctoral studies and postdoctoral internships for professionals from third countries.

204. We will strengthen higher education libraries by increasing their capacity to acquire more literature and subscription databases. We will invest in education infrastructure to meet modern requirements.

205. We will develop a quality career management system in higher education. We will carry surveys on high school graduates' employment and further careers.

206. We will seek a greater flexibility in study programmes, as well as a greater degree of coherence among the sectors of post-secondary education, while ensuring greater coordination between vocational training institutions and colleges, as well as between colleges and universities. We will improve the competence crediting procedure and avoid confrontation between the systems.

207. We will introduce admission to higher education establishments, which would facilitate the enrolment of talented, gifted young people in arts, sports, music courses which require specific preparation, considering their specific gifts and abilities (talents) and evaluation outcomes.

208. We will restore the reputation of the profession of a scientist and a high school teacher, and we will raise, where possible, salaries of teachers and scientists, so that assistant's salary would not be below the national average, and associate professor's and professor's salary would be markedly higher than the national average. We will rearrange calculation of teachers' working hours.

209. We will seek to interest young people to opt for scientist's or researcher's profession. We will encourage and support young scientists and their participation in international competitions.

210. We will create a transparent public accountability and responsibility system within higher education, at the same time strengthening the autonomy of higher education establishments, which is a key principle in their operation. We will eliminate distortions in the management of higher education establishments, which are in conflict with the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania; we will also reform higher education councils and review their functions.

211. We will provide more opportunities for public higher education establishments to use the entrusted public property by promoting their own initiatives.

212. We will strengthen state's interaction with associations of students, rectors, employers, scientists, with the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, trade unions; we will involve them in key decision making.

213. We will develop a funding methodology for individual complicated infrastructure facilities, managed by higher education and research institutions (the botanical gardens, national cultural monuments, etc.), thus ensuring their functionality and preservation for future generations.

Science and technologies

214. We will carry out long-term investments in fundamental research and encourage business-science cooperation. We will provide for a large part of applied research funding to be contributed by the purchaser, thus having more funds to redirect to fundamental science. We will also make a more efficient use of EU structural funds.

215. We will commission national scientists to develop competitive products that would promote our unique identity across the world.

216. We will inform the public about the country's scientific achievements and innovations, we will seek to stimulate public interest in science and technology. We will promote the importance of innovations for the national economy and social development.

217. We will build science, education and knowledge economy clusters, and accelerate the development of knowledge society, at the same time strengthening long-term framework for the competitiveness of the Lithuanian economy.

218. We will emphasize the role of science and technology parks in developing and highlighting the image and identity of cities and regions. The science and technology parks will bring together forward-thinking scientists, students, alumni, entrepreneurs and their companies; we will seek to promote cooperation between science, industry and other sectors of economy, as well as the development of high-tech sectors.

219. We will increase the number of doctoral students following the postgraduate programme. We will seek to attract not only local but also foreign students. We will promote internships of doctoral graduates.

Information and knowledge society

220. We will promote active use of information and communication technologies by the Lithuanian public. To this end, we will strengthen the coordination of the development of the information society, including at the municipal level.

221. We will arrange publicly funded regular computer literacy courses for individuals of different age groups, including by using the services of private training establishments. We will promote individual ability to handle information technologies, by helping individual groups to acquire necessary knowledge and skills.

222. Through financial incentives, we will encourage small and medium-sized enterprises to use information and computer technologies to increase business efficiency and competitiveness. We will promote close cooperation between science and business entities in the development of products, technologies, and moving them both to experimental as well as mass production.

223. We will create more favourable legal conditions for the development of electronic business, while ensuring adequate consumer protection.

224. We will speed up the work of database development and consolidation. We will seek for a more effective use of information resources at public institutions; expand the use of cloud computing in public and administrative services, support digitalisation of libraries and archives.

225. We will ensure a full broadband coverage, to the extent possible.

226. We will encourage people to actively participate in government decision-making, enabling them to provide comments and suggestions online. We will seek that public authorities and agencies would acquire at the most favourable terms (cost-efficient) globally acknowledged software products under cooperation agreements. We will try to achieve that the number of licences purchased by public authorities and agencies should meet that of software products in use.

227. We will create e-government gateway and provide every citizen with an e-mail address in the public server to receive the official mail of public authorities.

228. We will implement an electronic signature programme, ensure e-voting possibility at various levels of elections and referendums.

IX. CULTURE POLICY

229. We will carry out the guidelines for reforming the Lithuanian cultural policy.

230. We will develop a long-term strategy for Lithuania's cultural development and its implementation plan. We will provide for financing of the culture and arts sector as fatefully important in maintaining and developing the fundamentals of national identity, which serve as a vital element for the state and the people to move forward and create their future. We will seek for adequate funding of the culture, which makes a direct impact on the economy and public policy, as well as for prudent and transparent use of the cultural budget. We will ensure that State support for the Lithuanian culture and art is increased.

231. We will ensure necessary financing for institutions of cultural memory and art creation and promotion, which promote and protect national identity, as they carry out their missions.

232. We will set up a Lithuanian Culture Council, whose main function will be allocation of resources and evaluation of the effectiveness of their use, and ensure its smooth functioning. We will review the functions of the Ministry of Culture and reorganize its structure.

233. We will seek for the Ministry of Culture to be granted the status of a coordinator of the inter-institutional action plan, including active involvement in the activities related with the use of EU structural support.

234. We will seek to prevent haphazard administration of the culture and arts sector leading to artificial tensions, so that it would be transformed into a focused and high-performance system, reconciling both the consistent strategic planning and performance-driven activities.

235. We will actively involve artists, culture and art associated organisations in cultural policy-making.

236. We will promote public cultural initiatives, support and promote the oeuvre of amateur and folk artists, foster Song Festival traditions.

237. We will strengthen the system of protection of copyright and related rights, and raise public awareness on intellectual property protection.

238. We will address issues of state and regional cultural development, heritage, etc., and implement the regional development programme in regular consultations with the cultural community.

239. We will seek appropriate implementation of the modernization programme of national museums, libraries, cultural centres, and regular renovation of their infrastructure.

240. We will ensure universal access to culture; support professional urban artists who target outermost regions with their programmes; we will initiate free visitation days to museums and theatres; encourage creative initiatives by children and youth, establishment of centres and clubs, and free membership for children from disadvantage families.

241. We will promote human freedom and possibility of defending their spiritual values, we will protect society and the younger generation from aggression and spiritual degradation that is becoming ever dominant.

242. We will protect and promote national cultural identity and openness to other cultures, having regard to the EU and the world cultures; we will improve the Lithuanian culture policy model, considering the challenges posed by Lithuania's membership in the EU and globalisation tensions.

243. We will raise the motivation of efficient well-performing cultural workers by consistently raising their salaries.

244. We will provide for more favourable possibilities for public theatres and concert institutions of choosing the status of their institution (budgetary or public body) and enable them to match the grant for payroll and facility maintenance with the

opportunity of earning extra from theatrical performances and concerts for the implementation of new projects.

X. NATIONAL MINORITIES

245. We will address challenges of cultural development of national minorities through the elaboration of a long-term strategy; we will provide for favourable conditions for the cultural needs of national minorities.

246. We will elaborate a draft law of the Republic of Lithuania on national minorities. We will delegate national minority representation functions to a department set up for this purpose. We will address the outstanding issues of spelling first names and surnames in documents as well as names of streets and settlements, in line with the provisions of the CE Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

247. We will support cultural centres serving ethnic communities.

248. We will carry out reforming of a network of schools with Polish and Russian as languages of instruction taking into account the interests of local communities and following the principle of school effectiveness.

249. We will seek to postpone to a later date the final examination in the Lithuanian language for non-Lithuanian graduates.

250. We will strengthen support for the preservation of cultural heritage of national minorities and promote its use for the development of tourism, traditional handicraft and traditional business.

XI. HEALTH PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT AS WELL AS POLICIES OF INDIVIDUAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH PROTECTION POLICIES

251. Following the constitutional principle of an active state health policy, we will develop a clear, transparent, reliable and affordable for all national health preservation and enhancement institutional framework, aimed at long-term goals of health development, preservation, enhancement and recovery. Following the WHO recommendations “Health for all”, we will introduce national programmes that will ensure smooth sectorial cooperation of all public institutions, including the National Health Council, the public and private sectors and non-governmental organisations in the implementation of health policy.

We will approve annual health care affordability, acceptability and appropriateness indicators and mechanisms to monitor their implementation.

252. We will promote healthy lifestyle principles by streamlining them in pre-school and education establishment curricula, and by supporting university initiatives regarding healthy lifestyle. We will avoid saving at the expense of health programmes.

253. We will increase municipal responsibility for public health promotion and education activities and develop municipal public health office network and give it the necessary funding, we will introduce public health enhancement programmes, encourage non-governmental organizations representing the rights of patients to actively participate in addressing the public and individual health problems.

254. We will place due emphasis on public health monitoring. We will ensure effective coordination of environment and public health monitoring activities in the municipalities with a view to ensure timely responses to threats to human health.

255. We will facilitate sanatorium treatment. We will make use of every possibility provided by resort facilities to prevent diseases, at the same time ensuring European service standards. We will promote export of these services.

256. We will make a more extensive use of economic levers, encouraging employers to allow employees to take care of their health. We will provide equal conditions for all people, regardless of their income and social status, to enable their physical activity in leisure time.

257. We will seek legal regulation of non-traditional (complementary and alternative) medical services. We will improve safety and availability of recreational services.

258. We will pay particular attention to children's health, provide more health recovery services to the population, reduce disparities in health provision, especially in rural areas.

259. Particular attention will be paid to the needs of the elderly by introducing special programmes to enhance health, improve quality of life and ensure dignified retirement for the elderly. We will promote the development of geriatric services and ensure a variety of gerontology professionals.

260. We will approve a new national individual health care programme for 2013-2020. We will update and actively implement current programmes for the reduction of death rate due to cardiovascular and oncological diseases, accidents and suicides, excessive use of alcohol and drugs, smoking, lack of physical activity. We will carry out a

systematic monitoring of health indicators; eliminate premature mortality due to injury and disease; carry out audit of individual and public health services based on the analysis of their demand and supply. Having consolidated national and EU structural funds, we will ensure modern cardiology services across Lithuania.

261. Particular attention will be paid to early childhood diseases prevention, diagnosis and treatment. We will improve the vaccination system in Lithuania by expanding publicly funded children's and adults' vaccination.

262. We will engage in proactive addiction prevention by using national and local funds for the implementation of public health improvement programmes to help combat addiction, especially among young people. We will create all the preconditions for Lithuania to have a reduced alcohol and tobacco-related death rate. We will develop an effective call-up system for preventive health check.

263. We will focus almost exclusively on the implementation of the Mental Health Strategy, and the issue of suicides. We will mobilise various sectors, strengthen their interaction in the areas of HIV (AIDS), drug addiction, alcoholism prevention and control, especially among children and youth.

264. We will strengthen the national oncological assistance through cancer control, prevention and early diagnosis across the country. We will continue cancer prevention programmes, aiming for wider coverage. We will seek to establish the National Cancer Institute, integrated into university clinics, which would be responsible for the national cancer registry and coordination of oncological assistance and prevention.

265. We will seek affordable, high-quality dental care, particularly focussing on oral diseases prevention, especially among children and youth.

266. To implement the constitutional principle of free medical care in public health institutions, we will maintain an optimum state and municipal medical institution network. Municipalities will be responsible for the development of the primary individual health care, nursing care and supportive network, while the development of specialized individual health care network will remain in the hands of the state. All state and municipal medical institutions will operate in the joint system of national institutions.

267. Indispensable for the patient individual health care services, which can only be provided by private health care providers, but not by the national health care, may be covered under agreement between on the State Patients' Fund and the concerned private individual health service provider within the procedure provided by law or other legal acts.

268. We will develop a national programme for long-term demand for health professionals and publicly funded training of medical professionals for the national health system. We will reform the health care system based on the socially responsible approach and long-term benefits to society and the state.

269. We will make an overall improvement in health care management, increase personal responsibility of the founders and managers for institutional performance. We will improve the payment for health care services, increase incentives to family doctors for quality services, and build an incentive system for health care professionals, especially those working in disadvantaged regions of the country.

270. We will ensure an effective operation of primary health care institutions, quality and efficiency of their services; we will upgrade hospital admission and emergency units. We will ensure renovation, within three to four years, of effective hospital maternity and children's units and their necessary equipment to provide safer and better health care services for women in pregnancy, childbirth and for their infants.

271. We will effectively provide specialized outpatient and day hospital services and develop electronic health care services.

272. We will make complex upgrading of the ambulance fleet, and in rural areas we will provide for passenger cars to provide health care services in patient's home.

273. We will continue investing in health care modernization and renovation, as it ensures a safer and better quality of services and preserves jobs. Economic downturn-related burden will not be loaded on the shoulders of the patients and the medical staff.

274. We will develop supportive treatment and nursing, improve their quality, availability, and increase their diversity. We will co-ordinate closer development of supportive treatment, nursing and care services.

275. We will ensure an integrated health care for the disabled and improve integration of the disabled into the society, taking into account the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

276. We will reduce patient lists and improve quality and availability of health services. We will streamline high-tech based individual health care services provided by the national health system, and we will introduce new ones to enable prompt diagnosing and reading of the results.

277. We will ensure an effective functioning of the system for the protection of patients' rights by focussing on the development of the system for the protection of

patients' rights and health damage compensation as well as provision of information to patients.

278. We will increase health care investments, improve the health insurance model by integrating mandatory and supplementary (voluntary) health insurances, review service fees, and seek their adjustment to real costs.

279. Income stability of individual health care professionals will remain a priority for the Republic of Lithuania. We will try to achieve that medical salaries help the staff make their mind about staying and working in the homeland.

280. We will formulate specific measures to improve the operation of the pharmaceutical sector, to develop a smoother pharmacy network, paying a particular attention to the reduction of pharmaceutical prices, encouragement of parallel imports of pharmaceuticals, provision of quality pharmaceutical services, especially in rural areas, introduction of pharmaceutical care, and elimination of corruption and drug cartels in the market.

281. We will reduce prices for pharmaceutical and medical materials and tools, medical equipment and instruments, raise the efficiency and transparency of the procurement of medical supplies. We will improve procedures for centrally procured medicaments by clearly regulating medicament enlisting, by periodic review of this list, and by recording a precise moment of enlisting of a medicament.

282. We will apply the most cost-effective and transparent medicament procurement methods to ensure competitive prices, and in the case when medicaments are produced by sole manufacturer in the world and there is no competition, we will recommend that an inter-institutional group is set up to negotiate the price of medicinal products and their acquisition terms directly with the manufacturer.

283. We will decisively eradicate corruption manifestations in health care, carry out effective monitoring of corruption prevention, review current procurement procedures for medicaments and medical equipment and impose more stringent regulation therewith. We will eliminate the practice of illicit premiums for individual health care.

Sports policy

284. We will try to implement the National Sports Development Strategy and pursue the sports policy which would benefit the population living in the regions of the country, so that physical activity and a healthy lifestyle were accessible for the

communities, neighbourhoods, and pupils would have good sports facilities at schools during classes and after school, as well as in clubs, and that this policy would be designed not only for the development of high-performance athletes, but also for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, so that there were enough regional, national and international sports events and competitions.

285. We will transform public attitude towards the sports, encouraging people to view sport as one of the most effective measures to improve health and quality of life. We will provide people with favourable legal, social and economic conditions to do sports. We will elaborate and develop a long-term physical training and sports policy for the benefit of everyone. We will develop programmes beneficial for health, physical activity and high-performance athletes.

286. We will seek to invigorate and continue to develop cooperation of different government institutions operating in all areas related to social function of sport. We will change the status of Physical Education and Sports Department under the Government of Lithuania, we will assign it with additional tasks and strengthen its administrative capacity. We will seek to intensify and further develop cooperation of all government institutions in the areas of sports, youth, education and tourism.

287. To promote sports and raise its prestige, we will establish a National Sports Council, as an advisory body for sports policy evaluation and formulation, accountable to the Seimas.

288. We will establish new sport funding arrangements to achieve balance between the development of professional and amateur sports.

289. We will seek to establish a legal status of a sports club and the lead role in the national sports system, provide legal and economic conditions for faster development of sports clubs as major operators in the national sports system. We will promote their contribution to non-formal child and youth sports education, the development of sports, and interaction between professional and amateur sports.

290. We will develop a consistent system for training elite athletes, helping to deal with talent selection, initial training, promotion, sports skill development and improvement. We will strengthen the existing and establish regional elite athletes training centres. Municipal sports centres (schools) will be accessible for rural children. We will elaborate sports programmes for sports centres (schools), and update training requirements for athletes and coaches.

291. We will make sports education equivalent to other subjects. Pre-school and pre-primary education establishments will have physical activity as compulsory through all the time of education (at least one hour per day); we will facilitate exercising for university students.

292. We will create favourable conditions for each resident to exercise, by building and renovating sports infrastructure, having it equally developed across all regions of Lithuania to be accessible to every individual in his immediate environment, and providing right conditions for the implementation of physical education for various age groups, and the development of professional and amateur sports. To this end, we will mobilize and effectively use public, private and the EU funds, focussing on sports facilities at education establishments (general education, higher education). We will complete building sports facilities of national importance.

293. We will ensure a more effective selection of gifted children in sports (youth), as well as a more effective implementation of training, funding and bringing to professional sports programmes. We will seek proportional coverage of these programmes across Lithuania.

294. We will carry out a national sports event audit, streamline the system of competitions to make a more efficient use of public allocations for sport and ensure an adequate number of events for athletes.

295. We will provide for the system of direct incentives to promote public and private investment sports, when investment is made in the development of public sports infrastructure; we will simplify land allotment procedures and ensure harmonization of territorial planning standards with the needs for sports development.

296. We will legitimize the establishment and development of the system for state compensation to sports clubs for their functions of social integration and prevention of social problems.

297. We will legitimize social benefits for professional athletes (compensation payments until they reach the age of retirement).

298. Considering the market (economic) needs and developments, we will specify training of sports professionals, especially sports teachers, coaches, and sports medicine professionals. We will adjust sports training programmes at country's higher education establishments.

299. We will improve the system for training Lithuanian elite athletes, enabling talented athletes to participate in European and world championships. We will make

reasonable efforts to have adequate preparation of Lithuanian athletes for summer and winter Olympic Games. Considering the exceptional position of Lithuanian National Olympic Committee (hereinafter referred to as the LNOC) in the system of Lithuania's sports, we will support the Olympic movement and its educational programs.

300. Considering the importance of Olympic achievements by our athletes to Lithuania at large, we will improve the funding model for training of elite athletes, at the same time keeping the current LNOC sources of funding. To promote Lithuania through sports, we will hold high-level international sports events in the country.

301. We will develop and promote wellness services, public-private partnerships in sports and physical education, thereby encouraging each individual to lead a healthy lifestyle.

XII. ENERGY SECTOR AND ENERGY SECURITY

302. We will depoliticise energy projects. We will evaluate current situation in the energy sector and identify action directions to facilitate the adoption of decisions that serve the public interest. Reduction of energy poverty is a priority for the Lithuanian residents.

303. We will declare as a national priority of Lithuania the massive renovation of multi-apartment housing by offering apartment owners additional financing schemes so that they won't be compelled to borrow from commercial banks and by paying the investment back from the savings on heating costs.

304. We will seek full synchronization of Lithuania's electric power system with the EU energy system, integration of the gas supply system into the EU member states' market and will support the emergence of efficient and competitive markets in electricity, gas, biofuel and other areas.

Regional and energy infrastructure projects

305. We will support the implementation of the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP) and initiate, together with other Baltic countries, the development of the common energy strategy for the Baltic states, since it is only cooperation and strategic partnership between the neighbouring countries that will ensure energy security and reduce the costs of energy infrastructure projects.

306. We will become a part of the EU electricity market, ensure a non-discriminatory, free and competitive use of international electric power transmission interconnections, create opportunities for the formation of a competitive electricity price which will meet the needs of the Lithuanian consumers.

307. We will seek to achieve, in co-operation with the neighbouring countries, a reduction of prices on energy sources, which should have a positive influence on the wellbeing of the country's population. We will develop a transparent price fixing mechanism and provide conditions for residents to receive energy at an affordable price.

308. We will continue and complete the construction of electricity transmission interconnections with Sweden and Poland (the “NordBalt“ and “LitPol Link“). We will build a gas interconnection between Lithuania and Poland and we intend to apply for EU funding for this project.

Electricity sector

309. In view of the results of the consultative referendum of 14 October 2012 on the construction of a new nuclear power plant in the Republic of Lithuania, we will review the National Energy Independence Strategy and, through a broad agreement of political parties, submit a strategy of independent provision of the state with energy resources which will be the most economically viable and most acceptable for consumers and will also consider the perspectives of nuclear energy based on a thorough and integrated analysis of alternative ways of development of the energy sector in a long-term perspective. The best alternative should be based on cost and benefit analysis in order to secure energy independence and the lowest price.

310. With a view to increasing the efficiency of energy consumption and establishing a decentralized electricity system, we will promote the installation of small cogeneration power plants close to consumers.

311. The EU assistance funds will be used for modernization of power grids as part of implementation of the concept of smart grids, which would allow a better use of various power generation sources (including those generating green electricity) and create favourable conditions for the development of the electric vehicles sector, as well as for the use of heat pumps and other devices regulating electricity generation and consumption.

312. We will investigate, whether it is feasible to expand the capacity of the Kruonis Pumped Storage Power Plant by installing additional turbines.

313. In order to lower the electricity price for consumers, we will support only those services of public interest that secure the minimum necessary reserve of power supply for Lithuania.

314. We will promote the development of a common electricity market of the Baltic countries. Through building international links, we will seek a full integration of the power transmission system into the common EU system. We will support the joint efforts of EU member states to create a common EU electricity market as soon as possible.

315. We will try to achieve the most efficient and integrated use of power interconnection with Sweden, including the possibilities to provide Lithuanian consumers with cheaper electricity from Scandinavian countries, development of offshore wind farms in the Baltic Sea, provision of reserve power, etc.

316. We will strictly control and curb unreasonable excess profits of energy companies.

Gas sector

317. We will seek to resolve the problem of diversification of the sources of natural gas supply by reducing the dependence on a single gas supplier. We will begin without delay the construction of a liquefied natural gas terminal. To construct the terminal, we will endeavour to make use of EU funding as well as the opportunities offered by public private partnership and foreign investment.

318. To ensure the diversification of gas supply, we will deliver a reverse flow gas interconnection with Poland and link up Lithuanian and Polish gas networks, thereby facilitating Lithuania to secure an alternative gas supply solution. We will pursue EU funding to implement this project. We will tackle the closing of the ring of gas pipelines in Lithuania and the expansion of capacity of existing gas pipeline network.

319. We will initiate the research and exploration of shale gas in Lithuania.

320. We will seek the support of EU institutions for ensuring the promptest establishment of the common EU gas exchange and the launch of its virtual operation.

Renewable energy resources

321. We will become a part of the Third World Energy Revolution, which is associated with the transition from fossil fuels to the world's future energy, i.e. energy from the use of renewable sources.

322. We will encourage the development of sustainable energy which integrates economic, environmental and social priorities.

323. Competitive generation of local renewable energy and the use of renewables for electricity and heat production should become the priorities of the national energy policy.

324. We will declare the widening use of biofuel which will replace fossil fuels a national priority of Lithuania's energy industry, as being Lithuania's internal resource for creating new jobs, increasing the diversity of energy supply and slowing down the flight of capital from the country.

325. We will draft a long-term programme for the production, use, promotion and support of renewable energy, which will ensure the optimal development of energy generating renewable sources, without distorting market relations and by avoiding unreasonable increase in electricity and heat tariffs. We will improve the model of trade in biofuel through promoting the production by local producers. We will encourage the arrival of new suppliers in the biofuel market and will enhance the biofuel exchange.

326. We will encourage innovations, the use of applied research and modern technologies in the field of renewable energy sources.

Increasing the efficiency of energy consumption

327. We will create opportunities for the public sector to use energy efficient buildings, purchase energy efficient products and services, also, we will annually update at least 3 per cent of the total area of buildings used by the public sector.

328. We will instruct the enterprises to obtain an energy consumption audit so as to establish for each enterprise a potential of lower energy consumption.

329. Legal regulation of energy transmission and distribution will be changed in order to ensure that the State Commission for Prices and Energy, while approving the tariffs on transmission and distribution services, shall take into account the criteria of energy consumption efficiency.

330. In order to cut expenses, we will implement a smart metering system across the whole energy sector.

331. We will develop public awareness on energy, use of renewable energy sources and energy saving matters. We will create mechanisms to encourage saving of electricity through a wide use of energy-saving devices.

Heating sector

332. We will replace the natural gas, as a source of heat production, with renewable energy sources, in particular biofuel, and will foster competitiveness in the area of heat production. We will encourage the arrival of new suppliers in the biofuel market and will enhance the biofuel exchange.

333. We will eliminate all bureaucratic obstacles, which currently hinder the development of the use of biofuel in the heating sector and prevent efficient renovation of the aged multi-apartment buildings.

334. We will include biofuel implementation projects into the State Investment Programme and will direct EU assistance funding to this area. We will reduce heating costs by allocating EU support funds for the construction of biofuel boiler heating systems. We will put more investment into the development and introduction of biofuel technologies.

335. We will limit the profits of the heat producers and suppliers who fail to offer any cheaper solutions for heat production and supply. We will improve the model of trade in biofuel through promoting the production by local producers.

336. We will encourage and support local industry which produces equipment for the generation of energy from renewable sources as well as the use of such equipment.

337. We will encourage the production of heat and electricity by cogeneration, where this is economically feasible.

338. We will impose strict transparency requirements for the enterprises engaged in activities in the sector of centralized heat supply. We will improve the national price regulation system and mechanisms.

XIII. TRANSPORT

339. We will seek to increase the competitiveness of the transport sector in the European and global markets by full development of conditions of transit and related

services, in particular by maintaining good relations with the neighbouring states on the basis of economic benefit.

340. We will consider as a priority task the sustainable development of Lithuania's transport system so that the development of different modes of transport infrastructure and the progress of their operation technologies would above all benefit the wellbeing of the country's population.

341. We will develop modern logistics centres and deploy the latest technologies enabling essential improvement of service quality and reduction of prices for goods and services. This will be not only an economic, but also an important social task.

342. We will concentrate the 2014–2020 EU structural assistance for transport sector on the areas which are linked to laying the foundations for a long-term growth and competitiveness, thereby ensuring an efficient use of funds.

343. We will draw up investment plans covering at least a three year period, while strictly following their implementation and considering the economic, social and environmental impacts on the country's economy and citizens as critical factors when making the plans.

344. We will renew the co-operation between the Transport and Transit Commission set up pursuant to the Resolution of the Government and the relevant sectoral ministry by attracting the business community engaged in this sector and aiming to remove bureaucratic obstacles to the implementation of investment plans of state-owned and private enterprises alike.

345. We will work toward a responsible development of the Lithuanian road infrastructure through modernisation of the major highways. We will reduce the percentage of unsurfaced roads of state significance by 30 per cent. We will earmark funds from the Road Maintenance and Development Programme for local (municipal) roads. We will use the funds of the Road Maintenance and Development Programme directly to address transport issues.

346. We will, together with the municipal administrations, draw up special programmes offering radical solutions to the development of an environmentally friendly and efficient public transport, while improving public transport services.

347. We will give high priority to ensuring road traffic safety in the country. We will strengthen co-operation between individual ministries and institutions as well as control over them to ensure the implementation of road safety programmes and their adequate financing, will instruct institutions in charge of the organization of education

activities to review and supplement the training and education programmes so that all children are provided with knowledge and instructions on how to practice safe behaviour near streets and roads.

348. We will tighten the control on drivers' speed and drink-driving limits, will install modern speed detection systems all across the country and will impose stricter liability on chronic violators of road safety regulations.

349. We will make a wide use of and give special attention through public media to the education on road safety issues.

350. We will encourage the development of environmentally friendly modes of transport in Lithuania. We will develop the network of pedestrian and cycle routes by giving particular attention to their safety and to ensuring the safety of existing routes as well as providing additional safety means (such as guard rails, road marking, means to increase visibility, etc.).

351. We will encourage the development of the fleet of electric vehicles in Lithuania. We will develop the network of recharging stations for electric vehicles and will gradually replace the vehicles in the state and public service sector with vehicles running on electricity.

352. We will implement the projects of modernisation and development of railway infrastructure by making use of national and EU funding. We will actively participate in drafting of EU legislation on rail transport so that it accounts for the specificity of the Lithuanian railways.

353. We will pursue a coherent state policy toward increasing the volume of transit freight carried by the Lithuanian railways by attracting additional freight flows from Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, Turkey and other countries of the Black Sea Region, China as well as EU member states and the USA.

354. We will create equal legal opportunities for the entities in the provision of passenger and (or) freight services to use the public railway infrastructure, so as to achieve a fair competition in the railway transport sector; we will defend Lithuania's national interests by taking advantage of the right granted to Lithuania to decide on liberalization of cross-border rail transport from third countries and will ensure that such transport should be performed exclusively by the national carrier.

355. We will minimize the losses of passenger carriage by appropriate use of railway transport for both domestic and international carriage of passengers.

356. We will develop railway electrification process and also enhance environmental protection; we will stabilize and reduce costs and service prices.

357. We will develop public logistics centres near major railway junctions by creating as favourable conditions as possible for the interaction of multiple forms of transport and the attraction of business entities in order for them to use the established infrastructure, thus joining a common network of international rail freight corridors.

358. We will resume close co-operation with the academic society in the field of maritime and inland waterways as well as research institutions and will fully support the ambition of the Lithuanian Maritime Academy to legalize the title of a “Maritime Academy“.

359. We will ensure the seafarers’ rights on the state as well as global level and will develop a long-term National Maritime Programme; will improve the seafarers’ remuneration procedure and social guarantees, will ratify the conventions of the International Labour Organization on Maritime Labour, Work in Fishing, Dock Work and on Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work).

360. We will seek to ensure the continued development, improvement and modernisation of the port infrastructure with a view to maintaining the current dynamics of the Klaipėda Sea Port and securing its competitiveness among other ports in the Baltic Sea Region.

361. We will encourage the emergence of new passenger and freight shipping routes by increasing the competitiveness of the Klaipėda Sea Port in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea.

362. We will aim at modernizing the infrastructure of airports and improving the quality of passenger service.

363. We will encourage the opportunities for local and foreign small aircraft operators to use the Lithuanian infrastructure and will create additional means for this purpose.

364. Taking into account the social importance of the post office, we will ensure that the company *AB Lietuvos paštas* (the Lithuanian post) preserves its status as a state enterprise, while encouraging transparent co-operation with private companies in the same sector, and will secure the delivery of not only postal, but also professional and adequate quality courier, logistic, financial intermediation, advertising and *e*-services, together with flexibility and fast adaptability to the market.

XIV. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

365. With a commitment to consistent environmental actions and economic development, we will continue to apply the principle of sustainable development in the exploitation of natural resources, protection of environment from unlawful pollution and the guaranteeing of a healthy living for the current and future generations.

366. We will guarantee the residents of the country the right to live in a clean and healthy environment. We will strive to reduce air pollution, upgrade public transport and will encourage the production and use of clean, environmentally friendly fuel and biofuel.

367. We will take an active participation in the global climate protection movement which is vital for ensuring survival on Earth. We will review all regulatory legislation and will remove, where necessary, the bureaucratic obstacles to efficient use of renewable energy sources so as to encourage every available means to reduce the greenhouse effect and will allocate state assistance for this purpose. We will give special attention to energy saving.

368. We will aim at economic development without deterioration of environmental quality and will guarantee the residents' right to live in a clean and healthy environment. We will implement the EU directives and national laws on environmental and human health effects.

369. We will promote environmental protection awareness, care for animals at all levels of youth education and will make a wider use of the national broadcaster. We will support and encourage the environmental protection activities of non-governmental organizations and will seek to secure their involvement in decision-making and implementation of the envisaged measures.

370. We will develop and consistently carry out a policy of sustainable forestry. Considering forest as one of Lithuania's major natural assets contributing to the state's and its citizens' wellbeing as well as landscape stability and the quality of the environment, we will preserve it for the future generations, while responding to environmental, economic and social needs of the public. We will protect and expand the area of state-owned forests as a guarantee of the country's environmental, social and economic wellbeing. We will ensure that forests have a continuous function of protecting the environment as well as a recreational value, guarantee a supply of valuable timber and other forest products by planting commercially valuable, productive and biologically resistant forest tree species.

371. We will continue to expand the forested areas and will support private initiatives. We will hold the view that forests are one of the most important factors for ecosystem stability and that no further privatization of forests, except their rightful return to former owners, should be allowed. By employing new technologies we will continue to improve the use of forest resources, placing a special emphasis on the use of wood residues from felling and thinning for energy purposes. We will encourage and support the education and consultation of private forest owners, promote the establishment of co-operatives and will provide other assistance.

372. We will maintain the view that the key forest management issues in the country have been solved and that further correction of management issues is possible only upon urgent necessity (such as amalgamation or merger of certain forest enterprises).

373. We will develop education as a crucial means to strengthen the policy of environmental protection. We will achieve that the integration of sustainable environmental protection, social and economic development is included in all educational and study programmes.

374. We will give special attention to the conservation of biological diversity both in the protected and non-protected areas. The use of animals and plants should become a matter of state importance and policy decision-making regarding their use should not be transferred to the private sector. The state will support public concern for animal care, protection of animals from cruelty and will provide conditions for taking care of homeless animals.

375. We will draw up a Programme for the Utilization of Lithuania's Mineral Resource Deposits, which would outline a long-term strategy for the exploitation (mining/extraction and production) of mineral resources. Since the state's underground resources are used inefficiently, we will also offer conditions for the state-owned enterprises enabling a more efficient utilization of the earth's underground riches.

376. We will strengthen institutional capacities to achieve an appropriate use and efficient administration of the assistance provided by the EU structural funds. We will ensure a transparent and efficient use of the EU funding allocated for environmental protection. We will inform the public on a regular basis about environmental situation and forecasts.

377. We will create a rational waste management system, which would encourage practices that reduce the amount of waste needing to be disposed of and the hazard it poses to the environment and human health. We will encourage and support waste processing by

following the key principles and directions outlined in the National Strategic Waste Management Plan. We will give priority to waste sorting, composting, processing and its use for the generation of energy.

378. We will promote the production of vehicles propelled by electricity and the development of a supporting network of service stations. We will modernize public transport service. We will develop an environmental monitoring and control system, which will enable a fast response to pollutant dispersion and preventing the spread of pollution.

379. Aiming to improve water quality, we will assess the technical level of the waste water treatment facilities operating in urban areas to establish priorities for upgrading so as to implement as soon as possible the EU requirements for waste water treatment. We will review the system of evaluation of drinking water quality for urban and rural areas and will improve water quality and control requirements for excavated groundwater wells, encourage the initiatives of rural communities to apply for EU funding support for modernizing water resources management (water quality testing) and will identify measures to encourage modern farming practices with a view to reducing water pollution.

380. We will place heavier responsibility on manufacturers for environmental pollution and quality of environment with regard to required EU standards. We will seek that the obligations imposed on manufacturers and importers are complied with at minimum expense so that every participant in the waste management system is given an appropriate assessment and that the waste management system operates in a sound and competitive manner.

381. We state that given the fact that some of the decisions concerning territorial planning and special conditions for construction as specified in construction regulations, etc. have lost relevance and no longer meet the requirements of the present-day sustainable economic development and also that they have become one of the major stumbling blocks to attracting investment, which in turn leads to reduction of the country's competitiveness, we will seek to replace them.

382. We will thoroughly examine the protection and management of existing protected areas. We will make sure that, on all levels of protected areas responsibility, the necessary documents will be prepared, regulations will be laid down, prohibitions will be explicitly formulated for all citizens, authorisations for compensations will be provided, etc. We will reduce to the minimum the subjective factor in the management of protected areas. We will achieve that the residents living in protected areas are protected from

discomfort and that their lives improve. We will restore the deteriorated status of protected areas. We will hold the view that the area of land set aside for protected areas in Lithuania has been defined.

383. We will give particular attention to initiatives of the private sector to construct health-related, recreation, sports and other facilities, in particular in rural areas, and will promote a healthy lifestyle among the youth.

XV. COMPETITIVE AGRICULTURE AND DIVERSE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

384. We will design a long-term rural development strategy based on enhancement of the quality of life and reduction of urban and rural social disparities, harmonious development of individual regions, improvement of rural employment, promotion of active participation and partnership in local activity groups and local communities as well as the development of physical and social infrastructure in rural areas.

385. We will create a more favourable perception by the public of rural life and agriculture. We will improve the quality of life of the rural population. We will encourage people to establish and develop traditional as well as alternative occupations. We will support the establishment of competitive farms capable of producing high quality healthy and safe food products, and also, the production of organic and natural as well as a range of exceptional quality and traditional livestock farming produce and will encourage the development of such farms.

386. We will seek to allocate EU financial assistance to investment projects aimed at implementing new technologies, rather than to stopping the farming activities in the agricultural sector. We will promote cooperative organization among small farms based on common use of modern agricultural machinery subsidized by the state.

387. We will support the creation of medium-seized commercial and family farms through developing a modern and competitive agricultural, food and forestry sector, rational use of land resources, and by offering additional support to sustainable agriculture and forestry we will develop business relations between agricultural producers, processing firms and retailers to create a system facilitating such relationships.

388. We will seek to achieve that the development of science, application of innovations and modern technologies becomes one of the key factors of progress in the agricultural sector. We will improve the contribution of agricultural research to the development of the country's agricultural economy. We will encourage applied and

fundamental research in all areas of agricultural science. We will attempt to focus the efforts of agricultural and forestry scientists on applied research supporting agricultural progress and enhancement of competitiveness. We will support innovation and skills development, green technologies and efficient use of research findings.

389. We will make an efficient use of the EU and national budget funds by improving rural infrastructure, developing public utility infrastructure systems (electricity, water pipes, sewage, communications, etc.) and will make sure that funding is available every year for hard surfacing and maintenance of local roads of regional significance as well as gravel roads.

390. Through a wider use of EU assistance and national budget funds, we will support the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises in rural areas and the development of non-traditional agriculture and alternative occupations. We will promote the integration of land and forest management into a complex rural development framework. We will support farmers who grow bioenergetic plants and aim to build wind and hydroelectric farms and biogas generators.

391. We will promote rural tourism, eco-tourism, traditional village occupations, development of traditional craft centres and will support the manufacture of national heritage and traditional products. We will protect and foster Lithuania's national heritage. We will encourage the creation of alternative businesses, richness of their diversity, development of local initiatives and the creation of new jobs.

392. We will oppose the discrimination of the Lithuanian farmers. We will make sure that the Lithuanian farmers receive the same economic treatment as farmers in the old EU member states. We will seek to ensure that the level of direct payments provided to the Lithuanian agriculture corresponds to the level of such payments to farmers of the old EU member states.

393. We will create favourable conditions for the young farmers for farming or engagement in other ventures in rural areas.

394. We will seek that the land set aside for agricultural purposes is not subject to manipulation either by foreign or Lithuanian citizens. We will create favourable legal conditions for local communities to influence the land market in favour of persons who are genuinely engaged in farming activities.

395. We will complete the restitution of ownership rights to surviving real property. We will finalise in the near future the restitution of land and forest ownership rights in rural areas, speed up and support the implementation of land consolidation, which will

contribute to a more efficient use of land plots as well as improvement of farming conditions and the settlement of new farmers.

396. We commit to undertake a review of the legal framework governing purchase and sales of agricultural products in order to legalize the long-term agreements on the purchase and sales of farm products. We will provide a better control mechanism for this process.

397. We will allocate support for direct sales and the development of the local market. We will encourage the development of multiple forms of direct sales of livestock and plant products enabling farmers to sell their produce directly to consumers.

398. We will review the tax treatment of farmers' income, including the application of profit tax and taxing according to farm size expressed in the European size units.

399. We will develop and promote specialized agricultural co-operation, focusing in particular on establishment of agricultural marketing co-operatives and producer organizations and will support the initiatives of rural communities and local activity groups. We will extend the farming value chain by encouraging, in addition to primary production, the development of processing and other activities.

400. We will improve the farming conditions for farmers working on poor soils. We will encourage the farming of beef cattle and, where the soils are poor, mutton sheep, thus creating additional jobs and added value.

401. We will build up and protect a rational network of adequate quality educational, health, cultural and other services in rural areas. We will improve rural infrastructure, education, health protection, renovate cultural and other facilities in rural areas so as to meet a wider range of rural residents' needs of quality of life. Rural residents must have an easy access to the cultural services produced in the urban areas. We will seek to revive the traditional Lithuanian village so that rural locations preserve their cultural and ethnic characteristics, maintain their centres of health, culture and education in order to achieve a maximum satisfaction of quality of life needs of the rural population.

402. Aiming at integrating the need of rural communities to live in a cleaner unpolluted environment, we will promote the development of environmentally sustainable agricultural production and a wider use of renewable energy. We will encourage the construction of bioenergy plants and the development of bioenergy industry as well as expansion of energy production from renewable sources in the land and forestry sectors. We will ensure a sustainable land management, preservation of landscape and biodiversity.

403. We will encourage professional education, life-long learning, information and consultation of farmers, support research in the field of economic policy for agriculture, regional economic and social development of rural areas as well as relevant technological issues. Taking into account the needs of the Lithuanian agrarian sector and of the state as whole, we will ensure training of high-skilled agricultural workers, allocate targeted funds for undersubscribed university courses, which, however, are vital for the country's agricultural industry, providing training for high-quality agricultural professionals.

404. We will seek that the Lithuanian embassies abroad become the embassies of the Lithuanian business. We will take concrete and efficient actions to explore new as well as develop existing export markets of the Lithuanian agricultural and food products. We are convinced that the more active the participation of farmers and enterprises in the promotion of products export, the more stable is their business. We will encourage the export of farm products, search for new markets to offer the Lithuanian agricultural produce and will expand the existing ones. We will attempt to create equal conditions for competition in international markets for the Lithuanian farmers and producers.

405. We will continue to implement the Agricultural Management Reform allowing simplification and better efficiency of management.

406. We will strengthen the status of farmers' self-government and rural non-governmental organizations.

XVI. STATE GOVERNANCE

407. The state governance policy aims at consistently bringing closer the state governance to the needs of the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania. To this end we will analyse the development of society, prepare opinion polls and look into arising issues. We will improve the state governance by redistributing functions of public authorities and completely eliminating their duplication. We will not raise governance costs and the number of civil servants. We will expand municipal rights in the territorial administrative entities and increase municipal autonomy and responsibilities. We will ensure the effectiveness of state governance and self-government through the improved public administration.

408. While developing e-democracy solutions, we will stimulate the interactions between society and public administration institutions, and we will encourage public

involvement in the government's decision making process through the employment of ICT tools.

409. We will modernise the public sector by involving the public into the governance processes, we will restore the efficiency of public authorities, optimise the functions of ministries and other institutions, and increase the transparency and openness of working methods.

410. We will improve the impact assessment of decisions, taking into account the potential social and economic effects of such decisions.

411. We will seek to simplify administrative rules and procedures for citizens and entrepreneurs: we will remove excessive information requirements, shorten deadlines for making decisions, and eliminate unnecessary checks and certain controlling authorities.

Civil Service Reform

412. We will seek that the Lithuanian civil service has public trust, works efficiently and productively, bears responsibility, and is transparent, appropriately managed, open to innovation and society.

413. Seeking to make selection procedure to civil service more objective and transparent, and in order to prevent civil service from protectionism and politicising, and to ensure that only persons with appropriate competence and value judgements are selected, we will deploy a partially centralised system of selection to civil service. Therefore, we will ensure that only persons with an excellent reputation are employed in civil service.

414. In order to attract new people to civil service, at the same time preserving a high level of qualification and value judgements of current civil servants, we will create conditions for young and talented people to improve their competence and to consistently pursue their career, as well as to be able to compete with the private sector. We will improve the systems of performance assessment and career planning, remuneration and motivation for civil servants. Moreover, we will ensure that wages and career opportunities provided correspond to performance results and contribution.

415. Aspiring for a more effective training system of civil servants, we will focus more on the development of practical and analytical skills of civil servants, correlate more closely the training of civil servants with the competence management, stimulate practical application of knowledge acquired through the training, use training as a motivational tool

for civil servants in a more appropriate manner, and use assistance of EU funds and programmes, designed for the training, effectively.

416. Seeking for a more open civil service, we will improve the Register of Civil Servants and Civil Service Information System, and ensure that state and municipal institutions and authorities are provided with all the necessary information on the human resources management.

Improving State Governance

417. We will ensure a clear system of public administration institutions, their functions and mutual relations. Without any delay, we will reorganise public administration and control institutions and authorities that are clearly overlapping. We will simplify decision making procedures.

418. By employing international standards and sharing good administrative practices, we will improve the quality of managing public affairs and raise the competence of persons working in the public sector.

419. We will not increase the number of ministries, but we will clearly establish the areas of ministerial governance and set well-defined tasks as well as the criteria for the performance of these tasks and responsibilities. We will review a long-term strategy for the modernisation of state governance.

420. We will reorganise the network of Government institutions in order to save public funds, ensure a better interinstitutional cooperation and make the provision of administrative services more convenient for the public.

Municipal Development and Increase of Municipal Responsibilities

421. We will increase economic and financial independence for municipalities, improve methods for determining revenues of municipal budgets in order to stimulate entrepreneurship, investments, creation of jobs and tax revenue growth within the municipal territory. We will optimise the systems for drawing up municipal budgets as well as the tax systems, which would lead to a direct correlation between municipal budgets and the successful activities of economic operators, development of business activities in the municipal territory and the number of jobs.

422. We will create legal and other necessary conditions to deploy and improve a system of drawing up, approval, implementation and control of strategic municipal action plans and municipal budgets according to programmes. We will increase municipal capabilities to perform autonomously the functions that have already been delegated to them and reduce the state's interference in the administration of these functions.

423. We will tighten legal liability of politicians for damage caused during the decision making process, and for the failure to comply with the requirements of the Law on the Adjustment of Public and Private Interests in the Civil Service of the Republic of Lithuania. Local authorities shall have the freedom of actions and initiative to carry out obligations imposed on them by the electorates.

424. We will support direct election of mayors and seek not only to provide more authorisations to mayors but also more stringent liabilities. We will improve the administrative supervision of municipalities.

425. While improving the procedures of drafting action programmes and annual planning for chiefs, we will increase the efficiency of activities of the chiefs.

Regional policy

426. We will improve and further implement the national strategy for regional development, with the following key objectives in mind – bridging the gap of the economic and social development, stimulation of the development in target areas, inclusion of municipalities into the formation and implementation of the national regional development policy, and proper coordination of instruments of the national regional development policy with the EU regional policy.

427. We will concentrate the state political and economic support on target areas. We will accord a bigger role for regional development councils in the implementation of national regional development policy, and for their powers in the planning and administration of EU structural assistance.

428. We will carry out programmes to reduce differences in income and standard and quality of living among various people and regions, we will introduce measures aimed at reducing poverty and social exclusion. While reducing social and economic disparities, we will focus on preserving current jobs, creating new jobs, improving conditions for business and its development.

429. While implementing various state strategies and programmes and planning state investments, we will assess them from the regional development aspect, in view of reducing socio-economic gaps in these areas. We will create regional innovation systems, which could contribute to a successful development of small and medium-sized businesses in the region, by joining the efforts of business, science (universities, colleges) and other actors (such as innovation centres, science and technology parks, business incubators, etc.).

430. We will place particular importance on raising the standard of living in rural areas, and reducing social exclusion among urban and rural population. We will provide state political and economic support to target areas.

431. We will strive that a greater emphasis is placed in the EU budget on helping the least developed regions in the EU, also including Lithuania.

XVII. FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

432. In terms of fight against corruption, we will join the efforts of the highest ranking state officials, civil society, the media, public authorities, business sector, non-governmental organisations, establishments of higher education, religious organisations and other representatives of society and seek their active involvement into the disclosure of cases of corruption. We will seek a breakthrough in the moral, psychological and civic public conscience of society and politicians as well as intolerance to corruption, by implementing in practice and not only with slogans the principles of legal state, encouraging service to people by all public authorities and the equality of all persons before the law, and by making public decisions of law enforcement authorities as well as the administrative decisions.

433. We will carry out an effective and coordinated anti-corruption policy. We will make the public procurement process more transparent, so that it can be done electronically and online.

434. We will enforce a legal provision, thereby obliging civil servants, officials and persons of similar rank to inform their employers or competent law enforcement authorities about cases of corruption and corruption crimes that they have become aware of. Failing to do that shall deem them accountable in the procedure established by law and subject to other sanctions permitted under legislation.

435. We will guarantee a national defence or protection for persons who have informed of cases of corruption and corruption crimes from administrative or otherwise

persecution and reprisal, by adopting appropriate laws or regulations, and we will grant immunity from criminal prosecution in the cases provided by law.

436. We will lay down a criminal act of corruption – trading in influence – in the Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania.

437. We will implement the recovery of assets – the legitimacy of the acquisition of which has not been proved – in civil procedure or the taking of these assets or funds by the state and, thus, preventing from a possibility of becoming unduly rich.

438. We will extend the time limits of prosecution for the large-scale corruption or misappropriation of state funds and assets.

439. We will review and update the National Programme and Strategy for the Fight against Corruption for 2011–2014 of the Republic of Lithuania through the involvement of qualified experts, citizens, and representatives of society, non-governmental organisations and communities.

XVIII. LAW AND ORDER

440. Bearing in mind the importance of protecting human rights and freedoms, we will strive for an efficient work of law enforcement authorities in order to protect the rights and freedoms of our citizens and promptly respond to the infringement of rights.

441. We will optimise the number of authorities, responsible for public safety, and seek a clear definition in legislation of the functions performed by them, in view of avoiding the duplication of these functions. To this end, we are going to reorganise the Financial Crime Investigation Service under the Ministry of the Interior. Moreover, we will strengthen the internal and external control mechanism of activities of authorities responsible for public safety, thereby ensuring that these activities are transparent and impartial, promoting the service to people and non-intrusion into people's private lives, and eliminating the opportunity for corruption.

442. We will strive for coordinated and harmonised actions of municipal authorities and the police in ensuring public order and safety. The police should cooperate more actively with non-governmental organisations and residents, in particular, in preventing the trafficking in human beings, forced labour and domestic violence. We will encourage municipalities to set up subdivisions in charge of maintaining public order and to consistently pass the initiative to them of applying separate provisions of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Lithuania. We will support community

initiatives aimed at ensuring safety in their territories and promoting and implementing safe neighbourhoods.

443. We will continue improving the administration of statutory bodies, management of finances and other resources, also by reducing appropriations designed for the administration of these bodies. To this end, the police structure will be optimised to yet a greater extent by aligning it with the present structure of courts and prosecution offices that has proved its worth in practice. We will deploy an integrated information system of criminal proceedings – an e-case – designed to register actions of all officers involved in an investigation, as well as information relating to the investigation of a criminal act from the registration date of the criminal act to the date of announcement of the judgement.

444. We will make the selection of police and law enforcement officers to the service more stringent and ensure that only appropriately educated persons assume the above positions. We will place particular importance on pre-trial investigation officers and seek that the persons assuming such position should have an appropriate degree in law without any exceptions. Potential statutory officials studying by the state's request will be guaranteed free education and the financial support necessary for the completion of studies.

445. New officers accepted to the service will be offered a possibility of choosing a length of service of up to 25 years to receive the pension; the officers with the largest number of years of service will be entitled to a larger pension.

446. We will apply a flexible system of wages for officers. The shared system of wages and social guarantees for statutory officers will be laid down in the Statute of Internal Service. We will create an integrated system of selection of officers. We will ensure that the career of officers depends on targeted and constant assessment of their performance, skills and qualifications.

447. We will improve the infrastructure of services of public safety. We will seek to include the funding of the facilities and services that are most important for the police into the sphere that receives funds from the EU structural assistance for 2014 – 2020. We will increase the protection of EU external borders by strengthening the operational effectiveness of the State Border Guard Service under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, and we will ensure the efficient use of EU funds designed for the protection of external borders, first and foremost, by installing the latest technology. We will draft a development plan aiming at making the digital mobile radio communication system a shared network for all public safety and rescue services, and thus ensuring close

and prompt communication between them. We will place particular importance on the communication between rescue services with the army, seeking to strengthen the capacities of rescue services, especially in carrying out search and rescue operations at sea, at the Curonian Lagoon, and in other regions of the country. The management of the capacities of emergency services will be integrated into the network of the general emergency number 112.

448. With regards to the functions of fire protection, management of extreme situations, civil safety and rescue, we will improve a two-level joint system of rescue services. We will encourage and support the formation of volunteer fire and rescue structures, in rural areas in particular.

449. We will ensure the implementation of international obligations in the fight against crime, and we will strengthen the cooperation between the police, safety and other law enforcement authorities, as well as between courts and prosecution offices in the country, particularly in the fight against crime, drug trafficking, terrorism, trafficking in human beings and other criminal acts of international nature. To this end we, will continue taking an active part in the activities of international institutions, such as Interpol, Europol, FRONTEX, OLAF, as well as in the activities of the working group of the Baltic Sea Region in charge of the fight against the organised crime.

Migration Policy

450. Together with the EU we will do our best to manage migration.

451. We will initiate a joint policy of external border control, in view of strengthening the fight against illicit trafficking in human beings and activating the prevention and control of illegal migration. We will put our efforts to overcome the following emerging new threats: the spreading cosmopolitan consumerism, brain drain, trafficking in human beings, and terrorism, crime and extremisms beyond EU borders.

452. We will take an active part in the development of the Common European Asylum System, based on fair asylum rules for persons fleeing from persecution.

453. We will draw up an integrated programme for the return of emigrated labour, including a prompt creation of new jobs, drafting a package of social stimulus to return to Lithuania and the formation of better conditions for meeting the social needs of the returned persons.

XIX. LAW ENFORCEMENT

454. We will ensure the protection of human rights through a consistent improvement of legal system. The implementation of rights and obligations of Lithuanian citizens must be inseparable from the democratic developments and responsibility for the nation's future.

455. We will avoid the unreasonably frequent adoption of amendments to laws and maintain stability in the legal system. We will review the legal framework, repeal the ineffective and overlapping legal acts and simplify the content and form of legal norms.

456. We will draft legal acts taking into consideration reasonable public needs and opinion. We will expand the role of citizens in the legislative process.

457. We will make sure that legal acts establishing a new legal regulation are adopted only upon public consideration and approval. We will legitimise a procedure, upon which an active dialogue with society, associations and associated business structures is maintained in the drafting of laws and other regulations.

458. We will ensure that an impact assessment on public relations of draft legal acts establishing a new legal regulation should be carried out.

459. We will adhere to a principle according to which the legal acts establishing a new legal regulation should generally come into force no sooner than six months after their adoption.

460. We will support the development and efficiency of the dispute mediation system. We will legitimise an institution of the "juge de paix".

461. We will restore people's trust in the legal system, draw up a concept and draft amendments to laws regarding the institution of public judges (lay judges) in courts. We will improve the mechanism of defence of the public interest.

462. We will pay close attention to reducing the costs of time and financial resources, and we will eliminate superfluous procedures and thus contribute to the accelerated procedure of the hearing of criminal cases. We will finalise and adopt the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Lithuania.

463. We will ensure that courts stay independent, encourage the establishment of specialised divisions in courts and an efficient investigation of cases in the occupational, family, etc. fields. We will fervently eliminate the functions not pertaining to courts and gradually increase the number of assistants of judges. We will strive for a better supply of

financial resources and technical equipment to courts. We will shorten the deadlines for the provision of expert conclusions.

464. We will organise the preparation of qualified investigators, increase their wages and set an optimal work load. We will improve the image of this profession.

465. We will strengthen the mutual understanding between society and courts by providing society with detailed information on activities of courts and explaining the judgements. Moreover, we will optimise the judicial system.

466. We will make sure that state functions, delegated to notaries, bailiffs, etc. are carried out adequately and for a reasonable fee.

467. We will ensure that information on legal acts, their drafts and concluding court judgements is published in the public cyberspace and is accessible to everyone.

468. We will prevent superfluous regulation of legal relations, placing a priority on the consolidation and codification of legislation. We will improve the procedures of pre-trial investigation and increase the competences of the personnel working in this field.

469. We will boost society's education in law, seeking that each Lithuanian is taught basics in law and receives the legal knowledge necessary to ensure the protection of human rights. To this end, we will adjust and supplement the curriculum in schools of general education. We will carry out an active educational policy in the field of human rights, in view of a more effective protection of constitutional rights to an unbiased trial, personal protection, as well as the rights to the inviolability of private life, and aiming at preventing the violations of the presumption of innocence in public space.

470. We will guarantee a free of charge primary legal assistance to everyone and expand the list of persons entitled to the secondary legal assistance.

471. Our fight against offenders will be based on a long-term consistent strategy ensuring that each offence is thoroughly investigated, the offender is sanctioned in the procedure established by law, and the damages are paid to victims. We will show no tolerance to grave financial crimes. We will tighten penalties for an attempt on somebody's life and on property.

472. We will safeguard the respect for human rights in the places of detention and penal institutions appointed by a court.

473. We will create conditions for former offenders to reintegrate into society and its daily life, in order to prevent from the recurrence of crimes.

474. We will seek to change the direction of the penal policy, which would be aimed not at penalising the offender but rather at the rehabilitation of the offender,

eliminating the possibility of imprisonment for minor offences. We strongly believe that only an essential reform of the entire sector (that includes legal acts and infrastructure) would lead to a reduced number of crimes and persons serving their time in places of detention.

XX. NATIONAL DEFENCE AND SECURITY

475. We will strive for an active contribution to the world peace and security and the development of Euro-Atlantic cooperation as the prerequisite for the national security; while regarding the EU and NATO as key organisations, we will strengthen relations in the defence sphere of the European countries.

476. We will strengthen the common foreign and security policy of the European Union and avoid its overlapping with the main guarantor of security, i.e. NATO. We will expand our influence in the decision making process regarding the liquidation of causes of conflicts and terrorism, peace keeping and the provision of humanitarian assistance in crisis areas.

477. We will carry out a periodic evaluation of threats to the state, taking into consideration the developing new risk factors; we will adjust and change the course of the national security and defence strategies, as well as the action plans in due time, while providing for effective measures aimed at ensuring the national security.

478. We will carry out regular monitoring of threats to the national security, placing particular attention on the latest means of influence on the public space and politics, i.e. through information technology, the media of different forms of ownership and culture.

479. Based on the defence system of the Lithuanian state, the civil society and the Lithuanian army – consisting of professionals, volunteers and the mobilisation reserve – will remain strong, conscious and informed. The professional army will be formed on a volunteer basis, supplied with effective weapons and an up-to-date military technology. Together with its allies it will provide a reliable national defence and will be prepared to fulfil the obligations of the collective defence. At the same time it will be duly prepared to operate within the groups of rapid response of NATO as well as the EU battle groups, or to perform tasks on its own.

480. All available types of the armed forces – land force, military naval force, military air force and special operation forces – will be developed pursuant to the principle

of the most cost-effective use of the limited financial resources. The Parliament together with the Government will approve the course of development of the Lithuanian armed forces and appropriately provide for the funds.

481. The Lithuanian army will consistently improve public relations. If requested, the Lithuanian armed forces will help civil institutions in the provision of assistance to people in the cases of natural disasters and other calamities, and will bring together citizens for a collective resistance against aggressors. The Lithuanian army will help families, schools and public organisations to foster a sense of patriotism in youth, and, together with the National Defence Volunteer Forces and the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union, it will employ new means to encourage the national determination to defend the Homeland and its freedom.

482. We will restore the process of transformation of the Lithuanian army that has been positively evaluated by NATO, and we will aspire for a modern, mobile and professional army that would meet modern requirements and able to withstand present and future challenges.

483. While developing the national defence system, we will follow article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, establishing the principle of collective self-defence, and we will place much greater attention on the implementation of article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty, thereby Lithuania has undertaken by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, to maintain and develop its individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.

484. We will adhere to the principle laying down that the Lithuanian air space is a constituent part of the common NATO air space. We will devote special attention to the strengthening of the air space control, seeking to ensure the actual integrity and inviolability of the entire NATO air space.

485. We will seek that the NATO air policing mission that has been carried out in Lithuania since 2004 stays permanent air policing mission of NATO in the Baltic countries.

486. We will fully develop the capabilities of the support provided by the receiving country, ensuring the preparation for the deployment of the allied forces or receiving the reinforcement forces in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania. As our main priority we will develop the infrastructure, necessary to receive NATO's support in the case of a threat and to ensure the interaction of various public authorities.

487. While taking care of the development of our own national defence capabilities and fulfilling the obligations of the Republic of Lithuania, we will attempt to ensure a contribution proportionate to the available resources to the strengthening of the common defence capabilities of the Alliance.

488. We will consider the structure of the command to the forces and specify the command and operational management chains, aiming at the more effective management and ensuring a close interaction with the forces of other NATO countries, while employing the structural patterns and standards verified by these countries.

489. The active reserve will consist of the National Defence Volunteer Forces with their territorial structure, analogous to the territorial structure of Home Guard in other countries. The purpose of the National Defence Volunteer Forces territorial structure is to further prepare an active reserve, which, if needed, will supplement other Lithuanian military units, to be sent to take part in international operations, prepare and send to international operations specialists of various fields as well as infantry units of a size of a company, and provide assistance to state and municipal authorities in the procedure established by laws.

490. The National Defence Volunteer Forces will be prepared for a rapid use within the territory of our country in the cases of aggression threats and mobilisation, also to perform tasks of defence, protection of facilities of state and municipal importance and support to the armed forces of the allies.

491. We will attend to the improvement of the system of social security of military and civilian personnel, at the same time expecting greater professional responsibilities from them.

XXI. EU AND FOREIGN POLICY

492. Foreign policy of the Republic of Lithuania will be based on the principles of solidary state cooperation, supremacy of international law, mutual trust and respect, democracy, and safeguarding of human rights and freedoms. Effective and consistent foreign policy shall ensure strengthening of the state's external security and protection of its interests, shall create favourable conditions for economic activity, energy security, good neighbourly relations, and shall protect the rights of its citizens. National interests of the Republic of Lithuania shall correspond to the efforts of the EU member states as well as

those of other democratic states to seek more efficient interplay among the EU and other democratic states with a view to seeking a fairer global development.

493. Within the EU, Lithuania will be constructively active while seeking the best possible conditions for the state development; and in its bilateral relations, consistent and pragmatic while seeking long-term interests.

494. While pursuing foreign policy, we will consolidate the image of Lithuania as that of an active and constructive member of the international community, who meets its international obligations and fosters common democratic values, and together with other democratic states takes on security, peace keeping, and other contemporary global challenges: fight against famine and poverty, illegal migration, terrorism, drug addiction, proliferation of nuclear arms, climate change, etc.

495. We will strengthen partnership with the EU member states. First of all we will shape the foreign policy of our state, who is part of the Baltic region, towards active relations with the Nordic and Baltic States, Germany, and Poland, with which objectively we have common political and economic interests. We will actively participate in the implementation of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. We will further develop our strategic partnership with France. We will greatly focus on relations with the United Kingdom, including regional cooperation between the Nordic and Baltic States and the United Kingdom. Close cooperation with these states creates conditions for enhancing our leverage in the EU and reaching our required decisions.

496. By foreign policy means we will shape favourable environment for business development abroad, we will actively contribute to exploration of new growing markets, and we will aid tackling global competition issues and ensuring good conditions for the national business in the international trade. Diplomatic missions of the Republic of Lithuania must actively defend business interests abroad, and not to stay away while tackling topical issues that have an impact on our economic interests.

497. We will continue preparation for negotiations on joining the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Membership of this organisation means recognition of stability and economy of a state, as well as attraction of new investments.

498. We will bring in political scientists and other experts into the policy shaping and analysis of the international politics. We will encourage creation of new non-governmental organisations thereby creating conditions for a more active involvement of experts of various fields into the topical foreign policy decision-making process.

499. We will improve quality of diplomatic service to achieve efficient and constructive implementation of national objectives of the foreign policy. We will improve the system for diplomat education, training, and professional development.

500. We will improve the quality of consular services: we will abandon excessive requirements, and we will apply modern technologies and thereby ensure fast decision-making. Consular service must be an efficient service, defending rightful interests of the citizens and meeting their expectations.

501. We will strengthen relations with Lithuanians living abroad, we will support preservation of national identity and community spirit thereof, and we will provide support to organisations of Lithuanians living abroad.

502. We will implement an inter-institutional action plan for 2012–2014 of the 2011–2019 Programme, on creation of *Global Lithuania* – involvement of Lithuanians living abroad into the state activities.

503. We will encourage and support opening of Lithuanian schools and cultural centres abroad. We will make state authorities' cooperation with communities of Lithuanians living abroad more active. We will develop cultural diplomacy and cultural exchange. On the basis of bilateral and multilateral agreements, we will further seek to recover cultural and historic values that have been illegally taken away from Lithuania.

504. We will strengthen informational policy abroad and will implement a long-term state programme for the formation of Lithuania's image abroad. We will seek to anchor Lithuania as a centre for international conferences and initiatives, and seat of various international organisations or representations thereof.

505. While fostering historic remembrance of crimes that have been committed by the totalitarian and authoritarian regimes in Europe and Lithuania, and commemorating the Holocaust victims, we will follow criteria of the historic justice and assessments of the best Lithuanian and foreign history experts. We will oppose efforts to rewrite historic events or to make use of historic facts to political ends.

Lithuania, an active EU member state

506. Lithuania needs a strong, solidary, united, competitive, and safe EU that speaks in a single voice. Our state will actively and consistently support strengthening of the EU–USA transatlantic partnership. We are against the EU with a nucleus of stronger states and poorer periphery.

507. Lithuania's preparation for and Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the second half of 2013 will remain among the top priorities of Lithuania's foreign policy. Following the notion that Lithuania's membership in the EU provides good conditions for Lithuania's economic and social development, we will seek that Lithuania's Presidency is smooth. While assuming responsibility for the mission falling upon a member state, we will seek that during our Presidency, decisions are taken for the benefit of the entire EU in the priority areas for Lithuania. During the period of implementation of this project, we will maintain the closest possible dialogue with the public, social partners, non-governmental organisations, and all political parties.

508. We are in favour of strengthening the Community method and the balance between the Community method and the intergovernmental method while tackling the EU affairs. Implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon created on the basis of the Constitutional Treaty drafted by the European Convention is the most topical direction of the EU reform. Lithuania is in favour of strong EU institutions that properly represent interests of all EU citizens, including the citizens of Lithuania. We will seek that the proposals submitted by the European Commission reflect Lithuania's interests. While strengthening legitimacy of the European Parliament, special attention will be given to increasing the voter turnout in the 2014 elections to the European Parliament. Greater involvement of national parliaments in the European decision-making process would be beneficial in looking for solutions to new challenges in present-day Europe.

509. We will consistently implement economically viable strategic projects with a view to enhancing national energy security, and we will reduce dependency on monopoly energy supply from one country. Therefore we will seek that EU energy and transport connections are linked into one system; also, that common efficient EU energy strategy, which would reflect common energy policy based on solidarity, efficient implementation measures thereof, and common competitive energy internal market are created. While tackling these issues that are topical for Lithuania, we will strengthen and make more intensive our relations with the Baltic and Nordic states, Poland, Germany, and France, while coordinating our positions on matters of the EU agenda.

510. We will seek appropriate functioning and development of the EU internal market, as well as science and innovation development.

511. We will support EU enlargement policy.

512. We will actively contribute to the EU efforts while creating a competitive, science and knowledge-intensive Europe, and common information and creation space. We

will be active in drafting the European Union multi-annual financial programme; we will seek a fair distribution of the EU budget and the fastest possible economic convergence of the less developed countries, at the same time creating favourable conditions for the scientific development and innovations.

513. While seeking comprehensive implementation of the European Social Charter and harmonisation of social security systems, we will support initiatives on universal employment and implementation of minimal social standards in the EU, social cohesion, and poverty reduction.

514. We will support EU's anti-monopoly measures with a view to developing an integrated, free, and efficient EU's internal market and strengthening economic cohesion of member states; we will seek that Lithuania joins the euro zone.

515. Together with other EU member states we will support an active global EU role with a view to reducing the impact of climate change, taking account of specific conditions of member states, and common objectives. We will support EU initiatives, and we will propose new initiatives encouraging the use of low-pollution renewable energy sources, energy saving, and research in the field of alternative energy.

516. We will actively contribute to strengthening of the EU's area of freedom, security and justice, and efficient management of the external borders.

Lithuania and international organisations

517. Lithuania will support strengthening of the global role of the United Nations. As a member of the EU, NATO, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Council of Europe, and other international organisations, Lithuania will seek to make their activities more efficient, transparent, and flexibly responding to new challenges.

518. We will strive to anchor Lithuania in these organisations, to make use of economic conditions as well as conditions created by stable security environment; we will develop friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all neighbouring states.

519. We will seek that participation of Lithuania in these organisations contributes to stability, prosperity, and consolidation thereof. We will support changes in the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund with a view to closing the gap between the rich and the poor countries, efficient tackling of matters related to food prices, fighting against climate change, and implementing of the Kyoto Protocol.

520. We will make the policy of enlargement and aid to third countries more active; we will contribute, according to our means, to the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration Goals.

521. Lithuania's aspiration to become a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council in 2014–2015 will remain an important objective for our country. It would create unique opportunities to actively participate in tackling global issues related to security maintenance, economy, and social policy, and would enhance Lithuania's global standing.

522. We will seek to strengthen NATO as the most important collective defence organisation of the Euro-Atlantic area and one of the key pillars of international security. We will seek that Euro-Atlantic cooperation remains the essential condition of the national security, with NATO and EU as central organisations of this cooperation.

523. Strategic partnership of Lithuania, also of Latvia, Estonia, Poland, and the US within NATO is the underlying pledge of our national security.

524. We will seek partnership between the NATO member countries and countries that are not members of NATO, for it is the best way to secure peace and stability in the world. We will seek to contribute to constructive pragmatic NATO–Russia relations, and EU–Russia relations, based on the principle of reciprocity. We will continue and strengthen the Alliance–Russia practical cooperation on fight against drugs, scientific and technical cooperation for the benefit of peace, Afghanistan transit, and aid in the event of natural disasters and catastrophes.

525. We will actively support institutions and initiatives of regional cooperation.

526. Situation in the neighbouring states has a direct impact on the long-term security of Lithuania. With a view to ensuring security, stability, and respect for human rights and freedoms, as well as strengthening democracy in the Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus, and Central Asia, we will seek to make use of instruments at the disposal of the OSCE, as the largest regional organisation.

527. While taking part in the international missions and operations, we are in favour of strengthening solidarity among the NATO and EU member states. We will actively support counter-terrorism efforts made by the international community.

Lithuania and regional cooperation

528. Close cooperation among Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia will continue to be indispensable not only on the political and security maintenance levels, but also in terms of

economic and cultural dimensions. Efficient implementation of important energy and infrastructure projects, such as Rail Baltica, Via Baltica, and other joint science and culture programmes will continue to be an essential precondition with a view to strengthening economic and social development as well as cultural and human relations among the three Baltic States. We will make use of Lithuania's activities in the Baltic Council of Ministers as an opportunity to speed up implementation of projects that are important to the entire region.

529. As a state of the Baltic Sea Region, we will seek that greater focus is given to closer and more concrete cooperation among the Baltic and Nordic (NB8) states. It would allow achieving, by joint efforts, a better representation of the common interests of the states of this region, Lithuania including, both within and without the EU and NATO. This region, which encompasses the EU member states, Russia and the new neighbours, can substantially contribute to the progress not only of this region, but also that of the entire Europe. In the field of energy, we will first seek to create a common electricity market that would correspond to the region's interests. We will encourage closer cooperation with the Nordic countries in the fields of economy, transport, innovations, climate change, conservation of the Baltic and North Sea ecosystems, security, and defence, which would contribute to the development and security of the entire European and Euro-Atlantic area; we will develop cooperation under the current e-PINE initiative.

530. While implementing the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, we will enhance the role of Lithuania as an active member of the Baltic Sea Region. We will support efforts to improve implementation of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. To this end, efficient activities of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) are necessary; apart from the EU member states, the CBSS comprises Iceland, Norway, and the Russian Federation, while Belarus has an observer status.

531. We will give new impetus for relations with Poland, by restoring and intensifying dialogue on strategic matters.

Relations with Russia and new EU neighbours

532. We will make use of Lithuania's geopolitical location for bringing it closer to the new neighbours and Russia.

533. Relations between Lithuania and Russia need "reloading". We will found cooperation between Lithuania and Russia on European values that are aimed at

strengthening mutual trust, and we will focus not on the past, but on the future; we will not set ourselves hardly viable preconditions impeding good mutually beneficial neighbourly relations. The issue of occupation damage inflicted by the Soviet Union will have to be tackled by means of negotiations with Russia, while looking for acceptable solutions.

534. Bilateral relations between Lithuania and Russia will be based on the 29 July 1991 agreement, taking into account all provisions of this agreement, and taking into account Russia's obligations to the Council of Europe on compensations to deportees from the Baltic States and descendants thereof. Sensitivity and complexity of certain matters should not pose an obstacle to dealing with mutually topical political, economic, cultural, and scientific matters, as well as important issues related to export and import flows of goods and services, which, under current conditions, require particularly active decisions on both sides. We will make use of opportunities opened by Russia's membership in the World Trade Organisation with regard to business relations development and more favourable investment conditions.

535. Seeking to be active participants of the EU–Russia strategic partnership, we will seek that the EU speaks and cooperates with Russia with a single voice and has a common strategic programme. We will continue to seek that a new legally binding comprehensive EU–Russia Agreement is concluded, which would create stability and allow the EU to efficiently secure its interests. We will actively participate in Russia's Partnership for Modernisation programme. EU–Russia joint fight against international terrorism, nuclear arms proliferation and other threats is good basis to efficiently implement joint environmental, energy, economic, culture, and other programmes. We will actively participate in the review process of the EU and NATO policy towards Russia, by encouraging a constructive dialogue, based on democratic values, between transatlantic community and Russia, with a view to securing positive development of Russia towards a democratically evolving society.

536. Lithuania is interested in revitalization of political dialogue on various levels, by involving into it parliamentary committees on foreign affairs of both countries, groups of inter-parliamentary relations, top-level officials of ministries of foreign affairs, strengthening of relations with regions of the Russian Federation, first of all with the Kaliningrad Region, Saint Petersburg, and Moscow. We will seek to implement cross-border cooperation projects with the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation, in consideration of the EU context. We will encourage and support development and opening of this region and cooperation with the EU. With a view to encouraging relations of

citizens of the Kaliningrad Region with Lithuania, we will seek, together with the EU, to create better opportunities for frontier residents (including extension of frontier territories) for visa-free travel to Lithuania and the Kaliningrad Region.

537. We will support efforts to encourage democratic process evolving in the EU's new neighbouring states. We are convinced that that respect for the fundamental human rights, the principle of the rule of law, and the identity of every state make conditions for the natural development of democracy in those states. We will closely cooperate with the EU's neighbours Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova. We will support Georgia's and Ukraine's efforts to join the Euro-Atlantic cooperation area. We will actively contribute to Moldova's efforts with a view to strengthening domestic democratic reforms and looking for ways for closer relations with the EU.

538. We will support Belarus's efforts to consolidate independence and nurture democracy and civil society. We will support Belarus's integration into the European structures, commensurate with the Belorussian government efforts to come closer to the European democracy standards; we will support democratic progress and initiatives to create conditions for a viable free society.

539. We will encourage inclusion of Armenia and Azerbaijan into the East Partnership programmes, and we will support development of peace, stability, and democracy in this region.

540. With a view to ensuring equal business conditions for Lithuania's business entities and equally favourable investment climate, as well as defending their interests in the East Neighbourhood area, we will discuss with Lithuania's business representatives the best ways as to how this could be achieved.