

EUROPEAN FOUNDATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS



The European Foundation of Human Rights (EFHR) is an organization actively operating in Lithuania since 2010. It was established in response to the striking increase of the abuses of human and national minority rights in Lithuania observed after joining the European Union.

EFHR gives free legal advice

One of our principles is to offer a free legal advice to anyone who became a victim of discrimination and human rights abuses in the public or private sphere, or who is a witness of those abuses (e.g. when the party is a government office or employer). Our legal aid can provide: consultations, drawing up legal documents and process of a case in the court or other institution as well. Free legal aid is offered by the professional EFHR lawyers and counsels from the most prestigious legal offices that cooperate with the Foundation.

Human rights consultations are offered also to trade unions and other body corporates.

The EFHR scope of activity does not include the cases of land restitution and litigations between natural persons.

EFHR takes care of education and informing society about human rights

The Foundation organizes free human rights workshops, lectured by professors, scholars and experienced lawyers. They are intended for school pupils, lawyers and other interested

persons. The participants receive certificates.

Our NGO actively co-operates with high schools in organisation of lectures on problems such as discrimination, human rights and functioning of NGOs.

EFHR prepares and distributes leaflets and other publications about discrimination, human and minority rights (addressed also to persons without legal proficiency). Information we provide is up-to-date, based on the examples of human rights abuses and with detailed instruction explaining the possible way of reacting when being a victim or a witness of discrimination.

EFHR organizes educational visits to regions far from the capital of Lithuania

Despite the dynamic technological development, still not everyone has equal access to the Internet. Therefore, some people do not have the possibility to receive appropriate legal aid and information. EFHR seeks to guarantee legal aid and communication materials in regions situated far from the capital. During these study visits, the Foundation provides information about its scope of activity, and particularly tries to reach out to people to inform them about active ways of defending their rights.

EFHR monitors media and cyberspace

According to the criminal code, each comment or statement publicized on an Internet forum that openly incites hatred and discrimination against a particular group of people is forbidden and subject to the penalty.

Thus, EFHR is scanning the Internet looking for manifestations

of hate speech. When finding that kind of abuse (comment inciting hatred or discrimination), EFHR writes applications to the law enforcement agencies to initiate investigation. In our opinion, newly won cases and awarded penalties prove that the state cannot watch passively while the hate speech on the Internet arouses. Abusive media articles, quoting false information or incorrectly interpreting surveys and statistics are also illegal. EFHR acts according to the character of the violation by writing applications and petitions to appropriate institutions, e.g. insisting on the reconsideration of possible violation of journalistic ethics or rectification of biased information.

Employers discrimination

Due to the fact that some employers discriminate against people based on their gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, race, ethnic and national origin, religion, language, social status or personal beliefs, the EFHR team pays attention to job offers discriminating particular groups of people. In cases when the job profile does not require any special abilities from candidates, this kind of selecting criteria are illegal. EFHR monitors and reacts against those abuses by writing petitions to the Lithuanian Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment.

EFHR – co-operation

- with many talented volunteers and trainees. As a non-profit organization, EFHR appreciates each person who helps us in struggling against discrimination. It offers the possibility to gain experience in human rights sphere to **lawyers, journalists, philologists** and other **interested persons**. One of the crucial aims is to educate young volunteers by sending them for workshops and conferences abroad, which enables them to learn mutually with activists from other international organizations.
- with international organizations seeking partners from other countries. EFHR currently closely cooperates with: **UNITED, Sillamäe Society for Child Welfare from Estonia, Connect Art, Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities, European Centre for Minority Issues**, etc. Besides that, EFHR prepared free Polish and Lithuanian editions of the Council of Europe's educational publication "**Rights and Freedom in practice**", which comprehensively illustrates the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights.
- with **chambers** and **law experts**. Our aim is to exchange experiences to offer more professional legal aid.

EFHR and media

Because of the noticeable activity of EFHR, the Lithuanian and foreign media are attracted. Radio, press and television use materials published on EFHR's website (interviews and notes). Our presence in media helps us to disseminate human rights issues and EFHR's activities.

Moreover, the Foundation voluntarily translates into English and publishes on **www.media.efhr.eu** website the most up-to-date articles commenting national minority issues in Lithuania.

We are waiting for a contact from you, especially if you:

- need legal aid;
- are looking for information or have questions about human rights;
- would like to invite EFHR to your region, organization, institution, village or school;
- find an example of a comment inciting discrimination or abusive job offer;
- would like to cooperate with EFHR



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