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IMPLEMENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN LITHUANIA

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Abstract

Purpose – in 2011, the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council unanimously endorsed the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, a set of guidelines for States and companies to prevent and address human rights abuses committed in business operations. The UN Working Group strongly encourages all States to develop, enact and update a national action plan on business and human rights as part of the State responsibility to disseminate and implement the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Following the adoption of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania in 18 August 2014 approved the document "Lithuania's Action in Implementing the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights", which provides for measures related to the promotion of human rights protection in business, i.e. Actions and measures adopted by the government that have been implemented, are being implemented or are planned to be implemented in the near future are related to the implementation of the Principles on Business and Human Rights.

During its Voluntary National Review at the High Level Political Forum in July 2018, Lithuania stated: "With a view to combating discrimination and establishing human rights in the labour market and business, it is planned to draw up the second national action plan on business and human rights in 2018 following the guidelines of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the United Nations." Although the plan has not yet been adopted, the article aims to assess Lithuania's progress and problems with the implementation of business and human rights principles.

Design/methodology/approach – linguistic, teleological, systematic analysis, comparative methods are used to evaluate soft law norms implementation to national law.

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Finding – current National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights is not updated since its adoption in 2014. Moreover, most of the measures presented in the plan are already out of date. Such situation creates uncertainty for businesses.

Research limitations/implications – the study is limited to NAPs-related UNGPs' implementation efforts in Lithuania.

Practical implications – this work aims to reveal problems with existing Lithuania's National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights and makes proposals for a new plan.

Originality/Value – this research attempts to provide a critical perspective on Lithuanian action plan on business and human rights and provide suggestions for the future update of the plan.

Keywords: United Nations, business and human rights, national action plans.

Research type: research paper.