

Lithuania

Thank you for your insights on how minorities enrich cultural life and advance development of societies. Constitution of Lithuania protects the freedom of thought, conscience, religion, and the fundamental rights of all persons. Our democracy is strengthened by its diversity, and our laws aim to build a just and open society for everyone. Last year, the new law on national minorities was adopted in our country. This comprehensive legislation establishes the rights, freedoms, and obligations essential for maintaining and fostering the traditions, customs, cultural, and linguistic identity of minorities. The law affirms the right to receive education in the language of the national minority in schools. Lithuania also promotes cultural language identity by providing extra state funding and support to 34 Sunday schools. This non-formal education reached more than 1,000 children of 16 nationalities in 2024. Enabling them to preserve their mother tongue and traditions. Support for cultural preservation is provided by the Department of National Minorities under the Government of Lithuania. Furthermore, our legislation guarantees freedom of religion and belief. There are 189 registered religious communities and associations in Lithuania. Of these, nine religious communities are officially recognized as historic and traditional, receiving state support. In conclusion, new law on national minorities and direct investment in cultural and linguistic education demonstrate Lithuania's respect for multicultural and multi-confessional coexistence. We will continue to promote and defend these principles internally and in our external relations, particularly as we observe constraints on the rights of persons of Lithuanian minority in our close neighborhood. We urge every country to recognize the valuable contribution of minorities to the cohesion of society. Thank you.