

# **MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY AND CHALLENGES OF GOING THROUGH A DIVORCE – THE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SYSTEMATIC INTERDISCIPLINARY COOPERATION**

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## **BACKGROUND**

Divorce for parents and their children is a challenging process which causes a lot of stress in different phases of divorce and adaptation after divorce. In terms of the ratio of marriages and divorces, there are currently 65 divorces per 100 marriages in Lithuania – one of the highest numbers in the European Union. Lithuania shows initiative to investigate the situation, to develop and implement a system of systematic help for divorced families. The theme of marital divorce requires close cooperation between the ministries of justice, social security and labour, health care, education, science and sport, internal affairs, and also municipalities, public health bureaus, non-governmental organizations, various specialists in responding to the health and psychosocial needs of divorced (or going through a divorce) adults and children of different ages.

## **OBJECTIVES**

To gain insight on how to provide the needed supportive services for the divorced families (adults and children) or families going through a divorce.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND MAIN ACTION POINTS**

Interinstitutional cooperation as well as cooperation between different levels is needed. These are municipalities, the Ministries (Government) and non-governmental organizations with strong support from researchers' and universities. Further development of mental health services is needed. The development of family packages would offer families full assistance, e.g. by a psychiatrist and/or a psychologist, social worker and directed to other specialists if needed.

### **Main Action Points:**

- Establish interinstitutional collaborative network between Ministry of Health Care, other ministries, municipalities, and non-governmental organisations to ensure the mental health literacy of the population.
- Training programme “Improvement of Mental Health Literacy” for educational, social and health care specialists, who are working with children and families (teachers, doctors, nurses, social workers, public health specialists, psychologists).