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## **THE PUBLIC INFORMATION ON THE EURO ADOPTION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OF LITHUANIA**

### **I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. The Public Information on the Euro Adoption and Communication Strategy of Lithuania is a medium-term strategic planning document, the objective of which is to provide relevant and comprehensive information to the public of Lithuania about the single currency of the European Union and its influence on the national economy and the population, the preparation of the Republic of Lithuania for the adoption of the euro and the planned euro changeover procedure; it is also aimed at establishing conditions for the expedient and co-ordinated implementation of the measures for public information on the euro adoption and communication planned by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the Bank of Lithuania, and other public authorities and institutions (hereinafter referred to as the institutions concerned).

2. The first Strategy was approved by Government of the Republic of Lithuania Resolution No. 1050 of 29 September 2005 “On the Adoption of the National Changeover Plan and the Public Information on the Euro Adoption and Communication Strategy” (“Valstybės žinios” (Official Gazette), 2005, No. 117-4235) and was under implementation. The Strategy in this document was improved, prepared following the National Changeover Plan and based on the public opinion polls; it takes into consideration the experience of the euro area Member States in organising the campaigns for the provision of information on the euro adoption and communication and the experience of Lithuanian institutions in this area and is presented in a new wording (hereinafter referred to as this Strategy).

3. The main principle for the implementation of this Strategy is the linking of the euro adoption process with the process of Lithuania’s accession and integration into the European Union. In implementing this Strategy, active participation of the public in the process of preparation for the euro adoption and the improvement of the economic literacy of the public are sought.

## **II. CURRENT SITUATION**

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION ON THE EURO**

4. In implementing the first Strategy, the institutions concerned prepared, published and disseminated to the public the publications on the single currency of the European Union, the euro. Seminars and other events were organised and lectures were read to employees of education establishments, businessmen, bank cashiers, public officers, consumers and other target groups in various places of the country. Representatives of the institutions concerned discussed the issues of interest to the public and answered the questions about the planned adoption of the euro in Lithuania in the meetings with local communities in various regions of the country.

5. Understanding that one of the most efficient sources for the provision of information on the preparation for the adoption of the euro is the mass media, during the period of implementation of the first Strategy the institutions concerned provided the euro area news and a large amount of information on the euro adoption and their activities to the mass media. The institutions concerned cooperated with the national television channels and public radio stations preparing and broadcasting cognitive broadcasts, specialised rubrics, information clips and other information materials. Therefore, the adoption of the euro was one of the most important topics in the mass media.

### **PUBLIC OPINION**

6. Commissioned by the European Commission, the international public opinion and market research company *the Gallup Organization* conducted a Eurobarometer survey in September 4-8, 2006, covering more than 10,000 inhabitants 15 years old and up from the new European Union Member States. Commissioned by the Bank of Lithuania, the Public Opinion and Market Research Center, the joint stock company Vilmorus (hereinafter referred to as Vilmorus) conducted a survey of the Lithuanian population (1009 inhabitants of Lithuania 15 years and older from 20 cities and 68 villages were surveyed in December 1-4, 2006). The research data show that the knowledge of the Lithuanian population about the euro is getting better gradually. According to the Eurobarometer findings, 31 percent of the Lithuanian population were adequately informed about the process of the euro adoption in September 2005 and 40 per cent in September 2006 (the average in the new European Union Member States is 40 per cent). The Vilmorus survey showed that 44.4 percent of Lithuanians are adequately informed about the process and the course of the adoption of the euro. The Eurobarometer poll also showed that 43 percent of the population believe that the euro will have a positive impact on the national economy (in 2005, this figure was only 32 percent). A slight

decline in the number of those negatively disposed towards the euro was recorded: 59 percent in 2005, and 56 percent in 2006.

7. The Eurobarometer survey showed that the country's population (63 percent of those surveyed) would like to get advance information about the procedure and circumstances of the adoption of the euro in Lithuania; of these, 28 percent would like to get such information as early as possible and 35 percent would like to be informed several years before the adoption of the euro).

8. The Vilnius survey discovered that the Lithuanian population is well informed that the single currency of the European Union is the euro (95.9 percent). They also know that the euro is not used in all European Union Member States (84.8 percent). Although almost 71 percent of the population have a positive view of Lithuania's membership in the European Union, only 43.8 percent denote the euro as the single currency of the European Union, and 50.7 percent of those surveyed consider that the euro as just a currency unit. 40.7 percent stated that Lithuania plans to adopt the euro in 2010, while only 39.9 percent noted that Lithuania is obliged to do so. Just as in earlier surveys, the Lithuanian population was inclined to delay the changes – 40.8 percent of the surveyed would like the euro to be introduced later than in 2010. The Vilnius survey identified that:

8.1. The most easily comprehensible advantages of the adoption of the euro for the population of Lithuania were the following: no need to change currency while traveling within the European Union (71.6 percent said this is important); Lithuania will become a full-fledged member of the European Union (68.1 percent); settlements of businesses with foreign partners will be easier (74.2 percent). Less weight was given to the fact that the euro is a reliable and stable currency (59.7 percent) and it will be easier to compare prices across the European Union Member States (62.9 percent).

8.2. The biggest concerns related to the adoption of the euro were also identified: a significant 91.8 percent are concerned about a potential rise in prices, 83.4 percent worry that their savings will be devalued and 69.4 percent are concerned that Lithuania will lose its national currency. Generally, the concerns remain the same as those indicated in earlier surveys commissioned by the Bank of Lithuania and in the regular Eurobarometer surveys done throughout the European Union.

8.3. The Lithuanian population were quite unanimous in their evaluation of sources of information. The most trusted sources of information regarding the euro were these: family members, relatives and acquaintances living in the euro area Member States (67.5 percent); people from countries where the euro was introduced recently (63.9 percent); economists (60.1 percent) and the Bank of Lithuania (58.7 percent). The least trustworthy sources were: representatives of non-governmental organizations (12.3 percent), members of the parliament (15.4 percent) and business representatives (16.4 percent). Surprisingly, the press only gathered a scant 26.1 percent.

8.4. Respondents rated the information about the euro in terms of its importance in the following manner: the most important information is about potential consequences of the euro adoption (88.1 percent), the practical information of the euro changeover (86.2 percent) and consequences of the euro adoption in other countries (71.2 percent).

8.5. The population were unanimous in their evaluation of information media and information provision channels: a significant 91.6 percent responded that information via television is needed, 79.4 percent believed that information through radio is needed, while 78.4 percent would like to obtain information through the national press and 65.1 percent through the local press. People were least interested in the information provided by libraries (22.8 percent).

9. A Vilnius survey of the business community of Lithuania conducted from 21 November to 8 December 2006 (commissioned by the Bank of Lithuania) covered 403 businessmen and company executives from various sectors. Businessmen generally had a positive view of Lithuania's membership in the European Union (61 percent) and emphasized freer movement of goods and services, opening of new markets and the assistance of the European Union. Several negative aspects were also noted – more bureaucracy and higher labour emigration. This survey identified that:

9.1. Businesses evaluated the adoption of the euro more favourably – 54.3 percent of respondents were in favour of the single currency, however, 47.1 percent also favourably evaluated the fact that Lithuania failed to adopt the euro in 2007. On the other hand, 32 percent of respondents would like the euro to be introduced as soon as possible, and, together with those who want this to happen in 2009 or 2010, this part of respondents makes up more than 60 percent of the total.

9.2. Businessmen believe that the adoption of the euro will allow Lithuania to establish itself as a full-fledged European Union Member State. This factor was of concern to 68 percent of the businessmen and was significantly more important than other factors related to the benefits of the euro adoption. When evaluated in the context of the whole economy of Lithuania, instead of only personal business, this factor was considered even more important – 75.4 percent of respondents indicated this factor as important.

9.3. Businessmen also cited a possible rise in prices as a disadvantage of the euro adoption (only 32.3 percent).

9.4. Most businessmen (as much as 79.5 percent) thought that they should participate in the process of the adoption of the euro; of these, 44.4 percent denoted that they should participate via business associations. 37 percent of respondents knew about the Code of Good Business Practice, which was under preparation for signing, and only 27 percent believed that it may prevent from a rise in prices.

9.5. The following sources of information were considered by businessmen as most trusted: economists (70.5 percent of respondents), people from countries where the euro was introduced recently (68.5 percent), the Bank of Lithuania (67.2 percent) and business associations (63.5 percent). The least trusted sources were members of the parliament of the Republic of Lithuania (15.9 percent), emigrants (18.1 percent) and journalists (24.3 percent).

9.6. The most important information for businesses at present is the information on potential consequences of the adoption of the euro (84.6 percent), Lithuania's preparation (75.9 percent) and the adoption of the euro in other countries (72.5 percent). One year before the adoption of the euro, the most important information for them would be the information about potential consequences of the adoption of the euro to business (92.6 percent) and the changeover procedure (92.3 percent).

9.7. The most important information media for businesses were different from those preferred by the general public: 88.8 percent of respondents would like to get information via the Internet, 84.9% through the national press and 83.1 percent through television.

10. Commissioned by the European Commission, the international public opinion and market research company *The Gallup Organization* conducted a Eurobarometer survey in September 4-8, 2006, dedicated to the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the introduction of the euro in the European Union Member States, covering more than 12,000 inhabitants 15 years old and up from the euro area Member States. The survey identified that:

10.1. 5 years after the introduction of the euro, the euro was favourably evaluated by 48 percent of the population of the euro area Member States. Those considering that the euro created more problems than it gave benefits made up 38 percent. 7 percent believed that the new currency changed nothing and 7 percent did not have any opinion on the issue.

10.2. The euro was evaluated favourably by as much as 75 percent in Ireland, 65 percent in Finland and 64 per cent in Luxembourg. The lowest percentage (38 percent) of those evaluating the euro favourably was in Greece and the Netherlands. The evaluation of the adoption of the euro was the worst in those states where the adoption of the euro coincided with the cycle of deceleration of the economic growth.

10.3. As much as 81.4 percent of respondents stated that the prices increased after the adoption of the euro. Compared to the concern about a rise in prices, other negative changes seem insignificant. 18.5 percent of respondents believed that the euro aggravated everyday life, 7 per cent thought that it slowed down the growth of the national economy and increased the rate of unemployment and 5 percent noted that it harmed the national sovereignty.

### **III. ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVITIES**

#### **INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK**

11. To ensure the proper preparation of Lithuania for the adoption of the euro, the Commission for Coordination of the Adoption of the Euro in the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the Commission) was established on 30 May 2005, following Government of the Republic of Lithuania Resolution No. 592. The Commission is chaired by the Prime Minister who has two deputy chairmen - the Minister of Finance and the Chairman of the Board of the Bank of Lithuania. Members of the Commission include the Minister of Social Security and Labour, the Minister of Economy, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Agriculture, and the General Director of the Department of Statistics under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the Department of Statistics). The Commission's objective is to ensure proper preparation for the adoption of the euro in the Republic of Lithuania. Seven working groups have been set up to deal with specific issues and submit conclusions to the Commission, these are the Coordination Working Group, the Public Information Working Group,

the Cash Working Group, the Business Environment Working Group, the Consumer Rights Protection and Social Affairs Working Group, the Legal Issues Working Group, and the Information Technologies Working Group (Republic of Lithuania Government Resolution No. 204 of 12 August 2005 and Republic of Lithuania Government Resolution No. 318 of 23 December 2005).

12. The Public Information Working Group consists of the representatives of the public institutions, such as the Bank of Lithuania, the Office of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Statistics, as well as consumers, businessmen and municipal institutions, such as the Lithuanian Consumer Institute, the Association of Lithuanian Trade Enterprises and the Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania. The Public Information Working Group coordinates the activities of the public institutions during the implementation of the Strategy, discusses the information submitted by the institutions on the course of implementation of the Strategy and provides the information thereon and proposals on updating and supplementing the Strategy to the Commission, taking into consideration the results of the monitoring and evaluation of its implementation.

#### **CO-OPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK**

13. The Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Lithuania are represented in the meetings of the managers of communication units of finance ministries and central banks of the European Union Member States organised by the Economic and Financial Affairs DG of the European Commission, intended for discussing the issues related to the provision of information to the public on the adoption of the euro. The European Commission has also envisaged a budget and offers different forms of co-operation (according to the Partnership Agreement between the Republic of Lithuania and the European Commission for the organisation of information and communication campaigns on the changeover to the euro in the Republic of Lithuania according to the information and communication strategy on the euro and the Economic and Monetary Union signed on 8 November 2005 (Valstybės žinios (Official Gazette), 2006, No. 6-195) (hereinafter referred to as the Partnership Agreement), also according to the Twinning Programme) for the implementation of various communication measures.

14. Under the Twinning Programme, other European Union Member States share their practical experience in the area of public information and other areas related to the adoption of the euro with the Lithuanian institutions providing information on the euro to the public (the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Lithuania).

15. Following the Partnership Agreement, the European Commission finances and implements certain public information measures. The Bank of Lithuania has been assigned as an institution responsible for the implementation of the Partnership Agreement.

16. The representatives of the Bank of Lithuania participate in the Euro Cash Communication Working Group of the Eurosystem/ECB Communications Committee. It coordinates the issues related to the implementation of public information campaigns on euro banknotes and coins in the countries seeking to adopt the single currency of the European Union, reconciles the information on euro banknotes and coins to be published, and discusses the preparation of the means for the presentation of security features of euro banknotes and coins (booklets, posters and information on websites) and analogous education materials for cashiers.

#### **IV. OBJECTIVES**

17. The following objectives are raised in this Strategy:

17.1. Informing the public about the adoption of the euro and related factors. The institutions concerned have to supply information to the public within their competence on all aspects of the adoption of the euro: impact of the adoption of the euro on the Lithuanian economy, principles of conversion of accounts of the population and companies with banks, balance-sheets and social benefits to euro, denominations of euro banknotes and coins, banknote security features, cash changeover facilities.

17.2. Helping the public to prepare for the adoption of the euro. While providing information to the public, the institutions concerned have to create the conditions for the proper and timely preparation of the public for the adoption of the euro.

17.3. Contributing to the smooth process of the adoption of the euro in Lithuania. The institutions concerned have to aim at securing contribution to the smooth adoption of the euro by the public that is well-informed, well-prepared and supports the adoption of the euro. Forming the attitude that only coordinated actions of all institutions concerned, active participation of the whole society and benevolent support of business enterprises will allow ensure the smooth adoption of the euro in Lithuania.

17.4. Forming a favourable attitude of the public towards the future currency of Lithuania, the euro. The institutions concerned have to take care to prevent concerns of the well-informed society about the adoption of the single currency of the European Union, ensure understanding of the benefits of the euro adoption in Lithuania and seek public support and favourable attitude towards the single currency of the European Union during the adoption of the euro in Lithuania and afterwards.

## **V. KEY PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**

18. The main principle for the implementation of this Strategy is the linking of the process of the adoption of the euro with the idea of the general integration to the European Union. The research confirmed that target groups of the society do not link the adoption of the euro with the integration to the European Union. Information should be used to link these processes and explain that the euro means closer integration to the European Union. Moreover, as the research suggests, the public is not concerned about the euro itself, but about its too fast adoption and the related potential negative processes; therefore, the provision of information to target groups of the society should not return to the principled discussion about the necessity of the euro adoption, it is sufficient to allow understanding that the adoption of the euro is already provided for in the Accession Treaty of Lithuania and it is not the question of principle, but only the question of time. The postponement of the adoption of the euro was determined not by doubts regarding the benefits of the euro, but by objective criteria that Lithuania did not comply with during the time of its assessment in May 2006. By linking the ideas of the accession to the euro area and the integration to the European Union, it is sought to secure support of the part of society that evaluates the membership in the European Union favourably (around 70 percent). This idea should be reflected in the visual materials, symbol and slogan (-s) of the activities of the provision of information on the euro. They will help target groups to notice easier the information on the adoption of the euro in the general information flow and identify it as the euro information campaign. The general idea of the European Union should be followed in providing information to all target groups.

19. The secondary principles that facilitate smoother implementation of this Strategy are the following:

19.1. Involvement of social groups in the process of the adoption of the euro. This principle is applied for a more transparent and efficient utilisation of capabilities of individual social groups to participate in the process of the practical dissemination of information, and to perform the functions of control and supervision right after the adoption of the euro. Political organisations, non-governmental organisations and business associations could become especially important information partners of the institutions concerned. This principle would help not only in maintaining the feedback with target groups of the society more efficiently, but also in promoting the idea that the adoption of the euro, same as the integration into the European Union, is a common concern of all citizens.

19.2. Raising economic literacy. Understanding of the main principles of the functioning of economy would allow the society and target groups to perceive better the necessity of the adoption of the euro, get rid of unreasonable fear related to the adoption of the euro and give publicity to indirect benefit of the adoption of the euro. It is no less important for the public to know and

understand that, to adopt the euro, it is necessary to comply with the criteria of financial stability that also determine a stable condition of the national economy. After the adoption of the euro, a country acquires more capabilities to maintain stability of its economic and financial condition. Publication of the information on the Economic and Monetary Union would contribute to this.

20. When emphasizing the benefit of the adoption of the euro, it is important to pay more attention to the explanation and publication of indirect benefits of the adoption of the euro (saved currency exchange expenses, cheaper borrowing in foreign markets, etc.).

21. In implementing this Strategy, the institutions concerned have to follow certain public information principles. The most important principles are the following:

21.1. Openness and transparency principle. The institutions concerned have to be open, accessible to all interested in the adoption of the euro, and always ready to answer all questions related to the adoption of the euro within their competence and to provide all possible information.

21.2. Feedback principle. The institutions concerned not only have to provide information to the public, but also to analyse carefully and assess how this information is perceived by the public, and to receive feedback.

21.3. Unanimity principle. The institutions concerned have to consider carefully, co-ordinate among themselves and aim at providing the public with uniform and coordinated information both at the level of managers and other experts communicating with the public.

21.4. Information quality principle. The information provided by the institutions concerned has to be timely, clear, easily understandable, and adjusted to each target group.

22. The institutions concerned have to prepare timely and comprehensive information on all issues arising during the implementation of the Strategy with regard to the adoption of the euro and to ensure that it reaches the intended addressee. In order to ensure that the opinion of the population is based on knowledge and not only on emotions, especially important are the practical aspects of the adoption of the euro. All target groups should receive comprehensive practical information on the euro and the conditions for its adoption. It includes the information on the changeover procedures, the dual circulation period, the consumer protection mechanism during the changeover, graphic representations of euro banknotes and coins and descriptions of characteristics, identifications marks and security features of euro banknotes and coins. Detailed explanations should be presented about the payment of wages, pensions and other benefits, settlement for goods and services during the dual circulation period and afterwards, conversion of accounts of the population and companies with banks to the euro, etc. Attention should be focused in particular on informing the population of small towns and villages.

23. To ensure that the public perceives the benefits of the adoption of the euro as good as possible, it is very important to explain that the prices will be converted to the euro according to

strict rounding rules and that there are no reasons to fear a general increase in prices after the adoption of the euro, since the replacement of one currency with another does not create conditions for a price jump. It is also important to popularise the Lithuanian symbol on the national side of euro coins and to emphasize that this is the way to continue the tradition of the Lithuanian currency. Due attention should be paid to the presentation of the national sides of euro coins of all euro area Member States, since coins of other countries will also circulate in Lithuania after the adoption of the euro. While informing foreign media and other foreign institutions concerned about Lithuania's preparation for the adoption of the euro, the network of Lithuanian diplomatic representations as well as support of the European Union institutions should be used.

24. The language factor is also important; the information should be prepared not only in Lithuanian, but also in the other languages used by the national minorities living in Lithuania (Russian, Polish and other), as well as by foreign businessmen and tourists (English). Information also has to be adapted for the disabled people.

25. Taking into account the public opinion and the media surveys, the most effective information provision sources (television, press, brochures, etc.) and channels should be selected. Much effort should be devoted to the provision of information to the public about the sources of information on the adoption of the euro.

26. In their relations with the media, the institutions concerned should not only respond effectively to the inquiries received, but also initiate the discussions on various issues of the adoption of the euro in the media and meetings of their representatives with various target groups of the population and to utilise other tools and methods for the dissemination of information. The institutions concerned should search for arguments proving the benefit of the adoption of the euro, collect and publish them. This would not only raise the level of awareness of the public, but also help conquering the doubts of a part of the population about the adoption of the euro. In addition, the institutions concerned should initiate positive signals regarding the preparation of Lithuania for the adoption of the euro both in Lithuania and abroad. It is necessary to seek involvement of the respected individuals of the society in the public discussions about the adoption of the euro. However, during the implementation of this Strategy, too high expectations of the public that are impossible to implement should not be raised.

27. It is important to inform the public in a way co-ordinated both with the public and private institutions in Lithuania and abroad by focusing much attention also to the internal communication of the institutions in order to ensure the ability of the institution staff to explain issues related to the adoption of the euro. The staff and the management of the institutions concerned should disseminate uniform and coordinated information on the adoption of the euro.

28. It is necessary to encourage active contribution of commercial banks, business associations, consumer, disabled, youth and various other organisations that form the public opinion, information providers to the provision of information on the adoption of the euro to the public. Advertising (creative and media) and public relations agencies must be employed for the implementation of specific public information measures.

29. The experience of institutions concerned in carrying out the information campaign for the referendum on membership in the European Union and other wide-scale public information projects, as well as the experience of international and euro area institutions should be used. A co-operation with the European Commission and the European Central Bank that play an important role in the preparation for the adoption of the euro in new European Union Member States, making the decisions on the expansion of the euro area and their implementation is particularly important.

30. In implementing this Strategy, it is useful to monitor and gather information on the experience of the new European Union Member States that intend to adopt or have adopted the euro and to disseminate it through selected channels.

Public information and communication tools are listed in the Appendix to this Strategy.

## **VI. MESSAGE CATEGORIES**

31. Given a wide range of information provided to the public, the variety of messages (key news) and in order to plan their effective timely presentation to the required addressee, several message categories should be distinguished:

31.1. Promotion of economic literacy. Messages that help the public to understand basic economic processes and their consistent pattern and create an information base for the understanding of the significance of the adoption of the euro.

31.2. Analysis of economic processes. Messages showing that certain fears of the society are not related to the adoption of the euro, since they depend on other economic processes.

31.3. Preparation for the adoption of the euro. Messages promoting interest in the adoption of the euro and in other factors related to the preparation for the adoption.

31.4. Consequences (results) of the adoption of the euro in Lithuania. Messages forming a favourable public opinion on the adoption of the euro.

31.5. Practical aspects of the adoption of the euro. Messages related to different aspects of the adoption of the euro: the value of goods and services in euro, schedule of the national currency (cash and non-cash) changeover to the euro, denominations of euro banknotes and coins, euro banknote security features, etc.

31.6. Experience of foreign states during and after the adoption of the euro.

## **VII. TARGET GROUPS**

32. The main target of this Strategy is the whole population of Lithuania. However, taking into consideration the nature of activity, distinctive information needs and accessibility of its dissemination channels, the following main target groups are distinguished:

32.1. General public – the entire population of Lithuania who use currency and will directly face the changeover.

32.2. The media – Lithuanian national and regional media, foreign press, radio, television and Internet;

32.3. Businesses – trade and services sectors.

32.4. Public institutions and their servants – not directly related to the adoption of the euro, but able to disseminate information prepared by the institutions through their communication channels.

32.5. Retired persons and persons eligible to social support – mostly unemployed population.

32.6. Youth – young people, mostly schoolchildren and students;

32.7. Disabled people – people with hearing, visual or other disabilities.

32.8. National minorities – national minorities that are permanent residents of Lithuania.

32.9. Residents of remote settlements and granges.

32.10. Foreigner nationals – residents of those states, from which the largest number of businessmen and tourists come to Lithuania, and residents of the neighbouring states.

32.11. Lithuanian citizens living in other states.

## **VIII. INFORMATION MULTIPLIERS**

33. The institutions concerned co-operate with other institutions and organisations while implementing this Strategy and seeking to provide as comprehensive information to the public as possible. The main multipliers of information on the adoption of the euro prepared by the institutions concerned are the following:

33.1. Other public and municipal institutions – not directly related to the adoption of the euro, but able to disseminate information prepared by the institutions concerned through their communication channels, such as municipalities (through their public relations divisions), local authorities, social care and other institutions.

33.2. The media – national, regional, specialised (including the media in foreign languages), one of the main builders of the public opinion that have high confidence of the public; the media

established by the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania living abroad, operating in the euro area states.

33.3. Commercial banks – an important provider of information to bank clients (depositors, borrowers, people exchanging the litas into the euro, etc.).

33.4 Education establishments – the main source of information for the youth.

33.5. Shopping centres and other trade and service centres – important public gathering places, where most people will encounter the new currency for the first time.

33.6. Large enterprises – potential sources for the provision of information on the adoption of to their employees.

33.7. Business associations, consumer organisations and other non-governmental organisations uniting various interest groups, specialised information centres – important intermediaries in providing information to target groups and implementing specific information provision projects.

33.8. Libraries – Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, regional and municipal public libraries, libraries of scientific and higher educational institutions, school libraries (excluding higher educational institutions), special libraries and other libraries – potential sources for the provision of information related to the adoption of the euro to readers.

33.9. Travel agencies and hotels – one of the most important sources for the provision of information to foreigners arriving to Lithuania.

33.10. Police – a potential source for the provision of information on the use of euro banknotes and coins to the Lithuanian population and foreign guests.

33.11. Public opinion leaders – politicians, businessmen, employees in education and science, art and show business representatives actively participating in the social life of the country.

33.12. Political parties.

33.13. Post offices – institutions with a wide network providing post and other services to the population.

## **IX. STAGES OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION**

34. This Strategy will be implemented in three stages:

34.1. Stage One: the period of preparation that started in September 2005, when this Strategy was adopted, and will continue to the date when the Council of the European Union makes the decision on the abrogation of the derogation to temporarily use the national currency in the Republic of Lithuania and the adoption of the euro in the Republic of Lithuania. Information related to the adoption of the euro is provided, the importance of the preparation period is stressed, symbols and

slogan (-s) of the public information campaign are introduced, and preparatory work for the intensive information campaign is performed at this stage. The institutions concerned discuss with the businessmen, non-governmental organisations and communities in order to find out their needs and concerns and to communicate relevant information on the euro area, its influence on the economy of Lithuania and potential indirect benefit to the national economy and an individual person. During this period it is very important to communicate with the media constantly and to start a series of educational articles and broadcasts on macroeconomic processes and their impact on the life of each citizen and to show the results of the adoption of the euro in the new European Union Member States through those information provision channels that are most trusted by the target audiences. These results will be communicated to the media and the public of Lithuania. It is planned to pay particularly much attention to the provision of information about the participation in the Exchange Rate Mechanism II, compliance with the Maastricht criteria, the European Central Bank and European Commission Convergence Reports and the decision of the Council of the European Union on the announcement of Lithuania's readiness for the adoption of the euro. In this stage, the information provision activities become more intensive when Lithuania submits the request regarding the membership in the euro area.

34.2. Stage Two: the period of preparation for the changeover from the date when the Council of the European Union makes the decision on the abrogation of the derogation to temporarily use the national currency in the Republic of Lithuania and the adoption of the euro in the Republic of Lithuania to the date of the adoption of the euro. This is the most intensive stage of the information campaign. The euro and the general idea of the European Union are linked even stronger than earlier and more emotionally by means of public relations and advertising. The benefit of the adoption of the euro is emphasized. Events dedicated to the euro are organised, the changeover plan is communicated, and still more intensive and vivid discussion with the public groups is started in order to involve them into the process of the adoption of the euro as potential assistants in monitoring and controlling the price conversion and display procedures. The agreements concluded with business organisations are communicated.

34.3 Stage Three: the period after the adoption of the euro: the day of the adoption of the euro and six months after the adoption of the euro. The public is informed about the price monitoring results and other information aspects related to the adoption of the euro, and the public opinion surveys are conducted in order to find out the attitude of target groups towards the new currency and the processes that accompanied the adoption process.

## **X. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS**

35. Effectiveness of the public information activity will greatly depend on the decisions of the institutions concerned related to the changeover procedure, as well as on the image of the euro in the euro area and the non-euro area European Union Member States.

36. In implementing this Strategy and the public information and communication measures related to the adoption of the euro provided therein, the institutions concerned have to conduct an ongoing monitoring and assessment of the following actions: information presented in the media (in terms of quantity and quality); public opinion on the planned adoption of the euro in Lithuania, determining factors with respect to the opinions and information needs; public inquiries received; other external factors (involvement of the business associations, and non-governmental organisations in the provision of information to the public about the adoption of the euro in Lithuania; assessment of the euro in the countries that have adopted the euro and in the countries that have not adopted it; confidence in Lithuanian government institutions and public authorities, as well as in the media; the opinion of the European Union institutions on the adoption of the euro in Lithuania; general economic and political situation in the country).

Appendix to the Public Information  
on the Euro Adoption and Communication Strategy of Lithuania

**PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS**

No.	Tools	Description	Target groups	Stage of implementation	The institutions concerned	Remarks
1.	Public opinion surveys	Periodical public and business opinion surveys in order to find out their attitude towards the adoption of the euro in Lithuania and determining factors, to identify public information needs and to evaluate the efficiency of the public information and communication measures of this Strategy.		I, II, III	Bank of Lithuania	In addition to surveys commissioned by the Bank of Lithuania, the public opinion surveys contracted by the European Commission and the European Union institutions are analysed.
2.	Media monitoring	Constant monitoring of the Lithuanian and foreign (if possible) media, analysis of the information and issues related to the adoption of the euro presented in the media, identification of the needs for information on the adoption of the euro.		I, II, III	Ministry of Finance, all other institutions concerned within their competence	Contracted by the Ministry of Finance, daily material on the Lithuanian media monitoring in relation to the adoption of the euro is prepared and distributed to other institutions concerned.
3.	Preparation of FAQ and answers on the adoption of the euro	Regular preparation of FAQ by the institutions concerned, mutual exchange and constant updating of FAQs.	Various target groups	I, II, III	All the institutions concerned within their competence	
4.	Developing symbols for the euro information campaign	In order to facilitate identification of the information provided through all communication channels and by different institutions by the public in the general information flow as the euro information campaign, symbols and a slogan (slogans) for the information campaign should be developed.	General public	I	Bank of Lithuania	
5.	Provision of information on the issues of	Constant provision of information to the (Lithuanian national and regional, foreign and specialised) media on various issues related to	The media	I, II, III	All the institutions concerned within	

	the adoption of the euro to the media	the adoption of the euro in Lithuania: public opinion, legal acts adopted or under adoption, decisions of the institutions concerned, compliance with the Maastricht criteria, timing of the adoption of the euro, possibilities of cash changeover, etc. Information is provided through announcements, interviews of the managers and experts of the institutions concerned, press conferences, presentations, posting of relevant information on the website and visits of the media representatives to the euro area states.			their competence	
6.	Provision of information on the issues of the adoption of the euro directly to target groups, preparation of answers to inquiries	Educational seminars, lectures presenting the adoption of the euro to the media representatives, businessmen, representatives of non-governmental organisations, public servants, cashiers and other target groups. Constant processing of inquiries received by the institutions concerned and preparation of answers to the inquiries on the issues of the adoption of the euro. Answers by post, e-mail, telephone, etc.	The media, public institutions and their staff, businessmen, elderly population, the disabled, youth, foreign nationals, other specific target groups	I, II, III	All the institutions concerned within their competence	
7.	Publications:					

7.1.	Publication about the euro	Comprehensive annual publication reflecting the topics related to the adoption of the euro in Lithuania (in Lithuanian, Russian, Polish and English)	General public	I, II	Prepared and distributed by the Bank of Lithuania and, if necessary, other institutions concerned	Distributed directly through mail boxes, with press publications, through information multipliers, directly to target groups
7.2.	Publications of the European Central Bank and the European Commission	Publications of the European Central Bank and the European Union institutions in Lithuanian about the euro and the Economic and Monetary Union	General public	I, II, III	Prepared and printed by the European Central Bank and the European Commission, distributed by the Bank of Lithuania and, if necessary, other institutions concerned	Distributed directly through mail boxes, with press publications, through information multipliers, directly to target groups.
7.3.	Publications to target groups	Publication of booklets, posters, information sheets to target groups (children, national minorities, elderly population). Relevant information on the euro adoption topics and the euro area news is presented.	Various target groups	II	Prepared and printed and distributed by all institutions concerned within their competence	Distributed directly through mail boxes, with press publications, through information multipliers, directly to target groups.

8.	Development of a joint website <a href="http://www.euro.lt">www.euro.lt</a> for the presentation of the adoption of the euro and the topics related to the euro adoption process and the European Union membership	Development and regular updating of the website presenting all information related to the adoption of the euro prepared by the institutions concerned. In the website's section on the adoption of the euro the institutions concerned present the news, legal acts, decisions, graphical representations of the euro banknotes and coins, their security features, the terms of the changeover, the calculator, the FAQ and so on. This website presents the links from all institutions concerned, as well as links to other websites, which provide useful information on the euro.	General public, the media, business men, public institutions and their staff, the youth, foreign nationals, other target groups.	I, II, III	Bank of Lithuania, the Office of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, other institutions concerned.	The Office of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania is responsible for developing the website content management system and using the general symbols of the information campaign on the website. The Office of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania has the rights of the website's administrator. The Bank of Lithuania is responsible for the content of information about the euro and its updates.
9.	Provision of information on the adoption of the euro on the websites of the institutions concerned	The institutions concerned present on their websites the main information on the euro adoption in Lithuania, related decisions and legal acts of the institutions, etc.	General public, the media, business men, public institutions and their staff, the youth, foreign nationals, other target groups.	I, II, III	All the institutions concerned	An opportunity is granted to the institutions concerned to include on their websites the links of similar design to the section of the website <a href="http://www.euro.lt">www.euro.lt</a> , where the euro adoption, euro banknotes and coins and their security features are presented comprehensively.

10.	Preparation of information for the blind and the visually impaired	Information prepared in Braille and/or audio information about the euro adoption	The disabled	II	Bank of Lithuania	
11.	Setting up euro stands	Setting up European Commission information stands with illustrated information about the Economic and Monetary Union at educational establishments and institutions concerned	General public, public institutions and their staff, youth	II	Bank of Lithuania	Coordinated by the Bank of Lithuania
12.	Organisation of the conference “Lithuania’s Path Towards the Euro” (preliminary title)	Organisation of an international conference dedicated to the review of Lithuania’s preparation for the adoption of the euro and the impact of the euro adoption on the economy	General public, the media, businessmen, public institutions and their staff, youth, foreign nationals	I, II	Bank of Lithuania	
13.	“Europhone” (800-line)	Free telephone hotline (800-line), “Europhone”, providing all urgent information related to the adoption of the euro prepared by the institutions concerned.	General public	II, III	Bank of Lithuania	
14.	Advertising	Press, television, radio, outdoor and internet advertising, providing information on euro banknotes and coins and their security features, the terms of the changeover, etc.	General public	II, III	Bank of Lithuania	

15.	Organisation of "Eurobus" visits	A van or another vehicle decorated with special euro attributes visiting the cities and regional centres of Lithuania. During their visits to the cities and regional centres (at the main places of meetings) publications on the adoption of the euro, souvenirs, etc., distributed.	General public	II	Bank of Lithuania	
16.	Production of euro souvenirs	Production of souvenirs (ties, office supplies, etc.) decorated with the euro attributes.	General public	I, II, III	Bank of Lithuania	Souvenirs are distributed through information multipliers directly to target groups.
17.	Internal communication	The latest information on the issues related to the adoption of the euro for the staff of the institutions concerned provided through internal communication tools (internal publications of the institutions, websites, etc.).	Public institutions and their staff	I, II, III	All the institutions concerned	