

**PRESIDIUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE LITHUANIAN SOVIET
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC.
DECREE ON THE Lithuanian language
(25 JANUARY 1989)**

Under the Constitution of the Lithuanian SSR, the Lithuanian language shall be the official language of the Republic.

In order to ensure the development and the use of the Lithuanian language in state and social life without abridging the constitutional right of those whose native language is not Lithuanian to use their native language, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR decrees:

1. That the Lithuanian language shall be the official language, that is the principal means of official communication for the people of the Republic. Lithuanian shall be used in carrying out the business of state and social bodies, in all spheres of public education, culture, science, industry, public services, communications and other areas of social life, and in all enterprises, institutions, and organisations of the Lithuanian SSR, irrespective of their institutional chain of command (with the exception of the armed forces).

2. That the highest bodies of state power and government, ministries, departments, Soviets of People's Deputies and their executive committees, social organisations, enterprises, institutions, and other organisations shall conduct their business and correspondence in the Lithuanian language.

Enterprises, institutions and organisations whose internal business until recently was conducted in the Russian language, shall begin to make the transition to conducting business and correspondence in the Lithuanian language within two years from the date of entry into force of this Decree. In certain cases, for valid reasons, and with the permission of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR, this transitional period may be extended by particular enterprises, institutions and organisations for an additional year, but these must guarantee that other organisations and citizens will be provided with the opportunity to communicate with them, resolve problems and receive documents in the Lithuanian language.

Correspondence with the bodies of state power and the government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with ministries and departments, social organisations, enterprises, institutions, and other organisations beyond the borders of the Lithuanian SSR, shall be conducted in the Russian language or in whatever language is acceptable to both parties.

3. That laws of the Lithuanian SSR, acts of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR and its Presidium, resolutions and directives of the Council of Ministers, and documents of social organisations shall be issued in the Lithuanian language, promulgated in the Lithuanian language, and, as necessary, in the Russian language as well.

Resolutions, directives, and other documents of ministries, departments, the Soviets of People's Deputies and their executive committees, enterprises, institutions, and organisations shall be issued in the Lithuanian language and, if necessary, translated into another language.

4. That official assemblies, sessions, plenary sessions, meetings, sittings, congresses, and other events shall be conducted in the Lithuanian language. Persons who do not know Lithuanian shall have the right to speak in their language. In such cases, their language will be translated into Lithuanian.

5. That seals, business forms, signs and plaques used in offices and in public places, as well as designations on goods produced in the Republic and their descriptions, shall be in the Lithuanian language. Official letterhead and other documents used in international and all Union correspondence, as well as correspondence with the republics of the USSR shall be provided in Lithuanian and in translation into other languages.

6. That heads and other senior officers of the supreme bodies of state power and government of the Lithuanian SSR, ministries, departments, the Soviets of People's Deputies and their executive committees, social organisations, enterprises, institutions, and other organisations of the Republic shall know the Lithuanian language.

Senior officers of the People's Courts, state notary offices, bodies of the Procuracy and Internal affairs, institutions of public health, social security, trade, public service, transportation, communications, finance, housing, as well as other institutions shall provide their services in the Lithuanian language or in the language acceptable to both parties.

7. That the people of the Lithuanian SSR shall have schooling and obtain elementary and secondary education, vocational, specialised and higher education in the Lithuanian language. For persons whose native language is a language other than Lithuanian, so that they may take an active part in the state, public, and cultural life of the Republic, and so that they may avail themselves of education at institutions of higher learning of the Lithuanian SSR, adequate means shall be provided for such persons to learn the Lithuanian language in educational institutions where the language of instruction is not Lithuanian, as well as in special courses provided for that purpose.

8. That persons whose native language is a language other than Lithuanian shall be provided with appropriate facilities for organising preschool education, classes, elementary and secondary education, for training teachers, for publishing books and newspapers in their native language, and for establishing societies of language and culture, clubs, museums, theatres, musical groups, etc.

In preschool educational institutions, elementary and secondary schools, and cultural organisations established for persons whose native language is other than Lithuanian, correspondence and other business may be conducted in the appropriate language.

9. That state government bodies of the Lithuanian SSR shall enhance the prestige of the Lithuanian language, preserve Lithuanian personal names and place names, as well as provide general assistance to scholarly institutions devoted to the Lithuanian language, and create the material basis necessary for the development, research, and expansion of the Lithuanian language. At the same time, conditions shall be provided for the development of other languages used in the Republic.

The Lithuanian SSR shall contribute to the schooling and study of the Lithuanian language outside Lithuania.

10. That heads of ministries, departments, the Soviets of People's Deputies and their executive committees, enterprises, institutions, and organisations shall be directly responsible for the implementation of this Decree within their respective institutions.

The Council of Ministers of the Lithuanian SSR shall oversee the implementation of this Decree throughout the Republic.

The Council of Ministers shall be responsible for providing facilities for the implementation of this Decree.

Vytautas Astrauskas

Jonas Gureckas

Chairman
Supreme Soviet
Lithuanian Soviet
Socialist Republic

Secretary
Supreme Soviet
Lithuanian Soviet
Socialist Republic

25 January 1989

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