

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
Why should human rights be a central part of my life?
70th Anniversary English Writing Competition
Contest Dates: October 1-October 31**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy in Lithuania and the Seimas Ombudsmen's Office (the National Human Rights Institution) invites all students from Lithuanian schools, from grades 9-12 to participate in an English writing competition to mark the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This is a chance to express your personal views or stories about the importance of human rights and share it with the people of Lithuania. The motto of the contest – be creative and break stereotypes in talking about human rights.

Writing submissions will be evaluated by personnel from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, U.S. Embassy and the Seimas Ombudsmen's Office. Please note that the evaluation commission will be judging the submissions based on content and your ability to share your ideas, opinions, and insights. They will not be judging your text based on your English level or on grammar and spelling – so all students are encouraged to participate and share your personal stories or present creative ideas about human rights in a variety of written formats (essay, poem, song, short story, rap, etc).

20 finalists will be selected and invited to participate in the first ever National Human Rights Forum in Vilnius on December 10 where three winners will be announced at the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania to mark International Human Rights Day. You must email your submission to Greta Armonaityte at **ArmonaityteG@state.gov** by midnight on October 31.

Writing Prompts

The UDHR sets out the fundamental freedoms and rights inherent to all people and has become the foundation for human rights' laws, organizations, and governmental institutions. The UDHR has 30 articles (they can be found online at <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>) outlining the essential human rights that should be protected in every nation.

Choose one of the following prompts to address in your writing piece (500 words maximum):

1. The UDHR begins with the statement “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” How is the modern world living up to this declaration? Where has society made the most progress, and where the most work still needs to be done? In answering these questions, please also share examples of which UDHR rights you are using in your daily-life and how you are protecting them.
2. Seventy years ago, the world was a very different place, when the realities of today, such as the internet, artificial intelligence, or space exploration, were largely unimaginable. If the UDHR was written today, are there any new issues that you think should be included? Or is the UDHR so “universal” that it covers elements of life not yet imagined? In answering these questions, please also share examples of which UDHR rights you are using in your daily-life and how you are protecting them.
3. Protecting human rights is not always straightforward, and ethical dilemmas can arise when two human rights conflict, such as between “freedom of opinion and expression” in article 19 and freedom from “attacks upon reputation” in article 12. Describe an example of such a situation where two rights conflict, and how you think it can be best resolved. In answering this question, please also share examples of which UDHR rights you are using in your daily-life and how you are protecting them.