

National Conference on Sustainable Development “SIGNALS 2019”

The National Audit Office of Lithuania (NAOL) continues the new format of interaction with the public sector it launched three years ago: on 27 November 2019, the national conference on sustainable development “SIGNALS 2019” was held. This already traditional annual event organised by the NAOL invited its participants to see the most relevant signals sent this year by the public sector, make the necessary change and answer the following questions:

- Strategic thinking: do we see a part or the whole?
- Added value generating change: How to implement it?
- Social welfare puzzle: How to make decisions that bring positive changes?

The plenary session called the participants to look at how the national strategic decisions and their financing affect the welfare of the country and its economic growth; what trends are seen among the major economies, and what directions of public finances work best. It also invited all interested institutions to choose whether they want to continue observing only a part of public activities and public finances or whether they choose to see the whole and make the most efficient strategic decisions.

One of the parallel sessions covered the sharing of national and international experience on ways to successfully implement change; looked at why some reforms are particularly complex and searched for ways to make change happen.

The second parallel session saw the discussions, agreements, and proposals for decisions in reducing the income inequality, well-directed social assistance, a role of social dialogue, and the potential of social business as well as the effectiveness of social policy measures in these fields.

“SIGNALS 2019” wound up with the closing session where the signals caught at the conference, the greatest challenges facing the State, and the significant tasks awaiting Lithuanian public sector were discussed by representatives of the academia, the public, and the NAOL: to give them an assessment from different perspectives thus allowing the look at the whole and generating ideas for the real change. It is encouraging that this year’s conference saw a steady rise in number of participants: from some 400 in 2017 to over 600 in 2019. The event was attended by representatives from various spheres of Lithuanian public sector, the academic community, the media as well as international speakers.

“SIGNALS 2019” organised in partnership with INTOSAI, the European Commission, the British Council, and Vilnius University Institute of International Relations and Political Science focused on sustainable development via strategic thinking and strategic decisions in the public sector and the welfare of the State.