



**Liechtenstein interim report**  
**on the interim follow-up recommendations of the fifth country report (2018)**  
**of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)**

Vaduz, 22 October 2020

The Secretariat of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) requested Liechtenstein on 15 June 2020 to provide information on the status of the interim follow-up recommendations made by ECRI in its fifth country report. The Office for Foreign Affairs kindly asks the ECRI Secretariat to take note of the steps taken to implement these recommendations outlined in this report.

In its fifth country report on Liechtenstein, ECRI issued two recommendations for which it requested priority implementation:

1. ECRI recommends that the authorities commission a study about the problems that the different groups of migrants (including non-German speaking migrants, refugees, religious minorities, Muslims and cross-border commuters) face and develop a new strategy and action plan on the integration of migrants and people with migration backgrounds in all areas of life. The new national integration action plan should specify the actual measures to be implemented to achieve the goals set. Each goal and measure should be accompanied by indicators, base lines, target values, a timetable and an authority or person responsible for their implementation. Implementation should be assessed on a regular basis. The authorities should reach agreements with the employers about their contribution to this plan.
2. ECRI recommends that the authorities commission a study about the problems that LGBT people face and what measures should be taken to remedy these problems.

## **Implementation of the first recommendation**

In 2018, the government set up a working group under the leadership of the Ministry for Social Affairs and commissioned it to develop an updated integration strategy based on the previous integration framework. The working group is made up of representatives of national authorities (Ministry for Social Affairs, Migration and Passport Office, Office of Social Services) and civil society (Liechtenstein Human Rights Association (VMR)). In November 2018, the working group commissioned the Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights to carry out a migration study.

Published in May 2020, the study records progress in the integration of immigrants, as far as empirical indicators are available. For instance, migrants experience lower rates of unemployment compared to neighboring countries, and linguistic integration is progressing successfully. At the same time, however, the study points to continuing issues, including – despite improvements – challenges regarding equal educational opportunities for children with a migrant background. Accordingly, the study also identifies possible areas of activity for further advancing the socioeconomic potential of the immigrant population. In particular, the authors advocate for the establishment of a specialized unit for integration.

Based on this study, the working group is currently working on an integration strategy. The recommendation is therefore already being implemented.

## **Implementation of the second recommendation**

The issue of LGBT equality affects various areas of society. The fifth ECRI country report emphasizes the problems of discrimination and hate speech, in particular. In this context, the Liechtenstein LGBT organization Flay, in cooperation with Erasmus+ and the publicly-funded youth information center “aha”, conducted a multi-level training course for youth workers from Liechtenstein and six other European countries from September 2018 to January 2019. Thanks to this course, youth workers are able to better recognize the concerns and needs of socially excluded young people and respond to the special circumstances of LGBT youth.

In response to hate speech in newspapers and social media, the National Violence Prevention Commission has launched an awareness campaign from 2018 onwards. The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of media professionals regarding hate speech and to help prevent its dissemination through print media. In September 2019, the National Violence Prevention Commission organized a seminar with journalists to promote their knowledge of relevant legal provisions and to outline methods to respond to hate speech.

The publicly-funded Human Rights Association (VMR) – Liechtenstein’s national human rights institution – has also been active in the area of LGBT equality over the past two years. In September 2018, the association published a first report on the situation of people with different sexual orientations and gender identities. In addition to a brief analysis of the progress made thus far in the field of equality, the report also underlines the need for action in legislation, in particular with regards to access to marriage and adoption for same-sex couples, the right to donate blood by homosexual men, and the recognition of a non-binary gender. In January 2020, the Human Rights Association organized the first roundtable on the situation of LGBT youth in Liechtenstein, inviting relevant stakeholders from state institutions and civil society.

Over the course of this meeting, a status assessment was carried out and further fields of action were defined.

The Liechtenstein judiciary also had to deal with LGBT rights over the past two years. In September 2019, the Constitutional Court ruled – in contrast to the Administrative Court – that the exclusion of same-sex couples from marriage is compatible with the constitutional principle of equality and the prohibition of discrimination under the European Convention on Human Rights. A constitutional review of opening the stepchild adoption to parents of the same sex is still pending.

In sum, LGBT equality remains an important issue as both civil society and state actors have been and continue to be actively engaged in addressing discrimination. However, there is currently no plan to commission a study (as recommended by ECRI) on the situation of LGBT people in the areas of employment, housing, health care or access to goods.