

## **Annex 1:**

### **Summary of the consultation with civil society in Liechtenstein**

1. Since 2009, the Office for Foreign Affairs has conducted an annual human rights dialogue with interested non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Liechtenstein. This dialogue serves to exchange information, with the goal of intensifying cooperation between public authorities and civil society, but also to improve networking among human rights organisations. The dialogue is pursuant to a recommendation addressed to Liechtenstein as part of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council and has met with great interest on the side of the participating NGOs.

2. At this year's NGO dialogue, the attending organisations had the opportunity to comment on the draft UPR national report. The event took place in Schaan on 11 September 2017. More than 30 representatives of non-governmental organisations, independent institutions and bodies, and the private sector took part.

3. The discussions were conducted in two workshops. Workshop 1 dealt with the topics of integration and combating racism. In the area of combating racism, reference was made to the phenomenon of hate speech, in particular on the internet, and clarification was requested as to whether the existing legal basis for preventing and combating hate speech is sufficient. In the area of integration, the importance of linguistic integration was stressed. There was both praise and criticism from the participants. While children, including children of asylum-seekers, are strongly encouraged to learn the German language, there are gaps and unequal treatment in language promotion for the foreign population as well as for refugees and asylum-seekers. Various participants suggested eliminating unequal treatment, involving the private sector in language and integration courses, and creating incentives for foreigners from low-education backgrounds to participate in language courses. Participants saw the introduction of political co-determination rights for foreigners at the municipal level, the possibility of dual citizenship also in the case of naturalisation, the improvement of communication between the State and foreigners' associations, and the promotion of integration through awareness-raising as well as cultural and encounter projects as important measures to promote integration and to end unequal treatment. It was also criticised that persons with a permanent residence permit lose their permit after a very short stay abroad, which especially affects young people who wish to gain some work experience in a foreign country. The participants also saw a need for action in the area of religion. In particular, the lack of legal and financial equality of the religious communities in Liechtenstein was criticized, as well as the blockade of the new rules governing the relationship between church and State that have been under development for many years.

4. Workshop 2 focused on gender equality and the prevention of violence against women. Discussions focused heavily on paid and unpaid care work (care for children, the elderly, and sick people). The unequal distribution of this work between the sexes and the classification and stereotyping of these activities as women's work are seen as an important obstacle to achieving equality between women and men. Several participants pointed out the increasing need for care and nursing staff due to demographic developments and the associated increase in the proportion of elderly people and those in need of care. This usually female staff is recruited increasingly from private households abroad and employed

in Liechtenstein under unregulated conditions. In this context, the workshop called for the introduction of a regular employment contract setting out conditions such as minimum wages and rest periods. A similar problem exists in the case of agricultural trainees recruited abroad. These are mostly men. A collective bargaining agreement has been proposed for these workers, but has not yet been implemented.

5. The participants also raised the important issue of the compatibility of work and family life. Parental leave, an important element in promoting such compatibility, is hardly used, which is not surprising as it can only be taken unpaid. As no data on parental leave is collected, it was suggested that a survey be carried out. Many participants also called for the introduction of paid parental leave. In principle, it is crucial to involve men in the gender equality debate and to reduce stereotypes through awareness-raising projects. As a positive development, it was pointed out that the wage inequality between women and men has decreased. Praise was also expressed for the signing of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), although further steps should be taken on both issues, namely measures to promote equal pay, ratification of the Istanbul Convention, and consideration of more public resources for the operation of the Women's Home.

6. In the subsequent plenary discussion, the following additional concerns were raised on other topics: the signing and ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Issue of Multilingual Extracts from Civil Status Records, the introduction of an association complaints right for the Association for Human Rights (independent National Human Rights Institution), improvements in the implementation of the right of custody, the creation of a coordinating body for sexual abuse cases involving children, and an increase in the budget for International Humanitarian Cooperation and Development, with the aim of achieving an ODA share of 0.7% or at least of not falling below the current share of 0.5%.

7. Some organisations also took the opportunity to submit written statements. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the continuation of the existing politics course for women, and the inclusion of men in gender equality work were called for. It was also criticised that, despite growing demand, the level of public funding for subsidising day care facilities and after-school programmes has remained at the 2011 level and has not been increased since then. In addition to the oral statements during the NGO dialogue, the Association for Human Rights also submitted a written statement, which identifies the need for action in the area of gender equality (political representation, working life, Istanbul Convention), children's rights (custody, promotion of the family, measures against sexual abuse), equality of persons with disabilities (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, unequal treatment in regard to disability pensions), the integration of the foreign resident population (lack of an integration strategy and coordinating body, recognition of religious communities), asylum, and sexual orientation (abolition of the legal differences between marriage and registered domestic partnerships). The association also pointed out that the authorities and organisations with a performance mandate in the area of human rights must receive sufficient financial and personnel resources to enable them to fulfil their tasks.