

ANNEX: CONSULTATION PROCESS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

1. Since 2009, the Office for Foreign Affairs has conducted annual human rights dialogues with interested non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Liechtenstein. These dialogues serve 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 dialogues, pursuant to a recommendation addressed to Liechtenstein as part of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council, have 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 exchange views on implementation of the UPR recommendations from 2018. The event took place on 17 November 2022 in Schaan. More than 40 representatives of non-governmental organisations from independent institutions and bodies took part.

3. The discussions were conducted in four workshops: 1. Women's rights, equality, gender justice; 2. Rights of persons with disabilities; 3. Children's rights; and 4. Political and civil rights, civil liberties. The moderators of the workshops (representatives of NGOs) then presented the discussed topics in the plenary session.

4. Workshop 1 – Women's rights, equality, gender justice: The ratification of the Istanbul Convention met with a positive response. The *de facto* fight against violence against women and the financing of the relevant Liechtenstein institutions, including victim counselling, should not be neglected in this regard. It was demanded that a law against discrimination be prepared, including a catalogue of penalties. Furthermore, an equal opportunity strategy is to be developed and implemented. Concrete measures should be taken to combat discrimination against women, such as: sexism and discrimination in the workplace, including equal pay (a wage equality analysis should be stipulated by law and unpaid "care work" should also be surveyed), lack of promotion opportunities, obstacles in re-entry after maternity, (the increase of daily allowance premiums for companies that had received daily allowance due to maternity leave and support for self-employed micro-entrepreneurs), taking into account the qualification from maternity and the pension gap between women and men. Fundamental priorities in this regard include intensifying awareness-raising measures relating to role models. Another topic discussed in the workshop was the compatibility of family and work, in particular the expansion of day care centres and standardised day structures as well as further promotion of part-time work models. In addition, new models should be found so that care work is reflected in pensions. The introduction of paid parental leave was also addressed. One year of parental leave should be remunerated adequately, and solutions for self-employed entrepreneurs should also be sought. A gender quota (50/50) for management positions in the economy as well as for the representation of women in politics, especially in political offices and in management positions in the national administration. Furthermore, the topic of abortion should be taken up again and a regulation on time limits should be advanced. Finally, the equality between the generations and a decreasing appreciation of older persons was discussed. The discussion was based on the fact that an increasingly low esteem for older persons was observed. As a general matter, the lack of sufficient data was noted in various areas to be able to assess the situation.

5. Workshop 2 – Rights of persons with disabilities: It was welcomed that the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is on track. The integration strategy was also praised. Progress has been made in raising awareness. Information provided by public authorities and election documents should be designed to be accessible and easy to understand for persons with disabilities. There is currently a lack of "sign language interpreters" in all areas of life, such as education – despite the high demand in Liechtenstein. Inclusive education measures in general or for children and young people were deemed insufficient. Likewise, there is a lack of cultural mediation in Liechtenstein, as well as a contact point for issues involving social security law, such as an ombuds office. These measures would include further relief for families with children with disabilities. It was also pointed out that public institutions, such as the police and the

ambulance and rescue services, should be made more aware of interventions involving people with disabilities and trained accordingly. Barrier-free access to certain buildings, which should have been implemented by the established deadline, was also not fully implemented. In addition, the collection of data relating to persons with disabilities could be improved.

6. Workshop 3 – Children's rights: Based on the UPR recommendation to develop a strategy for equal opportunities for children with a migration background, the right to education in particular is an important issue. Equal opportunities should be increased in general, for example by abolishing the quota for admission to the baccalaureate school (Liechtenstein Gymnasium). It was also criticised that STEM/MINT subjects are emphasised while essential areas such as art, culture, and sport are neglected in the education system. The inclusion of parents with a migration background was also called for, and they should be encouraged to participate in parents' councils, for instance. With regard to child and adolescent mental health, a more proactive approach should be taken in the future by publicizing an emergency number and creating relevant offices for acute cases (24/7). In this regard, the possibility of a national program for early detection was also raised in the workshop. For this purpose, child psychiatric care should be improved and mental illnesses destigmatised. Overall, more should be invested in preventive measures relating to child and adolescent health. The issue of wealth neglect was also raised, to which too little attention is paid in society as a whole. There were calls for data collection to be improved. An important topic discussed was family policy, which should receive more attention in politics through better framework conditions and adequate funding. The participation of children in municipal-level processes could be improved, and the "Youth Participation Liechtenstein" (Jubel) initiative could be extended to primary schools. A national prevention programme on violence against children was also proposed. This should include a safe forum for children to report incidents of violence at any time.

7. Workshop 4 – Political and civil rights, civil liberties: Anti-discrimination should be advanced in general. The lack of a substantive, substantial proportionality test in the drafting of legislation was criticised. Furthermore, there is unequal treatment of religious communities because the Religion Act has not yet entered into force. Specifically, the separation of church and state should be further advanced. Participants mentioned that wearing a headscarf for religious reasons lead to additional challenges and obstacles in the labour market. The full implementation of the Geneva Convention on Refugees was also called for, along with other measures in the refugee field (language courses, vocational counselling). Room for improvement was noted with regard to the situation in the Liechtenstein Prison, especially in light of the fact that custodial sentences are in principle executed in an Austrian prison on the basis of a treaty. Accordingly, it is difficult for Liechtenstein prisoners, as well as those in juvenile detention, to maintain family contact from abroad. The lack of a national addiction counselling centre and a prevention centre was also criticised, as was the lack of systematic data collection on poverty and mental health. It was criticised that Liechtenstein citizens who live abroad but work in Liechtenstein, for example, are not allowed to vote because of their place of residence and are accordingly discriminated. The prohibition of dual citizenship and the restricted freedom of establishment were also discussed. An important concern on the part of youth representatives was the increased promotion of political education for children and young people.