

## **Comments by infra on the third country report pursuant to article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 18 December 1979**

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### **Domestic violence**

The report gives a comprehensive presentation of the measures adopted against domestic violence. In particular the introduction of the Violence Protection Act in 2001 constitutes a milestone in the fight against domestic violence. As the report properly notes, implementation of the Violence Protection Act places great demands on many of the involved State and non-State offices. In particular, the officers of the National Police are situated in a field of tension between violence protection and the proportionality of intervention in the private sphere.

The effectiveness of the Violence Protection Act crucially depends on its implementation, however. Failure to expel a perpetrator from the household can at times lead to a very dangerous aggravation of the situation for the victim.

### **For these reasons, we propose the following measures:**

- Intensification of the training of officers of the National Police (accurate assessment, processes and evidence of domestic violence, dealing with victims and perpetrators, consistent condemnation of violence instead of mediation)
- Court: questioning of victims and handling of the issue by trained experts
- Optimization of the intervention (immediate response by the State authorities, acceleration of the processes)
- Optimization of cooperation among the State authorities and the network of helpers (police, courts, Office of Social Affairs, victims assistance offices)
- Regular evaluation of the interventions (at least once a year: round table/discussion of cases with all actors, moderated by the Office of Equal Opportunity)

We furthermore propose that **rape, sexual duress, and dangerous threats be legally enshrined as public offenses**, since this would clearly underscore the condemnation of violence in the private sphere.

### **Representation of women in political bodies**

The report presents the intensive efforts, wide-ranging problems, and analyses. Overall, an impressive package of so-called "soft" measures has been implemented to promote the political participation of women in the political arena.

Despite all these efforts, the representation of women in a wide range of political bodies is far removed from equal representation. For purposes of a rapid and sustainable increase in the share of women in politics, foundations under public law, courts, etc., we therefore recommend **the introduction of a gender quota as a temporary measure.**

### **Criminalization of abortion**

The report makes reference to human rights and fundamental freedoms. In one point – self-determined maternity – fundamental freedoms are sorely undermined. Abortion continues to be subject to strict punishment in Liechtenstein (imprisonment of up to one year) and is even prohibited if the woman has an abortion abroad. This is contrary to responsible decision-making during a difficult time of inner conflict and in a highly personal area.

**We therefore propose to protect a woman's responsible decision of conscience by introducing a balanced time-limit solution that takes into account both the protection of unborn life and also the situation of inner conflict of the woman.**

### **Professional opportunities of women**

The report shows clear disadvantages of women in the workplace. The employment rate of women is lower than that of men; women are strikingly underrepresented in management positions; and they have significant problems in finding a job when returning to the workforce after a family phase.

We welcome the planned salary statistics disaggregated by gender. Solid statistical data is, however, only the foundation for further measures. Positive measures have been implemented in the area of compatibility of work and family. Unfortunately not as useful, however, is the introduction of unpaid parental leave. We call for the introduction of paid parental leave, since only then can it be utilized by broad segments of the population.