



# Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

### Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Liechtenstein\*

1. The Committee considered the sixth periodic report of Liechtenstein (CEDAW/C/LIE/6) at its 2136th and 2137th meetings (see CEDAW/C/SR.2136 and CEDAW/C/SR.2137), held on 14 February 2025.

#### A. Introduction

2. The Committee appreciates the submission by the State Party of its sixth periodic report, which was prepared in response to the list of issues and questions prior to reporting (CEDAW/C/LIE/QPR/6). It also appreciates the State Party's follow-up report to the previous concluding observations of the Committee (CEDAW/C/LIE/FCO/5). It welcomes the oral presentation by the delegation and the further clarifications provided in response to the questions posed orally by the Committee during the dialogue.

3. The Committee commends the State Party on its delegation, which was headed by the Deputy Director of the Office for Foreign Affairs, Christine Lingg, and included representatives of the Migration and Passport Office, the Office of Education, the Office of Social Services, the Office of Public Health, the Liechtenstein National Police, representatives of the Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, and interpreters.

#### B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2018 of the State Party's fifth periodic report (CEDAW/C/LIE/5) in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular amendments to its criminal law introducing new offences and expanding existing provisions on gender-based violence, in 2019.

5. The Committee welcomes the State Party's efforts to improve its institutional and policy framework aimed at accelerating the elimination of discrimination against women and promoting gender equality, including efforts to develop its first national gender equality strategy.

\* Adopted by the Committee at its ninetieth session (3–21 February 2025).



6. The Committee welcomes the fact that, in the period since the consideration of the previous report, the State Party has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), in 2021, and created a coordination group for its implementation.

7. The Committee congratulates the State Party on its election by the Economic and Social Council as a member of the Commission on the Status of Women for the term 2023–2027.

### **C. Sustainable Development Goals**

8. The Committee welcomes the international support for the Sustainable Development Goals and calls for the realization of *de jure* (legal) and *de facto* (substantive) gender equality, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, throughout the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Committee recalls the importance of Goal 5 and of the mainstreaming of the principles of equality and non-discrimination throughout all 17 Goals. It urges the State Party to recognize women as the driving force of the sustainable development of the State Party and to adopt relevant policies and strategies to that effect.

### **D. Parliament**

9. The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see [A/65/38](#), part two, annex VI). It invites the Landtag, in line with its mandate, to take the necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the submission of the next periodic report under the Convention.

### **E. Principal areas of concern and recommendations**

#### **Reservations**

10. While acknowledging the dual system of the State Party, the Committee is concerned that the State Party has no intention of reconsidering its reservation to article 1 of the Convention with respect to hereditary succession to the throne of the Princely House, which excludes women from succession to the throne and therefore discriminates against the female members of the Princely House, which is also incompatible with the State Party's obligations under articles 2, 5 and 7 of the Convention.

11. Recalling its previous concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/LIE/CO/5/Rev.1](#), para. 10), the Committee recommends that the State Party review its reservation to article 1 of the Convention and engage in discussions with the autonomous Princely House, with a view to its withdrawal.

#### **Data collection and analysis**

12. The Committee notes the publication of updated and expanded gender indicators by the Office of Statistics in 2024, with the number of indicators increasing to 35. However, it remains concerned that critical data disaggregated by sex are still missing, particularly in relation to care work, domestic violence and the representation of women across all economic sectors, and about the lack of an intersectional perspective in data collection. This may impede the development of

effective policies and initiatives aimed at advancing women's rights and gender equality.

**13. The Committee recommends that the State Party further expand its gender data collection to cover care work, domestic violence and women's representation across all economic sectors and that it gather and analyse the data through an intersectional lens. It also recommends that the State Party enhance collaboration with civil society organizations to improve the quality of and access to gender-related data.**

**Visibility of the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the implementation of international recommendations**

14. The Committee acknowledges the efforts made by the State Party in enhancing the visibility of the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's previous concluding observations, including through their publication on government websites. However, the Committee is concerned about the low number of court cases on gender discrimination, which may indicate a lack of awareness of the Convention among members of the legal profession, as well as among women themselves, in particular migrant and refugee women. The Committee is also concerned about the limited participation of civil society organizations throughout the review process of the State Party's sixth periodic report.

**15. The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Continue to raise awareness among women of their rights under the Convention and the legal remedies available to them in cases of violations of such rights and ensure that information on the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's general recommendations is available to all women in accessible formats;**

(b) **Consider establishing a comprehensive mechanism for the implementation of the concluding observations of the United Nations human rights treaty bodies, including the present recommendations, and involve non-governmental organizations that promote women's rights and gender equality in the work of the mechanism, taking into account the four key capacities of a national mechanism for reporting and follow-up, namely engagement, coordination, consultation and information management;**

(c) **Ensure that the Convention, the Committee's jurisprudence and its general recommendations are made an integral part of systematic capacity-building for judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officials and lawyers, with a view to enabling them to continue to directly apply or invoke the provisions of the Convention in court proceedings or interpret national legislation in the light of the Convention.**

**National machinery for the advancement of women**

16. The Committee welcomes the State Party's efforts to develop its first national gender equality strategy, including the organization of five participatory workshops to define its vision, priorities and objectives. However, it notes with concern that a clear timeline for the strategy's adoption has not been established and that no implementation or monitoring plan has been developed. The Committee also notes with concern the absence of a general civil anti-discrimination law in the State Party, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex.

**17. The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) Adopt comprehensive civil anti-discrimination legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex;**
- (b) Establish a clear timeline for the adoption of the national gender equality strategy and allocate sufficient resources for its implementation;**
- (c) Further develop monitoring mechanisms with measurable indicators to assess the implementation and ensure accountability;**
- (d) Continue to engage all relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations and gender experts, in finalizing, implementing and monitoring the national gender equality strategy.**

18. The Committee notes that the Equal Opportunities Unit has been upgraded to a full Division and that additional human and financial resources were approved by parliament. However, it remains concerned that the Division has assumed new responsibilities related to disability, sexual orientation, migration and integration, potentially diverting already scarce resources from its work on women's rights and gender equality.

**19. Recalling its previous concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/LIE/CO/5/Rev.1](#), para. 16), the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) Strengthen the Equal Opportunities Division and ensure that it is provided with the authority, visibility and human, technical and financial resources necessary to effectively advance women's rights, regularly assess progress in the implementation of gender equality policies, plans and programmes and evaluate the impact of those efforts;**
- (b) Consider establishing a focal point mechanism within government departments and agencies to mainstream gender equality, strengthen interministerial coordination and enhance synergies in advancing women's rights and gender equality.**

**National human rights institution**

20. The Committee notes that the accreditation of the Association for Human Rights is under consideration by the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions. However, it remains concerned about the limited focus on women's rights and gender equality within the Association, given its broad mandate.

**21. The Committee recommends that the State Party take necessary measures to support the accreditation process of the Association for Human Rights with the view to obtaining the A-status accreditation. It further recommends that the State Party allocate adequate and sustainable financial resources to the Association to allow it to effectively carry out its mandate in relation to the protection and promotion of women's rights and gender equality, in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles, annexed to General Assembly resolution [48/134](#)).**

**Non-governmental organizations**

22. The Committee is concerned about reports that women's rights organizations receiving government support through specific service delivery agreements do not receive sufficient funding to fill the gaps in the provision of public victim support

services, such as shelters for victims of domestic violence, requiring them to rely on private donations.

**23. The Committee recommends that the State Party review its existing project-based funding and cooperation initiatives to protect women's human rights to identify funding gaps and take measures to address them. It further recommends that the State Party strengthen its support and funding for civil society organizations, particularly women's organizations, to enable them to raise awareness and advocate women's rights and gender equality.**

#### **Temporary special measures**

24. The Committee welcomes government initiatives to promote equal opportunities, such as the political course for women and the support of the Diversity in Politics initiative across political parties. However, it remains concerned about the absence of time-bound and targeted special measures in the State Party to achieve substantive equality of women and men in areas such as political and public life, as well as the limited public acceptance of such measures.

**25. Recalling its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/LIE/CO/5/Rev.1, para. 20), the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Adopt temporary special measures, in line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, to accelerate substantive equality of women and men in all areas where women are traditionally underrepresented or disadvantaged, such as political and public life, education and employment;**

(b) **Take specific steps to promote a comprehensive and systemic understanding among State officials and the general public of the non-discriminatory nature and transformative value of temporary special measures as a tool to advance substantive equality.**

#### **Stereotypes**

26. The Committee welcomes the efforts made by the State Party to address gender stereotypes, including the participation in the virtual United Nations photo exhibition entitled "Not a Woman's Job?", as well as several awareness-raising and educational programmes in schools. However, the Committee notes with concern:

(a) The absence of a comprehensive strategy with proactive and sustained measures to overcome persistent stereotypes and prejudices about the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society. The State Party, however, announced during the dialogue that measures to combat gender stereotypes would be part of the national gender equality strategy;

(b) The absence of information on measures taken by the State Party to combat prejudice and hate speech against women facing intersecting forms of discrimination.

**27. Recalling its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/LIE/CO/5/Rev.1, para. 22), the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Adopt a comprehensive policy with proactive and sustained measures, targeted at women, men, girls and boys, to overcome stereotypes concerning the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society;**

(b) **Take specific measures against hate speech, with a specific focus on women facing intersecting forms of discrimination;**

(c) **Evaluate the effectiveness of projects and initiatives aimed at combating stereotypes, in collaboration with civil society organizations.**

**Gender-based violence against women and girls**

28. The Committee notes with concern:

- (a) The lack of a comprehensive national strategy to prevent and combat gender-based violence against women;
- (b) That the legal definition of domestic violence in the State Party's Criminal Code has not been fully aligned with the Istanbul Convention and that certain forms of gender-based violence, including psychological and economic violence, are not criminalized as stand-alone provisions in the Criminal Code;
- (c) The low prosecution and conviction rates in cases of gender-based violence, including domestic violence;
- (d) The lack of victim sufficient support services and limited access to legal representation for women and girls victims of gender-based violence against women, as well as the absence of a barrier-free hotline.

29. **Recalling its general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19 (1992), and target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals to eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) Adopt and implement a comprehensive national strategy to prevent and combat gender-based violence against women, ensuring a coordinated and holistic approach across all sectors;**
- (b) Amend the Criminal Code to fully align the definition of domestic violence with the Istanbul Convention and criminalize all forms of gender-based and domestic violence in accordance with the Istanbul Convention;**
- (c) Allocate sufficient human, technical and financial resources to the coordination group for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention;**
- (d) Provide mandatory capacity-building to the judiciary, the police and other law enforcement officers on the strict application of criminal law provisions on gender-based violence against women;**
- (e) Reinforce the protection and support services for women victims of gender-based violence and remove obstacles faced by women victims of gender-based violence in accessing justice, including by ensuring that they have access to affordable and, if necessary, free legal aid in all related legal matters and to a barrier-free emergence hotline;**
- (f) Ensure the systematic collection and analysis of data on all forms of gender-based violence against women, disaggregated by age and relationship between the victims and perpetrators.**

**Trafficking in women and girls and exploitation of prostitution**

30. The Committee is concerned that the State Party has not adopted a national action plan for combating and preventing trafficking in persons. The Committee notes with concern that, notwithstanding investigations of trafficking, there have been no prosecutions or convictions of perpetrators, and consequently no compensation to victims. The Committee is also concerned that the State Party has no plans to further decriminalize women in prostitution.

31. Recalling its general recommendation No. 38 (2020) on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Develop and implement a comprehensive national action plan to combat and prevent trafficking in persons, in particular women and girls, and enhance efforts to investigate and prosecute trafficking cases, ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable through effective law enforcement measures;

(b) Collect comprehensive data on trafficking in women and girls, including the number of reported cases, prosecutions and convictions and the sentences imposed on perpetrators;

(c) Ensure that all victims of trafficking have access to temporary residence permits, irrespective of their ability or willingness to cooperate with the prosecution authorities, as well as to shelters, housing, healthcare, psychosocial counselling and rehabilitation programmes;

(d) Take measures to decriminalize women in prostitution in all settings and provide them with support and exit programmes for those who wish to leave prostitution.

#### **Equal participation in political and public life**

32. The Committee notes that the proportion of women increased from 28 per cent to 32 per cent in the recent national parliamentary elections. However, it remains concerned that women continue to be underrepresented in both the parliament and municipal councils. The Committee is also concerned about the underrepresentation of women in management positions in the private sector, notwithstanding positive trends observed in the State Party.

33. In line with its general recommendations No. 40 (2024) on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems and No. 23 (1997) on women in political and public life, as well as target 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Introduce mandatory and enforceable gender quotas aimed at parity, subject to fines in case of non-compliance, for political parties for the nomination of candidates for elections to the parliament and municipal councils, and for the appointment of women to the Government, the civil service and the foreign service, in particular at decision-making levels;

(b) Take all appropriate measures, including parity quotas, preferential recruitment and promotion of women, and economic incentives, to increase the representation of women in management positions in all sectors.

#### **Nationality**

34. The Committee is concerned about the State Party's naturalization regulation, which requires individuals to reside in the country for 30 years before obtaining citizenship, except in certain circumstances. Taking into consideration the gendered patterns of immigration, the Committee also notes with concern that this requirement may affect the enjoyment of human rights by women without citizenship status.

35. The Committee recommends that the State Party consider a general reduction of the required period of residence for obtaining citizenship and ensure that women and girls without citizenship can fully enjoy their rights under the Convention in the State Party.

**Education**

36. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) The very low rate of female faculty members at the University of Liechtenstein;

(b) The persistent underrepresentation of girls and women in non-traditional fields of study and career paths, in particular economics and finance, which is a crucial economic sector in the State Party;

(c) The lower participation rates of female students compared with their male peers at the doctoral level;

(d) The absence of a mechanism for students, including women and girls, to report bullying or sexual harassment in educational institutions;

(e) The absence of a plan to join the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);

(f) The lack of adequate mandatory sexual and reproductive health education in all schools.

37. **Recalling its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/LIE/CO/5/Rev.1, para. 32), the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

**(a) Adopt legislation to specifically prohibit discrimination against women and girls in education;**

**(b) Adopt targeted measures, including temporary special measures such as quotas and the preferential appointment of female candidates, to increase the number of women among faculty members;**

**(c) Implement gender-sensitive measures to orient girls and boys towards non-traditional fields of study and career choices, and in particular to encourage women to study economics and finance and attend advanced studies;**

**(d) Institute a mechanism for students, including women and girls, to report bullying and sexual harassment in educational settings;**

**(e) Consider joining UNESCO and ratifying the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education;**

**(f) Ensure adequate mandatory age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education in all schools.**

**Employment**

38. The Committee welcomes the efforts made by the State Party in increasing women's participation in the labour force, particularly the establishment of the network of family support, the 2016 reform of childcare financing, and the planned introduction of two months of paid parental leave per parent, set to take effect in 2026. However, the Committee notes with concern:

(a) That women continue to be overrepresented in low-paid jobs and underrepresented in management and leadership positions;

(b) That, while women often return to work after the birth of their first child, they primarily do so in part-time roles, contributing to the persistent significant gender pay gap and pension gap;

(c) The limited availability of childcare facilities, with too few childcare places and waiting lists;



- (d) The lack of accountability in cases of sexual harassment in the workplace;
- (e) That women migrant workers in the domestic care sector often work without the protection of labour laws and face barriers to accessing legal aid.

**39. In accordance with target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) Increase women's access to formal employment, including by dismantling gender stereotypes regarding the traditional roles of women, and conduct awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of women's equal participation in the labour market;
- (b) Strengthen initiatives to promote women's employment and career development opportunities in the private sector, including by providing financial incentives for private companies to recruit women to leadership positions, including in non-traditional sectors;
- (c) Increase investment in childcare infrastructure to ensure the availability of sufficient, affordable and high-quality childcare places;
- (d) Strengthen the legal framework and accountability mechanisms to ensure the effective investigation and prosecution of cases of workplace sexual harassment;
- (e) Ensure a substantial period of paid paternity leave and raise awareness to encourage fathers to avail themselves of paternity leave;
- (f) Ensure that women migrant workers in domestic services are fully covered under labour laws and have unrestricted access to legal aid and complaint mechanisms;
- (g) Join the International Labour Organization and ratify the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) and the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189).

## **Health**

**40. The Committee notes with concern:**

- (a) The criminalization of abortion and the provision of abortion, with limited exceptions in cases of sexual violence or risk to the life of the pregnant woman, which increases the likelihood of unsafe abortions and compels women and girls to seek abortion services abroad, imposing health risks and an economic burden;
- (b) The lack of critical disaggregated public health data;
- (c) That women with disabilities face barriers in accessing healthcare, particularly sexual and reproductive health services and information, and can be subject to sterilization without their consent.

**41. In accordance with its general recommendation No. 24 (1999) on women and health and target 3.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) Legalize abortion both for the pregnant woman who undergoes the procedure and the healthcare providers performing it, including in cases of incest or severe impairment of the fetus, and decriminalize it in all other cases;

(b) Regularly collect and report demographically representative public health data and ensure that they are disaggregated by sex and age;

(c) Ensure affordable access to adequate health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, to all women and girls, with particular attention to migrant women and women with disabilities, and ensure that the latter are not subject to forced sterilization.

#### **Social and economic empowerment of women**

42. The Committee is concerned that, notwithstanding the State Party's strong financial sector and its position as a hub for wealth and asset management, there is insufficient guidance for investors, including public pension funds and small and medium-sized investment firms, on integrating human rights and gender equality into their investment activities. The Committee is also concerned that the State Party's social benefits might discriminate against women, particularly in the care economy, such as childcare and the care of older persons.

43. The Committee recommends that the State Party establish specific guidance for investors, including public and private financial institutions, on integrating human rights and gender equality considerations into investment decisions. It further recommends that the State Party review its social benefit laws and policies to ensure that there is no gender-based discrimination, especially in relation to the care economy, such as childcare, the care of older persons and domestic work.

#### **Women facing intersecting forms of discrimination**

44. The Committee is concerned about reports of discrimination against disadvantaged or marginalized groups of women facing intersecting forms of discrimination, such as the exclusion of women with disabilities from equal political representation, and employment discrimination faced by Muslim women wearing headscarves. It notes with concern the lack of disaggregated data on the situation of these groups of women in all spheres of life.

45. Recalling its previous concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/LIE/CO/5/Rev.1](#), para. 40), the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Strengthen anti-discrimination legislation to explicitly prohibit multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including those based on gender, disability and religion;

(b) Collect data on women facing intersecting forms of discrimination and provide, in its next periodic report, information on the situation of these groups in the private and public spheres;

(c) Ensure that political parties and institutions adopt inclusive policies and accessibility measures to support the participation of women with disabilities.

#### **Marriage and family relations**

46. The Committee notes with concern the lack of research and analysis on the economic consequences of divorce on both spouses in the State Party. It is also concerned by reports indicating restricted access to justice for women in family law matters, and in particular those involving domestic violence.

47. Recalling its previous concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/LIE/CO/5/Rev.1](#), para. 42), the Committee recommends that the State Party conduct a study on the economic consequences of divorce for both spouses, in accordance with general recommendation No. 29 (2013) on the economic consequences of marriage, family

relations and their dissolution. The Committee further recommends that the State Party ensures free legal aid to women based on economic need, including legal representation during separation procedures, and particularly in cases involving domestic violence.

#### **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

48. The Committee calls upon the State Party to use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to further evaluate the realization of the rights enshrined in the Convention in order to achieve substantive equality between women and men.

#### **Dissemination**

49. The Committee requests the State Party to ensure the timely dissemination of the present concluding observations, in the official languages of the State Party, to the relevant State institutions at all levels (national, regional and local), in particular to the Government, the parliament and the judiciary, to enable their full implementation.

#### **Ratification of other treaties**

50. The Committee notes that the adherence of the State Party to the nine major international human rights instruments<sup>1</sup> and relevant regional instruments would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the State Party to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

#### **Follow-up to concluding observations**

51. The Committee requests the State Party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 11, 39 (e), 41 (a) and 47 above.

#### **Preparation of the next report**

52. The Committee will establish and communicate the due date of the seventh periodic report of the State Party in line with a future clear and regularized schedule for reporting by States Parties (General Assembly resolution 79/165, para. 6) and following the adoption of a list of issues and questions prior to reporting, if applicable, for the State Party. The next periodic report should cover the entire period up to the time of its submission.

53. The Committee requests the State Party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents (HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6, chap. I).

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<sup>1</sup> The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.