



Input for the List of Issues Prior to Reporting (LOIPR)

From the Ombuds Office for Children and Young People
(OSKJ) in the Liechtenstein Human Rights Association
(VMR) and UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein

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Introduction

Liechtenstein ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1995 and has reported to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding its implementation of the Convention on two occasions (in 1998 and 2004). The UN Committee issued its Concluding Observations in 2006. Numerous recommendations have been put into practice either in whole or in part over the last 14 years and encouraging progress has been made with implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child. For instance, positive developments can be reported in several areas: representation of the interests of children and young people, child and youth participation, improvement of structures and measures for early childhood development, alternative childcare and structures for counseling and support in cases of sexual abuse. In the following report, we focus on the areas that we believe need to be urgently addressed in order to drive improvements in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child forward in Liechtenstein. This report also integrates results from an as yet unpublished study by UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein.¹ Between November 20, 2019 and June 1, 2020, children and young people aged between 9 and 17 from the three linguistic regions of Switzerland and from Liechtenstein were invited to take part in a survey. 287 of the total of 3,459 children and young people in this age group living in Liechtenstein (as at December 31, 2019) took part in the survey. Their responses supply important findings about how children and young people in Liechtenstein perceive the implementation of their rights from a subjective viewpoint and where they would like to see changes or improvements in this regard. This information should also be incorporated into the report.

1. General implementation measures

1.1 Children's rights and companies

In order to respect and promote children's rights, companies are required to prevent harm to children on the one hand and to actively safeguard children's interests on the other. By incorporating respect for and promotion of children's rights into their core strategies and operating procedures, companies can strengthen existing sustainability initiatives while gaining economic advantages at the same time.

- What steps is Liechtenstein taking to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (the Ruggie Principles)? Does Liechtenstein have, or is it planning, a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights?
- Which sectors and industries of Liechtenstein's economy harbor risks as regards guaranteeing human and children's rights in Liechtenstein and worldwide, and what do these risks primarily comprise?
- What efforts is Liechtenstein making to ensure that its globally active companies respect and promote human and children's rights in their business relationships and supply chains?

¹ This study is being undertaken in collaboration with the Institute of Social Work and Social Spaces (IFSAR) at Eastern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences (OST) and will be published in May 2021.

2. General principles

2.1 Non-discrimination

As in many other countries, there is an almost total lack of data on discrimination and violence against LGBTI individuals in Liechtenstein. This deficiency of data makes it difficult to quantify the problem. However, from young LGBTI circles in Liechtenstein, it can be learned that, for example, bullying at schools is a major problem. International studies also indicate that hate crimes and discrimination are frequent occurrences. It would therefore be important to improve the data situation in Liechtenstein so that measures could be initiated on this basis and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people could be eliminated. In its 2018 report on Liechtenstein, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe recommended that a study on the problems encountered by LGBTI individuals should be carried out and that measures to rectify these problems should be initiated.² This urgent recommendation (no. 12) has not been implemented thus far.

- What are the issues or areas of life where there is legal or de facto discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people in Liechtenstein?
- What steps is Liechtenstein taking to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people in Liechtenstein against discrimination?

2.2 Respect for the views of the child

2.2.1 Children's participation in legal proceedings and child-friendly justice

The right of children to be heard in all decisions that relate to them has not yet been fully implemented in Liechtenstein. There is a lack of comprehensive quality criteria and guidelines for hearing children and young people systematically in court and administrative proceedings. This right must also be guaranteed in the educational and healthcare sectors.

- To what extent are children and young people in Liechtenstein, as well as their caregivers, aware that there is a right to be informed and heard in all procedural areas?
- What funds and resources are available for the ongoing training of service providers to ensure that they are adequately trained in hearing testimony from children?
- How does Liechtenstein ensure that children and young people involved in proceedings have access to adequate information so they can participate in ways that are appropriate for children?
- What structures and measures guarantee the implementation of the Guidelines of the Council of Europe on Child-Friendly Justice? What additional measures are planned?

2.2.2 Participation in political processes and schools

There have been positive developments with regard to participation by children and young people in recent years. At national level, for instance, vehicles and structures for participation have been created such as the National Youth Council of Liechtenstein and Youth Participation in Liechtenstein (jubel). Due to the professionalization of open youth work and the implementation of UNICEF's "Child Friendly Cities" initiative, participation by children and young people in individual municipalities has also been improved at communal level. At present, a youth group is advocating reduction of the voting age from 18 to 16. However, there is a lack of vehicles and opportunities for younger children, and the same is true of possibilities for children and young people to become systematically involved in decisions and pro-

² European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe, 2018: "[ECRI Report on Liechtenstein. Fifth Monitoring Cycle](#)".

jects at the national and municipal levels. Children and young people are involved in decision-making processes in schools to varying degrees. This is heavily dependent on the culture of the school in question and the attitude of the teaching staff.

- What criteria and guidelines for systematic participation by children and young people are in place for areas such as politics, administration and schools in Liechtenstein?
- How does Liechtenstein verify implementation of the right to have one's say and participate in politics, administration, schooling and other relevant areas?
- How is it ensured that the perspective of children, and/or their interests, are taken into consideration in (political) decisions and projects of the government and the municipalities?
- How is it ensured that the Liechtenstein Children and Youth Act (KJG) is put into practice and systematically implemented?

3. Violence against children

3.1 Children as victims of domestic violence and violence in education

According to a 2020 study on the punishment behavior of parents in Switzerland³, one in every four children regularly experiences psychological violence and only 57 percent of parents stated that they had never used physical violence against their children. There is virtually no data about the situation in Liechtenstein, but it can be assumed that it is comparable to the situation in Switzerland. The survey by UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein mentioned in the introduction reaches a similar conclusion about the situation in Liechtenstein. 30 percent of children and young people from Liechtenstein who were surveyed state that their parents have inflicted physical harm on them on at least one occasion. 26 percent say that their parents have already made fun of them, mimicked them, insulted them or called them names. 20 percent of these children have been ignored by their parents as a punishment, or their parents have stopped talking to them.

The study by the Swiss Foundation for the Protection of Children (Kinderschutz Schweiz) cited above concludes that parents who use violence against children are interested in support and help. In Liechtenstein, there is an absence of representative data on the incidence of physical and psychological violence against children, and there is also a lack of government awareness-raising campaigns and prevention projects (implementation of recommendation no. 23, Concluding Observations, 2006).

Neglect or negligent treatment are also forms of violence against children. We wish to draw attention to the problem of "affluent neglect" of children in Liechtenstein: this term describes an existing phenomenon whereby the level of material provision is good or even excessive but the necessary care and attention are lacking.

- What data on the incidence of physical and psychological violence against children is available in Liechtenstein?
- What is Liechtenstein doing with regard to preventing violence? How is it ensured that the population is regularly made aware by campaigns or other measures?
- What information and training programs does Liechtenstein make available to parents, teachers, medical specialists and other professionals?
- What steps is Liechtenstein taking so that the early identification of negligent treatment, neglect or child maltreatment by healthcare and educational staff will be driven ahead effectively and as a mandatory requirement?

3.2 Violence on the internet, protection of children against cyber crime

30 percent experience physical violence.

³ Swiss Foundation for the Protection of Children (Kinderschutz Schweiz), 2020: "[Bestrafungsverhalten von Eltern in der Schweiz](#)". [In German. "Punishment behavior of parents in Switzerland"] The summary of the study can also be accessed in [French](#).

Although the digital sphere did not yet play a part when the Convention on the Rights of the Child was drafted, it has now become an important additional area of children's and young people's lives. One in three internet users is now a minor under the age of 18.⁴ Access to the digital sphere offers children great opportunities to exchange ideas, work together and access information or services, for example. At the same time, however, children are confronted with risks that must be taken seriously such as exploitation, cyber bullying or attacks on privacy that can impact their physical and mental health and development. Another factor is that many children, parents and caregivers – as well as companies – are unaware of the risks to children's rights in the digital sphere. In the study by UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein, 15 percent of respondents state that they have already received sexualized content, 5 percent confirm that they have already received vulgar comments, been made fun of or ignored, and 8 percent have experienced private photos or videos being made available to third parties without consent.

For parents, caregivers and educators, it is a major challenge to enable children to handle digital media safely and responsibly, and to protect them against cyber crime. The measures to protect children against cyber crime (cyber bullying and extortion, cyber grooming, sexting or child pornography) and to prevent the dissemination of personal data are mostly based on criminal law and are not adequate without accompanying preventive protection programs.

15 percent received sexualized content online.

- What measures is Liechtenstein taking to strengthen children's and young people's abilities to use digital media and to protect them against unsuitable media content and cyber crime?
- How does Liechtenstein ensure that protection and self-determination as regards the disclosure of personal data are guaranteed when children use digital media – especially in the context of school instruction?
- What is Liechtenstein doing to make parents and other authorized caregivers aware of the need to supervise and accompany their children when they are using the internet and to draw their attention to their responsibility as educators?

3.3 Violence in schools, bullying

The study by UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein shows the extent to which various areas of children's lives are characterized by violence. For example, 21 percent of the surveyed children from Liechtenstein state that they have been ostracized and bullied by other school students. 17 percent report that other children took away their private possessions such as cell phones. Furthermore, 5 percent of the children surveyed have experienced physical violence from teachers, and 18 percent were made fun of, insulted, called names or mimicked by their teacher.

21 percent experience ostracism and bullying.

- What instruments and processes for the systematic collection of data on bullying and violence in schools are available in Liechtenstein?
- What resources and measures are deployed by the government to prevent bullying among school students in various settings (e.g. on the journey to and from school, during school lessons, etc.)?
- What time resources are made available to teachers so that they can focus on the psychosocial components of schooling and turn the school into a violence-free zone?
- How does Liechtenstein ensure that school students are not exposed to violence from teaching staff?
- To what extent are lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex and transgender children and young people affected by gender-specific violence and bullying? What steps is Liechtenstein taking to collect this data and protect those affected?

⁴ UNICEF, 2016: "[One in Three: Internet Governance and Children's Rights](#)".

4. Family environment and alternative care

4.1 Children as victims of family legal disputes

Since it came into being in 2010, the OSKJ Ombuds Office for Children and Young People has often dealt with disputes concerning parental custody and visitation rights. This has not changed since joint custody was established as the usual case in 2015. Highly contentious separation conflicts are especially damaging to a child's interests and welfare. Also, legal proceedings concerning custody, maintenance and visitation rights often drag on for a very long time. Dilatory scheduling leads to a hardening of the fronts and can result in an agonizing conflict of loyalty for children, as well as alienation from the parent who is not appointed as caregiver. This leads to violations of the child's right to regular contact with both parents and the right to mental health. Due to the implementation of parent and child law currently practiced in Liechtenstein, there is no effective means of improving the situation for the affected children.

- How does Liechtenstein ensure that the welfare of the child can best be taken into account in family legal disputes and that the right to be heard and informed is guaranteed?
- What measures is Liechtenstein considering to ensure that parents going through separation and divorce are guided not to lose sight of the children's interests?
- What procedure is planned to support the practice of the judiciary and the authorities as regards regulating custody and visitation rights for children of separated parents?

4.2 Right to family, paid parental leave, reconciling work and family life

Parenthood should not give rise to discrimination. This means that starting a family must not lead to social disadvantages. On the contrary: in keeping with the sustainability of society, family policy should aim to value and honor parenthood and ensure that the child's right to the best possible development can be implemented.

The family is the most important area of life for children and young people, and for younger children in particular. Although the traditional image of the family is still predominant in Liechtenstein, family forms such as single-parent families and patchwork families have increased significantly. As women become more professionally active and a new model of fatherhood emerges, improved conditions for reconciling family and work are needed. Families in the middle and lower income brackets who want to look after their children themselves, at least in the first year of their lives, do not receive the necessary government support. As a study by the Sophie of Liechtenstein Foundation confirms, the development of viable relationships with the closest caregivers in the first years of life is an essential prerequisite for the healthy development of a child's personality.⁵

Liechtenstein has statutory maternity leave of only 20 weeks. Based on a government survey of families in 2017/18⁶, a large majority of parents would like to be able to care for their child themselves as fully as possible during the first year of their life. 76 percent of parents surveyed favor the introduction of paid parental leave. However, there is strong resistance to the introduction of paid parental leave – especially from employers and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI).

According to Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers, Liechtenstein must introduce paid parental leave and paid paternity leave by August 2, 2022. We fear that in the political process of implementing this directive, economic interests will be given greater weight than the child's right to a family and healthy development and that, as a result, the EU directive will only be implemented on the basis of minimal standards.

⁵ Expert report commissioned by the Sophie of Liechtenstein Foundation, 2018: "[Effekte institutioneller Betreuung in den ersten Lebensjahren auf die Entwicklung des Kindes](#)". [In German. "Effects of institutional care in the first years of life on child development"]

⁶ Märk-Rohrer L., Marxer W., 2018: "[Familienpolitik in Gegenwart and Zukunft](#)". [In German. "Family policy, present and future"]

- What steps is Liechtenstein taking to promote all family models equally and to increase both the material and immaterial value attached to families?
- What measures are being implemented to guarantee the child's right to the best possible development within the family?
- What is Liechtenstein doing to develop the implementation of EU Directive 2019/1158 concerning paid parental leave in the best interests of children?
- What is Liechtenstein doing to reach out to stressed or disadvantaged families and to support them with child development?

4.3 Right to family unity

Due to the restrictive Act on Foreigners (Foreigners Act; AuG) and the reservation concerning Article 10 of the CRC, there are certain cases in Liechtenstein where family reunifications cannot take place or can only take place under more onerous conditions. We also note that individuals who address questions about family reunion to the authorities do not receive adequate or case-specific information on how they can bring their family members to join them within the scope of the statutory provisions that are currently in force.

On August 27, 2019, the Liechtenstein Human Rights Association (VMR) and the Ombuds Office for Children and Young People (OSKJ) wrote to the government (Ministry of Home Affairs). In their letter, they recommended that a provision for cases of hardship should be incorporated into the Act on Foreigners so that the right to a family would be guaranteed by a family reunification in special cases, even if not all the conditions were met. They also called on the government to consider withdrawing the reservations to international conventions that restrict family reunification. We also drew the government's attention to recommendation no. 5 of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child dating from 2006. This suggests that Liechtenstein should take the necessary legal and other steps to establish family reunification and naturalization practices compatible with the principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and should consider withdrawing the relevant reservations in the near future. In a reply dated September 9, 2019, the Ministry of Home Affairs wrote that it saw no reason to amend the law.

- What adjustments to legislation is Liechtenstein planning in order to ensure that family reunifications for individuals from third countries can take place in keeping with children's rights?
- How is it ensured that individuals who want to learn about family reunification options receive information that meets their needs?
- Which possibilities does Liechtenstein see for implementing recommendation no. 5 (Concluding Observations 2006) of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child?

5. Disability, health and welfare

5.1 Right to inclusive education

Article 18, paragraph 2 of the Disability Equality Act of the Principality of Liechtenstein states: "The country promotes the integration of children and young people with disabilities into mainstream schools through appropriate educational reforms as well as training and support for teachers. The provisions of the Education Act and the Teachers' Service Conditions Act are applicable." These provisions are not fully implemented in the existing Education Act, but they are included in the "Ordinance on Support Measures in Schools" that was updated in August 2019. Considerable progress with implementing the right to inclusive education has been made in recent years, with the result that relatively large human and financial resources are available for support and inclusion in the Liechtenstein school system. However, improvements are still needed in individual schools with regard to equality of opportunities for children whose cognitive skills are comparable to those of mainstream school students but who rely on a framework of special conditions to master the subject matter (compensation for disadvantages). For example, this applies to children with dyslexia or autism spectrum disorder.

- What steps is Liechtenstein taking to ensure the analysis of supply and demand for additional support measures for children with learning difficulties?
- What needs-oriented measures is Liechtenstein planning in order to enable inclusive education for all children?

5.2 Consequences of the coronavirus crisis for children and young people

Children and young people are hit particularly hard by the government-ordered measures to stem the COVID-19 pandemic. The longer these measures remain in place, the greater the risk of lasting damage to the development of the vulnerable group of young people. Measures currently in force do not allow children and young people to be adequately occupied or to develop so they can gain the freedom they need. The consequence can be that they are unable to take the steps in their development that are due on the basis of their age and maturity. Children need contact and interaction with their peers, and they need to experience self-efficacy by gaining experience outside the parental home. In addition to the duties and demands of school, they need a healthy balance in their leisure time. Moreover, opportunities for education and jobs are at risk due to the economic consequences of the coronavirus crisis. This also makes it more difficult to start out in working life.

In particular, the world where families live has become very confined. This can place excessive demands on parents, subsequently leading to (increased) violence in upbringing. It can also be assumed that children from families that were already under stress or disadvantaged before the coronavirus will be hit particularly hard by the effects of the pandemic. Uncertainties, fears or conflicts in the family and restrictions on social contacts also impact the children. Contact with peers is a key factor in developing one's own identity, especially for young people. Various child and adolescent psychiatric clinics in Switzerland report that children and young people are suffering more frequently from anxiety states, suicidal thoughts and depression, and that both inpatient and outpatient treatment has increased significantly (Lausanne University Hospital (CHUV), Bern University Hospital of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy (UPD)). In January 2021, the Child Protection Group at the University Hospital of Zurich (Switzerland) reported a sharp increase in suspected cases of child maltreatment. No corresponding figures from Liechtenstein are available, but it can be assumed that the situation is comparable.

On February 15, 2021, in their role as representatives of children's and young people's interests, the OSKJ and KINDERLOBBY LIECHTENSTEIN (LIECHTENSTEIN CHILDREN'S LOBBY) published an Open Letter to the government⁷ calling for a re-examination of the proportionality of protective measures in relation to their effects on the healthy development of children and young people.

⁷ OSKJ and KINDERLOBBY LIECHTENSTEIN, 2021: «[Offener Brief: Kinder und Jugendliche in der Corona-Pandemie](#)». [In German. Open Letter: "Children and young people in the coronavirus pandemic"]

- What surveys on the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on children and young people is Liechtenstein planning?
- What measures is Liechtenstein taking to cushion the negative consequences of the coronavirus crisis for children and young people?
- What steps is Liechtenstein planning to enable children and young people to process the coronavirus crisis?
- What steps is Liechtenstein planning to ensure the analysis of supply and demand for psychological, psychiatric and psychotherapeutic care for children and young people?
- What surveys is Liechtenstein planning on the welfare of children and young people from Liechtenstein who are undergoing (partially) inpatient psychiatric treatment in Austria or Switzerland?

5.3 Standard of living

Experts do not dispute the fact that relative poverty exists in Liechtenstein and that it also affects children. On the basis of rising case numbers for economic social assistance and growing numbers of applicants at private advice centers and contact points, the Liechtenstein Human Rights Association (VMR) also assumes that the number of people affected is increasing. This problem is likely to have been exacerbated even more by the coronavirus crisis. However, comprehensive data about people (and especially children) affected by poverty is lacking in Liechtenstein. The last report on poverty dates from 2008 and does not look at child poverty. It would be absolutely necessary for the next report to do so because the last report states that single parents (23.4 percent) and married persons with two or more children (14.7 percent) are most often reliant on social benefits – in other words, the households where children also live. The study by UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein also shows that children are affected by poverty: for instance, 4 percent of children and young people surveyed state that their families do not have sufficient money to allow them to join their preferred club or to study their desired musical instrument. 3 percent of children live in cramped housing conditions where they do not have enough room to play and relax, or do their homework in peace. 1 percent get clothes that have already been worn by other children due to the difficult financial situation.

According to information given by the Minister of Society and Health in the State Parliament (Landtag) in 2019, a new report on poverty is being initiated.

- How much progress has been made with implementing the new report on poverty?
- Will data on child poverty also be collected in order to obtain comprehensive information about the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals so that targeted measures can be implemented?

6. Education, leisure and cultural activities

6.1 Child-friendly living environments

Experiences of autonomy and identity building are key elements in a child's development. Both processes take place in environments where children live and take exercise – spaces that they can develop and make their own. By no means least, public open spaces are important social meeting places for children and young people (peer group). The ability to move around autonomously and safely in road traffic also plays an important part in the development of children and young people. Routes to and from school are also open spaces where children can garner experiences and strike up social contacts without being disturbed. This strengthens their self-confidence and fosters personal responsibility. Safe and reliable planning of traffic – with people who are 1.2 meters tall in mind – is a crucial factor here. Due to its small size and scattered settlements, Liechtenstein faces major challenges in spatial planning.

There is no spatial planning concept covering the whole country that takes account – through participative processes – of the needs of all generations, and especially those of children and young people, for recreation areas and open spaces. To an increasing extent, children's everyday lives in Liechtenstein also take place indoors or in rigidly designed outdoor spaces. Children have fewer and fewer opportunities to explore their environment on their own initiative and play freely as they themselves choose to do.⁸ In the survey by UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein, for example, 15 percent of children from Liechtenstein state that there are too few places in their surroundings to play, relax or meet up with friends. 12 percent say that there are some places where they do not like to go, for example, because of noise, dirt or violence.

15 percent want more places to play, relax and meet up with friends.

- What is the situation in Liechtenstein as regards child friendly living environments? Is Liechtenstein planning an inventory or needs analysis?
- Where is the greatest need for action?
- In Switzerland, children and young people must be included in spatial development processes according to Article 4 of the Spatial Planning Act (SPA). Are there any guidelines or laws, etc., about this in Liechtenstein?
- What is Liechtenstein doing with regard to developing, designing and realizing needs-oriented living environments and open-air spaces for children and young people?
- What steps is the public sector taking to safeguard and promote play culture, child creativity and peer activities in public institutions and spaces?
- Are brownfields and/or areas designated for temporary usage made available for children and young people?
- Global warming and environmental changes negatively impact the child-friendliness of public spaces. Does Liechtenstein have a strategy for overcoming these challenges?

6.2 Right to participate in art and culture

Participation by children and young people in art and culture is not a luxury. Artistic processes and the child's own creative, artistic activities encourage consideration of existential questions – and this is especially crucial in difficult times. Art opens up worlds and provides scope for humor, utopia, questions and experiences. Cultural programs for adolescents strengthen and support young people's personal development.⁹ Liechtenstein offers a range of high-caliber artistic and cultural activities, but they do not reach all children and young people.

- What measures is Liechtenstein taking to enable all children and young people to participate in art and culture?
- How is Liechtenstein ensuring that art and culture become clearly defined elements of both leisure and education (cultural and esthetic education)?

⁸ More information at: <https://www.unicef.ch/de/unsere-arbeit/schweiz-liechtenstein/kinderfreundliche-lebensraeume>.

⁹ ASSITEJ (International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People), 2020: "[Manifest der ASSITEJ - Association Internationale du Théâtre pour l'Énfance et la Jeunesse \[Manifesto of ASSITEJ - International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People\]](#)".

6.3 Early childhood education and care (ECEC)

It is pleasing to note that much has been done in the field of early childhood education and care in Liechtenstein. In 2018, the Coordination and Advice Center for Early Childhood Development (KBFF)¹⁰ was set up to a level of 20 percent, with an increase to 40 percent in the following year. Early childhood development programs support parents and caregivers in creating an environment that is conducive to healthy infant development, thus contributing to equality of opportunities. In November 2020, the Parliament decided to create another 100 percent FTE for this purpose. This expansion is a milestone and investment in this area will fall on fertile ground. The hallmark of a successful early childhood policy is a commitment to action in the areas of creating access, networking, quality assurance and finance.¹¹ Establishing the Coordination and Advice Center was an important step towards networking. To go beyond this, it is advisable for the government and the municipalities to make investments that would allow a high-quality program to be provided and, in particular, to ensure that socio-economically disadvantaged families and their children gain access to the services on offer.

- What guarantee is there that the program in Liechtenstein is addressed to all families (especially socio-economically disadvantaged families) and that it is geared to their needs?
- What support services does Liechtenstein make available for disadvantaged children and their families to ensure their participation in early childhood programs?
- What financial resources does Liechtenstein make available to the early childhood sector to substantially relieve pressure on families so that early childhood education, support and care services are affordable, especially for disadvantaged families?

7. Special protective measures

7.1 Unaccompanied minor asylum-seekers (UMAs)

Children and young people aged below 18 who enter a country without their parents or other adults with official parental obligations in order to seek asylum have special rights to protection on account of their vulnerability; these are enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and are recommended by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Asylum Regulations ("Asylverordnung") that came into force in Liechtenstein on January 1, 2017, and also govern care and support for UMAs are not compliant with children's rights. Article 9 paragraph 2 of the Regulations stipulates that UMAs aged 16 or over can be accommodated in the same way as adults in the regular structures of the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers, provided that the Office of Social Services (ASD) raises no objections. The provision enshrined in the ordinance that stipulates the immediate appointment of a person of trust by the ASD to support and accompany the UMAs during the asylum procedure is intended only for UMAs up to the age of 16. UMAs are accommodated in Liechtenstein's Socio-Educational Youth Residential Group on a case-by-case basis. Here, too, care is not specifically geared to the needs of UMAs. Moreover, the procedure is delayed because the responsibilities of several authorities are involved and places are limited.

- What measures is Liechtenstein planning to ensure psychosocial care for UMAs?
- What is Liechtenstein doing to ensure that UMAs aged 16 and over are accompanied by a person of trust so they are adequately supported in a manner that is appropriate for children?
- What steps are being taken to provide protection and security for UMAs, especially those aged 16 or more?

¹⁰ More information at: www.elternkindforum.li.

¹¹ UNESCO, 2019: "[Für eine Politik der frühen Kindheit](#)". [In German. "In favor of an early childhood policy"]

8. Key issues for children and young people

287 of the total of 3,459 children and young people living in Liechtenstein took part in the online survey by UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein. 251 children and young people answered the question about what ought to improve for them in Liechtenstein. 28 percent replied "nothing" and 13 percent answered "don't know". The rest of the children and young people mentioned suggestions for improvements. We would like to take this opportunity to mention the issues brought up by children and young people here as categories:

- More spaces and programs for children and young people
- The school situation (less homework, a different school system, etc.)
- More say in political issues
- A more just society
- No drugs
- Better environmental protection and sustainability
- More free time, less pressure
- Safe and secure use of digital media
- Financial support and child benefits
- More safety in public spaces
- Less violence, bullying and racism

9. Annex

9.1. Ombuds Office for Children and Young People (OSKJ) in the Liechtenstein Human Rights Association (VMR)

The Ombuds Office for Children and Young People (OSKJ) was founded in 2010. It is an independent and generally accessible contact and complaint center for issues relating to children and young people; both children and adults from Liechtenstein can refer to it.¹² The OSKJ is headed by the Ombudsperson for Children and Young People. The Office monitors the implementation of children's rights, issues recommendations on improving the situation and mediates between private individuals and public authorities. The OSKJ's responsibilities are stipulated in Articles 96-98 of the Liechtenstein Children and Youth Act (KJG). Since 2017, the Ombuds Office for Children and Young People (OSKJ) has been part of the Liechtenstein Human Rights Association (VMR), the independent human rights institution that is compliant with the Paris Principles.¹³

The OSKJ coordinates the networking group called KINDERLOBBY LIECHTENSTEIN (LIECHTENSTEIN CHILDREN'S LOBBY). 23 organizations and institutions involved with children and young people have joined together to form the children's lobby. They jointly advocate the rights and interests of children and young people, make their concerns heard and raise awareness about children's rights by staging campaigns and events. The OSKJ has incorporated input from the children's lobby into this LOIPR.

9.2 UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein

The Committee for UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein¹⁴ was founded as an association in 1959. As the United Nations Children's Fund, the organization stands up for the children of this world and its work aims to ensure that every child can exercise their rights – and this also holds true in Liechtenstein.

UNICEF sees itself as an advocate for children. UNICEF stands up for children and their rights by observing the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, collecting data and channeling the knowledge acquired into political and public discourse. Participation in the state party report procedure constitutes a core task in this context. This role is also based on Article 45, letters a and b of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

¹² More information at: www.oskj.li.

¹³ More information at: www.menschenrechte.li.

¹⁴ More information at: www.unicef.ch.

