Liechtenstein

Bias-motivated speech
The use of hate speech targeting LGBT persons and others in readers' letters published in the press and on Internet was noted in a European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) report published in May, as was the lack of a specific regulatory body dealing with hate speech.

The Criminal Code was amended in 2016 and punishes hate speech on grounds of sexual orientation with up to two years of imprisonment. As part of Liechtenstein's third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) review, several countries noted concern that only sexual orientation was included.

Bodily integrity
In July, the UN Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) recommended that Liechtenstein ban non-consensual and medically unnecessary interventions on intersex children.

Education
In the beginning of the year, local LGBTI NGO Flay contacted the Department of Education asking for the withdrawal of a textbook used in religion classes in public schools (ages 12-16), which teaches that the Catholic church is against same-sex relationships and masturbation. The Department of Education responded that it has no influence over what is being taught in religion class.

Equality and non-discrimination
As part of the UPR, Liechtenstein accepted recommendations to continue its efforts against the discrimination of LGBTI people and to improve social inclusion. Several countries were concerned that only sexual orientation was included in the country’s Criminal Code with regard to discrimination.

ECRI expressed concern that LGBT persons face prejudice in schools and discrimination in employment and housing, and recommended that the state commission a study about the problems faced by LGBT people and measures needed to tackle these. ECRI also noted that Liechtenstein’s National Human Rights Institution, the Association for Human Rights, is mandated with protecting LGBT people.

Family
The CEDAW recommended Liechtenstein to achieve equality between registered same-sex partnerships and marriage. ECRI noted that in many areas this has already been achieved, for instance via the inheritance law, social insurance law, occupational pension law, the law governing foreigners and naturalisation and tax law. However, ECRI called on Liechtenstein to introduce second parent adoption and to eliminate any other legal differences.

Legal gender recognition
Human rights defenders continued lobbying for a legal basis for legal gender recognition this year, which currently does not exist. Some trans people have been able to change their name and gender marker, but the procedure remains ad hoc, and thus inconsistent and difficult for applicants. Regulations about trans healthcare and insurance coverage are also lacking, as ECRI noted.

Public opinion
ECRI welcomed that attitudes towards LGBT people have significantly improved.

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