

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 10 September 2014

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EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

APPLICATION OF THE CHARTER IN LIECHTENSTEIN

6th monitoring cycle

Report of the Committee of Experts

on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

on 10 September 2014

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages provides for a control mechanism to evaluate how the Charter is applied in a State Party with a view to, where necessary, making recommendations for improving its legislation, policy and practices. The central element of this procedure is the Committee of Experts, set up under Article 17 of the Charter. Its principal purpose is to report to the Committee of Ministers on its evaluation of compliance by a Party with its undertakings, to examine the real situation of regional or minority languages in the State and, where appropriate, to encourage the Party to gradually reach a higher level of commitment.

To facilitate this task, the Committee of Ministers adopted, in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 1, an outline for periodical reports that a Party is required to submit to the Secretary General. The report shall be made public by the State in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 2. This outline requires the State to give an account of the concrete application of the Charter, the general policy for the languages protected under Part II and, in more precise terms, all measures that have been taken in application of the provisions chosen for each language protected under Part III of the Charter. The Committee of Experts' first task is therefore to examine the information contained in the periodical report for all the relevant regional or minority languages on the territory of the State concerned.

The Committee of Experts' role is to evaluate the existing legal acts, regulations and real practice applied in each State for its regional or minority languages. It has established its working methods accordingly. The Committee of Experts gathers information from the respective authorities and from independent sources within the State, so as to attempt to obtain a fair and just overview of the real language situation. After a preliminary examination of an initial periodical report, the Committee of Experts submits, if necessary, a number of questions to each Party to obtain supplementary information from the authorities on matters it considers insufficiently developed in the report itself. This written procedure is usually followed up by an on-the-spot visit by a delegation of the Committee of Experts to the State in question. During this visit the delegation meets bodies and associations whose work is closely related to the use of the relevant languages, and consults the authorities on matters that have been brought to its attention. This information-gathering process is designed to enable the Committee of Experts to evaluate more effectively the application of the Charter in the State concerned.

Having concluded this process, the Committee of Experts adopts its own report. This report is submitted to the Committee of Ministers, together with suggestions for recommendations that the latter may decide to address to the State Party.

Chapter 1 Background Information

1. The Principality of Liechtenstein signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereafter referred to as the Charter) on 5 November 1992, and deposited its instrument of ratification on 18 November 1997. The instrument of ratification is attached as Appendix I of this report. The Charter entered into force for Liechtenstein on 1 March 1998.
2. In accordance with Article 15.1 of the Charter, Liechtenstein submitted its sixth periodical report to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on 20 January 2014. The periodical report has been made public.
3. The present report was adopted by the Committee of Experts on 14 May 2014.

The work of the Committee of Experts

4. The Committee of Experts took note of the sixth periodical report of Liechtenstein, which confirms the information provided in the initial report according to which there are no regional or minority languages used in Liechtenstein. As the Charter is not applicable to any regional or minority language in Liechtenstein, the Committee of Experts has not considered it necessary to organise an on-the-spot visit as it has done in relation to other States Parties.

Chapter 2 Findings of the Committee of Experts

- A. The Committee of Experts commends the authorities of Liechtenstein for the commitment and European solidarity they have demonstrated by ratifying the Charter.
- B. The Committee of Experts has concluded that, in light of the particular situation whereby in Liechtenstein no regional or minority languages are spoken, it will not propose to the Committee of Ministers to forward any recommendations to the Principality of Liechtenstein.
- C. In accordance with Articles 16 paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Charter, the Committee of Experts asks the Committee of Ministers to take note of this report and to express to the government of Liechtenstein its appreciation of the valuable contribution it has made to the protection and promotion of regional or minority languages in Europe by its ratification and active contribution to the promotion of the Charter. The Committee of Experts expresses its hope that other member States of the Council of Europe on whose territory no regional or minority languages are used will follow this example and ratify the Charter as an act of solidarity in the view of the objectives of the treaty.

Appendix I: Instrument of Ratification



Liechtenstein:

Declaration contained in the instrument of ratification deposited on 18 November 1997 - Or. Fr.

The Principality of Liechtenstein declares in accordance with Article 2, paragraph 2, and in accordance with Article 3, paragraph 1, of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages of 5 November 1992, that there are no regional or minority languages in the sense of the Charter in the territory of the Principality of Liechtenstein at the time of ratification.

Period covered: 01/03/98 -

The preceding statement concerns Article(s): 2, 3