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EIGHTH EVALUATION REPORT ON LIECHTENSTEIN

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Committee of Experts of
the European Charter
for Regional or
Minority Languages

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Adopted on 17 March 2023

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. 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 periodical report shall be made public by the state in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 2.

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, in order to obtain a fair and just overview of the real language situation. After a preliminary examination of a 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. Once adopted by the Committee of Experts, this evaluation report is submitted to the authorities of the respective state party for possible comments within a given deadline. A confidential dialogue may, at this stage, be requested by this state party. The final evaluation report is made public, together with the comments, if any, which the authorities of the state party may have made. This document is then transmitted to the Committee of Ministers for the adoption of its recommendations to the state party, on the basis of the proposals for recommendations contained in the evaluation report.

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1. The ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by the Principality of Liechtenstein

1. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereafter referred to as “the Charter”) is a treaty of the Council of Europe putting obligations on its states parties to protect and promote the country’s traditional regional or minority languages in all fields of public life: education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, and transfrontier exchanges. The Principality of Liechtenstein signed the Charter on 5 November 1992 and ratified it on 18 November 1997. The instrument of ratification is attached as Appendix I of this report. The Charter entered into force in respect of Liechtenstein on 1 March 1998.

2. States parties are required to submit reports every five years¹ on the implementation of the Charter. The authorities of Liechtenstein submitted their eighth periodical report on 1 March 2023. This eighth evaluation report of the Committee of Experts is based on the information contained in the periodical report, as well as in the previous evaluation reports of the Committee of Experts on Liechtenstein. As in previous monitoring cycles, the Committee of Experts did not consider it necessary to organise an on-the-spot visit to Liechtenstein.

2. Findings and recommendations of the Committee of Experts

3. The Committee of Experts took note of the eighth periodical report, which confirms the information provided in the initial report according to which there are no regional or minority languages, as defined in Article 1 of the Charter, used in Liechtenstein.² Nevertheless, the Liechtenstein authorities reaffirm their continued support to the Charter “as an essential tool of the Council of Europe in its efforts to preserve and strengthen Europe’s cultural heritage”. The Committee of Experts again commends the authorities of Liechtenstein for the commitment and European solidarity they have demonstrated by ratifying the Charter.

4. The Committee of Experts has concluded that, in light of the situation whereby in Liechtenstein no regional or minority languages are spoken on its territory, it will not propose to the Committee of Ministers to make any recommendations to the authorities of Liechtenstein.

5. The Committee of Experts nonetheless proposes to the Committee of Ministers to call upon those Council of Europe member states which have not yet ratified the Charter to do so, in particular those states which undertook to ratify the Charter when acceding to the Council of Europe. Considering the commendable examples of both Liechtenstein and Luxembourg, the Committee of Experts expresses its hope that also those member states of the Council of Europe on whose territory no regional or minority languages are used will ratify the Charter as an act of solidarity in view of the objectives of the treaty.³

6. This evaluation report was adopted by the Committee of Experts on 17 March 2023.

¹ Article 15.1 of the Charter provides that states parties submit periodical reports every three years. However, following the entry into force of the reform of the monitoring mechanism of the ECRML on 1 July 2019, states parties are now to submit their reports every five years instead of every three years.

² [MIN-LANG\(2023\)PR4](#), eighth periodical report of Liechtenstein.

³ See Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Communication, Doc. 15276 of 26 April 2021, Application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (2018-2021) - [Biennial Report](#) by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to the Parliamentary Assembly, pp.8-9.

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