



STÄNDIGE VERTRETUNG DES FÜRSTENTUMS LIECHTENSTEIN
BEI DER ORGANISATION FÜR SICHERHEIT UND ZUSAMMENARBEIT IN EUROPA (OSZE)

Integration of the foreign population in Liechtenstein

Introduction

The Working Group against Racism, Anti-Semitism, and Xenophobia, which was appointed by the Government pursuant to its decision RA 2002/1818-9761.2/8 of 18 June 2002 and dissolved pursuant to RA 2007/388-9761.2/8 of 14 February 2007, consisted of the following members:

- Christine Stehrenberger, Deputy Director of the Office for Foreign Affairs, Chair
- Nancy Barouk-Hasler, Office of Social Affairs
- Peter Gstöhl, Director of the Office of Public Health
- Jules Hoch, National Police
- Alicia Längle/Domenik Wanger (mutual substitutes), Office for Foreign Affairs
- Veronika Marxer, Office of Equal Opportunity
- Helmut Müssner, Office of Education
- Regine Walzl, Immigration and Passport Office.

Pursuant to RA 2006/542-9761.2/8 of 21 March 2006, the Working Group was mandated to prepare a status report for the Government on the situation pertaining to racism and integration. Ms. Marion Malin, staff member of the Office for Foreign Affairs, compiled this report on behalf of the Working Group. The status report aims to show the current state of affairs, the problems, and the need for action with respect to integration, and in this way to supplement the already existing foundations for a coherent integration policy on the part of the Government. Affected Government Offices were consulted for their expertise in the preparation of the report. The Office of Equal Opportunity, which is in charge of the topics of migration and integration and which will continue the mandate of the Working Group against Racism, Anti-Semitism, and Xenophobia, should thus be able to draw on an overview of the integration status quo that is as comprehensive as possible.

With approximately 12,000 foreigners living in the country, Liechtenstein is one of the European countries with the highest share of foreigners, namely 33.9% of the population (31 December 2006). Among EU and EFTA States, only Luxembourg, Estonia, and Latvia have a higher share of foreigners. Specific to the Liechtenstein situation is that 57.2% (end of June 2006) of its resident foreigners are from German-speaking countries. Comparisons with other countries with respect to integration efforts and problems relating to the share of foreigners should therefore be regarded with caution. Given the largely peaceful coexistence of foreigners and citizens, the integration of foreigners can be considered relatively unproblematic. The goal of the present report is to show existing deficiencies and deficits in the area of integration that could, in the long term, lead to social problems, as well as to propose possible countermeasures. In addition to the Introduction and Summary, the report is structured as follows:

In Part I on “Integration Policy”, the goals, contents, and legal framework of Liechtenstein policy on foreigners and integration are explained, and the responsibilities and tools for the promotion of integration are illustrated.

In Part II on “Foreigners in Liechtenstein”, basic data on the foreign population and the Liechtenstein refugee situation is presented. Next, the attitudes of Liechtenstein citizens toward their foreign neighbors are examined, measures already taken to combat racism and xenophobia are enumerated, and the need for action in the view of the Working Group against Racism, Anti-Semitism, and Xenophobia is outlined.

In Part III on “Areas of Integration”, already existing data and findings on the status quo of integration in the following areas are outlined: schooling; vocational training; labor market; social security; health; language; living situation; participation in social life and the political process, naturalization; religion and culture. In each area, a situation analysis is performed, integration deficits and deficiencies are determined, their causes identified, particularly affected risk groups named, existing measures explained, and the need for action shown.

In Part IV, “Conclusions”, the most important general results with respect to the integration of foreigners in Liechtenstein are emphasized. On this basis, the priority needs for action in the view of the Working Group against Racism, Anti-Semitism, and Xenophobia are identified.

The Annex contains supplemental material such as legislative texts, press clippings, and statistics.

To provide the envisaged overview of the status quo of the integration of foreigners in Liechtenstein and to give recommendations on how to deal with the existing difficulties, the status report makes use of previous research. This fact leads immediately to one of the key findings of the report: The topic of migration and integration has so far been only insufficiently treated and documented in Liechtenstein. Given this background, both the identification of integration deficits and deficiencies as well as the evaluation of measures already taken are difficult. Accordingly, a need for action exists with respect to expansion of the statistical data on integration in Liechtenstein, in order to facilitate targeted and efficient integration measures.

The available research is either limited to old data or to specific – generally legal – aspects.¹ More up-to-date and comprehensive are documents issued by the Liechtenstein Government in the form of “Reports and Proposals”, “Consultation Reports”, or “Comments” submitted to Parliament in connection with new laws, legislative amendments, or the conclusion of international treaties. Additional analyses on the integration of foreigners in Liechtenstein have been compiled in the form of internal notes, reports, and studies at the level of Government Offices. The present report draws in particular on such materials. In its presentation of the measures taken so far to promote integration, the report in general looks back only as far as 2002, the initial year of the five-year National Action Plan against Racism

¹ Claudia Heeb-Fleck/Veronika Marxer (2001; 2004) illuminate Liechtenstein migration policy from 1945 to 1981, as part of a Swiss National Science Foundation project. The immigration and integration study by Janine Dahinden/Etienne Piguet (2004) focuses on the analysis of statistical data of the Office of Economic Affairs, however only considering the census data through 1990. A diploma thesis by Tobias Ritter considers naturalization policy in the 1930’s and 1940’s. Likewise, past eras of immigration and the life of foreigners in Liechtenstein are covered in the works of Peter Geiger (1974), the conference documentation of the Liechtenstein Academic Society (1974), and various papers by Peter Meusbürger (1969; 1970; 1981). From a legal perspective, the papers on relevant basic law by Höfling (1994; 1995) and the older papers by Ivo Beck on settlement (1962) as well as the doctoral thesis by Ralph Wanger on Liechtenstein citizenship (1997) are of note.

(NAP, 2002-2007) implemented by the Working Group against Racism, Anti-Semitism, and Xenophobia.

For statistical information, the status report draws on various sources of data. Primarily, the following official statistics were used:

- Census²
- Population and foreigners' statistics³
- Crime statistics
- Marital statistics
- Education statistics
- Employment statistics
- Naturalization statistics.

The Working Group against Racism, Anti-Semitism, and Xenophobia commissioned political scientist Wilfried Marxer of the Liechtenstein Institute to undertake a survey and evaluation of statistical data in connection with racial discrimination. The study was completed in September 2005 and evaluated all statistical data through the end of 2003. Due to the lack of official statistics, data in the following areas was evaluated especially for the Liechtenstein Institute study:

- Share of foreigners at schools
- German as a second language at Liechtenstein schools
- Special schooling
- Disability
- Unemployment among foreigners
- Search for housing.

The present report draws on the data evaluated by the Liechtenstein Institute as well as on the official statistics. Because different sources were used for different years, the data cannot always be compared directly.

Summary

This report presents the current integration situation of foreigners in Liechtenstein, existing integration deficits and their causes, and the countermeasures already taken. Additionally, it identifies the need for action with respect to the promotion of integration.

Following the Government policy paper on Liechtenstein integration policy, this report regards the integration of foreigners as successful if all population groups coexist in mutual respect and tolerance, and foreigners extensively participate (or are able to participate) in the economic, social, and cultural life of Liechtenstein.⁴ For the analysis of the status quo of integration of foreigners in Liechtenstein, this means that the current state of affairs must be measured against a desired state of affairs characterized as follows:

² A census is conducted in Liechtenstein every ten years. The census is a complete statistical survey of the entire population (individuals, households, and buildings). Tabular evaluation is provided as part of official statistical publications in a simplified, summarized form. Not all census data is differentiated according to population group.

³ As a rule, the official statistics are updated once a year. The Office of Economic Affairs publishes a summary in the Statistical Yearbook.

⁴ Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein (2007).

- a) Equal opportunity prevails, i.e. foreigners in Liechtenstein enjoy similar statistical indicators in key areas of integration as Liechtenstein citizens in similar life situations (age, gender, education, ...).
- b) Foreigners in Liechtenstein are not confronted with exclusion, discrimination, xenophobia, or racism.

In summary, the following picture emerges with respect to the integration of the foreign population in Liechtenstein:

Treatment of foreigners:

In comparison with the Swiss and German population, Liechtenstein society demonstrates greater openness with respect to the social integration of immigrants. These results can be explained with reference to the economic prosperity, the low crime rate, and the fact that a large share of immigrants come from German-speaking neighboring countries and at the same time predominantly have a high level of education. Attitudes towards foreign-speaking, generally poorly educated foreigners in Liechtenstein would have to be analyzed separately. The attitudes of Liechtenstein young people towards foreign nationals are ambivalent. Foreigners are seen as an enrichment on the one hand, but also as a threat.

Right-wing extremist tendencies exist in Liechtenstein. There is an ideologized core group of approximately 20 to 30 right-wing extremists and a larger group of young people with affinities to right-wing extremist ideology. Right-wing extremists in Liechtenstein are neither formally nor politically organized. There is no right-wing political party. Since introduction of the anti-racism penal provision in 2000, the Office of the Public Prosecutor has filed three charges under § 283 of the Criminal Code. Two cases resulted in convictions, while one case is still pending.

Numerous measures to combat xenophobia and right-wing extremism have been taken in recent years at the legislative, administrative, social, and scholastic level.

Overview of the individual areas of integration:

Schooling: Approximately one third of the children and young people attending school in Liechtenstein are of foreign origin. Foreign-language children, especially from Southern, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe and Turkey, are overrepresented at the *Oberschule* (lower-tier secondary school) and in special-needs schooling. Sufficient knowledge of the German language is therefore of fundamental importance for students' educational and later professional careers. The most important existing measure to promote the education of foreign children and young people consists in the German-language courses for foreigners offered by the Office of Education in the framework of "German as a Second Language" (GSL).

Vocational training: Of the young people with an apprenticeship (vocational training) in Liechtenstein in 2006, 47.2% were foreigners. No statistical surveys exist on whether disproportionately many foreign youths lack well-grounded vocational training in the long run and therefore run a greater risk of unemployment and dependence on social welfare. The Office of Vocational Training and Counseling is responsible for counseling foreign youths with respect to vocational training. Foreign-language youths arriving in Liechtenstein after the end of their mandatory schooling can be integrated into the training process through a pre-apprenticeship or an integration year.

Labor market: Of the workers living in Liechtenstein, 37.5% are foreigners. The more secure the foreigner's residence status, the higher the probability that the foreigner will be working in

the service sector. Foreign workers – especially those whose first language is not German – tend to be in a lower socio-economic category than Liechtenstein workers. Foreign-language immigrants are disproportionately affected by unemployment. The Employment Service Bureau of the Office of Economic Affairs supports both unemployed citizens and foreigners in their search for an appropriate job.

Social security:

Certain nationalities represent a disproportionately high share of the clients of the Office of Social Affairs. Foreigners are exposed to a higher risk of poverty. The share of beneficiaries of Disability Insurance from Southern Europe, Eastern/Southeastern Europe, and Turkey was disproportionately high in 2004. Liechtenstein citizens and foreigners can benefit equally from the support measures offered by the Office of Social Affairs and by Old Age and Survivors' Insurance/Disability Insurance.

Health: No statistical surveys exist on the state of health of foreigners in Liechtenstein. According to representatives of the Liechtenstein health services, illnesses of foreigners may sometimes reflect social or familial problems rooted in their migration situation or change of cultures. Discrimination of migrants with respect to access to treatment methods is prohibited. Some difficulties arise due to language problems, cultural differences, or differences in mentality.

Language: 12.3% of the total population of Liechtenstein spoke a main language other than German in 2000. Educational disadvantages (especially also of parents of school-age children), poor study habits, lack of competence in the first language (language of origin), lack of opportunities and motivation to use the language, and also some gaps in offerings are causes of the deficient language skills of some foreigners. German as a Second Language, which is integrated into the school curriculum, as well as measures offered in the framework of vocational training exist to promote the language skills of children and young people. German-language courses for foreigners are offered by several educational institutions, some of which are supported by the State.

Living situation: In Liechtenstein, there are no separate neighborhoods predominantly inhabited by foreigners (segregation). Foreigners disproportionately live in rented apartments and are underrepresented with respect to home ownership. Immigrants from non-EU countries generally have lower than average living space per person, i.e. their living situation tends to be more cramped. So far, no statistical surveys have been conducted on discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin with respect to the search for housing. Native and immigrant families who are disadvantaged financially receive equal rental subsidies from the Housing Office.

Participation in social life and the political process, naturalization: Foreign-language immigrants are less active than others in clubs and associations. The foreign population in Liechtenstein cannot participate in the political process – neither at the national nor at the municipal level. Over the last 35 years, the naturalization of foreign children of Liechtenstein mothers has been the most significant type of naturalization. Compared with naturalization by a popular vote, the option of facilitated naturalization introduced in 2001 is the more practicable alternative especially for foreign-language immigrants.

Religion and culture: The relatively large and relatively quickly increasing share of Muslims in the foreign population is striking. A Working Group on the Integration of Muslims in Liechtenstein was created in 2004. At secondary schools, a choice is offered between Catholic or Protestant religious instruction and a course on “Religion and Culture”. The Government

has introduced a pilot project on Islamic religious instruction at primary schools. Cultural differences are taken into account in everyday life in schools. Foreign children subject to mandatory schooling receive support in learning their native language and getting to know the culture of their country of origin.

Conclusions:

The overview of the most important integration areas shows that general educational disadvantages, lack of language skills, a difficult socio-economic situation, and cultural differences are the most important causes of integration deficits. Conversely, access to (well-paid) work is the key condition for successful integration. Moreover, the overview shows that integration success in the areas of education and work is closely linked to knowledge of the national language. Specific groups at risk for poor integration are therefore foreign-language immigrants from educationally disadvantaged families, and in particular women. For this reason, the promotion of integration must focus especially on the areas of language, vocational training, and the labor market.

Existing measures and further need for action:

The analysis shows that in several areas, effective measures have already been taken, while the problem of integration in other areas has hardly experienced systematic treatment and consideration in the form of appropriate steps. Accordingly, while the measures already taken in individual areas must be supplemented in certain points, concepts and strategies for the promotion of integration must first be developed in other areas. The heterogeneity of the foreign population in Liechtenstein and the interactions between the various integration areas must be taken into account. Existing naturalization requirements must be reviewed critically and, where possible, liberalized. Urgently needed is an improvement of the statistical data, both to improve understanding of the actually existing integration difficulties and to verify the effectiveness of the measures taken. It will be equally crucial to improve the coordination and harmonization among the various measures and to provide the necessary resources for developing and implementing a unified integration policy.