



EF.DEL/50/05  
25 May 2005

ENGLISH only

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

**Country report of the Principality of Liechtenstein  
to the thirteenth OSCE Economic Forum on**

**demographic trends, migration and integration belonging to national minorities  
23 May to 27 May 2005**

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In view of the 13th OSCE Economic Forum in Prague, Liechtenstein forwards the following report on the subject matter with the aim to give a brief overview on the specific situation in Liechtenstein and its policy responses.

Population and demographic trends:

Liechtenstein is a country with 34'500 inhabitants and has a surface area of 160 km<sup>2</sup>. About 12'000 people or over 34% of the Liechtenstein population are not Liechtenstein nationals. The biggest group of foreigners living in Liechtenstein stem from neighbouring countries, in particular from Switzerland (31%), Austria (17%) and Germany (10%). Foreign nationals from other European countries live also in Liechtenstein, foremost from Italy (10%), Turkey (7.5%), Serbia-Montenegro (4,3%), Portugal (4,5%) and Spain (4%). But unlike many other states, Liechtenstein has no significant national minorities.

A major section of foreign nationals (around 60%) comes from Switzerland, Austria and Germany with similar cultural, social and linguistic backgrounds. An additional 20% originates from other EU member states. The remaining predominantly stem from countries with EU membership prospects or EU bordering states. Some refugees, first from South East Asia and then South Eastern Europe came to Liechtenstein at the time or as a result of conflicts.

The size of the Liechtenstein population has increased steadily in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While the total population in the 1950s stood at 14'000, that number increased 2.5 fold by 2004. In comparison with 1994, shortly before joining the EEA in 1995, the total number of inhabitants with Liechtenstein citizenship increased by 19% in 2004. However, this increase takes the naturalization processes in the 1990s into account. Within this timeframe, the total increase of the population living in Liechtenstein was equal to 12%. The birth rate in 2002 stood at 1.49.

The legal framework - bilateral and international agreements:

Under the rights and obligations of Liechtenstein nationals, the Liechtenstein constitution stipulates that the right of foreign nationals to take residence in Liechtenstein will be determined by international treaties or by reciprocity. Accordingly, the right to gain a residence permit is laid down in pertinent bilateral or multinational agreements. With Switzerland a special agreement regulating the legal position of Liechtenstein and Swiss nationals in each other's territory is in force. With the EEA member states, Liechtenstein entered into the EEA Agreement in 1995. The EEA Agreement unites the three EFTA-EEA States Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and the 25 EU member states into the Single Market,

governed by the “acquis communautaire”. The rules cover the four freedoms of which one is the free movement of persons. Based on the small size of Liechtenstein and its population, the number of the yearly allotted residence permits for EEA nationals are however linked to certain restrictions agreed to as part of the EEA Agreement. Family members of those EEA nationals holding residence permit are allowed to join. The basis for granting residence permits of third nationals into Liechtenstein are the provisions of the WTO Agreement. Foreign nationals from third countries are granted residence permits under certain circumstances. For Swiss, EEA and third country nationals, however, working permits are granted based on the principle of quality.

Linked to the aforementioned agreements, an executive ordinance pertaining to the free movement of persons came into force. It regulates aspects for foreign nationals living in or moving to Liechtenstein. The ordinance contains provisions on working, not living conditions. According to the ordinance, the living together of Liechtenstein nationals with foreign nationals aims to build upon mutual values and the rule of law, guided by mutual respect and tolerance.

#### The social framework - some examples of national efforts:

The government established an Office for Equal Opportunities with the aim to mitigate cases of discrimination and solve social tensions. The Office will act as a platform to which the foreigner’s association and individuals may address their contributions and possible grievances. The office is mandated to coordinate efforts between the various departments of the Liechtenstein administration, dealing with such concerns as language difficulties, employment, integration in schools, education, health services and social security. One particular task of the Office is to prepare a national blueprint on a comprehensive integration approach. The blueprint is expected to identify those policy areas where priority action in the legislative and other fields is needed. It is also supposed to deal with the question of better involvement of foreign residents in public life.

For women not speaking German as a native tongue, a special initiative “project migration” was developed by the “information and contact office for women” organisation (infra) in the year 2000 which promotes independence and integration into society by administering German language courses, offering advisory services and helpful information to women. The government awarded the equal opportunities price 2000 to the organisation for this outstanding contribution.

For adults, infra also published a booklet “Welcome to Liechtenstein – Information for migrants” in 2004. The brochure aims to support new migrants for a swift and smooth start in Liechtenstein. A regular update of the booklet is planned. The booklet is available in Croatian, German, English, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Turkish. Copies have been made available to the 13th OSCE Economic Forum.

For school children, a number of initiatives and activities by the educational system have been launched. As part of the PISA study, proposals to devise guidelines for the most useful application of the German language in the Liechtenstein teaching facilities have been developed and are being implemented. Children with no knowledge of the German language sign up for a one year intensive course in German in order to be fully integrated into the regular school curricula. Children with some German knowledge are being integrated into the regular school system immediately while being offered additional teaching lessons in German. Moreover, as the development of the native tongue is an important foundation for

learning a second language, the schools have installed an intercultural library in many foreign languages with emphasis on literature for children and youngsters.

Furthermore, to speed up integration of adults into their communities, cooperation with the business community, associations for foreign nationals and local institutions are being studied to promote linguistic competences at work and to further social contacts. The prospect of those foreign nationals with poor language skills, however, confines them to certain occupations with lower income levels and to their own community.

#### Conclusion:

Due to its economic growth and limited size of its population, Liechtenstein has had a comparably high percentage of foreign nationals. Liechtenstein has a relatively long tradition of integrating foreign workers and has paid great attention to the way and manner of integrating newcomers into society and its business community through a well managed and monitoring process. Integration is not meant as an adaptation process exclusively of the minorities to the majority but as a mutual process in which differences are seen as an enrichment to the Liechtenstein society. In this context, it is the view of the Liechtenstein government that the foreign population should be seen as a valuable part of our society and, with the sharing of mutual competences and experiences, would improve performance, competitiveness, long term economic success and, last but not least, the quality of life for every person living and working in Liechtenstein.

#### Documents and Websites in this context:

Liechtenstein country report to the 12<sup>th</sup> OSCE Economic Forum in 2004 (EF.DEL/13/04).

Report by Mr. Alvaro Gil-Robles, Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe for the attention of the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly, subsection The Place of Foreigners in Liechtenstein Society (CommDH(2005)5).

More information on the subject matter can be obtained on the following websites:

[www.liechtenstein.li](http://www.liechtenstein.li) (labour law and labour relations)

[www.gesetze.li](http://www.gesetze.li) (legislation on line)

[www.apa.llv.li](http://www.apa.llv.li)

[www.llv.li/amtstellen/llv-avw-statistik.htm](http://www.llv.li/amtstellen/llv-avw-statistik.htm)