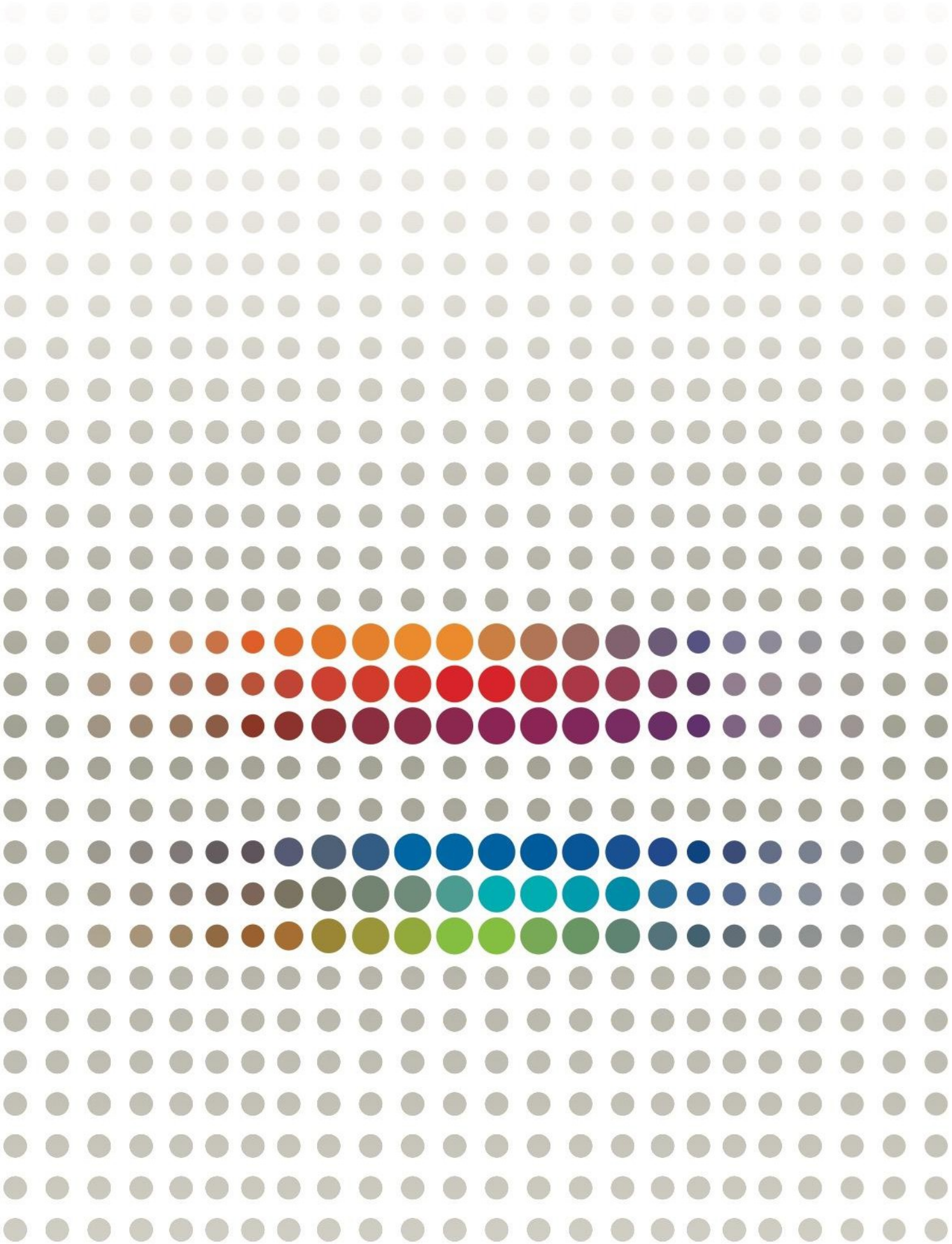
Annual Report 2024

Verein für Menschenrechte
in Liechtenstein VMR

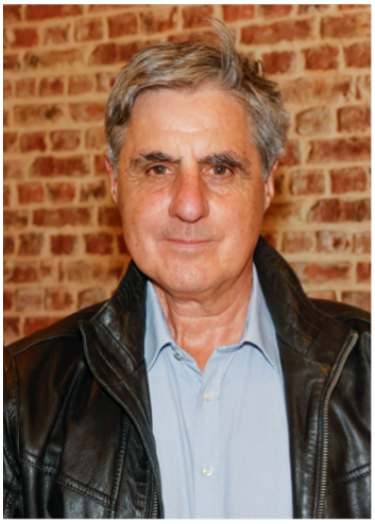


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# Foreword

Dear members
Dear supporters



The wars in Ukraine and Gaza are leading to massive human rights violations, war crimes and humanitarian suffering. Around the world, political polarization, populism and authoritarian tendencies are threatening basic democratic values and thus also the protection of human rights. The global environmental crisis is driving millions of people to flee their homes and into poverty, posing immense challenges to the human rights to food, water and a safe life.

At the same time, acceptance of the international order is declining. International law and its institutions such as the UN and the International Criminal Court are under pressure. In Europe, too, democracy and freedom are under greater threat than we ever thought possible.

In this context, national human rights institutions are more important than ever. They protect the fundamental rights of all people, uncover abuses and ensure that governments do not forget their responsibilities.

Information and education are essential cornerstones for the protection of human rights. It creates knowledge and awareness in order to recognize discrimination, oppression and injustice and to actively stand up for a just, free and humane society. Since August, we have been offering tolerance workshops at schools in addition to our tried-and-tested human rights workshops. We are proud to have received a government funding award for this. Many thanks to our partner organizations Amnesty International Liechtenstein and aha - Tipps und Infos für junge Leute, for this long-standing collaboration!

In 2024, we offered advice and support to 57 people who contacted the VCR with human rights concerns. With our current project "Pro Menschenrechte - Prozessieren mit Wirkung" (Pro Human Rights - Effective Litigation), we want to ensure that more human rights cases are heard in Liechtenstein and that those affected receive free legal protection. Many thanks to all donors and to the legal experts who support us in this endeavor.

We want to reach further milestones from 2025. Our project study on the creation of a "child-friendly justice system" is a focal point. Children and young people should be able to fully exercise their right to be heard and have a say in all legal proceedings. Their interests should be taken into account in legal decisions. To this end, we need new structures such as children's advocates and inter-agency cooperation.

Another priority is the establishment of a mechanism for reviewing disability rights. These have been placed on a completely new footing with the entry into force of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Liechtenstein in 2024. We look forward to working with experts and people with disabilities to

establish our new function as a monitoring body for disability rights.

We will continue to work on these and many other issues and are counting on you. Our joint commitment is the backbone of human rights in Liechtenstein and ensures that humanity and justice do not fall by the wayside.

Thank you for your support!



Wilfried Marxer, President

# Our mission

## Now more than ever!

Human rights are the basis for a life in dignity, freedom and security. But they cannot be taken for granted. The global situation shows that we need to protect them even more! Because without human rights, discrimination, oppression and violence threaten to destroy the lives of countless people. If we do not actively defend human rights, we will not only lose protection for the weakest, but also the foundations and values that make our society free and our world worth living in.

We stand up for human rights in Liechtenstein. We advise and support victims of human rights violations. We give vulnerable people a voice and stand up for their rights at all levels. We investigate, monitor and inform about the human rights situation in Liechtenstein. We strengthen the legal basis, raise public and political awareness and advise the authorities in their practice - so that human rights in Liechtenstein become effective.

# Our association

## One organization - three mandates

| VMR<br>Association for Human Rights | | |
|---|---|---|
| **NMRI<br>National Human Rights institution** | **OSKJ<br>Ombudsman's Office for Children and Adolescents** | **MOBE<br>Disability Monitoring Office** |
| The Association for Human Rights in Liechtenstein (VMR) was founded on December 10, 2016. It is Liechtenstein's national human rights institution in accordance with the UN's "Paris Principles". Its tasks are defined in the Law on the Association for Human Rights in Liechtenstein, VMRG (LGBl. 2016 No. 504). It is an independent contact point for human rights violations. | The OSKJ has been in existence since 2010. It is the national body independent of the authorities and works for children's rights in accordance with Articles 96-98 of the Liechtenstein Children and Youth Act. The OSKJ is tasked with protecting the rights and interests of children and young people, listening to their concerns, acting as a mediator with the authorities and monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. | The independent monitoring body under Art. 33 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was established in 2024. It ensures that the state takes effective measures to realize the rights of persons with disabilities. It is an independent point of contact for violations of disability rights. |

The VHR is a member of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI). In 2024, it applied for membership of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

# Members

The VMR currently has 37 member organizations and 57 individual members. All eleven municipalities in Liechtenstein are advisory members. The municipalities and member organizations are our partners in assessing and monitoring the human rights situation. They are advisory and contact points and are familiar with many human rights problems from their daily work. They are aware of abuses and support us in setting the right priorities in our work and recommending the necessary measures.

The private members are people who identify with the goals of the VMR and help to ensure that human rights are firmly anchored in society and lived in everyday life. Through their attention, their commitment and their membership fees, they support the VMR mission.

**Become a member!**

Your knowledge helps us move forward, your membership fee strengthens our impact. With your commitment, you help us to stand up for human rights, equal opportunities and inclusion in Liechtenstein!

**Click here to apply for membership:**






The General Assembly is the supreme body of the VMR. It ensures that the association stays on course and fulfills its legal mandate to protect human rights. The Assembly makes important decisions to strengthen the association: in 2024, it established a procedure for the election of the Board of Directors that will ensure the independence and competence of the VMR in the future. The Board of Directors, consisting of five to seven independent experts, manages the strategic destiny and advises the head office. It is balanced in terms of expertise, age, gender and origin. The office is staffed by four people (a total of 2.1 full-time positions).





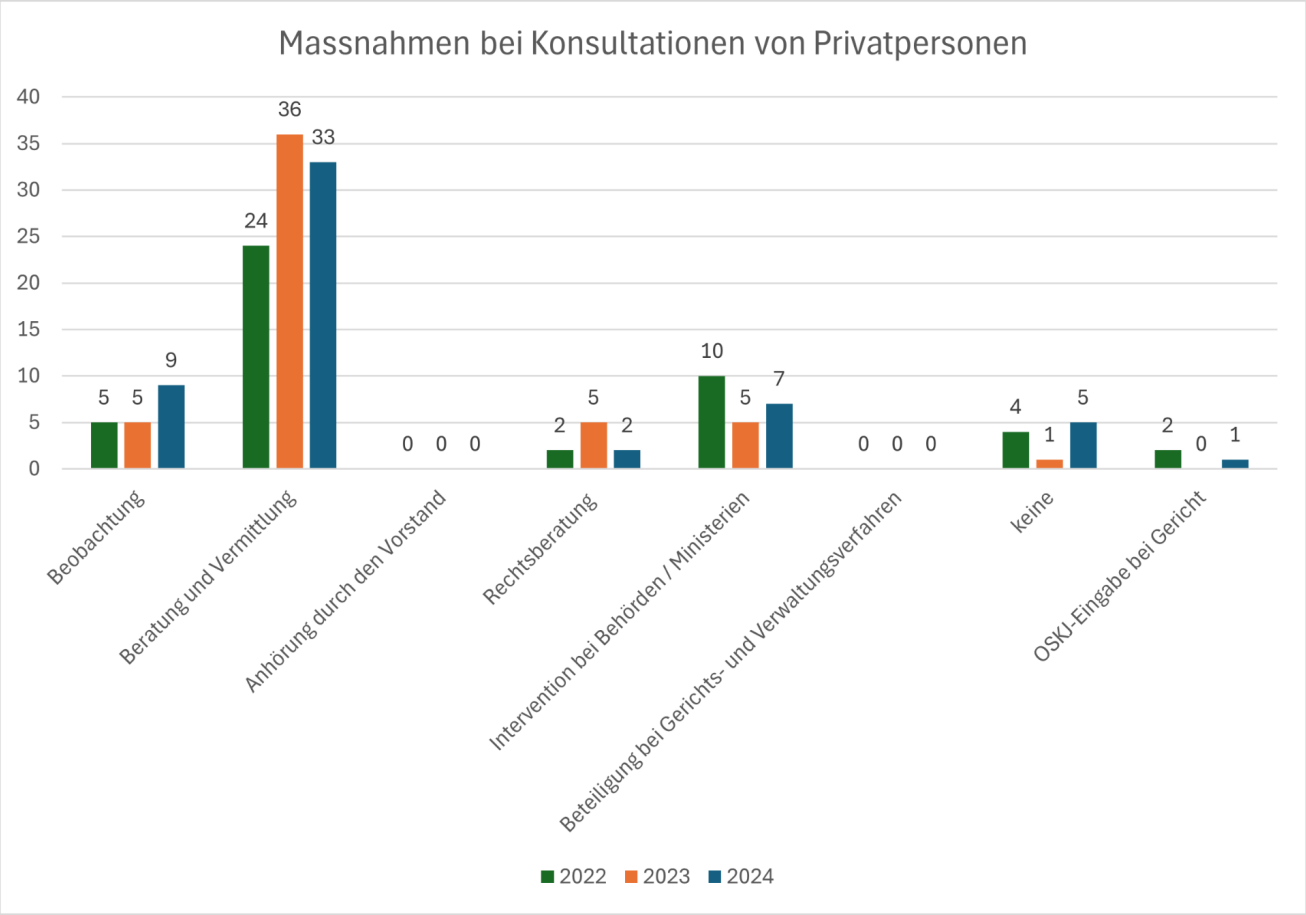

*Der Vorstand und die Geschäftsstelle des Vereins für Menschenrechte*

# Activities

## Access to justice - free advice

Everyone, regardless of origin, social status or financial means, must be able to assert their rights and protect themselves against injustice. This requires low-threshold and free access to social and legal advice. Without this, many rights only exist on paper and do not become effective in practice. The VMR offers free advice and initial legal advice for everyone.

In 2024, the VMR was consulted by a total of 57 people. Of these, 24 people were referred to the Ombudsman's Office for Children and Young People (OSKJ). One consultation was handled by the Disability Monitoring Office (MOBE). All contacts are checked for human rights violations. Advice and mediation was offered in 32 cases. In 7 cases, the MOBE and the OSKJ intervened with the competent authorities. In 3 cases, initial legal advice was offered free of charge. In 10 cases, the situation was monitored further. In 5 cases, no action was desired or necessary. The OSKJ also filed a petition with the court.




*In 2024, 57 people approached the OCR with human rights concerns.*

People come to the Ombudsperson Board with various concerns. The following three examples from our advisory practice show what the problems are and how the Ombudsperson Board can provide support:

**Case study 1:**
**Unequal pay despite equal qualifications - the fight for equality in professional life**

Ms. Meier* contacts the VMR because, as a teacher, she earns less than her colleague who has the same qualifications but has been employed for less time. This is contrary to the Gender Equality Act. The VMR encourages her to discuss the issue with her line manager and, if no solution is found, to contact the staff association of the provincial administration or the employees' association. If no solution is found, a complaint can be made to the government.

### Family between borders - when residence law separates families

Mrs. Milovic* from Croatia* lives in Liechtenstein with her two children. Her husband and the father of her children live in Buchs. She turns to the Ombudsman because her husband has not been granted a residence permit in Liechtenstein and is therefore violating her right to a family. The VMR clarifies the legal basis and the decisions of the authorities. It shows that the Passport Office has decided in accordance with the law. Nevertheless, the Advisory Council sees a human rights problem here: the Foreign Nationals Act is restrictive when it comes to family reunification. There is also no hardship rule when children are involved. Unfortunately, Liechtenstein made a reservation in this regard when it acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is why the VMR has been calling for a hardship rule in the Foreign Nationals Act and a withdrawal of the reservation in its monitoring report for years. Because only if the law is changed can the right to a family be enforced for the Milovic family.

### An apprenticeship for Nadja - when family problems jeopardize her career start

Mr. Beck* turns to the OSKJ. He is worried about his niece Nadja*. Nadja is in 3rd secondary school and would soon like to do an apprenticeship. As Nadja has a learning disability, she needs support when starting her career. Nadja's parents live apart. Her mother is ill and can't help her. Her father lives abroad. He is not well informed about Nadja's situation. Nadja would like to lead an independent life, but she cannot manage the search for an apprenticeship on her own. The OSKJ contacts the school and Nadja's father. She manages to get the father to work with the school to find an apprenticeship. In the meantime, Nadja has already been able to do various trial apprenticeships and take her first steps on the road to a career.

**Names and references changed*

### Litigation with impact - more case law on human rights

There is very little case law on human rights in Liechtenstein. This is due to the fact that the country has roughly the same number of legal norms as other European countries, but far fewer inhabitants who can enforce them. In addition, particularly vulnerable people in Liechtenstein are reluctant to file a lawsuit. This is sometimes for financial reasons. However, they often lack the courage or energy to go through with a legal case. The fear of attention or possible disadvantages also prevents those affected from doing so. As a result, many human rights cannot be enforced. This is because a court ruling not only helps the individual, but also helps to ensure that the legal provisions are interpreted and construed by the court. This benefits everyone who is struggling with similar problems.

This is why the VMR launched the "Pro Human Rights - Effective Litigation" project in 2024. The VMR conducts the legal process together or on behalf of those affected. It bears the legal costs, organizes the legal process, advocates for the human rights concerns of those affected and protects them from possible disadvantages. In this way, it strengthens their access to justice and contributes to the creation of more case law on human rights. Even if a human rights issue is not brought before a court, the VMR's initial legal advice is free of charge.

**Your donation counts!**

Help us to make human rights more effective. Support our legal advice and our strategic litigation project. So that more human rights violations end up in court and there is more case law on human rights.




Bank details

LLB Vaduz
LI81 0880 0551 4633 6200 1
Intended use: "Legal advice and legal costs"

# Education and awareness-raising

Knowledge about human rights forms the basis for all human rights protection. Information about human rights and human rights education must be accessible to all. Access to justice must be possible for everyone.

Since 2019, the VMR has been offering human rights workshops at secondary schools together with partner organizations. Pupils should learn about human rights and understand how they are protected and can be demanded in Liechtenstein and worldwide. Cooperation with the Commission for the Protection against Violence in recent years has shown that discrimination and bullying among young people is on the rise - especially via social media. The pupils affected suffer massively from the consequences of these forms of exclusion. New tolerance workshops were therefore set up in the last school year. These aim to prevent discrimination and bullying and promote respect, equality and tolerance among young people. Since its launch in 2019, 39 school classes with 641 pupils have taken advantage of the workshops on offer. The great interest in the workshops and the positive feedback from participants are a great motivation for everyone involved. The importance of this offer was acknowledged and appreciated by the VMR through the state's sponsorship award, which made the development of the workshops possible in the first place.

Verein für Menschenrechte
in Liechtenstein VMR

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
FÜRSTENTUM LIECHTENSTEIN

aha
Tipps & Infos für junge Leute

# «Wie gefährlich ist Populismus für die Menschenrechte?»




**Jetzt erst Recht!**
Menschenrechte für alle und überall
aha.li/workshop-menschenrechte



# «Wie gehen wir mit unterschiedlichen Meinungen um?»

**Stand up - Speak Out!**
Mach dich stark für Toleranz
aha.li/workshop-toleranz

NEW

---

# Workshop Angebote:

- Termin & Ort: nach Absprache
- Dauer: mind. 2 Unterrichtsstunden
- ab 12 Jahren (Sek I/Sek II)
- Anmeldung: nathalie@aha.li

*The human rights and tolerance workshops at secondary schools impart knowledge about human rights and promote respect and tolerance.*

On International Human Rights Day, the VMR and Amnesty International Liechtenstein organize an annual public event on a specific human rights topic. This year, the focus was on artificial intelligence (AI) and human rights. Nina Laukenmann from the University of Basel and Liechtenstein Data Protection Officer Marie-Louise Gächter spoke about regulation and the opportunities and risks of AI for human rights. It became clear that AI as an instrument can both endanger and strengthen human rights. Regulation is needed above all where the use of AI jeopardizes human rights. The EU and the Council of Europe have created an initial legal basis for this. Afterwards, visitors were able to try out artificial intelligence for themselves at various stands. The evening was framed by an AI improvisational theater by the Kreativ Akademie, AI music and art on AI by Satellites of Art.




*Artificial intelligence offers many opportunities to strengthen human rights. But it also involves risks. These must be regulated globally.*

# Freedom

The restriction of personal freedom must be weighed up very carefully. This applies in the case of imprisonment, involuntary placement or institutional forms of housing. Those affected need transparent procedures, opportunities to lodge complaints and appropriate support and advice.

During the annual exchange with the Prison Service Commission, the conditions of detention in prisons were once again discussed this year. The VMR has long recommended measures to improve employment opportunities and visiting options for families with children. The detention of juvenile offenders in accordance with children's rights is a challenge. The state prison does not offer the necessary framework conditions - it remains a case-by-case approach. The surrounding countries themselves have too little space in juvenile detention centers. There needs to be either a political decision to expand the state prison or corresponding agreements with surrounding prisons.

Between 2002 and 2022, the number of welfare placements quadrupled - and the number continues to rise every year. In 2024, 94 placements were made. 90 percent due to mental illness or abnormalities. The VMR evaluates the district court's statistics every year. What is behind the sharp increase in this trend is largely unclear among specialist authorities and the judiciary - and that worries us.

# Flight, migration and integration

Asylum seekers and refugees have a right to accommodation, medical care and legal support. People with a migration background or people of different religions must be protected from violence, discrimination and exploitation. They should be given opportunities to participate in society and politics.

People from 114 nations live in Liechtenstein. Foreigners make up 35 percent of the permanent population. They cannot vote. Yet the political participation of all is very important for a democratic society. As part of the "Diversity in politics" project, the VMR looked for opportunities for political participation by foreigners in Liechtenstein. To this end, it carried out a comprehensive analysis, gathered the opinions of those affected and discussed proposals from experts and political parties. The results of the study were published in a report with specific recommendations at the beginning of 2025. The report can be downloaded at www.menschenrechte.li/integration.

Over 85 percent of Liechtenstein's population belong to a religious community. In addition to the Catholic Church, which is enshrined in the constitution as the national church, there are other active religious communities in Liechtenstein. Unfortunately, there is still no legal basis for these religious communities, which means that they have to organize themselves as private associations and are not entitled to public recognition or state funding. The VMR is committed to the equality of all religious communities and to interreligious dialog in Liechtenstein. This strengthens mutual understanding, helps to break down prejudices and promotes social

cohesion so that peaceful and tolerant coexistence is guaranteed. Together with Haus Gutenberg, the VMR organizes the annual Round Table of Religions. In addition to cultivating relationships, this also gives rise to various interfaith activities, e.g. mutual visits, events, etc. At the "Religion in the Cinema" film festival in the old cinema, five films on various religious themes were shown during the Week of Religions.

The number of asylum seekers in Liechtenstein has never been as high as in the last two years since the Second World War. As of December 31, 2024, there were 727 asylum seekers from Ukraine in Liechtenstein. Many of them are women and children. There are also other regular asylum seekers and temporarily admitted persons. At the "Asylum Round Table", the VMR discusses with all responsible authorities and organizations how the challenge of accommodation and care as well as efficient procedures can be overcome in view of the large numbers and how those seeking protection can be protected from human rights violations. In addition, the VMR trains the independent representatives of aid organizations who monitor asylum interviews. They ensure that asylum procedures in Liechtenstein are conducted correctly. The employees of the refugee aid organization also regularly take part in the training courses and can thus refresh their knowledge of asylum procedures.



*The "political participation" project was presented by the VMR and Diversity in Politics at the government's integration dialog. Foreigners would like to have more say and co-determination.*

# Equality and inclusion

Gender equality, equal rights for queer people and inclusion of people with disabilities: The three goals have one thing in common - all people are entitled to equal rights and opportunities. They must not be discriminated against or prevented from personal development because of their gender, sexual orientation or a personal characteristic. We are called upon to recognize the rights and needs of these groups and to take measures for equality and inclusion.

On January 17, 2024, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities came into force in Liechtenstein - an important step towards greater inclusion and equal opportunities. The VMR has thus taken on a new mandate: It is now also the independent Monitoring Office on Disability (MOBE), which ensures that the Convention is implemented. As a first step, the VMR launched an inventory of disability rights together with the Department for Equal Opportunities and the Liechtenstein Disability Association. Initial consultations were held under the Convention. We also prepared the establishment of a committee that will involve those affected and keep an eye on progress in disability rights. This will be an important milestone on the way to a more inclusive society!

Domestic violence in families or partnerships is also an issue in Liechtenstein, as reported by specialist agencies and the national police. It includes physical, psychological, sexual or economic violence. Many victims are afraid to seek help because they are dependent, ashamed or have no support. The Istanbul Convention, which has been in force in Liechtenstein since 2021, obliges the state to provide information, protection and prevention. The latest figures from 2023 show that the national police documented 251 reports of domestic violence. The number of unreported cases in Liechtenstein is likely to be correspondingly high, as in neighboring countries. However, only a few cases lead to convictions because some of the forms of violence mentioned are difficult to prove or are not reported. The VMR therefore drew up specific recommendations on victim protection for the coordination group for the Istanbul Convention and wrote to the government on the introduction of a "silent and barrier-free emergency call" in Liechtenstein, which would allow people affected by violence - as well as people with disabilities - to call for help via an app. This means they do not have to make a phone call.

Marriage for all was approved by Parliament in spring 2024. Since then, same-sex couples have been able to marry. This is a major step towards equal rights and recognition of people with different sexual orientations and will give all couples the same rights from 1 January 2025. The VMR supported this decision in its statement, so that equal treatment in relation to marriage is possible regardless of sexual orientation. At the same time, the VMR supported the implementation of a guide to gender changes at the civil registry office, which now provides a clear procedure for those affected.

Unpaid care work such as childcare, nursing or household tasks are often carried out by women. This unequal distribution puts women at an economic disadvantage, as care work is often compatible with career breaks or only part-time work. In order to better distribute and value the numerous tasks, equal pay for men and

women, better social benefits, family-friendly working models and a fair division of household tasks are needed. The Round Table on Gender Equality, which is coordinated by the VMR, focused on this topic this year. In a media campaign, 16 organizations campaigned for the appreciation of care work with their advertisements on various channels.




*The 16 participants in the campaign agree: care work needs more social and financial recognition. If equality is to be realized, it must be better distributed between the genders.*

# Children's rights

Children and young people have comprehensive rights and special protection needs. They must know their rights and be able to have a say in their concerns and be heard. Children and young people with disabilities or from a refugee or migrant background are particularly vulnerable. The increase in mental health problems is worrying. It is crucial that the rights of children and young people are recognized, promoted and protected.

In 2024, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child assessed the situation of children's rights in Liechtenstein for the first time in 17 years. It essentially pointed out the problems reported to the Committee by the OSKJ and the UN Children's Fund UNICEF: mental health, the lack of a voice in society and the legal system, bullying, domestic violence and divorce or custody conflicts. Social framework conditions such as

family-friendly working models and childcare outside the home were also addressed by the committee - all issues that the OSKJ has been pursuing for years.

The municipalities are key players in the protection and promotion of children's rights, as this is where children and young people live and develop. This is the aim of the "child-friendly municipality" label, which the UN Children's Fund UNICEF awards to Swiss and Liechtenstein municipalities. To achieve this, the municipalities must undergo a comprehensive assessment: for example, safe play and contact areas, opportunities for participation and child-friendly services are analyzed. An assessment is also made of how the municipalities are developing the rights of children and young people. The OSKJ is a member of the UNICEF expert commission and helps to assess the Liechtenstein municipalities. In 2024, the municipalities of Vaduz and Triesen were named "child-friendly municipalities" for the first time. Eschen - a "child-friendly municipality" since 2018 - was certified again. Congratulations to these three municipalities and to the other three municipalities that have already been awarded the label - Ruggell, Mauren and Schaan - for their child-friendly efforts!




*Vaduz and Triesen have now been awarded the UNICEF "child-friendly municipality" label. The OSKJ is a member of the expert commission for certification.*

All children have the right to be heard and to participate in accordance with Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This also applies to court proceedings, e.g. in the case of divorce or custody conflicts. In court proceedings, children and young people are often overwhelmed and frightened. They do not feel that they are taken seriously and often do not find optimal conditions for expressing their opinions freely. The creation of a child-friendly justice system is therefore the vision of the OSKJ for the coming years. This requires

child- and youth-friendly conditions at all procedural levels to ensure that children and young people are heard in legal proceedings and that their rights are protected. They should feel safe, be provided with age-appropriate information and receive support. In the reporting year, information on the topic was collected, preparations were made for a project study and cooperation partnerships were sought.

As every year, the OSKJ used International Children's Rights Day on 20 November to raise awareness of children's rights, network and amplify voices for children's rights. One highlight was the meeting between young people and the "Youth Minister" Manuel Frick on the right to respect for the opinions of children and young people. During the exchange of experiences, the young people and the minister discussed their experiences with racist slogans, for example. They agreed that this violates human rights and that civil courage and the support of adults are needed to stand up to it effectively.

The two-year children's lobby campaign "Zemma Handla" came to an end in 2024. Together with various partner organizations, children and young people addressed their right to a clean and safe environment in a variety of ways, increased their knowledge and raised awareness in their environment and society.




*The children's lobby, coordinated by the OSKJ, continued to campaign for the environment and sustainability in the second year of the "Zemma Handla" campaign and showcased the variety of projects implemented, for example on Children's Rights Day.*

# Health

All people have the right to appropriate healthcare and equal access to healthcare and social services - including people with a migrant background, disability or chronic illnesses. Healthcare must be barrier-free, and cultural and language barriers must be taken into account. The freeze on health insurance benefits must not affect those who are economically unable to pay for their healthcare costs.

Foreign-language patients often have problems finding their way around the healthcare system. However, understanding diagnoses, treatments and medical procedures is important for successful treatment. This is why the VMR, together with the Office of Public Health, provided free intercultural interpreters for medical practices in Liechtenstein for two years. The response was very good: the service was used intensively (2022: 82 assignments, 2023: 142), so the Office of Public Health decided to take over and finance the service on a longer-term basis from 2024 - a great success! However, when funding was temporarily suspended in the middle of the year for budget reasons, the VMR intervened and was able to ensure that the service was resumed in September, hopefully on a long-term basis this time.

The freeze on health insurance benefits has been a thorn in the side of the VMR for years. It must be ensured that no people are affected who are unable to pay the insurance costs due to their vulnerability. There also needs to be a definition of what constitutes emergency treatment that is still provided if benefits are suspended. The VMR is committed to clarifying these issues and introducing regulations.

# Poverty

Poverty is not just a lack of money, but a violation of basic human rights: access to adequate food, education, healthcare, housing and social participation is restricted. In Liechtenstein, older people, children and young people as well as single parents and singles are particularly at risk of poverty. More information is needed about the causes of poverty and targeted measures to combat it.

There is poverty in Liechtenstein. This is stated in the new 2023 Poverty Report. The VMR and other organizations had been calling for this report for years. It provides important statistical findings on the risk of poverty and those affected by it. However, there is a lack of detailed qualitative analyses that provide information on which groups of people are particularly at risk of poverty and the reasons that lead them into poverty. In order to close these gaps, the Office of Social Services initiated the "Together against poverty" project in January 2024, in which those affected and specialists were interviewed to gain additional insights. The VMR took part in the project as a specialist authority and advocated for the human rights dimension of poverty to be given greater consideration - including discrimination and social exclusion. The report published

in November 2024 contains various approaches in the areas of information, awareness-raising and networking. However, it lacks concrete measures to combat the causes. The VMR wants to continue to work towards this.

# Networking

On January 22, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, visited Liechtenstein. A rare opportunity to discuss human rights with the global protector of human rights. At the meeting, which was organized by the VMR, the High Commissioner spoke with 16 non-governmental organizations about the current challenges in the area of human rights. He emphasized how important human rights, democracy and the rule of law are for our freedom and equality. He called on all organizations to continue their important work and make it visible. This open and inspiring exchange motivated everyone involved to continue to stand up for important issues and find solutions together. It shows how much we can achieve when we work together!



*The visit of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, was a highlight. He encouraged all non-governmental organizations to continue to stand up for the rights of vulnerable groups.*

In order to assess the human rights situation in the country and make appropriate recommendations, a close exchange with various contact and advice centers, authorities and specialist agencies as well as international human rights experts is necessary. In 2024, the Advisory Council met with 19 international and supra-regional specialist organizations. At national level, it exchanged views with the Ministry for Society, 9 authorities and 19 non-governmental organizations. It organizes round tables at which authorities and non-governmental organizations exchange ideas. The OSKJ coordinates the Liechtenstein Children's Lobby, a lively and competent network of various children's and family organizations comprising over 30 organizations. This multifaceted exchange serves to address human rights problems, develop a common understanding of them and initiate concrete measures for improvement.

At the annual meeting of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions, the VHR gathers valuable experience from the European human rights work of its partners and suggestions on how to tackle

common human rights challenges.

# Outlook

The independent monitoring mechanism for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is to be established in 2025. The monitoring body in the VMR, persons with disabilities and experts in the field want to work together to jointly monitor the implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities in Liechtenstein in the long term. However, this requires additional financial resources, which must be provided by the state.

The OSKJ will dedicate a project study to the development of a child-friendly justice system in Liechtenstein. It will determine which organizational or legal foundations need to be created so that the rights and needs of children and young people are sufficiently taken into account in legal proceedings and their right to participation and co-decision can be better implemented.

Another focus is on legal advice and strategic litigation in human rights matters. These are to be further expanded in order to improve access to justice for all people, strengthen the administration of justice and effectively enforce human rights in Liechtenstein. In this context, the VMR remains committed to a comprehensive anti-discrimination law in Liechtenstein.

At the heart of efforts to promote women's rights and gender equality is participation in the national gender equality strategy and the national violence protection strategy in the course of implementing the Istanbul Convention against domestic violence and violence against women.

An institutional milestone in 2025 will be the VMR's accreditation with the Global Alliance for National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). For accreditation, the VHR must prove that it meets the minimum standards for national human rights institutions as set out in the UN Paris Principles. The VHR hopes that accreditation will provide important insights into the independence, legal anchoring, mandate, resources and staffing of the association, as well as fundamentally strengthening the institution.

Finally, from 2025, human rights should reach the people of Liechtenstein more strongly and directly with a new, accessible website and stronger communication on social media. On Human Rights Day, the focus will be on a human right that has always been considered the cornerstone of democracy and freedom, but is unfortunately coming under increasing pressure worldwide: freedom of expression.

# Finances

As a national human rights institution of the UN, the VHR must receive sufficient state funding from the country in order to fulfill its mandate. The 2024 national contribution to the association amounted to CHF 410,000. The OHR is free to use the funds within the legal framework. Not all activities can be covered by the state contribution. The association relies on contributions from third parties for pilot projects or project studies.

## BALANCE SHEET

| SHARES in CHF | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| Fixed assets | | |
| Property, plant and equipment | 24'220.00 | 34'541.05 |
| Rent deposit | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| **Total fixed assets** | **24'220.00** | **34'541.05** |
| | | |
| Current assets | | |
| Receivables | 1'705.08 | 10'167.90 |
| Bank balances and cash in hand | 186'735.45 | 111'608.53 |
| **Total current assets** | **188'440.53** | **121'776.43** |
| | | |
| Accruals and deferred income | 2'900.00 | 3'250.00 |
| **TOTAL ASSETS** | **215'560.53** | **159'567.48** |

| LIABILITIES in CHF | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| Association assets | | |
| Profit carried forward | 2'948.21 | 2'915.33 |
| Profit for the year | 190.25 | 32.88 |
| **Total association assets** | **3'138.46** | **2'948.21** |
| | | |
| Provision for strategic litigation | 42'182.00 | 0.00 |
| Provision for future projects | 87'602.85 | 87'602.85 |
| Provisions careforum.li | 14'962.30 | 15'210.30 |
| Provision for children's rights | 21'015.80 | 21'015.80 |
| Accounts payable | 46'609.12 | 32'040.65 |
| **Total liabilities** | **212'372.07** | **155'869.60** |
| | | |
| Prepaid expenses and deferred charges | 50.00 | 749.67 |
| **TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY** | **215'560.53** | **159'567.48** |

# INCOME STATEMENT

| Income (in CHF) | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| National contribution | 410'000.00 | 350'000.00 |
| Membership fees (private individuals and organizations) | 6'300.00 | 6'150.00 |
| Donations | 6'650.00 | 24'755.20 |
| Earmarked donations (strategic litigation) | 45'000.00 | 0.00 |
| Earmarked donations (Careforum.li) | 0.00 | 2'500.00 |
| Earmarked donations (gender equality) | 5'967.79 | 0.00 |
| Earmarked donations (anti-discrimination) | 0.00 | 30'000.00 |
| Other income | 462.50 | 683.43 |
| **Total income** | **474'380.29** | **414'088.63** |

| Expense (in CHF) | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| Project expenses (project expenses in the financial year) | -32'035.56 | -88'667.23 |
| Net change in provision for future projects | 0.00 | 52'900.00 |
| Net change in provision careforum.li | 248.00 | -1'381.35 |
| Net change in provision for anti-discrimination | 0.00 | 677.70 |
| Net change in provision for children's rights | 0.00 | 3'984.20 |
| Net change in provision for strategic litigation | -42'182.00 | 0.00 |
| | | |
| Public relations and representation | -37'482.63 | -16'371.05 |
| | | |
| Personnel expenses | | |
| Wages and salaries office | -232'959.00 | -237'211.30 |
| Social security contributions and pension expenses | -36'055.20 | -36'208.85 |
| Expenses for the Executive Board | -17'596.85 | -19'061.60 |
| Continuing education | -147.94 | -172.09 |
| Other personnel expenses | -581.40 | -2'630.60 |
| | | |
| Depreciation of property, plant and equipment | -10'321.05 | -4'210.00 |
| Premises expenses | -41'497.00 | -30'312.70 |
| Administrative expenses | -21'837.88 | -25'622.71 |
| Other operating expenses | -1'741.53 | -9'768.17 |
| | | |
| **Total expenditure** | **-474'190.04** | **-414'055.75** |
| **Profit for the year** | **190.25** | **32.88** |

Audita

Tel: +423 238 20 10
Fax: +423 238 20 05
audita@audita.li
**www.audita.li**

Audita Revisions-Aktiengesellschaft
Wuhrstrasse 14
Postfach 119
LI - 9490 Vaduz

HR-Nr.: FL-0001.087.363-6
MwSt. Nr.: 50 102

Bericht der Revisionsstelle an die Vereinsversammlung des

**Verein für Menschenrechte in Liechtenstein (VMR), Vaduz**
**(FL-0002.539.448-5)**

Als Revisionsstelle haben wir eine prüferische Durchsicht („Review") der Jahresrechnung des **Verein für Menschenrechte in Liechtenstein (VMR)**, die in Übereinstimmung mit dem liechtensteinischen Gesetz erstellt worden ist, für das am **31. Dezember 2024** abgeschlossene Geschäftsjahr vorgenommen.

Für die Jahresrechnung ist der Vorstand verantwortlich, während unsere Aufgabe darin besteht, aufgrund unserer Review einen Bericht über die Jahresrechnung abzugeben. Wir bestätigen, dass wir die gesetzlichen Anforderungen hinsichtlich Befähigung und Unabhängigkeit erfüllen.

Unsere Review erfolgte nach dem Standard zur prüferischen Durchsicht (Review) von Jahresrechnungen der liechtensteinischen Wirtschaftsprüfervereinigung. Danach ist eine Review so zu planen und durchzuführen, dass wesentliche Fehlaussagen in der Jahresrechnung erkannt werden, wenn auch nicht mit derselben Sicherheit wie bei einer Abschlussprüfung. Eine Review besteht hauptsächlich aus der Befragung von Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeitern sowie analytischen Prüfungshandlungen in Bezug auf die der Jahresrechnung zugrunde liegenden Daten. Wir haben eine Review, nicht aber eine Abschlussprüfung, durchgeführt und geben aus diesem Grund kein Prüfungsurteil ab.

Bei unserer Review sind wir nicht auf Sachverhalte gestossen, aus denen wir schliessen müssten, dass die Jahresrechnung nicht dem Gesetz und den Statuten entspricht.

Basierend auf unserer Review empfehlen wir, die vorliegende Jahresrechnung zu genehmigen.

Vaduz, 27. Februar 2025

**AUDITA REVISIONS-AKTIENGESELLSCHAFT**

Nedim Halilovic
Wirtschaftsprüfer
leitender Revisor

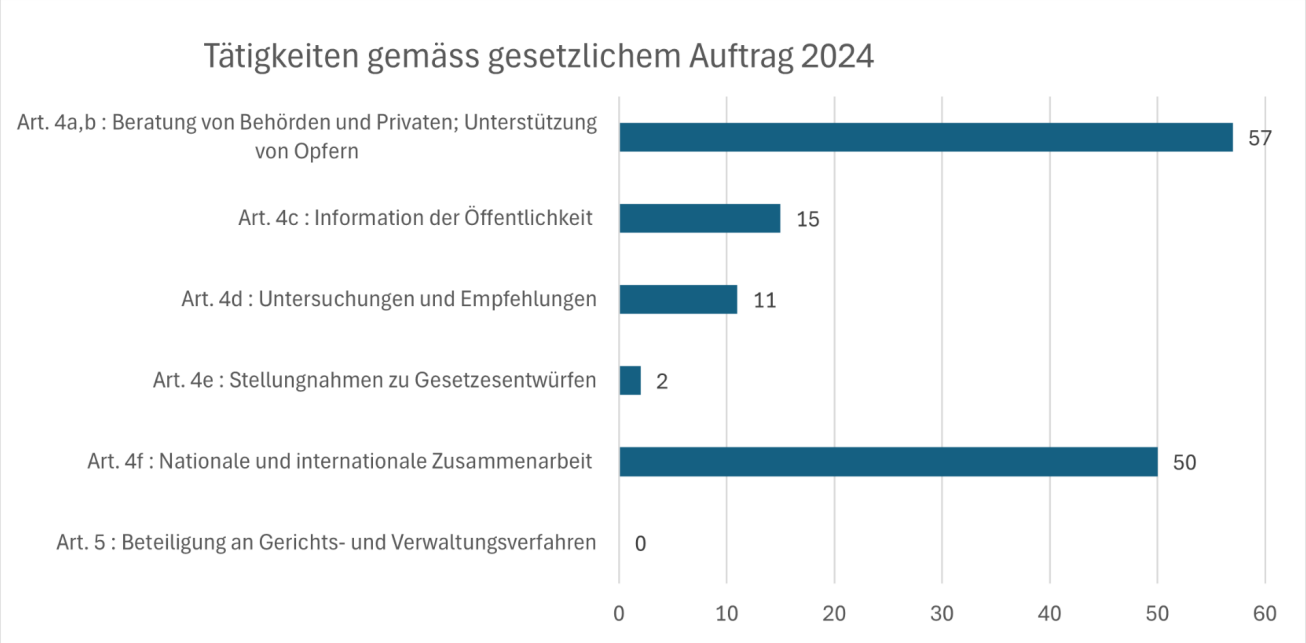
Thomas D. Hasler
eidg. dipl. Wirtschaftsprüfer

Beilage:
- Jahresrechnung (Bilanz und Erfolgsrechnung)

# At a glance

## Implementation of the legal mandate in accordance with Art. 4 and 5 VMRG

The Law on the Association for Human Rights lays the foundation for a broad commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights. The VMR makes every effort to implement this mandate and to support all people in Liechtenstein in leading a life of dignity and equality. Our commitment 2024 at a glance:




*At a glance - the VMR's commitment in 2024.*

Advice for private individuals and authorities, support for victims (Art. 4a and b)

57 consultations with private individuals, of which 24 by the OSKJ and 1 by the MOBE.

Information for the public (Art. 4c)

1. Human rights workshops at secondary schools
2. Media article on the NGO meeting with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
3. Press article Presentation of new OSKJ Ombudsperson
4. "Taking human rights seriously" award ceremony
5. Film Festival of Religions with the Round Table of Religions and presentation of the children's film "Pünktchen und Anton" with reference to the Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 2, Protection against Discrimination, and Article 32, Protection against Child Labor
6. Media campaign "Care Work" with the Round Table on Gender Equality
7. Public meeting in front of the state parliament to lobby for "fair parental leave" with the children's lobby and the Round Table on Gender Equality, as well as a newspaper interview
8. Participation in the opening of the exhibition on 40 years of voting rights at the State Museum
9. Media interviews on the importance of "care work" on International Care and Support Day
10. Media article on the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to Liechtenstein
11. Interview by the OSKJ on the school film "Hoi Council of Europe" about children's rights
12. Table moderation JUBEL-Forum Youth Participation Liechtenstein on the topic "Know your Rights!"
13. Coordination and implementation of "Young voices count", a discussion between young people and the Minister of Society, Unicef, Open Youth Work and OSKJ on Children's Rights Day
14. Radio interview series on Children's Rights Day, its importance and the Liechtenstein Children's Lobby

15. "AI and human rights" event on Human Rights Day

Investigations and recommendations (Art 4d)

1. Documentation of involuntary placements in cooperation with the district court
2. Documentation of charges and sentences under the § 283 criminal standard in cooperation with the public prosecutor's office and the district court
3. NGO shadow report under the Istanbul Convention on domestic violence and violence against women
4. Project study "Political participation of foreigners in Liechtenstein"
5. Assessment of disability rights UNCRPD together with the Disabled Persons' Association and the Equal Opportunities Division
6. Rule of law report to the European Network for National Human Rights Institutions
7. Recommendation to the Tax Administration to improve equality in the context of tax returns
8. Recommendation to the government on the implementation of a silent and barrier-free emergency call system
9. Recommendation to the government to examine the rehabilitation of homosexuals prosecuted under criminal law
10. Recommendation to the government on the outsourcing of parental leave from the health insurance funds to the family compensation fund
11. Opinion with recommendations on the state psychiatry concept of 7.5.2024 with regard to closing gaps in outpatient, day-care and inpatient care for children and adolescents

Opinions on draft legislation (Art. 4e)

1. Consultation on the amendment of the General Civil Code and other laws (revision of guardianship law)
2. Consultation on amendments to the Persons and Companies Act (PGR) and the Gender Equality Act (GLG) (implementation of Directive (EU) 2022/2381 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 November 2022 on ensuring a more balanced representation of women and men on the boards of directors of listed companies and related measures)

National and international cooperation (Art. 4f)

- Ministry of Companies
- 9 authorities and commissions
- 19 national non-governmental organizations and networks
- 21 international organizations, specialist bodies and experts, including
    - UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
    - Experts from the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva ("Mountains Group")
    - President of the European Court of Human Rights
    - Liechtenstein judge at the European Court of Human Rights
    - Experts of the Council of Europe against Corruption (GRECO)
    - Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)
    - UNICEF Commission for Child Friendly Communities
    - Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
    - Swiss Institute for Human Rights (isdh)
    - Monitoring Committee on Disability Vorarlberg
    - Ombudsman Vorarlberg
    - Embassies USA, UK and Canada
    - National Child Protection Commission Portugal
    - UN Disability Rights Monitoring Committee in Tyrol and Vorarlberg

Participation in judicial and administrative proceedings (Art. 5)

There was no participation in proceedings.

# Thanks to

The VMR would like to thank its members, patrons, partner organizations and trusted lawyers for their support and excellent cooperation. In 2024, special thanks go to the H.E.M. Foundation and the RHW Foundation for co-financing the "Pro Menschenrechte - Prozessieren mit Wirkung" project and to the Landesbank for its institutional support. Many thanks to all individuals, organizations and authorities who are committed to the promotion and protection of human rights in Liechtenstein!

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LI81 0880 0551 4633 6200 1
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