



European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination

NEWS REPORT

Country:	Liechtenstein
Title:	Office for Social Services
Date:	25 July 2017
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<u>Context</u>	
Issue at stake:	The Gender Equality Act was amended integrating the former Office for Equal Opportunities into the Office for Social Services
Ground of discrimination:	Sex and gender
Source:	Legislation
Field:	Employment; equal pay; pregnancy and maternity; parental leave; statutory social security; self-employment; goods and services; gender mainstreaming; other
Applicable law:	Gender Equality Act (GLG) Art. 19 as amended by LGBl. 2016/505 entered into force in January 2017

Content

Law: On 1 January 2017 a new law entered into force integrating the Office for Equal Opportunities and changing its name into Office for Social Services. Articles 18 and 19 of the Gender Equality Act (GLG) provided for the Gender Equality Commission and the Office for Equal Opportunities, but Article 18 GLG was abolished and Article 19 GLG was amended by a new GLG on 23 December 2016 (LGBl. 2016/505). By abolishing Article 18 GLG, the institution of the Gender Equality Commission was also officially abolished. Since March 2005 the Office for Equal Opportunities has dealt with equal opportunities, but on 1 January 2017 a new law entered into force and changed its name into Office for Social Services. Pursuant to Article 19 (1) and (2) (d) GLG, it is committed to doing work for legal and de facto gender equality. The Office for Social Services shall prepare opinions and participate in the process of the creation of law proposals insofar as it is relevant for gender issues. The competences for the Office for Social Services did not change compared to those of the former Office for Equal Opportunities.

Formerly, Article 19(3) GLG explicitly stated that the Office for Equal Opportunities shall be independent with respect to its tasks of counselling public authorities and the private sector, executing public relations as well as studies and recommendations on the appropriate measures to public authorities and the private sector. This Article 19(3) no longer exists regarding the Office for Social Services. The social dialogue is guaranteed in Article 19(2)(e) GLG where the Office for Social Services shall cooperate with public or private institutions; the government report explains that the term institutions shall also include the social partners. According to Article 19(2)(h) GLG the Office for Social Services exchanges information with the competent European institutions which are active with regard to the protection against gender discrimination.

In addition to this, a new independent institution called Association for Human Rights (*Verein für Menschenrechte, VMR*) in Liechtenstein was created by law (Law on the VMR, LGBl. 2016/504). Its main task is to protect and promote the human rights in Liechtenstein according to Article 4(1) Law on the VMR (VMRG). Pursuant to Article 1(2) VMRG, the VMR also has the function of an independent ombudsperson for children and young people.

Key points of analysis: Since March 2005 the Office for Equal Opportunities has dealt with equal opportunities, but on 1 January 2017 a new law entered into force and changed its name into Office for Social Services. Pursuant to Article 19 (1) and (2) (d) GLG, it is committed to doing work for legal and de facto gender equality. The Office for Social Services shall prepare opinions and participate in the process of the creation of law proposals insofar as it is relevant for gender issues. The competences for the Office for Social Services did not change compared to those of the former Office for Equal Opportunities.

Internet link source: For more details see the website of the Office for Social Services with the new chapter 'equal opportunities' since January 2017 <http://www.llv.li/#/117687/chancengleichheit> , accessed 8 June 2017.

Legislation of Liechtenstein see <https://www.gesetze.li/> (authentic version since 1 January 2013), accessed 8 June 2017.