

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO ESTONIA ADD.3

NORWAY

- We have noted that there has been a broad dialogue with the civil society when preparing this report for the UN Human Rights council. From the Norwegian side we would like to encourage Estonian Government to further build out and strengthen the dialog with the NGOs and the civil society in general.
- We have been informed that there is a process in Estonia to consider transforming and empowering the Chancellor of Justice and the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner so as to conform with the Paris principles and take steps towards accreditation by International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC). Can you comment on this process?
- We have noticed that Riigikogu Constitutional Committee has decided to initiate a bill to amend to the Chancellor of Justice Act to give the institution of Justice Chancellor duties of Children ombudsman. In our view the institution of a Children Ombudsman will need a different structure as well as competence in other areas than that of the Chancellor of Justice and, perhaps most important, it needs to be more visible for the public. From the Norwegian side we therefore see it as preferable to establish a separate Ombudsman for Children. Can you give a comment on your choice?
- The establishing of a Commissioner for Equal Treatment and Gender Equality is an important step towards fighting injustice and prejudice towards women's status in society. It has been pointed out that the Commissioner is lacking sufficient financial and human resources to carry out her/his responsibilities effectively under the Gender Equality Act.
- It has also been commented that the Gender Equality Department in the Ministry of Social Affairs should be strengthened in order to coordinate effectively the Government's work to promote gender equality. What are your future plans for the Commissioner and for the Gender Equality Department in the ministry?
- From the Norwegian side we hope that the Gender Equality Council will be established as an advisory body to the Government on matters relating to the promotion of the gender equality. What are your plans for such a council?
- We would also underline the need for a specific law on domestic violence against women. Can you give us a comment on this matter?
- It has been pointed out that the trafficking of human beings has become a serious challenge for the Estonian society. From the Norwegian side we have noted as positive that a Development Plan reducing violence for 2010 – 2014 has been worked out. However Estonia do not have a special legal act against trafficking in human beings . From the Norwegian side we encourage Estonia

to establish a special legal act against trafficking. Trafficking is an international crime and international cooperation on this issue is necessary. Norway has this year the presidency in the Council of the Baltic Sea States where there is a special task force against Trafficking in human beings. We invite Estonia to a close cooperation here.

- Based on your Integration Strategy 2008 – 2013 we recommend that Estonia should continue and strengthen measures like Estonian language courses to non-Estonian speakers and note the priority of establishing an Estonian produced television channel for Russian speaking citizen. How is the work of implementing this strategy going and what are the challenges?