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Switzerland and Liechtenstein – two neighbours moving even closer together

Switzerland and Liechtenstein already enjoy excellent bilateral relations. An additional treaty allowing Switzerland to represent Liechtenstein's consular interests will now cement these relations further.

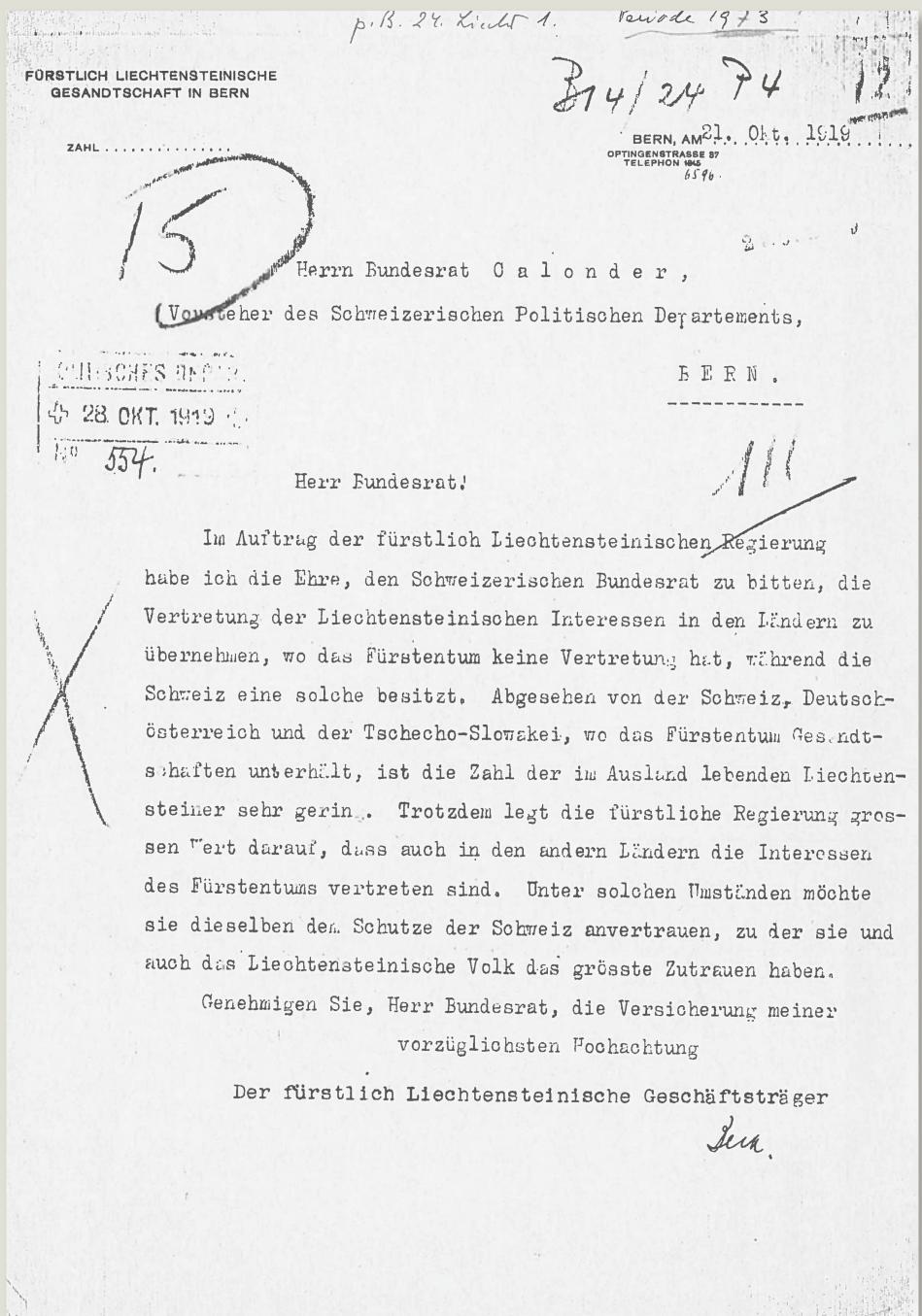
Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein have a lot in common. They are separated by a 41.3-kilometre border but have operated in the same economic area, or customs union, since 1924. Over 100 treaties in force currently reflect the many values that unite these congenial neighbours. The 3,758 Swiss living in Liechtenstein and the 1,713 Liechtenstein nationals living in Switzerland (in 2020) are further proof of the close ties shared by the two countries.

Switzerland to represent Liechtenstein's interests

Since 2000, Switzerland has appointed an ambassador for Liechtenstein, with residence in Berne. Apart from the embassy that it opened in Berne in 1919, Liechtenstein also has diplomatic missions in Berlin, Brussels, Geneva, New York, Strasbourg, Washington and Vienna. On the basis of a treaty dating back to 1919, Switzerland represents Liechtenstein in countries where Liechtenstein does not have its own embassy. In 2021, 913 Liechtenstein nationals were registered with Swiss representations.

Under the 1919 treaty, Swiss representations accept Liechtenstein passport applications, authenticate and submit certificates of marital status, and assist Liechtenstein nationals in various emergency situations. As agreed, these consular services are also provided within the parameters of the Swiss Abroad Act.

Switzerland also represents Liechtenstein's interests in relation to visas. Based on a framework agreement that came into force on 19 December 2011, Berne issues visas on behalf of its neighbour for short-term residence (1,352 Schengen visas in 2019) and long-term residence (116 national visas; 1,468 visas in total). An additional treaty, which came into force on 1 May 2022, now also governs consular representation of Liechtenstein by Switzerland in the US,



In 1919, the embassy of Liechtenstein in Berne asked the Federal Council to start safeguarding Liechtenstein's interests in countries where the Principality had no representation. Switzerland representing Liechtenstein's consular interests strengthens relations between the two countries.

Consular relations between Switzerland and Liechtenstein

On the basis of three treaties, Switzerland has been representing Liechtenstein's consular interests since 1919 and also issues visas on behalf of its neighbour. Consular statistics in 2019: 913 registered Liechtenstein nationals; 57 Liechtenstein passport applications; assistance to Liechtenstein nationals in emergency situations; 1,352 Schengen visas; 116 visas for long-term residence.

- 1919** Exchange of notes between Switzerland and Liechtenstein in countries where Liechtenstein does not have its own embassy.
- 2011** Framework agreement on cooperation related to visa procedures, entry and residence, and on police cooperation in the border area.
- 2022** Exchange of notes between Switzerland and Liechtenstein on consular representation of Liechtenstein in Germany, the US, Belgium, the Czech Republic and, to a limited extent, Austria.

Belgium, Germany, the Czech Republic and, to a limited extent, Austria, i.e. in countries where Liechtenstein has its own representation but no department dedicated to consular matters. Liechtenstein nationals can therefore rely on every Swiss representation abroad to provide them with consular services.

Did you know?

Occupying 160 square kilometres of land, Liechtenstein is Europe's fourth-smallest and the world's six-smallest country. Liechtenstein is a constitutional hereditary monarchy based on democratic and parliamentary principles. Its head of state is HSH Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein, who also bears the titles Duke of Troppau and Jägerndorf, and Count of Rietberg. In 2004, Hans-Adam II handed over the duties of head of state to his oldest son, HSH Hereditary Prince Alois. Four political parties are represented in the parliament of Liechtenstein, the Landtag. Liechtenstein is a landlocked country with no port, airport or motorway. It disbanded its army in 1868. However, every man fit to bear arms is required, until the completion of his 60th year, to serve in the defence of the country in the event of emergency. Of Liechtenstein's 39,055 inhabitants in 2020, 13,467 were not Liechtenstein nationals. Over half of the country's 40,328 employed people in the same year were cross-border workers (22,511), of whom 58 per cent live in Switzerland. Some 40 per cent of people living in Liechtenstein belong to a sports club. To date, this has translated into ten Olympic medals, all of them in alpine skiing. Liechtenstein has a rich culture. It has five restaurants listed in the influential Gault Millau restaurant guide, it issues its own postage stamps, and it boasts the "Princely Collections" which date back 400 years and have 1,700 paintings. Liechtenstein also has excellent international ties. It

has been a member of the UN since 18 September 1990, it joined the European Economic Area (EEA) on 1 May 1995, and its customs union treaty with Switzerland has been in force for 99 years. Liechtenstein is a Schengen-associated country. It has been implementing the Schengen Agreement since 2011.

The new 2022 treaty will provide even greater impetus and enrichment to what is already a well-established partnership.

RAHEL SCHWEIZER, FDFA,
CONSULAR DIRECTORATE (CD)

Marking the border – on the bridge from Schaan in Liechtenstein to Buchs in the canton of St Gallen.
Photo: dam.liechtenstein.li / provided



Travel Admin – the FDFA travel app

Travel Admin is the travel app from the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). The app assists you in preparing for a trip abroad and supports you during your journey with useful functions, information and individually adaptable checklists. The always updated travel advice from the FDFA is just a tap away, making it an indispensable part of any travel preparation. After registering, you can enter travel destinations and add other

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FDFA Helpline – your central contact point

The Helpline of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) is your central contact point for all matters relating to consular services. The FDFA Helpline is also ready to assist you in emergencies. Worldwide, 365 days a year, around the clock – by phone, email or Skype.

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www.fdfa.admin.ch

Bogotá (2022)



Federal votes

The Federal Council determines voting proposals at least four months before the voting date.

Everything you need to know about voting proposals (voting pamphlets, committees, recommendations by parliament and the Federal Council etc.) is available at www.admin.ch/votes or via the Federal Chancellery's VoteInfo app.

The Federal Council decided that the following federal proposals will be submitted to the people on 25 September 2022:

- Popular initiative of 17 September 2019 "No Factory Farming in Switzerland (Factory Farming Initiative)" (BBI 2022 700);
- Federal Decree of 17 December 2021 on Additional Funding for OASI by increasing Value Added Tax (BBI 2022 2991);
- Amendment of 17 December 2021 to the Federal Act on Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASIA) (OASI 21) (BBI 2021 2995);
- Amendment of 17 December 2021 to the Federal Act on Withholding Tax (Withholding Tax Act, WTA) (Strengthening the Debt Capital Market) (BBI 2021 3002).

Everything you need to know about voting proposals (voting pamphlets, committees, recommendations by Parliament and the Federal Council etc.) is available at www.admin.ch/votes or via the Federal Chancellery's VoteInfo app.



Popular initiatives

The following federal popular initiatives have already been launched at the time of going to press (deadline for the collection of signatures in brackets):

- Federal Popular Initiative "For a new Federal Constitution" (19.10.2023)
- Federal Popular Initiative "For a civically engaged Switzerland (Civic Duty Initiative)" (26.10.2023)
- Federal Popular Initiative "For restrictions on fireworks" (03.11.2023)
- Federal Popular Initiative "Use National Bank profits to support OASI (SNB Initiative)" (24.11.2024)
- Federal Popular Initiative "200 francs is enough! (SBC Initiative)" (01.12.2023)

The list of pending popular initiatives is available in German, French and Italian at www.bk.admin.ch > Politische Rechte > Volksinitiativen > Hängige Volksinitiativen

