



ANED 2013 Task 3 and 4 – Country reports on citizenship and political participation

Country: Liechtenstein

Author(s): Patricia Hornich / Wilfried Marxer

The [Academic Network of European Disability experts](#) (ANED) was established by the European Commission in 2008 to provide scientific support and advice for its disability policy Unit. In particular, the activities of the Network will support the future development of the EU Disability Action Plan and practical implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.

This country report has been prepared as input for the Thematic reports on [Citizenship](#) and [Political Participation](#) in European Countries. The purpose of the report is to examine the legal framework for citizenship in EU/EEA countries, access to, and accessibility of voting in elections for disabled people.

Part A: Legal context of citizenship and public participation

1. National disability strategy/action plan includes the right to civil and political participation of persons with disabilities

According to the Constitution (Verfassung des Fürstentum Liechtenstein),¹ Liechtenstein citizens² can exercise their civil and political rights directly through elections and popular votes. Further direct democratic rights include the right of initiating and taking part in national referenda (e. g. submission of a proposed public measure or actual statute to a direct popular vote) without the express permission of the organs of the state (parliament, government, president); alternatively, there are procedures for obligatory referenda at both legislative and constitutional levels as well as decisions on public finances above a certain threshold. Liechtenstein citizens who are entitled to vote are required to take part in elections and popular votes. The Liechtenstein constitution states in Art. 29 that all citizens shall be entitled to civic rights in conformity with the provisions of the present constitution. Full political rights are given to all people who

- Are 18 and over;
- Have their normal residence in Liechtenstein and;
- Are not restricted in exercising their voting rights.

The rules for being restricted in exercising ones voting rights are not laid down in the constitution of Liechtenstein. These criteria are laid down in a national law, called the Act on the Exercise of the Political Rights of the People (Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte, VRG).³ Art. 2 of the VRG states that a person is excluded from voting if:

- He/she is restricted through law in exercising his/her voting rights,⁴
- The person in question was unable to give his or her consent to elections or referenda, where exclusion from voting has been ordered by a court, Art. 131a ff. of the Non-Contentious Proceedings Act (Gesetz über das gerichtliche Verfahren in Rechtsangelegenheiten ausser Streitsachen, AussStrG (VRG)),⁵

¹ Verfassung des Fürstentum Liechtenstein, 05.10.1921, LGBl 1921, no. 15. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=1921015.xml&Searchstring=Verfassung&showLGBl=true>.

² The term citizens (Landesangehörige) given in the Constitution is to be understood as referring to all persons holding Liechtenstein citizenship.

³ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtegesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBl=true>.

⁴ This Article is based on the Act on amendment of the criminal law in 1922 (LGBl. 1922 Nr. 21). In 2012 the criminal law was revised. Thus, Art. 2 Abs. 1 of the Act on amendment of the criminal law (LGBl. 1922 Nr. 21) was changed in 2012 through the Act on amendment of the criminal law (LGBl. 2012 Nr. 357). Based on these changes, Art. 2 Abs. 1 (a) of the VRG has no further scope.

⁵ Gesetz über das gerichtliche Verfahren in Rechtsangelegenheiten ausser Streitsachen

(Ausserstreitgesetz; AussStrG), 25.11.2010, LGBl 2010, no. 454. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2010454.xml&Searchstring=AussStrG&showLGBl=true>.

- The person in question has been convicted by a national court to a period of imprisonment, which is not suspended for probation, of a minimum of one year based on the criminal offences listed in detail in Art. 2 c 1 of the VRG or a period of imprisonment, which is not suspended for probation, of more than five years based on the criminal offences set out in detail in Art 2 c 2 of the VRG.

All voters have a right to vote independently and in secret. A person who is registered to vote or who has been officially appointed as a proxy voter cannot be refused a ballot paper or the opportunity to vote on the grounds of mental or physical incapacity. So far there is no general restriction for Liechtenstein citizens in the exercise of their civil and political rights based on disability, as long as there has been no legally binding order by a court that the person in question is unable to give his or her consent to elections or referenda. Art. 131a of the AussStrG⁶ states that the procedure of excluding someone from their voting rights can only be initiated by application or by acting ex officio through the Princely Court of Justice (Fürstliche Landgericht) of Liechtenstein in the event of a justified indication of the necessity of such a measure. This takes place in cases where the Princely Court of Justice is involved to set up a formal guardianship role on the request of the parents of the person with disability and justified indications require the exclusion of the voting rights of the person in question. There is no legal binding list of justified indications known to the authors. In cases of persons with a mental and/or physical disability, the ability of the person in question to reach a sound judgement has to be determined by a judge in each individual case, as per Art. 15 of the Persons and Companies Act (Personen- und Gesellschaftsrecht, PGR).

7 Art. 18 of the PGR⁸ states that the very personal rights remain with the person in question (person with a disability) and belong exclusively to this person. They cannot be transferred to anyone else. According to Art. 269 et seqq. of the CCC,⁹ a guardian can be nominated for persons with mental and/or physical disabilities who can no longer manage their own affairs. The extent of disability defines the type and level of guardianship. A person with disability can use an auxiliary person to support the execution of his/her intention to vote as long as the auxiliary person does not influence in any way the voter's choice in the election.

The current version of the VRG came into force on 01.12.2012, LGBL 2012,¹⁰ no. 357, replacing the previous regulations of the VRG, which had been valid since

⁶ Gesetz über das gerichtliche Verfahren in Rechtsangelegenheiten ausser Streitsachen (Ausserstreitgesetz; AussStrG), 25.11.2010, LGBI 2010, no. 454. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=2010454.xml&Searchstring=AussStrG&showLGBI=true>.

⁷ Persons-and-Companies Act (PGR), 20.01.1926, LGBI 1926, no. 4; source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1926004.xml&Searchstring=PGR&showLGBI=true>.

⁸ Persons-and-Companies Act (PGR), 20.01.1926, LGBI 1926, no. 4; source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1926004.xml&Searchstring=PGR&showLGBI=true>.

⁹ Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch, 01.06.1811, LGBI 1967, no. 34. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1003001.xml&Searchstring=ABGB&showLGBI=true>.

¹⁰ The LGBL (Landesgesetzblatt) is the official National Legal Gazette in Liechtenstein, For a law to become valid, it must in every case be promulgated in the National Legal Gazette.

01.01.2011 and that were overturned by the Constitutional Court of Liechtenstein. The new legal binding regulations in the VRG made the launch of court proceedings regarding the rights of exercising voting rights for persons with an official guardianship necessary. This led to an increase in the number of judicial procedures relating to persons who have legal guardians as at the end of 2012. It is important to mention that based on the transitional provisions in II, chapter 2, LGBL 2012, no. 357, the decisions taken by the Administration Court in 2011 have remained unchanged. Details of these decisions are not available to the authors. Fig. 1 below shows the number of cases in the last two years – i.e. the year before the new VRG came into force and the first year of its application – relating to persons with disabilities being restricted in exercising their voting rights based on a court decision:

cases of persons with disabilities being restricted in exercising their voting rights	initiated judicial procedures	finalised judicial procedures
2011	4	4
2012	46	12

Figure 1: Judicial cases about persons with disabilities based on Art 2 of the VRG.¹¹

Furthermore, the Act on Equality of People with Disabilities (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz, AEPD)¹² aims to guarantee equal participation by people with disabilities in the daily life of society. The Constitution of the Principality of Liechtenstein includes the basic principle of equality, but has no provisions directly related to discrimination, on grounds of disability or on any other grounds. Art. 31 of the Constitution¹³ states that all Liechtenstein citizens shall be equal before the law. Art. 31 §1 of the constitution states that the term “Liechtenstein citizens” (Landesangehörige) is to be understood as referring to all persons holding Liechtenstein national citizenship, aliens excluded. Thus, the AEPD protects individuals against any kind of discrimination based on disability.

2. Citizenship education includes disability issues and is equally available to persons with disabilities

Liechtenstein includes civic education from the start of primary school level onwards. Thus citizenship education can be defined as a compulsory part of the school curriculum in Liechtenstein. Neither the School Education Plan (Lehrplan)¹⁴ nor the

¹¹ Figures from the Princely Court of Justice, Dr. Meier as of September 2013.

¹² Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBL 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBL=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBL=true>.

¹³ Verfassung des Fürstentum Liechtenstein, 05.10.1921, LGBL 1921, no. 15. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBL=1921015.xml&Searchstring=Verfassung&showLGBL=true>.

¹⁴ School Education Plan (Lehrplan). Source: http://www.llv.li/pdf-llv-sa-lehrplan_fl_aufgabe_2_1306.pdf.

Act on School Education (Schulgesetz, SchulG),¹⁵ nor the by-law on the Act on the School Education Plan for Kindergarten, Primary - and Secondary Schools (Verordnung über den Lehrplan für den Kindergarten, die Primar- und Sekundarschulen)¹⁶ include any specific regulations about citizenship education for children with disabilities.

The education of children and young people with special needs can, according to the wishes of the parents, take place either in a Special Education Centre (Heilpädagogisches Zentrum, HPZ),¹⁷ or in an integrated/inclusive form at a mainstream school (primary and secondary levels). Most children and young people with disabilities tend to attend the HPZ, especially children with learning difficulties. There they have the chance to attend a Special Education Day School (Sonderpädagogische Tageschule), which gives them individual teaching and prepares them for the professional world. This educational option is based on Art. 18 of the AEPD, which states:

- The State shall ensure that children and young people with disabilities receive early intervention and a basic training that is customised to their specific needs. The provisions of the Education Act apply.
- The State promotes appropriate forms of training and adequate training and support for teachers to integrate children and young people with disabilities into regular schools. The school rules and the teacher employment law apply.
- The State shall further ensure that children and young people with disabilities receive vocational education with respect to their special needs, abilities and interests. The state can participate in the disability-related costs, provided they are not covered by insurance and other benefits.

The official figures for the school year 2012/2013 show the following distribution of pupils with disabilities attending the HPZ in Liechtenstein:

department	total number of pupils	pupils domiciled in Liechtenstein	pupils domiciles abroad
linguistic healing kindergarten	18	7	11
speech therapy classes	21	11	10
special needs classes	41	40	1
total	80	58	22

Figure 2: Number of pupils with special needs at the Special Education Centre in Liechtenstein¹⁸

¹⁵ Schulgesetz (SchulG), 15.12.1971, LGBl. 1972 no. 7. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=1972007.xml&Searchstring=Schulgesetz&showLGBl=true>.

¹⁶ Verordnung über den Lehrplan für den Kindergarten, die Primar- und Sekundarschulen, 23.03.1999, LGBl. 1999 no. 82, Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=1999082.xml&Searchstring=Lehrplan&showLGBl=true>.

¹⁷ Heilpädagogisches Zentrum (HPZ). Source: <http://www.hpz.li/>.

¹⁸ Source: http://www.llv.li/pdf-llv-rk_rb2012_rechenschaftsbericht_gesamt.pdf_page_163.

Thus, citizenship education is generally a compulsory part of the school curriculum, regardless of whether the pupils are attending a mainstream school or the HPZ in Liechtenstein. The specific content and structures, as well as teaching materials, may vary between the different types of schools and at the various educational levels. For children and young people attending a foreign school the School Education Plan of the relevant country applies. Thus, no Liechtenstein-based citizenship education is taught to these pupils. The Liechtenstein School Education Plan does not provide any supplementary instruction on Liechtenstein citizenship for pupils attending a foreign educational centre.

Disability awareness and disability equality is part of the topic “Man and the Environment” and is thereby included in the official Liechtenstein curriculum. In the provision of religious education, the indicated goal is to enable pupils to face persons with a disability fearlessly, openly and confidently. This specific educational goal is exclusively stated in the religious part of the Protestant Religion Education Plan for pupils at the end of primary level schooling.¹⁹ The detailed Education Plan for Catholic Religious Education²⁰ says nothing about disability awareness. Around 75 per cent of the inhabitants of Liechtenstein are Roman Catholic.

3. The acquisition of citizenship of EU Member States and EU citizenship does not discriminate against persons with disabilities

Basically, Liechtenstein citizenship can be obtained by an adult in four different ways:

- Naturalisation by ordinary procedure (§ 6 LGBl. 2008 Nr. 306).
This way of obtaining Liechtenstein citizenship refers to acceptance into national citizenship by election. In this procedure the voting population of the community of residence votes on whether a person should be accepted as a Liechtenstein citizen. Final acceptance also requires consent from the Liechtenstein Parliament and the granting of citizenship by the Prince. This procedure requires that:
 - One's original nationality be renounced and;
- The person has resided in Liechtenstein for a minimum of ten years before the application is made.
Naturalisation as a consequence of marriage to a Liechtenstein citizen or of a registered same-sex partnership (§ 5 LGBl. 2008 Nr. 306).
Liechtenstein citizenship is not acquired automatically by marriage to a Liechtenstein national. However, by marrying a Liechtenstein national, citizenship can be acquired by the facilitated method if the following conditions, amongst others, are met:
 - Total residence of ten years in Liechtenstein, with the years of marriage counting as double;

¹⁹ Source: http://www.llv.li/pdf-llv-sa-lehrplan_fl_aufgabe_2_1306.pdf, e. g. chapter 3.3, page 43 or 53.

²⁰ Source: http://www.llv.li/pdf-llv-sa-lehrplan_fl_aufgabe_2_1306.pdf, e.g. chapter 1, page 3.
http://www.llv.li/pdf-llv-sa-lehrplan_katholische_religion.pdf.

- At least five years of marriage;
- Renunciation of previous nationality;
- The Liechtenstein wife or the Liechtenstein husband must not have acquired nationality by a previous marriage.
- Naturalisation based on a long-term residence permit (§ 5a LGBl. 2008 Nr. 306)
Liechtenstein citizenship can be applied for through the facilitated procedure for long-term residents. For this procedure, the following conditions, amongst others, apply:
 - 30 years of residence, with the years that a person has spent in Liechtenstein under the age of 20 counting as double;
 - Permanent ordinary residence in Liechtenstein of at least five years before submission of the application;
- Renunciation of original citizenship.
Naturalisation due to stateless status (§ 5b LGBl. 2008 Nr. 306).
Art. 4c of the Act on Acquisition and Loss of Citizenship (Bürgerrechtsgesetz, BÜG)²¹ states the general conditions for the acquisition of Liechtenstein nationality, regardless of which of the above-noted four possibilities applies:
 - Evidence of knowledge of the German language;
 - Basic knowledge of the law and political structure of Liechtenstein.
 Proof of knowledge of the German language and basic knowledge of the law and political structure of Liechtenstein is provided by a specific test as an integral part of the naturalisation application procedure.

Exemption from the general conditions for acquisition of Liechtenstein nationality is only given to:

- Minors who are not yet subject to general compulsory education at the time of submitting the application;
- Foreigners who can prove their regular residence in Liechtenstein for at least 30 years (long-term residents). The years that a person has spent in Liechtenstein under the age of 20 count as double;
- Stateless persons who have been born in Liechtenstein and had no citizenship from birth onwards and who have had their regular residence in Liechtenstein for at least 5 years;
- Persons who can prove by a medical certificate from the public health officer that due to their old age or medical condition they are not able to furnish such evidence (i.e. participate in the test);
- Applicants who have a limited capacity to act for themselves, insofar as this is proven by a medical certificate from the public health officer.

²¹ Gesetz über den Erwerb und Verlust des Landesbürgerrechtes (Bürgerrechtsgesetz, BÜG), 04.01.1934, LGBl. 1960 no. 23. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=1960023.xml&Searchstring=B%FCrgerrecht&showLGBl=true>.

Art. 4b of the BüG²² defines the criteria under which it is possible for a person to apply for Liechtenstein citizenship. Some of the most relevant criteria - taken from the BüG - are:

- The person in question has not been convicted by a court or subject to criminal proceedings;
- The livelihood of the person in question is sufficiently assured;
- The person in question has not supplied any incomplete or incorrect particulars about him- or herself.

Beside the above given conditions, no specific regulation exists regarding health status, disability etc. Persons with disabilities who are unable to prove evidence of knowledge of the German language, law and political structure of Liechtenstein as requested due to their disability, are exempted from the obligation by law (Art. 4c of the BüG). Thus, under the terms “medical condition” and/or “limited capacity to act for oneself”, exceptions for disabled people exist.

As no further health-related requirements for the acquisition of nationality are known to the authors, we conclude that no discrimination against or disadvantage to people with disabilities in this aspect exists. The statistics regarding acquisition of nationality do not give any indication of the number of persons with disabilities.

4. Persons with disabilities have an equal right to stand for political and public office

The Constitution of Liechtenstein states in Art. 29,²³ that all citizens shall be entitled to civic rights in conformity with the provisions of the present Constitution. According to Art. 29²⁴ of the Constitution people eligible to stand for elections must be citizens (Landesangehörige) of the Principality of Liechtenstein. The term citizens (Landesangehörige) given in the Constitution is to be understood as referring to all persons holding Liechtenstein citizenship without distinction of sex. Thus only nationals of Liechtenstein are eligible to stand for elections. This regulation applies to all national and local (community) elections.

According to Art. 2 (3) of the VRG,²⁵ the electoral rules are applicable to both active (right to elect) and passive (right to be elected) voting rights in respect of all state

²² Gesetz über den Erwerb und Verlust des Landesbürgerrechtes (Bürgerrechtsgesetz, BüG), 04.01.1934, LGBl. 1960 no. 23. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1960023.xml&Searchstring=B%FCrgerrecht&showLGBI=true>.

²³ Verfassung des Fürstentum Liechtenstein, 05.10.1921, LGBl 1921, no. 15. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1921015.xml&Searchstring=Verfassung&showLGBI=true>

²⁴ Verfassung des Fürstentum Liechtenstein, 05.10.1921, LGBl 1921, no. 15. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1921015.xml&Searchstring=Verfassung&showLGBI=true>.

²⁵ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten

(Volksrechtsgesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBI=true>.

affairs. Subject to the provision of Art. 30 (3) of the VRG,²⁶ participation in elections and referenda is only applicable to persons who are listed in the electoral register (Stimmregister). The electoral register is based on the municipality structure in Liechtenstein. Art. 44 of the VRG states that a candidate can only be nominated within his/her constituency or municipality, defined by the place of residence of the person in question (see also Art. 32 ff. PGR). A candidate may only be nominated once at the same time within his/her constituency.

The rules for ineligibility are not laid down in the Constitution of Liechtenstein. These criteria are laid down in a national law, called the VRG²⁷. Regarding ineligibility, Art. 2 of the VRG²⁸ states that a person is excluded from voting if:

- He/she is restricted through law in exercising his/her voting rights;²⁹
- The person in question was unable to give his or her consent to elections or referendums, where the exclusion from voting has been ordered by a court (Art. 131a ff. AussStrG);³⁰
- The person in question has been convicted by a national court to a period
 - of imprisonment, which is not suspended for probation, of a minimum of one year based on the criminal offences specified in Art. 2 c 1 of the VRG or;
 - a period of imprisonment, which is not suspended for probation, of more than five years based on the criminal offences specified in Art 2 c 2 of the VRG.

In respect of people with disabilities the law is silent about any legal limitations to their right to stand for local or national elections in Liechtenstein other than the above given regulations.

²⁶ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtegesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBI=true>.

²⁷ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtegesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBI=true>.

²⁸ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtegesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBI=true>.

²⁹ This Article is based on the Act on amendment of the criminal law in 1922 (LGBl. 1922 Nr. 21). In 2012 the criminal law was revised. Thus, Art. 2 Abs. 1 of the Act on amendment of the criminal law (LGBl. 1922 Nr. 21) was changed in 2012 through the Act on amendment of the criminal law (LGBl. 2012 Nr. 357). Based on these changes, Art. 2 Abs. 1 (a) of the VRG has no further scope.

³⁰ Gesetz über das gerichtliche Verfahren in Rechtsangelegenheiten ausser Streitsachen (Ausserstreitgesetz; AussStrG), 25.11.2010, LGBl 2010, no. 454. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=2010454.xml&Searchstring=AussStrG&showLGBI=true>.

The AEPD³¹ has no provision for establishing reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities in general. Clearer rules exist within section C of the AEPD, which provides regulations for buildings and public transportation facilities in relation to accessibility and suitability for people with disabilities. These rules can be seen as a general duty to provide accessibility, which exists in the absence of an individual request. This rule applies also to individuals holding elected offices. Nevertheless, the law is silent about any kind of higher financial allowances or extra assistance for people with disabilities holding elected offices.

5. Political parties are under a legal duty not to discriminate against persons with disabilities

Art. 31 of the Constitution³² provides for the equal treatment of Liechtenstein citizens under law. Public offices shall be equally open to them, subject to observance of the legal regulations. Art. 1 of the VRG³³ says similarly that all Liechtenstein nationals above the age of 18, who have their regular residence in Liechtenstein at least one month before an election, are fully authorised to vote. Thus based on the law Liechtenstein offers equal treatment for citizens in respect of local elections and public functions and thus local elections are open to all candidates.

6. All persons with disabilities have the right to vote on an equal basis with others

According to Art. 29 of the Constitution,³⁴ full civic rights are given to all persons holding Liechtenstein citizenship (Landesangehörige).

In national matters, including the right to vote, the political rights are granted to citizens of the Principality of Liechtenstein who

- Are 18 and over;
- Have their regular residence in Liechtenstein and;
- Are not restricted in exercising their voting rights.

The Constitution itself does not state any reasons for excluding citizens with disabilities or linking their right to vote to any type of impairment. Equally, the same

³¹ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBI=true>.

³² Verfassung des Fürstentum Liechtenstein, 05.10.1921, LGBl 1921, no. 15. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1921015.xml&Searchstring=Verfassung&showLGBI=true>.

³³ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtegesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBI=true>.

³⁴ Verfassung des Fürstentum Liechtenstein, 05.10.1921, LGBl 1921, no. 15. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1921015.xml&Searchstring=Verfassung&showLGBI=true>.

legal position can be seen in the regulations stated in the AEPD.³⁵ Thus, there are no stated provisions which generally exclude citizens with disabilities from exercising their voting rights. Nevertheless, as mentioned under point 1, the possibility exists of losing voting rights based on the deprivation of legal capacity of a person with disability. This is always evaluated by the judges of the Princely Court of Justice on an individual basis and finalised through a court decision for an individual person.

Within the Principality of Liechtenstein the same voting rights in law apply for national and local elections as well as for referenda.

Liechtenstein is not a member state of the European Union; thus no election rules exist for European Union elections (European Parliament).

7. People living in institutions are able to register and to vote

Subject to the provision of Art. 30 (3) of the VRG,³⁶ participation in elections and referendums is only applicable to persons who are listed in the electoral register (Stimmregister). According to Art. 9 of the VRG,³⁷ each municipality has to establish and maintain the electoral register for its community. The head of the local authority has the obligation to ensure an updated electoral register prior to elections. Thus, people with voting rights who live in institutions in Liechtenstein or, as an exception under certain criteria abroad (Art. 1 of the VRG),³⁸ are listed in the electoral register and therefore automatically enabled to participate in elections and referendums.

For many people with disabilities, guaranteed access to the electoral process did not exist until 1996. With the revision of the VRG Liechtenstein citizens were allowed for the first time to request postal voting under certain conditions. The main criteria were:

- The voter was suffering from sickness or infirmity;
- The voter was temporarily abroad during the election.

Thus this right was also intended for disabled people who could not go to the polling station due to their sickness or infirmity. With the revision of the law in 2004 Liechtenstein introduced the general postal vote, which was first employed in the national elections in 2005. Since then all citizens of Liechtenstein who are entitled to

³⁵ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBI=true>.

³⁶ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtegesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBI=true>.

³⁷ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtegesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBI=true>.

³⁸ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtegesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBI=true>.



vote can use postal voting instead of the personal handing in of a voting slip. In practice, the voting documents are sent by the local authority to all registered persons on the electoral register. The documents may either be used to vote in person at the polling station or for a postal vote. No individual request or action has to be taken by the voters to ensure that their right to vote is recognised. Other than these two voting types there is no further method of voting - such as voting in advance, voting by mobile phone, e-voting etc. - in Liechtenstein.



Part B: Access to and accessibility of voting and elections

1. Election authorities have guidelines in place on access and accessibility for people with disabilities

Liechtenstein is not structured as a federal, regionalised state with autonomous regions. The state structure is characterised by a local and national level, which is divided into two constituencies, the Upper Country and the Lower Country. The rules on voting as laid down in the VRG are valid in the same way for national and local elections.

The right to vote or stand for elections requires that the person be entered in the local election register of the municipality where the person has his or her domicile. The electoral register is based on the municipal structure in Liechtenstein. According to Art. 9 of the VRG,³⁹ each municipality has to establish and maintain the electoral register for its community. The head of the local authority has the obligation to ensure an updated electoral register prior to elections.

Elections in Liechtenstein are embedded in multi-layered control procedures. The municipal council sets up an Election Commission to undertake a number of activities in observing and monitoring the elections. The Election Commission consists of the Mayor of the municipality and a maximum of six further members. At the national level, the government nominates two main Election Commissions, one for the Lower Country constituency (Unterland) and one for the Upper Country constituency (Oberland). Each Election Commission consists of 11 members, with the chairperson being nominated by the government. The Election Commissions observe all the electoral processes for local and national elections at a municipal level, whereas the main Election Commission has to examine in particular the results of the municipal elections and decide in disputed cases.

Thus, authorities who are responsible for the public administration of voting and elections are the same, regardless of the type of voting (e.g. national, regional or referendum voting). Furthermore, as Liechtenstein is not a member state of the European Union no regulations or codes for European referendum voting exist.

In practice, on the occasion of each election or referendum, the government issues guidelines in the form of manuals which describe the procedure and the setup of the election. The manuals include the specifications on access, reasonable accommodation and accessibility of voting. As the polling station has to be set up in a public building it must be accessible to all voters. Regarding the accessibility of buildings, there exists a non-legally binding initiative instituted by the Office for Equal Opportunities,⁴⁰ which has published a brochure listing all the officially known public

³⁹ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtegesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBI=true>.

⁴⁰ Stabsstelle für Chancengleichheit, source: <http://www.llv.li/amtstellen/llv-scg-home.htm>.

and private offices and facilities etc., which are accessible to all people and in particular to citizens with disabilities. The brochure⁴¹ lists the main public buildings that host polling stations and which are constructed to be accessible by voters with a disability in the sense of reserved parking spaces and public transport stops in immediate proximity to the polling station for people with general disabilities, sliding doors, elevators or automatic door-openers for people with limited mobility, and tactile signals and indication of signs for visually impaired persons. Nevertheless, there are differences between individual polling stations depending on when the building was built and the when the latest renovations were carried out (see also point 3 below).

Regarding voting documents, there are no legal binding regulations in place. The VRG is silent about this topic. In practise, voting documents (including ballot papers) are designed according to the internal guidelines of the government. These guidelines came in place in 2006 and define the standard size as follows:

- Main title: 20 points font size, Calibri
- Title : 14 points font size, Calibri
- Header : 13 points font size, Calibri
- Text : 9 points font size, Calibri

Thus, comparing the internal guidelines of the government with the rules of easy language for people with disabilities (published by the Organisation of the Disabled)⁴² it can be said, that the minimum size of 14 points and the recommended front typ “Ariel” are not given by the government guidelines. Therefore, the voting documents are not completely accessible to people with learning difficulties (as one group of people with disabilities).

2. Training is provided to election authorities and election officials on non-discrimination, reasonable accommodation and accessibility?

In Liechtenstein the responsibility to instruct all persons involved with the process of elections or referendums rests with the chief election official and the national electoral commissions. The guidelines on election procedures are given by the government in the form of internal manuals. The guidelines have the status of official instructions to the authorities and are therefore binding on the election officials and the national electoral commissions. It is the obligation of these panels to organise and instruct the election workers accordingly. There are no regulations on how this has to be done or when. The manuals govern the election procedures and include the issues of disability rights, accessibility etc. The manuals are not publicly available.

⁴¹ Source: <http://www.barrierefreies.li/default.aspx>.

⁴² Source: <http://www.leichtesprache.org/downloads/Presse%20Information%20Netzwerk%20Leichte%20Sprache%20IN%20LEICHTER%20SPRACHE%2029.August%202013.pdf>.

3. Polling stations are accessible for persons with disabilities

Art. 12 of the AEPD⁴³ states that all buildings and facilities that received an official construction permit after the AEPD came into force must be designed in a barrier-free manner. Buildings that were built before the Act came into force should be adapted at the next major renovation; buildings which, for any reason, cannot be adapted may be exempted by the government. Art. 12 of the AEPD⁴⁴ on publicly accessible buildings and facilities states the following guidelines in detail:

- 1 Public buildings and facilities, for which, after the commencement of this Act, a building code permit is granted, shall be made accessible to all.
- 2 Public buildings and facilities, for which building regulations have been approved before the date of this Act, insofar as they are not already accessible, need to be modified and changed to make them accessible. This does not include buildings undergoing maintenance and renovation work, and work without extensive intervention in the buildings' brickwork.
- 3 The planning authority is obliged to provide, under the building permit process, the regulations which are to be complied with in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2. Building permits are to be provided with appropriate conditions.
- 4 As part of the building permit process, the planning authority has to inform the disability organisations that primarily work for the rights and interests of people with disabilities about planning applications in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2. They should be allowed, within a reasonable period, to comply with the regulations on accessibility. Disability organisations which have exercised their right to submit comments are eligible for appeal.
- 5 As part of the final building inspection, the building authority has to invite representatives of disability organisations that have agreed to participate in the final building inspection. They are granted the opportunity to inform the planning authority of their final acceptance and of any violations against accessibility. Other rights available to disability organisations as part of the final building inspection do not apply.
- 6 Public buildings and facilities which are approved by the planning authority without any objections, or where objections have been resolved, count as barrier-free.
- 7 In particular cases the building authority can permit exceptions to the barrier-free rule, or it can, in cases of renovation or maintenance according to §2, dictate measures for barrier-free access.
- 8 The owner, executive planners, construction management, engineers as well as contractors are responsible for the implementation of accessibility provisions after the granting of planning permission.

⁴³ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.

⁴⁴ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.



The AEPD has no specific regulations or guidelines regarding accessibility of polling stations to disabled people. As polling stations in Liechtenstein are set up in public buildings for the time of the election, the regulations about accessibility of public buildings and facilities are therefore valid. Art. 49 (2) of the VRG⁴⁵ says clearly that polling booths within the polling stations have to be set up in such a way that voters are enabled to complete and return the ballot paper unattended.

Thus the legal requirements are given and have to be met for all buildings and facilities which fulfil public purposes and therefore also the function of polling stations. Other than this, the law contains no further details on how accessibility is defined and what specifications or standards have to exist for machines etc. used for voting to fulfil the requirement of being accessible to people with disabilities.

Additionally to the law, the government publishes an internal manual each time in advance of an election or referendum etc. Within the manual polling stations are defined as public buildings that must have unobstructed access for all voters. For each election or referendum it is the responsibility of the relevant chief election official to designate polling places, having regard to accessibility for disabled voters.

Art. 23 §5 of the AEPD⁴⁶ on Legal Claims states that: “If the discrimination consists in the violation of the provisions on accessibility and adaptability according to articles 11 to 16, the assertion of claims under section 1 and 2 is excluded”. If in civil cases the claim is made that discrimination is based on a violation of the provisions on accessibility and adaptability, the court shall rule on the objection without interrupting the process itself.

This clearly shows that the national law requires public buildings and infrastructures to be designed, built, and possibly adapted in a disability-accessible way. If anyone fails to comply, the courts will have to decide on the penalties.

There is no case law known to the authors. The organisation for people with disabilities (Behindertenverband) in Liechtenstein has not received any complaint about accessibility of polling stations for people with disabilities in recent years.

4. Disabled people can access assistance during voting

Polling station staff must ensure that disabled voters are not offered a lower standard of service than other voters.

⁴⁵ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtegesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBI=true%20>

⁴⁶ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBI=true>.

Disabled voters are entitled to the right to request assistance to mark the ballot paper. This right is subject to the approval of the national electoral commission. This right is stated in Art 49 (2) of the VRG.⁴⁷

If the approval is given, the disabled voter may bring a person he/she trusts to help him/her to vote. The manual says nothing about the qualifications of this confidential person in the sense of being over 18 years old or a qualified elector, etc.

5. Alternatives to voting at Polling Stations are available

Since the national elections in 2005, all citizens of Liechtenstein who are entitled to vote may use postal voting instead of polling station voting. In practice, the voting documents are sent by the local authority to all registered persons on the electoral register. The documents may either be used for personal voting in the polling station or for a postal vote. No individual request or action has to be taken by the voters to ensure that their rights to vote are recognised. Furthermore, there are no existing requirements for this alternative system to be made accessible. Beside these two voting types, polling station or postal vote, there are no other methods of voting in Liechtenstein.

Art. 17 of the AEPD⁴⁸ states the obligation of society to take into consideration the special requirements of people with disabilities when interacting with them. This obligation is combined with the right of speech-, hearing- and visually-impaired people to use familiar facilities or tools, e.g. sign language, when communicating with official authorities in Liechtenstein. This includes also the possibility upon request to receive forms, court cases or official notices in an understandable and comprehensible form for disabled people without additional cost. Regarding voting documents no special, accessible format for person with disabilities, e.g. Braille documents, is known to the authors. Additionally not case of individual request of such documents has been reported by the official authorities or the Association for People with Disabilities to the authors.

Data from the parliamentary elections from 2005 onwards show that only a minority of people wished to retain the option of voting at polling stations. Thus, the majority strongly appreciated the new model of postal voting, which can be seen by the voting results as shown in the table below.

⁴⁷ Gesetz über die Ausübung der politischen Volksrechte in Landesangelegenheiten (Volksrechtgesetz, VRG), 17.07.1973, LGBl. 2012 no. 357. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=1973050.xml&Searchstring=Volksrechte&showLGBl=true>.

⁴⁸ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.

	voters	voter turnout	polling station voting in %	postal voting in %
parliamentary elections 2013	19,251	79.80%	4.40%	95.60%
parliamentary elections 2009	18,493	84.60%	19.50%	80.50%
parliamentary elections 2005	17,428	86.50%	51.00%	49.00%

Figure 3: Voters turnout during parliamentary elections in Liechtenstein from 2009 – 2013.⁴⁹

No concerns have been raised in Liechtenstein so far as to whether postal voting complies with the requirements of a secret ballot, in that people cast their vote outside the security of a polling station, or whether voters can cast their vote privately free from another person's coercion.

6. Political parties are implementing accessibility in their election activities and communications

Besides the given legal regulations regarding accessibility of buildings and facilities as well as media content for people with disabilities, no specific guidelines for political parties exist.

During the latest elections in 2013 accessibility was not a topic specifically attended to by the political parties. On a perusal of the websites of the currently represented political parties in Parliament, no specific disability policy or statement could be found. Internal party guidelines, including disability aspects (e.g. social inclusion of persons with disabilities), exist in some cases but do not, for example, include details on the accessibility of information (webpage content, simple language, etc.). This can be seen from the following table.⁵⁰

political party	website	disability policy available*	guidelines including disability aspects
Vaterländische Union (VU)	http://www.vu-online.li/	n.a.	n.a.
Fortschrittliche Bürgerpartei (FBP)	http://www.fbp.li/	n.a.	yes: guidelines of the party
Freie Liste (FL)	http://www.freieliste.li/	n.a.	yes: guidelines of the party
Die Unabhängigen (DU)	http://www.du4.li/	n.a.	n.a.

* Disability policy in the sense of ensuring non-discrimination and the provision of reasonable accommodation or accessibility to persons with disability in practice. (n.a. = not available).

Figure 4: Political parties in the Parliament of Liechtenstein

No specific examples can be provided as the internal documents of the political parties do not provide any as far as they are made publicly available.

The organisation for persons with a disability (Behindertenverband) in Liechtenstein launched an initiative in 2013 to translate the official political content of the parties

⁴⁹ Source: <http://www.landtagswahlen.li/resultate.aspx?eeid=8&ukid=14>.

⁵⁰ Source: internet research and individual preparation for this report by the authors.



into simple language. The response of the various political parties in terms of participating and supporting the initiative was subdued. The lack of legal obligations on the parties to implement accessibility in their election activities and communications is still a practical problem for persons with disabilities.

7. The broadcasting of election communications and debates is made accessible

Art. 56a of the Act on Media (MedienG)⁵¹ states the obligation on all broadcasters to implement adequate measures to ensure that their programmes are made accessible to hearing- and visually-impaired people. Art. 2 of the MedienG⁵² defines broadcasters and all persons who provide media content in terms of their responsibilities to the general public. Thus, there is a legal obligation on broadcasters to ensure that the media content of election debates and political parties etc. is accessible to hearing- and visually-impaired people.

In practice, accessibility is not uniform across all aspects of the different media types. The written content of the main public newspapers in Liechtenstein, for example, is accessible online and the size of the text can be adjusted to the level of vision of the reader. The web content for the online version of the newspaper, as well as the information given via social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) is designed to be a simple and understandable abbreviated version of the print media content. Although there are no specific Web Content Accessibility Writers or accessible web templates within a content management system, accessibility is understood as a task by the broadcasters and therefore addressed.⁵³ Most broadcasters have no specific technical support system to enable people who are deaf or hard of hearing to watch real-time audio-visual content. In some cases the broadcasters offer a choice of either watching or reading the media content, for example via a text transcript.

In respect of party political broadcasts no specific regulations exist regarding the way the information has to be given to the general public. As the question has not been discussed in public so far, no evidence of the extent to which political broadcasts are accessible in practice exists.

8. The business of those holding political and public office is accessible to disabled constituents

In Liechtenstein there is no specific legal binding requirement that holders of political or public office conduct their business in a way that is accessible to disabled people

⁵¹ Mediengesetz (MedienG), 19.10.2005, LGBl. 2005 no. 250. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=2005250.xml&Searchstring=Mediengesetz&showLGBI=true>.

⁵² Mediengesetz (MedienG), 19.10.2005, LGBl. 2005 no. 250. Source:

<https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBI=2005250.xml&Searchstring=Mediengesetz&showLGBI=true>.

⁵³ This assessment resulted from short interviews with the main local newspaper agencies and the disability organisation in Liechtenstein (Association for People with Disabilities, Hr. Kubisch-Risch).

whom they represent or otherwise serve. Nevertheless, Art. 5 of the AEPD⁵⁴ states that nobody shall be discriminated against due to disability, either directly or indirectly. Indirect discrimination exists when apparently neutral provisions, criteria or procedures would put persons affected by a specific ground of discrimination at a particular disadvantage compared to other persons. Indirect discrimination is explicitly defined on grounds of disability (AEPD Art. 6 §2).⁵⁵

According to Art. 6 §2 of the AEPD⁵⁶ the differential treatment is objectively justified if provisions, criteria or procedures are necessary in order to achieve a legitimate aim. In addition, the means of achieving that aim have to be appropriate. Liechtenstein law thus states that justification of indirect discrimination is possible in certain situations.

As there are no specific regulations given, the extent of the accessibility of the business of office-holders to disabled people in practice cannot be accessed.

9. The business of political and public office is accessible to disabled holders of those offices

The AEPD (Art. 11-12)⁵⁷ protects people with disabilities by ensuring access to public buildings. This means that public buildings must be constructed in a way that gives people with disabilities the possibility to move around freely. If buildings are not convenient for people with disabilities – especially public places – they must be adapted in order to give people with disabilities the freedom to move around freely as soon as work has been completed on the building. To this end, the government is obliged to consult the Office for Equal Opportunities⁵⁸ as well as recognised associations for people with disabilities, before formal approval for construction work is granted.

Art. 17 of the AEPD⁵⁹ states the obligation of society to take into consideration the special requirements of people with disabilities when interacting with them. This obligation is combined with the right of speech-, hearing- and visually-impaired

⁵⁴ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.

⁵⁵ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.

⁵⁶ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.

⁵⁷ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.

⁵⁸ Stabsstelle für Chancengleichheit: <http://www.llv.li/amtstellen/llv-scg-home.htm>.

⁵⁹ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.

people to use familiar facilities or tools, e.g. sign language, when communicating with official authorities in Liechtenstein. This includes also the possibility upon request to receive forms, court cases or official notices in an understandable and comprehensible form for disabled people without additional cost. Where public services are offered via the internet, they have to be compliant with the international standards regarding accessibility for disabled people.

In respect of the services and information provided by the parliament of Liechtenstein on their webpage, a complete barrier-free version is accessible. This version is based on the same data stream as the “regular” website and therefore the content in respect of time and quality is identical.⁶⁰ The web page of the national administration (including the government) provides the functionality to enlarge the font size to make the text easier to read.

Art. 10 §1 of the AEPD⁶¹ states that people with disabilities may not be discriminated against as employees in the public and in the private sector or at any other workplace, either directly or indirectly. There are exceptions to this general rule provided for in Art. 10 §3 and §4. Art.10 §3 of the AEPD,⁶² which state that discrimination does not apply if a special attribute is necessary to fulfil the professional task and the disabled person concerned does not meet the criteria for a job. Art.10 §4 AEPD⁶³ states that wages may be in relation to merit, without this being regarded as discrimination. As there are no specific references in the AEPD it may be assumed that the scope of discrimination covers all aspects of the conditions for access to employment. In relation to the public sector, discrimination is further limited by the Act on Employment of Public Officials (Gesetz über das Dienstverhältnis des Staatspersonals, Staatspersonalgesetz, StPG),⁶⁴ which explicitly names the integration of people with special needs, such as people with disabilities (Art. 4 §2i of the StPG⁶⁵), as an objective of personnel policy, whereas there are no such positive statements relating to the private sector.

⁶⁰ Source: <http://bf.gmq.biz/default.aspx?prid=13&lang=DE>.

⁶¹ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.

⁶² Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.

⁶³ Gesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz; BGIG), 25.10.2006, LGBl. 2006, no. 243. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2006243.xml&Searchstring=Gleichstellung&showLGBl=true>.

⁶⁴ Gesetz über das Dienstverhältnis des Staatspersonals (Staatspersonalgesetz; StPG), 24.04.2008, LGBl. 2008 no.144. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2008144.xml&Searchstring=Staatspersonalgesetz&showLGBl=true>.

⁶⁵ Gesetz über das Dienstverhältnis des Staatspersonals (Staatspersonalgesetz; StPG), 24.04.2008, LGBl. 2008 no.144. Source: <https://www.gesetze.li/Seite1.jsp?LGBl=2008144.xml&Searchstring=Staatspersonalgesetz&showLGBl=true>.



10. European elections

The information given above about accessibility applies equally to all types of elections in Liechtenstein (e.g. national and local).

Liechtenstein is not a Member State of the European Union, thus no election rules exist regarding European Union elections (e.g. European Parliament).

11. Points of Concern

In reality, the process of securing full access to the right to vote is ongoing. The most significant improvements were made in 2004 with the introduction of the postal vote. The mechanisms for voting (e.g. polling or postal voting) are of particular interest to people with disabilities and they could therefore be developed to provide:

- Mobile polling stations for institutions where persons with disabilities reside;
- Public education and information programmes for those with special needs, including the use of alternative formats such as Braille, large print and audio-cassettes;
- Accessibility training and awareness sessions for polling station staff;
- Adopting the internal guidelines of the government to make public documents accessible for people with learning difficulties (e. g. easy language, font type and size, etc.).

Concerns about postal voting have been raised in other countries as to whether it complies with the requirements of a secret ballot, in that people cast their vote outside the security of a polling station, and whether voters can cast their vote privately free from another person's coercion. In Liechtenstein, these issues have not been discussed in public nor have they been raised by any official representative of disabled people or political party.

The missing legal obligations to implement accessibility in election activities and the communications of political parties are still a practical problem for persons with disabilities. Additional regulations to the AEPD would be needed.

12. Good practice

Postal voting, which was implemented in 2004, has changed the practice of voting, but it cannot be said to have helped to increase the voter turnout since it was implemented. On the other hand, voter turnout is still relatively high in Liechtenstein; it fell to below 80 per cent only at the recent elections of 2013. Thus the opportunity for postal voting may have helped to keep the turnout rather high, compared to other European countries. The convenience factors of postal voting in particular have in some aspects meshed with needs deriving from the on-going digital evolution of the whole of society in Liechtenstein. More flexibility was expected and realised by postal voting, as may be seen from the following table:

	voters	voter turnout
parliamentary elections 2013	19,251	79.80%
parliamentary elections 2009	18,493	84.60%
parliamentary elections 2005	17,428	86.50%
parliamentary elections 2001	16,350	86.70%

Figure 5: Voters turnout at Parliament elections from 2001 to 2013.⁶⁶

Nevertheless there is still more potential for the on-going digital evolution to make accessibility of voting easier and more convenient. E-voting has not yet been introduced in Liechtenstein. This may be the next step to further facilitate voting. Experiences in other countries in this respect are being carefully watched, although there is no public discussion on this issue for the time being.

⁶⁶ Source: <http://www.landtagswahlen.li/resultate.aspx?eeid=8&ukid=14>.



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ANNEX 2: Table of Abbreviations

Act on Acquisition and Loss of Citizenship	BüG
Act on Equality of People with Disabilities	AEPD
Act on Employment of Public Officials	StPG
Act on Media	MedienG
Act on Municipalities	GemG
Act on School Education	ASE
Act on the Exercise of the Political Rights of the People	VRG
Common Civil Code	CCC
European Community	EC
Non-Contentious Proceedings Act	AussStrG
Persons-and Companies Act	PGR
Special Education Centre	HPZ