Liechtenstein

Country:
Liechtenstein
Year:
2016
Freedom Status:
Free
Political Rights:
1
Civil Liberties:
1
Aggregate Score:
98
Freedom Rating:
1.0
Overview:

Political Rights: 39 / 40 [Key]

Civil Liberties: 59 / 60

In 2015, the government of Liechtenstein continued to combat the country's reputation as a tax haven and to increase transparency in banking. In October, Liechtenstein entered an information-sharing agreement with the European Union (EU), part of a wider effort to reduce tax evasion within the bloc. Under the agreement, EU member states will be able to access information about bank accounts held by their citizens in Liechtenstein banks. The country had already reached a similar agreement with the United States in 2014. The press continues to play a role in illuminating secrecy practices and fraudulent financial activity. Local media are largely independent, and international outlets are also accessible.

A third of the population is foreign-born. Some native citizens have expressed concern over the growing number of immigrants from non-German-speaking countries, such as Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Officials responded by creating formal integration programs to teach recent immigrants the language and culture of Liechtenstein. In 2015, the government agreed to participate in a plan for the distribution of refugees across the European Union, and also continued resettlement through mechanisms provided by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Women are underrepresented in politics and business, and a gender pay gap persists. Abortion is legal in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy if the mother's life is in danger or if she was under the age of 14 at the time of conception. The government has signaled some intentions to decriminalize

abortion in recent years, and in March 2015, legislators announced that they would amend legislation that criminalizes obtaining abortions abroad. The law recognizes same-sex civil unions.

This country report has been abridged for Freedom in the World 2016*. For background information on political rights and civil liberties in Liechtenstein, see* Freedom in the World 2015*.*

Scoring Key: X / Y (Z)

X = Score Received

Y = Best Possible Score

Z = Change from Previous Year

<u>Full Methodology</u>

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