

# LANDTAG

OF THE PRINCIPALITY  
OF LIECHTENSTEIN

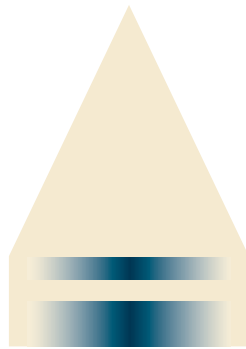
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LANDTAG  
OF THE PRINCIPALITY  
OF LIECHTENSTEIN

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*One has to work together with the right  
people, to respect and motivate them.*

*Long-term success is possible only  
within the team.*

Klaus Steilmann







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since 1862	



# Parliamentary activities and international encounters

In the general election of 5 February 2017 Liechtenstein chose continuity and stability. The balance of power between the various parties remained virtually unchanged, enabling the coalition government headed by the FBP to continue its work. While the difficult work of the past four years, which involved necessary cuts, was not universally well-received, it was however accepted in overall terms. Nevertheless, we safely piloted our ship of state through a challenging period, and this was recognised by voters when they confirmed the parliamentary majorities.

The new legislative period will be marked by an important anniversary. The Principality of Liechtenstein will be celebrating its 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019. On 23 January 1719 the Dominion of Schellenberg and the County of Vaduz were elevated by Emperor Karl VI to the status of a Principality directly suzerain to the Empire with the name of Liechtenstein. This was effectively the moment our country was born. The anniversary year will be an opportunity to strengthen and deepen the sense of belonging, national identity and patriotism. And it will also represent an opportunity to express thanks and raise awareness of our benign destiny.

The work of Parliament will be characterised more than usual by international encounters. In 2017 Liechtenstein will chair the International Parliamentary Lake Constance Conference. In the year 2018 Liechtenstein will be hosting the Annual Conference of Parliamentary Presidents of the Small States of Europe. In the anniversary year 2019 we are set to host the Meeting of the Parliamentary Presidents of German-Speaking States.



Parliament will need to work hard to do justice to these challenging tasks. These come in addition to all the tasks that arise at the national level, and are needed to ensure the orderly management of the state in the interest of all citizens. It is my duty and honour to play a part in the success of these responsibilities.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Albert Frick'.

Albert Frick,  
President of Parliament





”

*The essential task of Parliament is set out in Art. 45 Para. 1 of the Constitution: «... to exercise the rights and interests of the people relative to the government ...». While this may sound banal, it is a huge challenge to identify the interests of the people and to represent these. Increasingly polarised public opinion as well as emotionally-charged discussions, frequently conducted in social media, have also become part and parcel of life in Liechtenstein. This is no reason, however, to shy away from engaging in objective dialogue and instead to play to the political gallery. Upholding the rights and interests of the population entails searching for workable compromises, while minimising the distraction of extreme standpoints and positions. As a mainstream party at the centre of the political spectrum, the Vaterländische Union pursues policies that reflect its social and essentially liberal values, and works to promote the general wellbeing of the population.*

Violanda Lanter-Koller,  
Presidium Member and Group Spokesperson  
(VU)



# A part-time parliamentary seat is a challenging responsibility

The 2017–2021 Parliament comprises representatives who work in many different professional fields. Lawyers, managers and engineers are the principal professions. At the same time, businesspersons, housewives, media professionals, IT experts, mechanics, teachers and careers advisers also hold seats in Parliament.

The Liechtenstein Parliament is a part-time parliament. Members of Parliament who exercise their positions parallel to their professional responsibilities attend around eight to ten one to three-day sessions per annum. This means that a parliamentary seat generates a workload of some 500 hours per annum, in addition to the regular work of the members.

It is certainly advantageous that part-time parliamentarians can contribute their professional knowledge and specific sector know-how to their political offices. This encourages a pragmatic approach to solving the real problems facing the country. Industry representatives are excellent lobbyists, and are ideally able to attract attention to the particular interests of their respective professional group. Part-time parliamentarians have direct contacts with voters, and therefore have an understanding of grassroots issues.

A parliamentary seat in a part-time system also presents challenges, though. As effective lobbyists, industry representatives are often accused of not acting primarily in the interest of the population as a whole. The problem of conflicting interests can also arise. Above all, however, the workload of parliamentarians is often an issue for discussion. Because of the extensive demands of political activities and professional careers, the wor-



kload can be considerable. This is time that cannot be spent with the family or pursuing personal hobbies. Ultimately, however, the political system benefits from the wide-ranging professional know-how that such Members of Parliament are able to draw upon. A professional Parliament is therefore no solution, and it would not make sense for Liechtenstein to move away from having a part-time Parliament.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'G. Marxer-Kranz'.

Gunilla Marxer-Kranz,  
Vice President of Parliament





# Parliament represents the people and their sovereign rights

Voters elected a new Parliament at the beginning of 2017. As in previous election years, this brochure presents Parliament by outlining the manner in which it represents the people and exercises its legislative responsibilities, as well as its position within the division of powers that is fundamental to the structure of the state. Liechtenstein's Parliament was essentially established in the year 1862. In the Constitution of 1862, Parliament was accorded the right to participate in the legislative process, to approve important state treaties, to oversee the state administration and to exercise financial sovereignty. It was subsequently also given the right to elect the Government. From a historical perspective, the Liechtenstein Parliament is consequently one of the oldest popular representative bodies in Europe, created with democratic electoral procedures. This is an achievement of which we have every right to be proud.

Following introductory words by the President of Parliament and Madam Vice President, the key pillars of the institutions of Parliament, its working practices, the instruments available to the Members of Parliament as well as the most important business exercised by Parliament and the electoral system will be outlined.

The Members of Parliament are featured in the brochure together with personal information and their functions in parliamentary bodies. The brochure also contains a portrait of the Parliamentary service that supports Parliament. It also includes a brief description of the Parliament building, together with a discussion of the architecture and history of the buildings where parliament assembled in the past.



The brochure is intended to provide the reader with key information about Parliament, its activities and organisation as well as insights into its most important business procedures.

In addition, it also aims to encourage readers to visit Parliament while it is in session, enabling them to obtain direct experience of its activities. I hope that with this brochure I have been able to attract your interest to the activities of Parliament, and hope you enjoy reading this publication.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Josef Hilti'.

Josef Hilti,  
Secretary of Parliament



”

*Diversity of opinion is essential to the life of Parliament as it strives to identify the best possible and sustainable solutions.*

*Members of the Freie Liste parliamentary party uphold the positions and interests of its electors in Parliament. As part of the opposition, its task is also to scrutinise and challenge the work of the Government. At the same time, Freie Liste's Members of Parliament strive to work constructively and to make innovative contributions to the political discussion.*

*The following issues are important to me for the current legislative period: social cohesion, mobility, work-life balance, digitalisation of the world of work and the impact thereof, as well as ... a gender quota to ensure that more women take part in the political process. In my view, there should never again be a Parliament with 22 men and only 3 women.*

Georg Kaufmann,  
Presidium Member and Group Spokesperson  
(FL)



# The state structure of the Principality of Liechtenstein

## State structure

«The Principality of Liechtenstein is a constitutional hereditary monarchy based on democratic and parliamentary principles; state authority rests with the Prince and with the people ...» declares Article 2 of the Liechtenstein Constitution. The structure of the state is characterised by the dualism of Prince and people; they stand at the same level, side by side.

## The people and the rights of the people

Under the Constitution, the people may exercise their rights directly through elections and in referendums. Other direct democratic rights include the right to petition for an initiative or referendum at the statutory and constitutional level. Voters are obliged to take part in elections and referendums. The Prince, Parliament and the electorate have the right to submit initiatives to the legislature.

## Parliament

In the dualistic structure of the Principality of Liechtenstein, Parliament exercises the important function of representing all citizens. The Liechtenstein Parliament is elected directly by the people in a proportional voting system. The Upper Country (Oberland) electoral district provides 15 Members of Parliament, while the Lower Country (Unterland) electoral district provides 10 Members of Parliament. Parliament is convened and closed by the Prince. The Prince also has the right to dissolve Parliament in the event of good cause.

The principal task of Parliament is lawmaking. For a law to be valid, it requires the approval of Parliament as well as the assent of the Prince, the countersignature of the Prime Minister and promulgation in the Liechtenstein Law Gazette. Each law adopted by Parliament and not declared by it as urgent as well as every treaty approved by it under international law is subject to an optional referendum.

Parliament also has the right to propose Government appointments, which must have the approval of the Prince and Parliament. In addition to collaboration in the drafting of laws, financial sovereignty and overseeing the state administration, including the administration of justice, are also of particular importance. It is also responsible for attending to various electoral business.

## Government

The Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein is based on the principle of collective responsibility. It comprises the Prime Minister and four other government ministers. They are proposed by Parliament and appointed by the Prince. All important matters are subject to consultation and the adoption of resolutions by the collegiate Government. Within the Government, work is handled by the various ministries. The Prime Minister chairs the body, signs the adopted decrees and orders, and completes the course of business. Like the other members of the Government, he has only one vote. His powers are greater than those of the other members of the Government because he is responsible for verifying the legality of collegiate resolutions, has the right to report to the Prince and is required to countersign laws that have been approved by the Prince. Countersignature by the Prime Minister in accordance with Article 86 of the Constitution is of particular significance with regard to collaboration with the Prince.

## The administration of justice

Jurisdiction in civil and criminal matters is exercised on behalf of the Prince by the Court of Justice as the court of first instance, by the Court of Appeal as the court of second instance, and by the Supreme Court as the third and final court of instance. Administrative jurisdiction is exercised by the Administrative Court, and in certain cases by the Constitutional Court.



”

*In order for us to remain independent as a small state in future, we need to pursue a sustainable political agenda. Our quality of life can be maintained at the current very high level only if we develop solutions jointly, e.g. to face the problems of demographic change and the associated challenges, such as care services for the elderly. Solutions to improve the work-life balance need to be found. We cannot afford a situation where highly-qualified women have to decide between their careers or their children. We need greater flexibility here, to enable each family to identify and use its own model.*

*We will only achieve this if we think and act beyond narrow party mindsets and legislative periods, so we can continue to be proud of our «little country» in the years ahead.*

Daniel Oehry,  
Presidium Member and Group Spokesperson  
(FBP)



# Parliament

## Duties and position within the structure of the state

### Principles

According to its constitution, the Principality of Liechtenstein is a «constitutional hereditary monarchy based on democratic and parliamentary principles.» Parliament is the representative and «body» of the people, and as such its function is to exercise their rights and interests.

### Legislation

The principal task of Parliament is to contribute towards the legislative process. Without Parliament, no law can be passed or amended. Along with the Prince and the people, Parliament is entitled to submit constitutional and statutory initiatives. In practice, most bills are prepared by the Government or by its experts. Parliament has the right to send bills back to the Government, or to form commissions of its own to amend

such bills. An opening debate is held on each bill, and this is usually followed by two readings and a final vote. In the opening debate it is decided whether Parliament is willing in principle to accept a bill. In the first reading, suggestions can be made that are then examined by the Government before the second reading. A vote is held on each individual article during the second reading. If Members of Parliament submit motions for amendments, then a vote must first be held on these. With the article-by-article vote, the definitive wording of the article is finalised. After the second reading, a final vote takes place. This adopts the bill in its entirety.

### State treaties

Treaties that concern sovereign rights, involve the adoption of new responsibilities or affect the rights of citizens must be submitted to Parliament.



President of Parliament Albert Frick and His Serene Highness Hereditary Prince Alois of Liechtenstein.

Violanda Lanter-Koller, VU  
**Swearing-in ceremony**  
Susanne Eberle-Strub, FBP



Jürgen Beck, DU  
**Swearing-in ceremony**  
Patrick Risch, FL



# The institution of Parliament

## Commissions and delegations

### The plenary assembly

The Parliament of Liechtenstein has 25 members. It exercises its rights at the sessions of the full Parliament. Detailed discussion of laws is also usually conducted in the plenary assembly. This is why Parliament is described as a «working Parliament». In comparison with other parliaments, not many tasks are delegated to commissions. When commissions are formed, their remit tends to be limited to preparing specific business matters for the full Parliament and to formulating the corresponding motions.

### Members of Parliament

All Members of Parliament are part-time parliamentarians. They exercise their offices alongside their regular occupations. They receive an annual flat-rate fee as well as a daily allowance. Members of Parliament cannot be held legally accountable for anything they say in Parliament. They enjoy immunity to the extent that during Parliamentary sessions they may be arrested only with the consent of Parliament (unless they happen to be caught in the act).

### President of Parliament

The President of Parliament and the Vice President of Parliament are each elected for the current year at the opening session. The President of Parliament convenes the sessions and represents Parliament externally. The Vice President of Parliament represents the President in the latter's absence.

### Standing commissions

At the opening session Parliament also elects three standing commissions for the current year: the Foreign Affairs Commission the Finance Commission and the Audit Commission. Only the Finance Commission has decision-making powers. This means it can rule on certain financial transactions. Each standing commission consists of five Members of Parliament.

### Non-standing commissions

Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure, Parliament may also appoint non-standing commissions. These constitute

themselves either as special commissions or as investigative commissions. They may consist of three or five members. Their terms of office end with the completion of their task, although at the latest at the end of the parliamentary term. The special commissions are tasked with preparing individual laws or other business and with submitting corresponding motions to the full Parliament. The EEA Commission reviews EEA statutory regulations to determine whether they require the consent of Parliament. Investigative Commissions are provided with powerful minority rights: At the request of only seven members, Parliament is obliged to appoint an Investigative Commission.

### Parliamentary delegations

At the start of the parliamentary term, Parliament elects delegations to the international parliamentary bodies in which it is involved. In each case, these comprise two delegates and two substitutes for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, for the EFTA/ EEA Parliamentary Committee, for the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, for the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) as well as four delegates for the Lake Constance Parliamentary Commission. These delegations are elected for the entire parliamentary term, that is to say for four years. Parliament can also appoint special delegations to cultivate relations with other parliaments.

### Presidium of Parliament

The Presidium of Parliament consists of the President of Parliament, the Vice President of Parliament and the spokespersons for the parliamentary groups. The Parliamentary Secretary is also a member, in an advisory capacity. The Presidium of Parliament advises the President, especially when drawing up the agenda for the sessions of Parliament. It prepares the parliamentary budget and decides on the appointment of staff for the Parliamentary Service.

### Parliamentary recorder

On the occasion of the opening session each year, Parliament traditionally elects two recording clerks who count the votes.



”

*Parliament thrives on critical debate, which is why the Independents are so important.*

*Members of Parliament cast their votes solely in accordance with their oath of allegiance and their convictions (Art. 57 of the Liechtenstein Constitution) and vow «to promote the wellbeing of the home country without regard to other considerations to the best of their knowledge and ability» (Art. 54 of the Liechtenstein Constitution).*

*As our name «du – die Unabhängigen» («the Independents») suggests, we are not a unitary party, but instead a group of individuals who think and act independently, who have come together because we see many tasks and challenges in a similar light. We agree even more strongly about the manner in which the tasks we face need to be tackled: Pragmatically instead of with «other ideological considerations»; directly and purposefully instead of with party-political sidestepping and intrigues; dedicated to enlightenment instead of political correctness; with the wellbeing of society as a whole firmly in sight, instead of with one eye on particular interests – resolutely instead of timidly.*

Harry Quaderer,  
Presidium Member and Group Spokesperson  
(DU)



**Top photo, Foreign Affairs**

**Commission:** from left Thomas Lageder, Jürgen Beck, Albert Frick (Chair), Eugen Nägele and Manfred Kaufmann.

**Centre photo, Finance**

**Commission:** from left Wendelin Lampert, Wolfgang Marxer, Christoph Wenaweser (Chair), Rainer Beck and Herbert Elkuch.

**Lower photo, Audit**

**Commission:** from left Frank Konrad, Ado Vogt, Thomas Rehak (Chair), Alexander Batliner and Georg Kaufmann.





**Top photo, EEA Commission:** from left Patrick Risch, Peter Frick, Elfried Hasler (Chair), Ado Vogt and Thomas Vogt.

**Centre photo, International Parliamentary Lake Constance Conference**

from left Patrick Risch, Violanda Lanter-Koller, Albert Frick (Chair) and Ado Vogt.



**Lower photo, EFTA/EEA Parliamentary Committee:** from left Harry Quaderer, Elfried Hasler (chair), Manfred Kaufmann and Michael Ospelt.



### Parliamentary groups

At least three Members of Parliament are required to form a parliamentary group. Otherwise these constitute electoral groups. Parliamentary groups bridge the gap between the parties and the Members of Parliament. Before a matter is discussed in Parliament, the Members of Parliament come together in internal meetings of the parliamentary groups. This enables them to form collective opinions. While this does not mean there is a party whip, there is a certain degree of group discipline. The opinion of the parliamentary group is announced in Parliament by the group spokesperson. The parliamentary and electoral groups are entitled to use conference rooms of commensurate size.

### National Committee

The National Committee safeguards the rights of Parliament as a whole when Parliament is not in session

and is therefore unable to exercise its functions (that is to say, between the end of one year and the reopening at the start of the next year) or in the event of the adjournment or dissolution of Parliament. The National Committee consists of the President of Parliament and four further Members of Parliament, whereby the two electoral districts must be equally represented. The National Committee cannot enter into binding obligations for the country.

### Rules of Procedure

The tasks and working practices of Parliament are governed by the Constitution, Conduct of Business and Control of Administration Act and the Rules of Procedure.



Christa Markwalder, Swiss National Council President and President of Parliament Albert Frick.





**Top photo, Delegation for the Inter-Parliamentary Union:** from left Jürgen Beck, Mario Wohlgend (Chair), Johannes Hasler and Wolfgang Marxer.



**Centre photo, Delegation for the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE:** from left Günter Vogt (Chair), Helen Konzett Bargetze, Violanda Lanter-Koller and Eugen Nägele.



**Lower photo, Delegation for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe:** from left Christoph Wenaweser, Daniel Seger, Susanne Eberle-Strub (Chair) and Günter Vogt.





**Top photo, Judicial Appointments Committee:** from left Johannes Kaiser, Thomas Rehak, Thomas Vogt and Thomas Lageder.



**Centre photo:** Vice President of Parliament Gunilla Marxer-Kranz and President of Parliament Albert Frick.



**Lower photo, Presidium of Parliament:** from left Daniel Oehry, Harry Quaderer, Violanda Lanter-Koller, Albert Frick (Chair), Gunilla Marxer-Kranz and Georg Kaufmann.

# Members of Parliament

Parliamentary period 2017–2021



## Eberle-Strub Susanne

Housewife/  
Medical Practice Assistant  
Place of residence: Vaduz  
Member of Parliament since 2017  
· Head of the Delegation of the  
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe



## Frick Albert President of Parliament

21.10.1948  
President of Parliament  
Place of residence: Schaan  
Member of Parliament since 2009



- President of the Liechtenstein Parliament
- Chair of the Parliamentary Presidium
- Chair of the Foreign Affairs Commission
- Head of Delegation of the International Parliamentary Lake Constance Conference

## Hasler Elfried

11.06.1965  
Financial expert  
Place of residence:  
Gamprin-Bendern  
Member of Parliament since 2013



- Chair of the EEA Commission
- Head of Delegation of the EFTA/EEA Parliamentary Committee

## Hasler Johannes

10.06.1982  
Economic and Financial  
Investigator  
Place of residence:  
Gamprin-Bendern  
Member of Parliament since 2017



- Parliamentary Recorder
- Member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Delegation

## Kaiser Johannes

29.06.1958  
Media Professional  
Place of residence:  
Schellenberg  
Member of Parliament since 2001



- Member of the Judicial Appointments Committee

### **Lampert Wendelin**

21.04.1970  
Head of Public Procurement  
Place of residence:  
Triesenberg  
Member of Parliament since 2001



- Member of the Finance Commission

### **Nägele Eugen**

10.08.1964  
Rector of Liechtenstein  
Grammar School and Teacher  
Place of residence: Schaan  
Member of Parliament since 2013



- Member of the Foreign Affairs Commission
- Substitute member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE

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### **Oehry Daniel**

20.02.1971  
Project Manager  
Place of residence: Eschen  
Member of Parliament  
since 2017



- Spokesperson for the FBP Parliamentary Group
- Member of the Presidium of Parliament

### **Seger Daniel**

24.04.1977  
Attorney-at-Law  
Place of residence:  
Triesenberg  
Member of Parliament since 2017



- Substitute member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

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### **Batliner Alexander Deputy Member of Parliament**

24.10.1967  
Communications Consultant  
Place of residence: Mauren  
Member of Parliament since 2017



- Member of the Audit Commission

### **Ospelt Michael Deputy Member of Parliament**

04.01.1984  
Organisation Developer  
Place of Residence: Vaduz  
Member of Parliament since 2017



- Substitute member of the EFTA/EEA Parliamentary Committee



# Members of Parliament

Parliamentary period 2017–2021



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## Kaufmann Manfred

09.10.1978

Certified Public Accountant

Place of residence: Balzers

Member of Parliament

since 2013



- Member of the Foreign Affairs Commission
- Parliamentary Recorder
- Substitute member of the EFTA/EEA Parliamentary Committee

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## Konrad Frank

09.05.1967

Businessman

Place of residence: Vaduz

Member of Parliament

since 2013



- Member of the Audit Commission

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## Lanter-Koller Violanda

01.01.1964

Attorney at Law/Housewife

Place of residence: Ruggell

Member of Parliament

since 2013



- Spokesperson for the VU Parliamentary Group
- Member of the Presidium of Parliament
- Member of the Delegation of the International Parliamentary Lake Constance Conference
- Substitute member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE

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## Marxer-Kranz Gunilla Vice President of Parliament

28.05.1972

Attorney-at-Law/Housewife

Place of residence: Nendeln

Member of Parliament since 2017



- Vice President of the Liechtenstein Parliament
- Member of the Presidium of Parliament

### **Vogt Günter**

17.08.1961  
Dipl. Ing. FH  
Place of residence: Balzers  
Member of Parliament  
since 2017



- Head of Delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE
  - Substitute member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- 

### **Vogt Thomas**

24.02.1976  
Attorney-at-Law  
Place of residence: Triesen  
Member of Parliament  
since 2009



- Member of the EEA Commission
  - Member of the Judicial Appointments Committee
- 

### **Wenaweser Christoph**

13.06.1963  
Managing Director  
Place of residence: Schaan  
Member of Parliament  
since 2013



- Chair of the Finance Commission
  - Member of the Delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- 

### **Wohlwend Mario**

12.01.1973  
Vocational Trainer/  
Industrial Engineer MAS  
Place of residence: Ruggell  
Member of Parliament since 2017



- Head of Delegation for the Inter-Parliamentary Union
- 

### **Beck Rainer Deputy Member of Parliament**

31.08.1967  
Finance and Accountancy  
Specialist with Federal  
Diploma/Local Council Leader  
Place of residence: Planken  
Member of Parliament since 2017



- Member of the Finance Commission

### **Frick Peter Deputy Member of Parliament**

29.11.1965  
Qualified social education  
worker  
Place of residence: Mauren  
Member of Parliament since 2017



- Member of the EEA Commission







**The Members of Parliament 2017–2021:** front row from left Erich Hasler, Jürgen Beck, Parliament Vice President Gunilla Marxer-Kranz, Parliament President Albert Frick, Susanne Eberle-Strub, Violanda Lanter-Koller and Günther Vogt; centre row from left Johannes Kaiser, Mario Wohlwend, Harry Quaderer, Eugen Nägele, Herbert Elkuch, Johannes Hasler, Daniel Seger, Daniel Oehry, Elfried Hasler and Frank Konrad; back row from left Thomas Rehak, Christoph Wenaweser, Wendelin Lampert, Thomas Vogt, Manfred Kaufmann, Thomas Lageder, Patrick Risch and Georg Kaufmann.

# Members of Parliament

Parliamentary period 2017–2021



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## Beck Jürgen

22.07.1961

Businessman

Place of residence: Vaduz

Member of Parliament from  
2005 to 2013, currently since 2017



- Member of the Foreign Affairs Commission
- Substitute Member of the Delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union

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## Elkuch Herbert

30.12.1952

Businessman/Mechanical  
Engineer

Place of residence: Schellenberg  
Member of Parliament since 2013



- Member of the Finance Commission

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## Hasler Erich

28.12.1956

Patent Attorney

Place of residence: Eschen

Member of Parliament  
since 2013



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## Quaderer Harry

07.09.1959

Managing Director

Place of residence: Schaan

Member of Parliament  
since 2005



- Parliamentary Group Spokesperson for the DU
- Member of the Presidium of Parliament
- Member of the Delegation of the EFTA/EEA Parliamentary Committee



### **Rehak Thomas**

21.01.1971

Telecom Ing. HTL

Place of residence: Triesen

Member of Parliament  
since 2013



- Chair of the Audit Commission
- Member of the Judicial Appointments

---

### **Vogt Ado** **Deputy Member of** **Parliament**

26.07.1975

Businessman

Place of residence: Vaduz

Member of Parliament since 2017



- Member of the Audit Commission
- Member of the EEA Commission
- Member of the Delegation of the International  
Parliamentary Lake Constance Conference

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### **Wachter Peter** **Deputy Member of** **Parliament**

04.09.1949

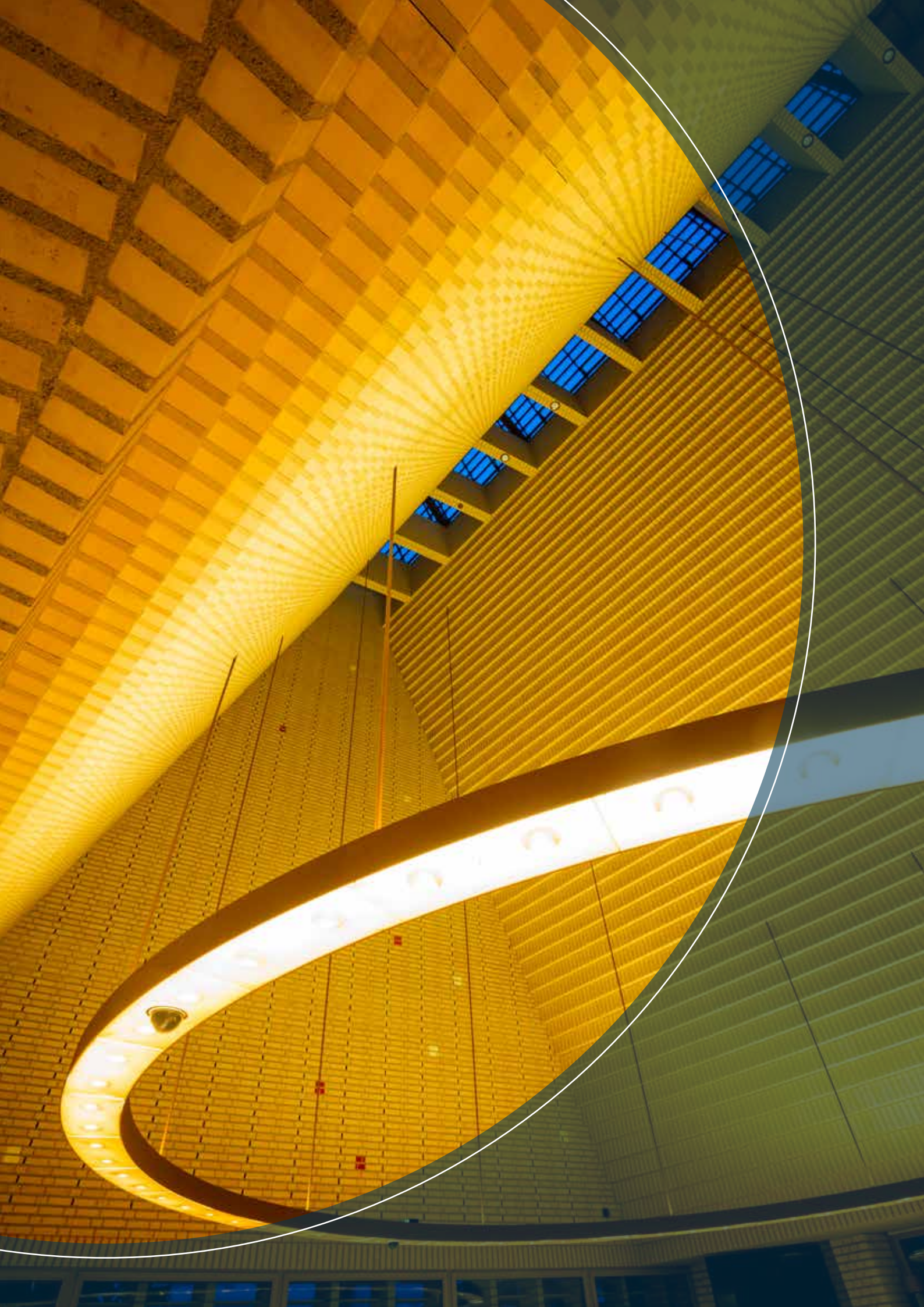
Retired Teacher

Place of residence: Schellenberg

Member of Parliament since 2013









# Member of Parliament

Parliamentary period 2017–2021



## Kaufmann Georg

22.11.1955

Careers Advisor

Place of residence: Schaan

Member of Parliament  
since 2017



- Parliamentary Group Spokesperson of the Freie Liste
- Member of the Presidium of Parliament
- Member of the Audit Commission

## Lageder Thomas

05.02.1980

Managing Director

Place of residence: Triesen

Member of Parliament  
since 2013



- Member of the Foreign Affairs Commission
- Member of the Judicial Appointments Committee

## Risch Patrick

27.09.1968

IT Expert

Place of residence:

Schellenberg

Member of Parliament since 2013



- Member of the EEA Commission
- Member of the Delegation of the International Parliamentary Lake Constance Conference

## Konzett Helen Deputy Member of Parliament

20.09.1972

Administrator and Ethnologist

Place of residence: Triesen

Member of Parliament since 2009



- Member of the Delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly to the OSCE

## Marxer Wolfgang Deputy Member of Parliament

04.11.1960

Financial Advisor

Place of residence: Nendeln

Member of Parliament since 2013



- Member of the Finance Commission
- Substitute Member of the Delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union

” *For me as a listener it was a fascinating experience to attend a parliamentary session for the first time. Although one has an idea of how a meeting of Parliament works, certain aspects surprised me. What surprised me most was that all discussions in Parliament were conducted in High German. What I like is that Parliament consists of individuals who are drawn from a wide range of professional backgrounds. This means that topics are always discussed from different angles. I can't entirely rule out the possibility of running for Parliament one day myself. I do know, however, that a great deal of time and dedication is needed to be a good politician.*

Veronika Vogt, Balzers



” *Parliament is very well organised, the large number of motions shows that the Members of Parliament have to deal with a great deal of business. That is impressive. I can certainly imagine myself running for Parliament: I am interested in politics and keen to express my opinion on important topics. I think it is very important that people are interested in politics. After all, it concerns our future as well as what happens after we are gone. Moreover, everyone should have an opinion, and should stand up for this too. In addition, I would like to see the number of women in Parliament increase, while at the same time the average age of Members of Parliament should be lower.*

Lea Sele, Triesenberg



” *Certain topics in Parliament appear to be extremely complex, the high piles of reports suggest that the work is also very time-consuming. It cannot always be easy, particularly for Members of Parliament who also have the responsibility of full-time jobs. What impresses me is that there is a wide range of opinions in Parliament, that Members of Parliament do not simply rubber-stamp prepared standpoints, as is the case in other countries. I could imagine a career in Parliament for myself, when I'm older - but only after my financial position is secure and I have enough time.*

Jan Willi, Triesen





# The Parliamentary Service

The Liechtenstein Parliament was set up as an official institution in the year 1818 as one of the three powers representing the state. However, it was only in the year 1990 that the Parliamentary Service was established. Since the establishment of the Parliamentary Service, and in particular because of the general increase in the internationalisation of the activities of Parliament and the complexity of the fields that have to be covered, its workload has increased sharply. This means that a real Parliamentary Service has only existed since this date. Today, the Parliamentary Service consists of the Parliamentary Secretary, his Deputy, three full-time employees and three part-time employees. The Parliamentary Secretary and his deputy are appointed by Parliament. Josef Hilti has been Parliamentary Secretary since 2002, while his Deputy Philipp Pfeiffer has been in office since 2008. The team is completed by Sandra Gerber-Leuenberger, Gabriele Wachter, Stefan Batliner, Maria Meier, Yvonne Heeb and Brigitte Negele.

The responsibilities and remit of the Parliamentary Service are described in the Rules of Procedure for Parliament, LGBI. 2013 No. 9, Art. 16 and 17. In particular, these Rules set out the organisation, preparation, follow-up and support of the sessions of Parliament, the recording of parliamentary debates and sessions of the commissions and delegations as well as the preparation of parliamentary resolutions. The Parliamentary Service is also the official contact of Parliament for the requirements of the government or administration, the general public, and other parliaments and international organisations. The Parliamentary Service currently has 6.4 staff positions for the performance of its duties.

The parliamentary brochures (in German and English) and brochures about the Parliament Building are available free of charge from the Parliamentary Service. Further information is also available on the parliamentary website ([www.landtag.li](http://www.landtag.li)).



**Parliamentary Service:** from left Sandra Gerber-Leuenberger, Deputy Parliamentary Secretary Philipp Pfeiffer, Yvonne Heeb, Parliamentary Secretary Josef Hilti, Gabriele Wachter, Stefan Batliner, Brigitte Negele and Maria Meier.





# The Parliament Building

The Parliament Building was designed by the German architect Hansjörg Göritz and opened in 2008. It has a characteristic ochre-coloured brick façade. Together with the Government Building and the Archive Building, they form the Government District. The unifying element in the Government District is Peter-Kaiser Square, the largest public square in Vaduz. Below Peter-Kaiser Square is an underground car park for more than 50 vehicles. In addition, the new National Command Centre is located at the same level as the car park. This facility is designed to provide the Government with the ability to operate a skeleton service in an emergency.

## A round table, in the literal sense

For important events and visits a blue carpet leads from the principal entrance of the Parliament Building to the entrance foyer, which is also called the Hall of Pillars. Passing through the entrance foyer, visitors reach the Plenary Chamber located on the first floor, where the 25 Members of Parliament including the Government meet and are supported by the Parliamentary Service. In the Plenary Chamber the Members of Parliament deliberate around what is literally a round table, which is a unique parliamentary seating arrangement in Europe. The Plenary Chamber with a maximum height of some 19 metres is a very impressive sight. It is equipped with a state-of-the-art speaker display panel with integrated voting system, a technical facility to telecast the plenary sessions as well as an interpreter's box.

The ground floor of the «Long House» provides Parliament with two conference chambers, a library, and archive as well as a cafeteria. On the first floor, opposite the Plenary Chamber, is the Lounge, where Members of Parliament can meet for informal exchanges of ideas and for refreshments between the sessions. Adjoining the Lounge

are the offices of the Parliamentary Service, where the Parliamentary Secretary, his Deputy and other members of staff can attend to their responsibilities.

## Roof terrace with views of the Swiss Alps

On the second floor of the building are the parliamentary group rooms for the political parties with seats in Parliament as well as the office of the President of Parliament. One floor above the office suite is the roof terrace with wonderful views of the Swiss Alps and of Peter-Kaiser Square below. The roof terrace, which if necessary could be converted into additional offices or conference chambers at a later date, also offers an impressive view of the approx. 26 metre high suspended wall behind the Parliament Building, which is secured with 15 metre long anchor elements.



### Building specifications

Start of construction: September 2002

Opening: February 2008

Total costs: CHF 42.2 million

Construction volumes: 21,000 m<sup>3</sup>

Surface area: approx. 5,300 m<sup>2</sup>







# History

## Absolutism

The institution of Parliament was created by the absolutist Constitution of 1818. The two estates, the Church and the people, obtained the right to be represented by «deputies». The Church elected three clergymen to Parliament. The people were represented by the eleven municipal heads and the municipal treasurers. The Parliament of the Estates was convened by the Prince for a single meeting each year. It possessed no rights whatsoever; its sole function was to assent «with gratitude» to the annual demand for taxes.

## The Constitution of 1862

The history of Liechtenstein's parliamentarianism begins with the Constitution of 1862. Parliament became a genuinely representative body of the people, and was largely constituted through free elections. The number of Members of Parliament was reduced to 15. Three Members of Parliament were appointed by the Prince, while twelve were elected indirectly by the people. At the time, only men had the right to vote. In each municipality two electors were elected for every 100 inhabitants. These electors then elected the Members of Parliament at an electoral meeting. Parliament hence had the right to participate in the most important, although not all, functions of the state: the right to participate in the legislative process, the right to approve important international treaties, the right to approve taxes (financial sovereignty), the right to oversee the state administration as well as the right to participate in military recruitment. Parliament had no influence over the formation of government or the appointment of judges.

## Electoral districts

The two historical districts were abolished during the absolutist period. Although the population continued to oppose their abolition, the Constitution of 1862 did not restore the districts. During the so-called «coinage turmoil» of 1877, when the inhabitants of the Lower Country vigorously opposed the introduction of the gold standard, the conflict flared up again.

In 1878 the country was divided into two electoral districts: Seven Members of Parliament were then

elected from the Upper Country, and five from the Lower Country electoral district. The Prince also appointed two members from the Upper Country and one member from the Lower Country. In the Constitution of 1921 the Prince relinquished the appointment of three Princely Members of Parliament. The total number of 15 Members of Parliament as well as the 60:40 ratio between the Upper Country (9) and Lower Country (6) remained the same.

## Blocking minority

The proportion was also retained when the number of members was raised to 25 in the year 1988, although this ratio (15:10) does not correspond exactly to the number of inhabitants in the two electoral districts. The Lower Country is overrepresented and protected as a minority. Because at least two thirds of the Members of Parliament (17) need to be present to pass a parliamentary resolution, representatives from the Lower Country have since 1878 been able to block changes to the Constitution, or by walking out of Parliament to make it impossible for a resolution to be established.

## The Constitution of 1921

The Constitution of 1921 placed the State of Liechtenstein on a new foundation. For the first time, monarchical and democratic principles were recognised as equals. Since then, many functions of the state have been exercised only if various bodies of the state work together. Relative to the Constitution of 1862, a fundamental innovation of the new Constitution was the notion that the state is based on «democratic and parliamentary principles». The people received wide-ranging direct democratic rights (electoral, initiative and referendum rights). Because the Prince relinquished the right to appoint three Members, Parliament became a truly representative body of the people. The rights of Parliament were significantly broadened: Since then, the Government has been formed through co-operation between the Prince and Parliament, whereby Parliament has the right to recommend appointments. Another new feature is that since then judges have been elected by Parliament, either directly or by means of a proposal submitted to the Prince.





### **The amended Constitution of 2003**

In the year 2003, within the context of the amendment of the Constitution, individual parliamentary rights and powers were modified or redefined. For example, the selection of judges was transferred to a Judicial Appointments Committee chaired by the Prince or head of state. The Government is appointed by the Prince with the agreement of Parliament, whereby the names are put forward by the latter. If the Government loses the confidence of the Prince or Parliament, its authority to exercise the office expires. For the period until the new Government takes office, the Prince appoints a provisional government to attend to the administration of the whole country. Furthermore, when an emergency decree is issued, the Prince temporarily takes the place of the legislative body. This constitutes an emergency measure that is not linked to Parliament.

### **Electoral law changes**

The secret and direct franchise was introduced only in 1918. Since then, Members of Parliament have no longer been elected by electors, but instead at the ballot box by the voting public. Prior to 1939, elections were decided by a simple majority. Shortly before the Second World War, with the threat from outside in mind, a truce was agreed between the feuding parties, resulting in a switch to proportional voting. At the same time, an electoral threshold of 18% was introduced. This was designed to keep extreme elements out of Parliament. This electoral threshold was abolished by the Constitutional Court in 1962 since it had no constitutional basis. A new electoral threshold of 8% was included in the Constitution of 1973. Initiatives to abolish or reduce this electoral threshold have not been successful to date. Similarly, other attempts to change electoral law (for example, by introducing a majority clause covering both electoral districts) have been rejected by the electorate.

### **Women's suffrage**

The introduction of voting rights for women was rejected twice in referendums in 1971 and 1973; this succeeded only at the third attempt in 1984.

### **Number of Members of Parliament**

The Liechtenstein Parliament is small in international terms. Since 1919, repeated attempts have been made to increase the number of MPs, but four referendums failed to bring about a change. It was only in 1988 that the electorate agreed to increase the number of Members of Parliament to 25.

### **Representation of women**

It was in 1986 that a woman was elected for the first time. In 1993, two women succeeded; from 1997 to 2001 there was only one regularly elected female Member of Parliament. Three women were elected to Parliament in 2001. At the elections of 13 March 2005 and 8 February 2009, no less than six seats (accounting for 24% of seats) were taken by women. This figure fell to five seats in the parliamentary election of 3 February 2013, corresponding to 20%.

### **The Parties**

The first parties were formed in the year 1918. Up until 1993, only the Progressive Citizens Party (Fortschrittliche Bürgerpartei – «FBP») and the Patriotic Union (Vaterländische Union – «VU») were represented in Parliament. Following the introduction of proportional representation in 1939, elections usually led to very small majorities. For many years, this led to the formation of coalition governments (1938 to 1997). In 1993 a third party, the Free List (Freie Liste – «FL») overcame the 8% electoral threshold and entered Parliament for the first time. The two legislative periods of 1997 to 2005 were each characterised by single-party governments. This was in contrast to the coalition between the two major parties that had been usual in the past. The model of the «grand» coalition government returned to favour in the years 2005 and 2009, and was also confirmed at the most recent election in 2013. At this election, The Independents (Unabhängigen – «DU») entered Parliament for the first time when they managed to secure four seats. This meant there were four recognised political groups in Parliament.

# Assembly places for the representative body of the people in Liechtenstein

By Dr Alois Ospelt, Historian

Parliament, the representative body of our people, moved to a prestigious new building at the centre of Vaduz in February 2008. The decision had been taken to construct this in the immediate vicinity of the Government Building. The following section explores the question of where the representative body of the people convened in the past, as well as how it was composed and assembled. Its duties and powers are likewise of interest.

The tour of the various premises where the representative assemblies met also outlines aspects of Liechtenstein's constitutional history.

## **Courts and assemblies at the Lime Tree in Vaduz, at Rofenberg and in Bendern**

The County of Vaduz and the Dominion of Schellenberg each formed a district or judicial municipality. Each appointed a court consisting of a mayor and 12 magistrates. From the Late Middle Ages onwards, the mayor and magistrates embodied the right of co-determination. They represented the districts in their relations with state powers and the ruler, and were responsible for the organisation of the community. They played a major part in the administration of the country and the judicial system. Up until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, they dispensed public law at the court locations. For the Upper Country this was the Lime Tree in Vaduz, in the vicinity of the Chapel of St. Florin. For the Lower Country this was in Eschen, at Rofenberg near the Holy Cross Chapel.

The place where the public court was held was also where able-bodied men met as a people's assembly to elect the mayors and magistrates. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Lower Country electoral venue was the Schwibboga in Bendern. Ceremonial public assemblies were held

every two years with a defined programme. Up until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, they were a tangible demonstration of the rights of the people.

## **Vaduz – centre of power and meeting place for popular assemblies**

Together with the buildings at the foot of the steep hill on which it is built, Vaduz Castle formed a centre of power. With the function of the fortress as the seat of the ruler, Vaduz was from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards more than just a judicial and administrative centre, customs post and marketplace, but also a place where elections and meetings were held. In 1392 Vaduz was named as the location of a court of law. In 15<sup>th</sup> century documents the Äuli is named as the place where the court of law assembled. The Lime Tree below St. Florian's Chapel is subsequently mentioned as the venue for the public court (May and autumn court) and for the election of mayors. This was where the popular assembly of the Upper Country met for around five hundred years, until 1808. It is in the vicinity of this historic site, in the grand administrative district and present-day Government Quarter, that almost all popular assemblies that followed the mayors and magistrates were and are located.

## **Loss of popular rights and the representation of the people**

The emergence of the Principality of Liechtenstein and the transfer of power to the Princes of Liechtenstein went hand in hand with the loss of previously well-established popular rights. In 1720 the Upper and Lower Country bodies, mayors and courts were abolished. In 1733, at the request of these two areas, these were reintroduced, but with greatly reduced rights. This reduced Mayoral Constitution, and with it the old tradition of district assemblies, remained in



#### Part of the government quarter

**1868:** Detail from the panoramic view from the River Rhine towards the village and castle by Moriz Menzinger 1868. The buildings from north to south: **(1)** School, built 1854; **(2)** House of Dr Grass, later the Teacher's House; **(3)** House of the Estates, built 1867; **(4)** Government Building, former Customs House and Taverna; adjoined to this **(5)** Provincial Governor's House.

place until 1808. It was in this year that the remaining popular rights were abolished by the princely rulers of the country. The Upper and Lower Countries ceased to exist, there were no land and court municipal assemblies any more, and thus no longer any form of popular representation.

#### Estates Parliament in the Provincial Governor's House: 1819–1847 and 1857–1862

In 1818 the Prince issued a Constitution that created the Parliament of the Estates. The Estates, consisting of the clergy and the people, were entitled to send representatives to Parliament. The clergy elected its three deputies, while the people or the subjects in general were represented by the municipal magistrates and treasurers. These were not freely elected, but were selected by the authorities from a list of three submitted by the municipal assemblies.

Between 1819 and 1847 Parliament held an annual meeting. This was followed by a ten-year interruption. The Estates Parliament was not convened during the revolution year of 1848. In the following year it was replaced by a National Council established by a provisional Constitution. This first democratic popular representation in Liechtenstein lasted until 1852, when the provisions of the provisional Constitution were again abolished by Princely decree. The Constitution of 1818 came into force once again. It was only on 14 October 1857, however, that the Parliament of the Estates was

again convened at the Provincial Governor's House. In the following years, it took part in discussions concerning a new constitution. It adopted this unanimously at its last meeting on 4 September 1862.

#### Various forms and meeting places of popular representations in the revolutionary year of 1848

In the spring of 1848 revolutionary movements emerged all over Europe to demand political, social and economic reforms. The people also rose up in Liechtenstein and made demands. Democratic rights, forms of political co-determination and types of popular representation were not merely discussed, but were also tested and put into practice within only a few months.

#### Provisional Constitution of 1849: the National Council, Liechtenstein's first democratic parliament – 1849–1851

The transitional provisions issued by the Prince on 7 March 1849 gave Liechtenstein a provisional constitution. The people, represented by elector assemblies and the Constitutional Council, were closely involved in its drafting. It formed the legal basis for the first democratic Parliament in Liechtenstein. Elections to the National Council were held in May 1849. This included significant changes; it was not solely house owners in the municipalities who had the right to vote, as had previously been the case, but also resident citizens of the country. Elections were no longer decided



The Old Quaderer Brewery in Vaduz, documented by Eugen Verling. Elector meetings took place in the hall of the Brewery in 1848. The hall was also used by the National Council in 1849 for its regular meetings.



indirectly by electors, but instead directly, although in two stages. In the first stage, each municipality provisionally nominated a full National Council of 24 members for itself. From the results, a national election list of 45 men was prepared, according to the number of municipal votes. On the afternoon of Sunday, 20 May 1849, the entire electorate of the Principality gathered «with all due ceremony» at the historic site near the Court Lime Tree in Vaduz to form a popular assembly. In a public vote, effected by a simple show of hands, voting was conducted for each of the names on the list until the number of 24 councillors and 8 substitutes was reached. In many aspects, the first National Council election was reminiscent of the mayoral elections conducted over forty years previously. Now, however, the election was no longer held separately in two electoral districts. Instead, the country as a whole formed a single electoral district. And so it was that an impressive gathering of some 1,800 voters was assembled and grouped around their municipal mayors. At two o'clock, all the bells of St. Florian's Chapel were rung and the National Administrator, standing «on a raised platform», opened the assembly with a brief address. There followed the election of the officers of the meeting, a president, a secretary, an election official and four vote counters. The election of the National Council then began as described.

The National Council held its first constitutive meeting in the hall of the Brewery in Vaduz on 23 May 1849. At the following meeting of 4 June 1849, the popu-

lar representatives chose this hall in Quaderer' Inn as its regular venue for the provisional period of one year. During the first and only session of the National Council, four further meetings took place here. At the final meeting of 14 February 1850, the popular representatives elected a National Council Committee. This was to continue the business of the National Council until the national Council was convened once again, as anticipated. After the first session had ended, however, it was not convened again by the Prince. On 15 March 1851 the national Council Committee also held its final meeting. In Austria and within the German Confederation, of which Liechtenstein was a member, reactionary policies began to be adopted. Principles, such as those that were to be adopted in a new Liechtenstein Constitution in the years 1848 and 1849, could no longer be implemented. On 20 July 1852, the Prince suspended the provisional constitutional articles of 1849. The estates-based Constitution of 1818 was reintroduced. The Parliament of the Estates, a popular representation without rights, was reinstated.

### **1862 – The year in which the present Parliament was born**

From the very outset, the Estates, convened once again in 1857, used their meetings as a forum to voice their wishes for reform to the Princely authorities. These wishes included primarily a new constitution for the country as well as freely-elected popular representation. In 1862, the Estates finally achieved their aim of transitioning Liechtenstein from absolutism to

constitutionalism with a Constitution freely agreed between the Prince and the people. The compromise contained in the Constitution of 26 September 1862 essentially established Liechtenstein's current form of government by bringing the monarchy and popular sovereignty together. Parliament again became a genuine representative body of the people with the right to participate in legislation and to approve the state finances. It had 15 members. The people elected twelve indirectly through electors, while three were appointed by the Prince.

### Electors' meetings 1862–1914

The electors were elected by each municipality, with two electors for every 100 inhabitants. With a total population of 8200 (1861), this meant there were around 164 electors. Up until 1877 the country formed a single electoral district. The electors gathered at Vaduz Castle to elect the Members of Parliament and their substitutes. The first meeting took place on 24 November 1862. In 1878 the country was then divided into two electoral districts: In separate elector meetings, the Upper Country then elected seven Members of Parliament, while the Lower Country elected five. In the Upper Country, elector meetings were held in the large dining room on the first floor of Vaduz Castle until 1894, where the Castle Inn was also located. Between 1898 and 1914, Upper Country electors met in Vaduz at the newly-built Nigg'schen Gasthof zum Schloss (now known as Schlössle Inn) run by the landlord of the former Castle Inn. The electors of the Lower Country convened in Mauren, until 1886 at the Batliner'schen Gasthof (now Rössle Inn), between 1890 and 1914 in



The electors of the Upper Country met in the Gasthaus zum Schloss (now Schlössle Inn) in Vaduz between 1898 and 1914 to elect Members of Parliament.



Between 1878 and 1886 the electors of the Lower Country met at the Batliner'schen Gasthaus (today Rössle Inn) in Mauren to elect the Members of Parliament.



The Old Schoolhouse in Mauren (right-hand section of the building) was where the electors of the Lower Country met between 1890 and 1914.



Parliament held its meetings from 1862 to 1867 in the saloon of the Kirchthaler Gasthof (now Vaduzerhof).

the Schoolhouse. The last meetings of the electors took place in 1914.

### **Parliament in the Kirchthaler Gasthof 1862–1867**

Following a preparatory meeting on 10 December, the newly-elected Parliament met on 29 December 1862, after a special service conducted in St. Florian's Chapel, for a ceremonial opening session in the saloon of Kirchthaler'schen Gastwirtschaft (later known as the Vaduzerhof). Parliament met in this inn until 1867. It was named after its former owner, the pharmacist and textile manufacturer Franz Anton Kirchthaler. This property was the former Vaduz Brewery built by Johann Baptist Quaderer, whose saloon had previously been used by earlier popular assemblies for their meetings. Both landlords, Kirchthaler and Quaderer, – the latter having in the interim moved to Schaan – were elected to Parliament in 1862.

### **Parliament in its own «House of the Estates» 1868-1905**

The self-confidence of Parliament is evidenced by its efforts to secure a dedicated building for the popular assembly. As early as 4 August 1864, it considered a government proposal to build a House of the Estates. The government commissioned the Land Surveyor Peter Rheinberger to prepare a construction project comprising not just chambers for the Parliament, but also official and residential quarters for the judge, along with arrest cells. The construction site, on which the stables of the tavern Zum Adler were formerly located (the present National Museum) was provided by Prince Johann II in 1865. At the time, the tavern was being used as the seat of government (since 1856). The construction budget was 6,800 guilders. This had to be financed by means of a loan. The first dedicated Parliament Building, which was of generous proportions for the time, was built in 1866/67. It was named after the Estates. Parliament assembled for the first time in the new chamber on 18 May. The House of the Estates now formed the centre of the country. The sign «0 km» was carved on the threshold. Distances up and down the country were measured from here. It was in 1864 that Parliament passed the National Surveying Act.

### **Parliament in the Government Building after 1905**

Around turn of the century, the state authorities and departments were evidently in need of more space. In 1899, Parliament petitioned the Government to take the steps necessary to construct a new and large administrative building for Liechtenstein.

This was to house the Parliament, the Government and all official departments, making it the focus of the political life and administration of the country. The official building that would then be vacated, including the House of the Estates, was to be used as accommodation by public officials.

The present Government Building was erected between 1903 and 1905 on the site of a former farmstead, near the Church and old assembly venue, to plans drawn up by the Princely Architect Gustav von Neumann. The costs were covered by a contribution of 100,000 crowns from the Prince and a loan from the Landschäftlichen Sparkassa of 260,000 crowns. The new administrative building was inaugurated at the Parliament meeting of 28 December 1905. Parliament had left its own building and was given a new assembly chamber on the second floor of the new official building.

The Parliament Chamber was decorated with portraits of the Prince and coats of arms in niches, on behalf and at the expense of the Prince. A large wrought-iron chandelier was also gifted by him. The marble bust of Prince Johann II was probably the one that had previously been placed in the old Parliament Chamber in 1902.

The relocation of Parliament to the dignified rooms of the imposing Government Building in 1905 was a sign, which was not noticed by the people at the time, of a shift in political power between Parliament and the Government that had been taking place gradually since 1862. Without any institutional change, the power and position of the Land Administrator, both within Government and in relation to the popular assembly, had greatly increased towards the end of the 19th century. To the same extent, awareness of a common interest between the Government and the people had diminished. This unwelcome development was corrected by the Constitution of 1921: As before, Parliament consisted of 15 members. Now, though, they were all elected by the people. The authority of Parliament to control and participate in the administration of the state was strengthened. The most important change in comparison to the old Constitution was the expansion in popular rights brought about by initiative and referendum rights.

### **Provisional relocation of parliament to the Music School 1969/70 and 1989–1996**

The Parliament Chamber in the Government Building was renovated in 1969/70. The original furnishings





The Government Building  
in 1909

were replaced. During this period, Parliament met in the lecture hall of the newly-established Music School in Rheinbergerhaus. The house had been built in the 16th century by the Count of Sulz as his official seat. In December 1984, Parliament informed the Government about its plans to realise a dedicated building on its own land and reasonably near the Government Building. With this resolution and subsequent planning for the development of the Government Quarter, a series of important questions concerning the layout of the centre of Vaduz were resolved and other proposals under discussion to locate a Parliament Building elsewhere were dropped.

In 1989, due to the lack of space in the Government Building, the now 25-strong Parliament moved its sessions to the lecture hall of the Music School. Until 1996, Rheinbergerhaus was once again the place where Parliament met.

### **Moving into the new dedicated Parliament Building in 2008**

In 2000, the decision was taken in favour of the project, since implemented, submitted by the architect Hansjörg Göritz from Hanover.

The Liechtenstein Parliament moved into its new assembly building in February 2008. The new Parliament Building provides Parliament with appropriate premises for its work. Its location, dimensions and architecture express the function of Parliament, determined by the Constitution, as the legislative body

of the state and reflects the political importance emanating from this in a contemporary manner.

The new building comes at the end, for the time being, of a century of development of the centre of Vaduz from a medieval administrative district to Liechtenstein's Government Quarter. Its proximity to a historic popular assembly site symbolises its significance for their representatives.

Parliament met in the House of the Estates, the first dedicated parliament building, from 1868 to 1905.



The opening of Parliament in 1963. The special status of the President of Parliament was emphasised by his position on a rostrum.



Parliament in the year 1974. The President's podium and the lectern were removed during the renovation of the Parliamentary Chamber in the years 1968/69.



Photo right: Parliamentary session 1969/70 in the Music School.

The Parliamentary Chamber in the Government Building with the new furnishings after the renovation of 1996.



**Sources** Liechtenstein National Archive; Parliament Minutes 1862 et seq.; Government Records RC 100/4 concerning Constitution and National Council, 1848–1860; Schädler Documents, SchäU 264–343 concerning Constitution and National Council, 1848–1851; Government Records RE concerning the construction of the Administrative Building and Estates Assembly, 1864–1868; Building Authority records SF 35: Princely Court of Justice Building 1865–1914; Government Audit Reports 1984 ff.

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# Presidents of Parliament since 1862



Karl Schädler 1862–1870



Wilhelm Schlegel 1871–1876,  
1878–1881, 1886–1889



Rudolf Schädler 1877



Albert Schädler 1882–1885,  
1890–1918



Friedrich Walser 1919–1921



Wilhelm Beck 1922–1928



Anton Frommelt 1928–1944



David Strub 1945–1953, 1955,  
1957



Alois Ritter 1954, 1956



Josef Hoop 1958–1959



Martin Risch 1960–1965



Alexander Frick 1966–1969



# Presidents of Parliament since 1862



Karlheinz Ritter  
1970–1973, 1978–1992



Gerard Batliner  
1974–1977



Ernst Walch  
1993



Paul Kindle  
1994, 1996



Otmar Hasler  
1995



Peter Wolff  
1997–2001



Klaus Wanger  
2001–2009



Arthur Brunhart  
2009–2013



Albert Frick  
seit 2013

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