

Geschichtliche Grundzüge der liechtensteinischen Aussenbeziehungen

Summary

The Principality of Liechtenstein, a tiny country which has survived as a sovereign state to this day, serves for a case study on the history of foreign relations. By searching through the history of Liechtenstein for general tendencies in its foreign policy, at least nine characteristic features can be outlined: (1) The minuteness, (2) the geopolitical situation between and on the outer edge of greater powers, (3) the role of the prince, shifting from house interest to state interest, (4) the rise of democratic participation, (5) the economic dependence, cushioned by a customs union, (6) the assimilation to neighbour states and peoples, (7) the neutrality since World War I, (8) the emancipation within the international community since World War II, and (9) the economic policy of niches during the twentieth century. These basic historical lines were confirmed also during the period of 1938 to 1945, when Liechtenstein lived under the threat of "Anschluss", the Third Reich stretching until a few miles before Vaduz.