EUROPEAN CLUSTER
COLLABORATION PLATFORM

Country factsheet

Liechtenstein

An initiative of the European Union

Content

Strengthening the European economy through collaboration

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01

Introduction and economic policy context
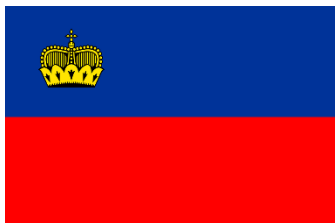
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1. Introduction and economic policy context

This document presents an overview of the cluster policy in Liechtenstein. Given the importance to contextualise the cluster policies (and related) analysed in the factsheets, a comprehensive outlook of the country in socioeconomic terms can be consulted in the [Economic and financial data on Liechtenstein](#) report by the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein.

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing Russian military aggression against Ukraine, European as well as global economies have been subject to severe output losses. In response, policymakers at various levels have acted decisively and made very significant financial resources available to tackle the threat of a prolonged downturn.

The Principality of Lichtenstein reacted to and addressed the COVID-19 pandemic with a policy mix of direct grants, credit guarantees by the Government for corporate loans (for SMEs), tax deferrals and various labour market measures.[1]

In the following, a succinct overview of the cluster policy in Liechtenstein will be provided. The structure of this factsheet generally encompasses:

1) an overview of the national cluster policy,
2) an assessment of the state of the national cluster policy.

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[1] https://www.esrb.europa.eu/home/search/coronavirus/countries/html/esrb.covidpmc_Liechtenstein.en.html

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National cluster policy, programmes and initiatives

2. National cluster policy, programmes and initiatives

In this section we provide an overview of a national platform initiative on digitalisation, which resembles a classical cluster policy. The below table showcases information on related aspects which constitute the approach (beginning with 'Policy Objectives', following with 'Policy Focus', etc.). Within the table the text presented in bold (black) depicts standardised categories across country factsheets (56 in total for 2023), which are applied for comparative purposes. This is followed by a complementary descriptive text to provide more insights about the cluster policy in Liechtenstein.

Policy type:	Broad policy (Digital transition)
Policy name:	digital-liechtenstein.li
POLICY OBJECTIVES	**Strengthening cooperation between companies or industry and RTDI actors.** **Increasing competitiveness and boosting scale-up of SMEs** **Supporting internationalisation activities** **Fostering R&D activities, technology development and implementation** **Fostering innovation and strengthening innovation ecosystems** **Promoting entrepreneurship, start-ups and spin-offs** **Promoting employment and upgrading skills and competences**
	While there are no classical cluster organisations in the Principality, the digital-liechtenstein.li initiative is the central platform for digital innovation and networking for Liechtenstein. The initiative is under the patronage of the Principality and the government and is supported by more than 50 companies and organisations. The initiative bundles the relevant forces from politics, business and science, creates access to relevant networks and enables the crucial transfer of know-how for the digital transformation. The digital roadmap is complemented by two European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIH): digihub.li and EDIH Digital Trust.
	Cross-sectoral

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Policy type:	Broad policy (Digital transition)
Policy name:	digital-liechtenstein.li

POLICY FOCUS	The digital roadmap highlights key technology trends and subsequently shows which opportunities and challenges arise for Liechtenstein as a result of digitalisation. The digital roadmap Liechtenstein formulates recommendations for action for politics, business and science and aims to initiate a broad exchange of opinions among the public about the opportunities and risks of digitalisation for Liechtenstein. The implementation of the concrete measures and recommendations for action takes place after consultation with the involved groupings in coordination with all stakeholders and politics.
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES	**Both drafting and implementation**
	The Principality of Liechtenstein
BENEFICIARIES	**Research organisations**
	Academic institutions
	Technology centres
	NGOs
	SMEs
	Large firms
	Business associations
	Policy makers
	In order to promote the innovative strength of Liechtenstein as a business location in the area of digital transformation, an innovation and digital lab shall be established with the aim of intensifying the transfer of knowledge and technology among economic actors and between business and science. The lab should ensure that SMEs, which do not have the necessary know-how, also have access to it.

Policy type:		Broad policy (Digital transition)
Policy name:		digital-liechtenstein.li
INSTRUMENTS	Financial	**Support to R&D projects, SMEs becoming cluster members, etc.** **Financing networking events** **Innovation: voucher, support to hire PhDs, cooperation with R&I actors**
	Technical assistance	**Support for hard skill development: knowledge transfer, intellectual property, entrepreneurship, export advice, market intelligence.** **Support for soft skills development: coaching, management training, upskilling/reskilling**
	Explanation	
HISTORY	Period	**Unlimited**
	Ending year *(for policies with limited period)*	
	Starting year	2017
	Explanation	The initiative was officially launched in 2017. The defined goals are intended to ensure that Liechtenstein exploits the opportunities of digitalisation for the benefit of the population and the economy and is one of the most modern countries in the world in terms of digitalisation by 2025. Liechtenstein is currently working on an updated version of the Digital Roadmap, which is expected to be released in fall 2022.
	Overall	
	Annual	EUR 0,75 million

Policy type:	Broad policy (Digital transition)		
Policy name:	digital-liechtenstein.li		
BUDGET	**Source of funding**	10% public funding 90% private contributions	
POLICY EVALUATION	Availability	**ex-ante**	
	Results		
POLICY ALIGNMENT WITH THE EU PRIORITIES		**Digitalisation**	

Source: ECCP (2023)

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State of cluster policy

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3. State of cluster policy

This section presents an overview on the state of play of cluster policy in Liechtenstein in the form of a qualitative assessment across four categories of analysis – policy scope, continuity of cluster policies, evidence of performance, and the range of cluster support instruments. Please refer to the Annex for the detailed overview of the categories. The table below presents an overview of **the state for Liechtenstein for 2023**.

Table 1: State of Play

Liechtenstein	State of Play
POLICY SCOPE	Absence of cluster policy
	Broad policy
	Sectoral policy
	National and/or regional cluster policy
CONTINUITY	No cluster policy available
	Cluster policy established recently
	Cluster policy established between over 2 and 10 years
	Cluster policy established over 10 years ago
EVIDENCE OF PERFORMANCE	No evaluation and / or monitoring available
	Existence of evaluations of past policies
	Existence of evaluations of past policies
	Existence of monitoring and ex-ante or ongoing / interim evaluation
CLUSTER SUPPORT INSTRUMENTS	No instruments for cluster development
	Financial support for cluster development in the broader and / or sectoral policy
	Financial or technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy
	Financial and technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy

Source: ECCP (2023)

The text below provides a **qualitative description** of the state of play of the cluster policy in Liechtenstein.

Policy scope

Liechtenstein has no national cluster-specific policy and is thus not actively developing cluster policy. It does however use the digitalisation roadmap to intensify the transfer of knowledge and technology among economic actors and between business and science.

Since March 2023, Liechtenstein hosts two European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIH):

EDIH digihub.li focuses on blockchain technology and token economy in conjunction with sustainable and regenerative business models. It offers four core services: an innovation ecosystem to support SMEs and public administration in the development of digital business models; the promotion of digital skills among employees of SMEs and the administration as well as the population; the personal coaching of digital transformation projects; and the provision of innovation spaces for startups, SMEs and investors to build and scale digital business models.

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The EDIH for Digital Trust in Liechtenstein aims to address the need for privacy by promoting digital innovations that set decentralisation and data protection against centralisation and intrusiveness. It focuses on four areas that inherently support the vision of greater digital trust: blockchain-/distributed ledger technology, regulation of emergent technologies, cybersecurity, and digital business model innovation. The EDIH's service portfolio covers the full SMEs journey from ideation through design/prototyping iterations to implementation of digital technologies and helping to find financing.

Continuity

The 2017 digital-liechtenstein.li initiative is the central platform for digital innovation and networking for Liechtenstein. The initiative is under the patronage of the Principality and the government and is supported by more than 50 companies and organisations. The initiative bundles the relevant forces from politics, business and science, creates access to relevant networks and enables the crucial transfer of know-how for the digital transformation. The new Digital Roadmap defines the goals in digitalisation until 2030.

Evidence of performance

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Cluster support instruments

The digital roadmap Liechtenstein formulates recommendations for action for politics, business and science and aims to initiate a broad exchange of opinions among the public about the opportunities and risks of digitalisation for Liechtenstein. The implementation of concrete measures and recommendations for action takes place after consultation with the involved groupings in coordination with all stakeholders and politics.

Cross-regional / international cooperation

While there are no cluster organisations in Liechtenstein, individual companies and research organisations are involved in cross-border cluster initiatives, such as the Konstanz-based BioLAGO cluster for the regional health industry.

References

References

Digital Liechtenstein: Digitale Roadmap für Liechtenstein. Accessed in May 2024. https://digital-liechtenstein.li/roadmap/

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Annex

Table 2: Analytical framework for the state of cluster policy

Criterion	Description	Categorial variables
Policy scope	assessment whether the country has a dedicated cluster policy, or cluster creation and/or development is targeted through broader policies, e.g. foreign trade policies, labour and social policies or specific sectoral policies, e.g. industrial policy tourism policies, agriculture policies	**absence of cluster policy** **existence of broader policies** **existence of specific sectoral policies existence of targeted cluster policies**
Continuity of cluster policies	assessment of the duration and experience of the country in carrying out cluster policies. This criterion assesses only existence of targeted cluster policies and not broader policies or sectoral policies	**absence of policies supporting cluster development = 0** **cluster policy established recently (within the last 2 years)** **cluster policy established between over 2 and 10 years** **cluster policy established over 10 years ago**
Evidence of performance	assessment whether there are evaluations of past and ongoing policies and a monitoring system in place. The existence of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms determines the degree of policy development in the country	**no evaluation and / or monitoring available** **existence of evaluations of past policies, e.g. ex-ante** **existence of monitoring or an ongoing / interim evaluation** **existence of monitoring and ex-ante or ongoing / interim evaluation**
Cluster Support Instruments	assessment whether the policies provide any instruments to support the policy implementation, being these financial and/or technical support	**no instruments for cluster development** **financial support for cluster development in the broader and / or sectoral policy** **financial or technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy** **financial and technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy**

Source: ECCP (2023)