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**TARGETED ANALYSIS**

# **InTerAlp**

Interface Territories across the Alpine region

**Scientific annex VIII //**

Governance report for Liechtenstein

November 2024

This targeted analysis is conducted within the framework of the ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme, partly financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

The ESPON EGTC is the Single Beneficiary of the ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme. The Single Operation within the programme is implemented by the ESPON EGTC and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

This delivery does not necessarily reflect the opinions of members of the ESPON 2030 Monitoring Committee.

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**Disclaimer**

This document is a scientific annex.

The information contained herein is subject to change and does not commit the ESPON EGTC and the countries participating in the ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme.

The final version of the report will be published as soon as approved.



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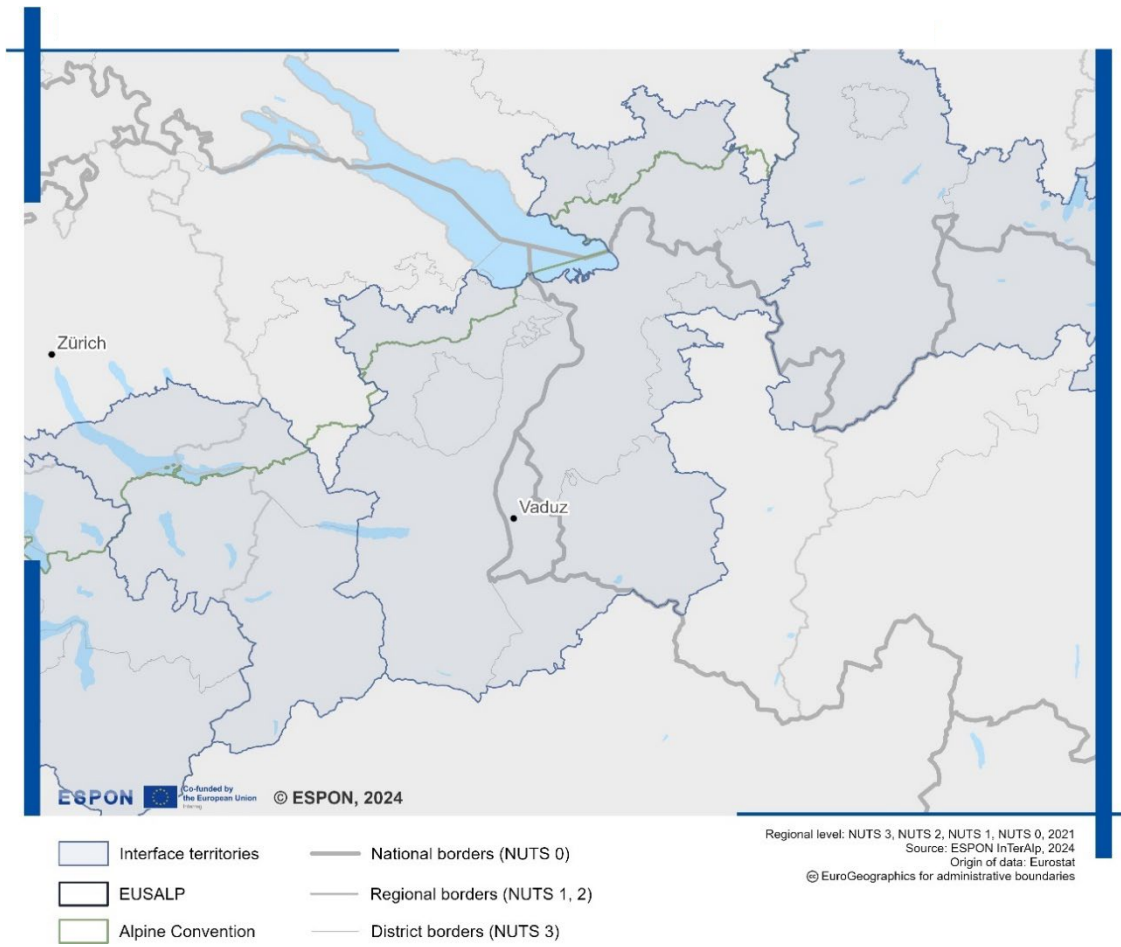
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# 1 Introduction

Liechtenstein is a double-landlocked country lying within the Alps between Austria and Switzerland, and with its total area of 160 km<sup>2</sup>, it is the sixth-smallest independent nation in the world by area. The country consists of two constituencies and eleven municipalities (LAU), while there is no subnational level.

It was founded 300 years ago in 1719 through the purchase of two lordships by Prince Anton Florian of Liechtenstein. The Principality remained in the Holy Roman Empire until its dissolution in 1806, and Liechtenstein subsequently became a sovereign state and joined the Confederation of the Rhine (*Rheinbund*). The path from the absolute monarchy to a modern state took several constitutional reforms, with the constitution of 1921 finally balancing the power of the prince with that of the people. According to its Constitution, Liechtenstein is a constitutional hereditary monarchy on a democratic and parliamentary base. The power is shared between the monarch – the reigning Prince, who is the head of state and exercises considerable political power – and a democratically elected parliament. The identity of Liechtenstein is predominantly associated with the Alpine landscape (Herburger & Hilti, 2023), and the whole of the Principality is included in the alpine convention perimeter. From a geospatial analysis emerged that 100% of the whole Liechtenstein surface area is covered by the Alpine Convention, as well as by the EUSALP perimeter, corresponding to 160 km<sup>2</sup>, which represents the largest share, among the countries under investigation. As a result, the whole country can be classified as Alpine Interface Territory, with the totality of its surface area classified as Alpine Interface Territories inside Alpine Convention and EUSALP perimeters (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1**  
**Interface territories across the Alpine region: The Liechtenstein perspective**



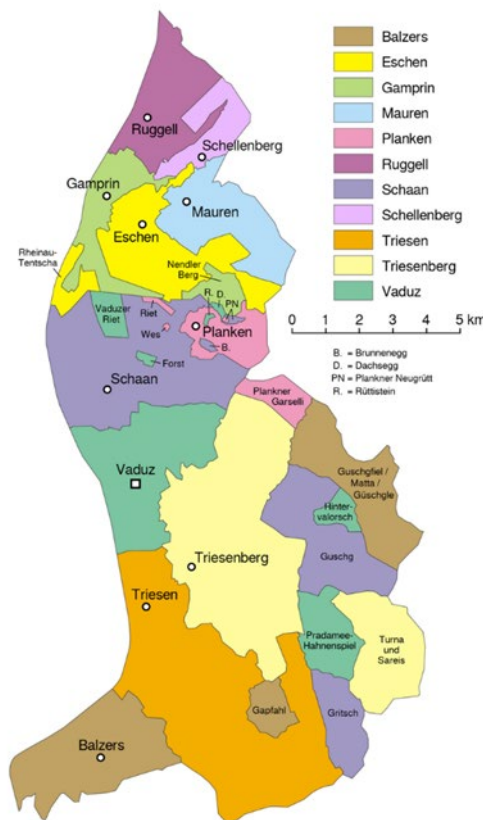
Source: authors' own elaboration

## 2 Spatial governance and planning

Historically, spatial planning in the principality of Liechtenstein has been strongly influenced by four specificities. First, the regulation of the Rhine and the transition from an agrarian society to an international leader in industry as well as financial services. Second, the autonomy of the eleven municipalities that is so strong that the constitution of the principality gives them the right to leave the principality if a majority of the eligible voters decides to do so (Landtag des Fürstentums Liechtenstein 05.10.1921, Art. 4(2)). Third, a strong orientation towards grassroots democracy and, fourth, a constitutional right to property. (Herburger & Hilti, 2023).

As regarding the administrative subdivision, the principality of Liechtenstein is divided into eleven municipalities, most consisting of only a single town. Five of the Gemeinden fall within the electoral district of Unterland (lower country<sup>1</sup>), while the other six are within the Oberland (upper country<sup>2</sup>) (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2**  
**Administrative subdivision of Liechtenstein**



Source: "Map of the municipalities of Liechtenstein", Author Maximilian Dörrbecker ([Wikimedia Commons](#))

The first National Building Law was officially promulgated in 1947, and although at the time of its implementation, it was one of the most modern in Europe. It was not until 1954 that the first municipality,

<sup>1</sup> District of Unterland municipalities: Ruggell, Schellenberg, Gamprin, Eschen and Mauren

<sup>2</sup> District of Oberland municipalities: Schaan, Planken, Vaduz, Triesenberg, Triesen and Balzers

the capital Vaduz, decreed the first municipal zoning plan and building code, while the last municipality, Triesenberg, finally decreed its zoning plan only in 2000. This character indicates the uneasy relationship spatial planning has with the municipalities and the population in Liechtenstein, and it also considers the population's rejection of a spatial planning law in a popular vote in 2002. Ultimately, parliament and the population approved a new building law in 2009 that at least modernised planning procedures and some regulations within the law (Zwiefelhofer, 2019). The current spatial planning system is illustrated in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**  
**The organisation of the Liechtenstein spatial planning system**

Planning system of Liechtenstein						
Planning level	Planning instrument	Content of plan	Legal basis	Policy maker	Legal impact	Scale
National level	Spatial Development Plan ( <i>Landesrichtplan</i> )	Coordination of laws and authorities whose actions have spatial impacts Coordination of actions with the municipalities	Article 32 of the Building Law Article 15 of the Building Ordinance	Elaborated by the Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning; approved and signed by the government	Legally binding for all public authorities	Nationwide
	Spatial Development Strategy ( <i>Raumkonzept</i> )	Strategic framework for the development of a new Landesrichtplan Definition of goals and measures for the future development of the country	None	Elaborated by the Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning in cooperation with municipalities and public stakeholders	None	Nationwide
	Mobility Strategy ( <i>Mobilitätskonzept</i> )	Strategic framework for the development of the traffic network and public transport. Definition of goals and measures	None	Elaborated by the Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning in cooperation with municipalities and public stakeholders	None	Nationwide
International/ Regional level	Agglomeration Programme ( <i>Agglomerationsprogramm</i> )	Analysis of the as-is situation in regard to settlements and traffic Definition of goals for the future development and definition of measures to improve mobility	Swiss Fund for National Streets and Agglomerations	<i>Verein Agglomeration Werdenberg-Liechtenstein</i> (11 municipalities in Liechtenstein; 6 municipalities in Switzerland)	Approval of Agglomeration Programme by the Swiss state is the prerequisite for the funding of mobility projects	International
Regional level	Vision 2050	Network for the future coordination of spatially-relevant actions Definition of the goals of the coordination network	None	Six municipalities in northern Liechtenstein	None	Regional
Municipal level	Building Code	Definition of building and design regulations; regulations on the development of building plots; protection of the landscape and views	Article 11 of the Building Law	Elaborated by the municipality; decreed by the municipal council; executed by mayor The population has the possibility to hold a referendum	Legally binding for all legal and natural persons	Entire municipality
	Zoning plan	Definition of land-use zones for the entire municipality	Article 12 of the Building Law	Elaborated by the municipality; decreed by the municipal council; executed by mayor The population has the possibility to hold a referendum	Legally binding for all legal and natural persons	Entire municipality

Source: ARL

## 2.1 National Level instruments

Since 2012, spatial planning at the national level has been administered by the Office for Building and Infrastructure (*Amt für Bau und Infrastruktur – ABI*), which coordinates all space-relevant planning and measures for sustainable development of the country and is the only responsible authority for execution of the entire building law. The framework for spatial planning is established by the building regulation (*Bauverordnung*), the building law (*Baugesetz*), and the law for construction land apportionment (*Baulandumlegungsgesetz*). On April 1, 2022, the ABI was restructured into three new offices: the Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning (*Amt für Hochbau und Raumplanung*), the Office for Underground Construction and Geoinformation (*Amt für Tiefbau und Geoinformation*), and a staff position for national real estate properties. These offices report to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Justice. Additionally, other national laws, such as the robust law protecting agricultural land, influence national planning in the Principality of Liechtenstein. Since 2013, the government has delegated the approval of special land use plans. Table 1 lists the main planning document at the national level.

**Table 1**  
National level instruments in Liechtenstein

Name (native language and English)	Prepared by?	Statutory vs. non-statutory	Mandatory vs non-mandatory	Binding (for whom) vs non-binding	Nature of the document (i.e. strategy, coordination, programme, regulative)	Relevant for the analysis?
<b>Vision 2050 Spatial Development Strategy</b>	Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein	Non-statutory	Non-mandatory	Non-binding	Vision	PARTLY
<b>Landesrichtplan (Spatial Development Plan)</b>	Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning	Statutory	Mandatory	Binding only for public authorities, not for private owners of land	Regulative	PARTLY
<b>Raumkonzept (Spatial Development Strategy)</b>	Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning	Statutory	Mandatory	Non-binding	Strategy	YES – it discusses strategies for the Alpine region
<b>Berggebietssanierung (BGS) (Mountain Area Remediation)</b>	Office for Environment Protection	Statutory	Mandatory	Binding	Regulative	YES – it aims at the sustainable development of the Liechtenstein Alpine region

Source: authors' own elaboration

### 2.1.1 Vision 2050 Spatial Development Strategy

The Vision 2050 Spatial Development Strategy is a future-oriented and intergenerational instrument that concerns long-term settlement development, nature and landscape, and mobility issues. This vision and strategy place emphasis on sustainability and the actions necessary to ensure the country's harmonious and responsible development until 2050. The goal is to reach a common understanding and agreement between the Principality, the Unterland municipalities, and Schaan on future spatial structures, ultimately generating a broad-based master plan. Regarding the Alpine dimension, the document does not provide explicit guidelines, but broadly speaking, the vision developed is strongly oriented towards the natural landscape conditions of the lowlands and ties in with the existing elements in the Liechtenstein Oberland and neighbouring countries. Especially in the case of natural areas, the focus is on the continuity and the interconnection of the areas. The section dedicated to nature and landscape states that the natural areas need to be integrated lengthwise and transversely while preserving their quality and value.<sup>3</sup>

### 2.1.2 Spatial Development Plan

The Spatial Development Plan (*Landesrichtplan*) is the central planning instrument binding on the authorities that identifies and coordinates all significant activities with territorial impact, managing and coordinating sustainable spatial development. Over time, due to the changing planning understandings, planning guidelines changed from a rather static and project-oriented planning to a conceptual planning. This focuses on current goals and is based on new approaches to solutions. The Spatial Development Plan is a concept plan consisting of a descriptive part and a plan map. (Regierung des Fürstentum Liechtenstein, 2011) At the strategic level (goals and guiding principles), the State Indicative Plan establishes the long-term direction of the state's spatial development policy, which is reviewed and, if necessary, adjusted as part of an overall revision as needed.

### 2.1.3 Spatial Development Strategy

The Spatial Development Strategy (*Raumkonzept*) is a strategic orientation framework for the coordination of activities with a spatial impact and promotes cooperation across spatial, subject-specific and institutional boundaries. The spatial concept is based on the principles of sustainable development. It aims to create an attractive living and economic space, as well as to protect the landscape, for future generation. In this regard, the document has some relevance for the Alpine dimension as it discusses strategies for the natural and undeveloped Alpine region, which must be kept free of new buildings and facilities as much as possible. Furthermore, the Alpine dimension is considered to correlate with the strategy concerning the coordination of recreation and tourism activities with nature conservation. (Regierung des Fürstentum Liechtenstein, 2020)

### 2.1.4 Mountain Area Remediation

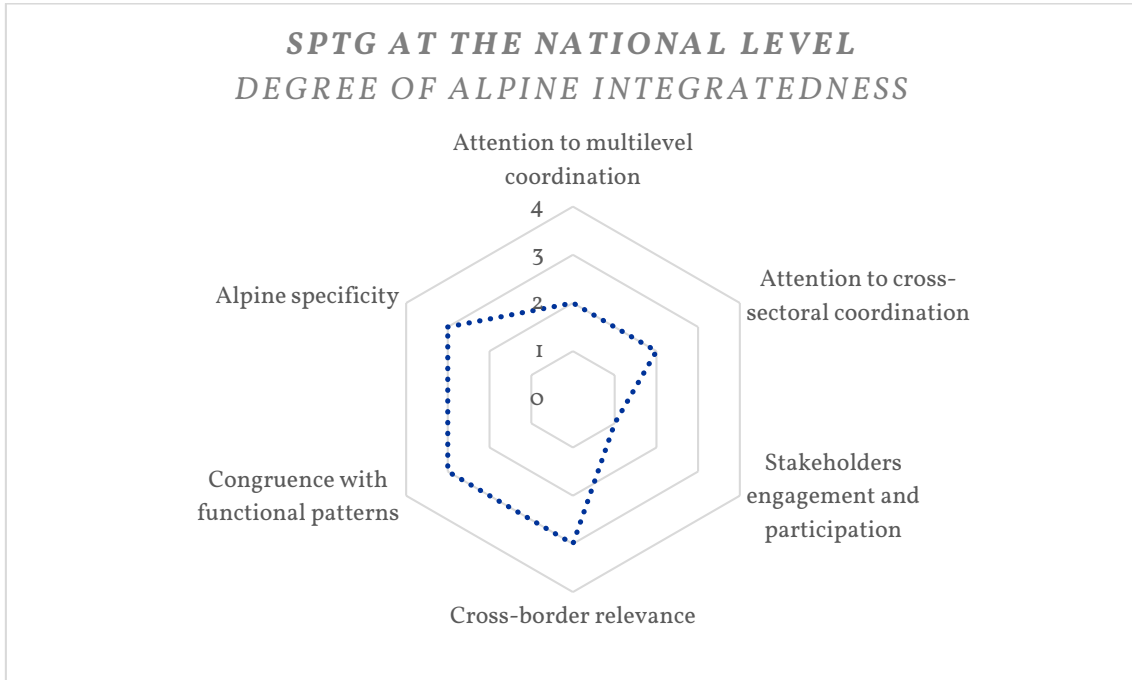
The Mountain Area Remediation (*Berggebietssanierung* - BGS), whose legal basis is represented by the Ordinance on the Preservation and Development of Mountain Areas, aims at the sustainable development of the Liechtenstein Alpine region, considering and coordinating the interests of all landowners and landscape users. It supports projects in the areas of alpine farming, forestry, natural hazards, leisure and recreation as well as settlement development within a defined framework. The BGS is responsible for planning, project planning, and implementing measures to preserve and develop the mountain area. These include protection against avalanches, rockfalls, ruts and landslides; the preservation of modern alpine farming; diverse forests that fulfil their functions sustainably; an expedient development of the Alpine region with roads and paths; a nature-friendly development of traditional and new leisure activities. (Wohlwend, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> Further information available at: [Vision2050](#)

### 2.1.5 Degree of Alpine Integratedness

The degree of Alpine Integratedness of National spatial planning is synthesised in visualised in Figure 4.

**Figure 4**  
Degree of Alpine Integratedness – National level



Source: authors' own elaboration

#### 2.1.5.1 Attention to multilevel coordination

Considering the institutional context and administrative geography of the country, multilevel coordination does not seem to be a priority like in other countries.

#### 2.1.5.2 Attention to cross-sectoral coordination

Despite not being a central priority, according to the documents analysed, cross-sectoral coordination can be traced mainly in the Mountain Area Remediation instrument, which has a cross-sectoral nature as it supports projects in different areas, and in the Spatial Development Strategy to a limited extent.

#### 2.1.5.3 Stakeholders' engagement and participation

From the analysis of the presented documents, stakeholders are not particularly mobilised in the preparation of the national strategies.

#### 2.1.5.4 Cross-border relevance

Due to its geographical configuration and spatial localisation, cross-border seems to be a priority and that emerged also in the different documents analysed.

#### 2.1.5.5 Congruence with functional patterns

The Spatial Development Strategy actually promotes cooperation across spatial, subject-specific and institutional boundaries.

### 2.1.5.6 Alpine specificity

The Spatial Development Strategy has a good understanding of the Alpine area and its territorial priorities. However, it cannot be said that it is fully focused on that. On the other hand, the Mountain Area Remediation has a high level of Alpine specific, as it is entirely focused on the sustainable development of the Alpine region.

## 2.2 Local level

The main planning instruments on the local level, and the only ones the municipalities are obliged to pass by law, are the building code (*Bauordnung*) and the zoning plan (*Zonenplan*). The building code governs aspects of construction and design, such as volumes, densities, typologies, and the protection of landscapes and views, while the zoning plan regulates land use. Although municipalities are not legally obliged to conduct public consultations when drafting a new building code, some opt to collaborate with the planning consultancy offices which prepare the building code. However, for amendments or revisions to the zoning plan, consultation with affected landowners, as well as their neighbours, is necessary. Before the municipal councils formally adopt the new building code and/or zoning plan, municipalities can request a preliminary review from the government's Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning. Once the municipal council passes the new building code and/or zoning plan, there is a 30-day period for public disclosure. The documents also need to gain the final approval of the government. During this period, changes required by the population, or the government may need to be incorporated. After the government approves it, the two-week period to request a public vote starts. Table 3 presents the main planning documents and the local level. Overall, Liechtenstein local-level instruments are particularly attentive to multilevel coordination, as it is necessary to integrate the national-level directives and coordinate the action at the local level, which is particularly true for the Local Structure Plan. On the other hand, the coordination with sectoral policies is rather low.

**Table 2**  
**Local Level instruments in Liechtenstein**

Name (native language and English)	Prepared by?	Statutory vs. non-statutory	Mandatory vs. non-mandatory	Binding (for whom) vs. non-binding	Nature of the document (i.e. strategy, coordination, programme, regulative)	Relevant for the analysis?
<b>Verein Agglomeration Werdenberg-Liechtenstein</b>	Werdenberg-Liechtenstein Agglomeration Association	Non-statutory	Non-mandatory	Non-binding	Coordination	YES
<b>Gemeinderichtplan (Local structure plan)</b>	Municipal Council	Statutory	Non-mandatory	Legally binding for the local authorities	Strategy	PARTLY
<b>Bauordnung/Zonenplan (Building Code)</b>	Municipal Council	Statutory	Mandatory	Legally binding for the local authorities	Regulative	NO

Name (native language and English)	Prepared by?	Statutory vs. non-statutory	Mandatory vs. non-mandatory	Binding (for whom) vs. non-binding	Nature of the document (i.e. strategy, coordination, programme, regulative)	Relevant for the analysis?
<b>Specific plans such as <i>Richtplan</i>, <i>Überbauungsplan</i> or the <i>Gestaltungsplan</i></b>	Municipal Council	Statutory	Non-mandatory	Binding on landowners	Strategy	PARTLY

Source: authors' own elaboration

### 2.2.1 Verein Agglomeration Werdenberg-Liechtenstein

Between the Alvier and the Liechtenstein Alps, the Werdenberg-Liechtenstein agglomeration stretches over a length of around 30 kilometers in the Rhine Valley, where 80,000 inhabitants live. To be able to actively meet the constantly growing challenges in this strongly networked region, the Werdenberg-Liechtenstein Agglomeration Association was founded in November 2009, according to the Swiss Law. The members of the Association are the six Werdenberg and eleven Liechtenstein municipalities, the municipality of Sargans as well as the canton of St. Gallen and the Principality of Liechtenstein, while the city of Feldkirch is also involved in the decisions as an observer. The purpose of the Association is to strengthen cooperation, joint development of future perspectives, and implementation for the agglomeration, as well as the efficient fulfilment of public tasks. (Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning, 2024) In addition, the Association sponsors the Werdenberg-Liechtenstein agglomeration programme, which was registered with the Swiss federal government by the Canton of St. Gallen in December 2007. The Werdenberg-Liechtenstein agglomeration programme aims at a greater coordination of cross-sectoral transport, settlement and landscape issues within the functional area of Werdenberg-Liechtenstein and was adopted by the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) of Switzerland in 2014. Infrastructure projects in the region will be supported accordingly with CHF 7.8 million.<sup>4</sup>

### 2.2.2 Local Structure Plan

The Local Structure Plan (*Gemeinderichtplan*), which is based on the national structure plan (*Landesrichtplan*), regulates the long-term spatial development of a municipality and it is binding on local authorities. It shows the strategy for spatial development and serves various purposes: it serves as a guiding and management tool for spatial development for the municipal authorities; shows the medium to long-term conceptual dispositions for spatial development; mutually coordinates the concepts of the country with the municipalities; ensures an overall view of the projects with spatial effects planned at the municipal level in the medium to long term and thus contributes to informing the population. (Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning, 2024)

### 2.2.3 *Richtplan*, *Überbauungsplan*, *Gestaltungsplan*

Furthermore, municipalities can decree plans for specific parts of their territory, such as the *Richtplan*, the *Überbauungsplan* or the *Gestaltungsplan*. The *Richtplan* is a strategic and conceptual planning instrument, which can also be decreed for the whole municipal territory. In the *Überbauungsplan* and the *Gestaltungsplan*, which are binding on landowners, the municipalities can define specific, detailed design aspects, the development of car parks, green areas and the infrastructural development of the building plots (Landtag des Fürstentums Liechtenstein 11.12.2008, Art. 20-25). On the one hand, the

<sup>4</sup> Further information available at: [Agglomeration Werdenberg Liechtenstein](#)

*Überbauungsplan* determines the permissible construction method for a specific municipal area, and it aims to ensure orderly and economical structural development and buildability in addition to the building regulations as well as to keep traffic and inner-city open space free. It regulates in particular the special construction method, the development and parking, as well as the open space design. On the other hand, the *Gestaltungsplan* specifies the development of one or more plots with the aim to secure the concept of an overall development with a better local and architectural design, thus it is implemented on a project-by-project basis. For these reasons, while the *Richtplan* is planned to have a validity of 10 to 15 years, the *Überbauungsplan* and *Gestaltungsplan* are usually more oriented toward a shorter, project-related time frame. (Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning, 2024).

## 3 Sectoral governance and planning

### 3.1 Transport governance and planning

The Office for Building Construction and Spatial Planning (*Amt für Hochbau und Raumplanung*), through the Department of Land Use and Transportation Planning, is the public authority responsible for transport governance and planning in Liechtenstein. Within the Department, the Mobility Management (*Mobilitätsmanagement*) is a tool to promote sustainable transport and reduce car use demand, through changing attitudes and behaviors of road users. Mobility management is based on “soft” measures, such as information, communication, organization of services, and coordination of the activities of different partners. In 2009, the Mobility Management Office was also entrusted with the task of “Coordination of Slow Traffic”, becoming the point of contact for all issues relating to non-motorized traffic as well as the interface to the municipalities in Liechtenstein. Table 4 presents the main transport governance and planning documents in Liechtenstein.

**Table 3**  
Main transport governance and planning documents

Level	Name (native language and English)	Prepared by?	Statutory vs. non-statutory	Mandatory vs non-mandatory	Binding (for whom) vs non-binding	Nature of the document (i.e. strategy, coordination, programme, regulative)	Relevant for the analysis?
National	<i>Mobilittätskonzept</i> (Mobility Concept)	Building Construction and Spatial Planning Office	Non-statutory	Non-mandatory	Non-binding	Strategy	YES
Sub-national	Transport Expert Group of the Region Sarganserland-Werdenberg	Sarganserland-Werdenberg Regional Association	Non-statutory	Non-mandatory	Non-binding	Committee	PARTLY
Local	n.a.						

Source: authors' own elaboration

#### 3.1.1 National level

In order to effectively meet existing mobility needs and ensure future-oriented, sustainable and safe mobility in Liechtenstein, the *Mobilittatskonzept* (Mobility Concept) 2030 defines five sub-strategies: settlement and transport, public transport, motorised private transport, walking and cycling as well as freight transport. To achieve the goals, the Mobility Concept 2030 provides for the implementation of four coordinated packages of measures with ten lead projects, including all modes of transport and all

neuralgic hubs in the state. The Mobility Concept 2030 is aligned with other instruments at any level of government, such as the Liechtenstein Spatial Concept, the Werdenberg Liechtenstein Agglomeration Programme and the Vision 2050 of the Spatial Development Strategy Schaan. In addition, the Mobility Concept 2030 is also coordinated with the current developments in Vorarlberg and in the cantons of St. Gallen and Graubünden. The measures of the mobility concept can be divided into four main areas. They apply to all places where action is needed and are backed up with implementation periods of different lengths. In this way, their implementation is intended to create a more attractive and efficient mobility offer in Liechtenstein in a progressive way.<sup>5</sup> (Ministry of Infrastructure, Economy and Sport, 2020)

### **3.1.2 Subnational level**

As emerged from the spatial governance analysis in the previous paragraph, in Liechtenstein the subnational level is not particularly relevant in terms of spatial planning competences. That is also true for the transport sector, but it is possible to highlight the practice of the Transport Expert Group of the Region Sarganserland-Werdenberg, which is committed to improving regional public transport planning and provision in the region. The body brings together representatives from the municipalities, the St. Gallen Office for Public Transport, the Office for Construction and Infrastructure of the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Graubünden Office for Energy and Transport, rail and bus service providers and specialist advisers. In accordance with its defined remit, the Specialist Group takes a strategic, whole-region approach to its work. It cultivates strong working relationships with the Werdenberg-Liechtenstein Agglomeration Association and with IG Bahn in the Rhine Valley, whose services are overseen and supported by the Sarganserland-Werdenberg Regional Association.<sup>6</sup>

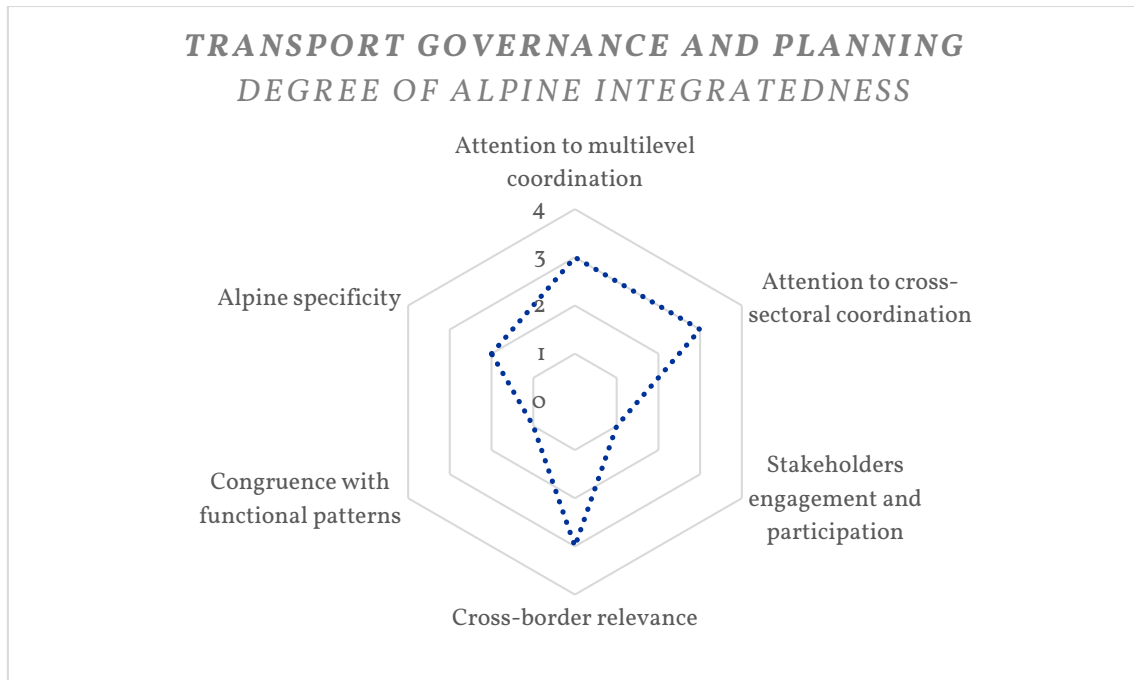
### **3.1.3 Degree of Alpine Integratedness**

The degree of Alpine integratedness of transport governance and spatial planning is synthesised and visualised in Figure 5.

<sup>5</sup> Further information available at: [Mobilität2030](#)

<sup>6</sup> Further information available at: [Werdenberg-Liechtenstein Agglomeration Association](#)

**Figure 5**  
**Degree of Alpine Integratedness – Transport governance and planning**



Source: authors' own elaboration

#### 3.1.3.1 Attention to multilevel coordination

The Mobility Concept 2030, which is the main instrument for transport planning, presents a relatively high attention to coordination with any other level of government, incorporating the strategies as well as coordinating the action at the lower level.

#### 3.1.3.2 Attention to cross-sectoral coordination

Similarly, the Mobility Concept 2030 is particularly focused on achieving a coordination with other sectoral instruments and strategies, such as the Liechtenstein Spatial Concept, the Werdenberg Liechtenstein Agglomeration Programme and the Vision 2050 of the Spatial Development Strategy Schaan.

#### 3.1.3.3 Stakeholders' engagement and participation

The analysis did not provide evidence of stakeholders' engagement in the preparation of the strategic documents.

#### 3.1.3.4 Cross-border relevance

The transport governance and planning in Liechtenstein seems to be particularly characterized by cross-border interest, as both the national Mobility Concept and the Transport Expert Group of the Region Sarganserland-Werdenberg practice demonstrate. This cross-border cooperation is predominantly with Switzerland, through the Werdenberg-Liechtenstein Agglomeration Association.

#### 3.1.3.5 Congruence with functional patterns

The analysed documents did not present any patterns of functionality.

#### 3.1.3.6 Alpine specificity

Despite being aware of the Alpine territorial dynamics, the analysed documents do not seem to be particularly characterised by a high degree of Alpine specificity.

## 3.2 Energy governance and planning

In Liechtenstein, the Energy Agency (*Energiefachstelle*) is the body responsible for the tasks according to Art. 22 EEG, which include advising private individuals, municipalities, and institutions on energy issues, developing and implementing energy policy concepts, orienting subsidies for energy measures, working on the EEA Agenda in the energy sector, certification of Minergie buildings, and maintaining an energy register. Table 4 presents the main energy governance and planning documents in Liechtenstein.

**Table 4**  
Main energy governance and planning documents

Level	Name (native language and English)	Prepared by?	Statutory Vs non-statutory	Mandatory vs non-mandatory	Binding (for whom) vs non-binding	General character of the document (i.e. strategy/vision, coordination, programme, regulative)	Relevant for the analysis?
National	<b>Energiestrategie 2030/Energievision 2050 (Energy Strategy 2030/Vision 2050)</b>	Energy Office	Non-statutory	Non-mandatory	Non-binding	Strategy/Vision	YES – it considers the scarcity of natural resources and envisions a sustainable production
	<b>Klimastrategie Liechtenstein 2050 (Climate Strategy Liechtenstein 2050)</b>	Liechtenstein Government, Ministry of Home Affairs, Economy and Environment	Non-statutory	Non-mandatory	Non-binding	Strategy/Vision	YES – it highlights the unique challenges and opportunities for climate action in the Alpine area
Sub-national	<b>Expert Group 'Energy'</b>	Sarganserland-Werdenberg Regional Association	Non-statutory	Non-mandatory	Non-binding	Committee	PARTLY
Local	<b>Energiestadt-Land (Energy City label)</b>	Energy City Sponsoring Association	Non-statutory	Non-mandatory	Non-binding		PARTLY

Source: authors' own elaboration

### 3.2.1 National level

With the Energy Strategy 2030, Liechtenstein is assuming its responsibility and setting out the concrete goals and measures to become a role model in the field of sustainable energy. The strategy is based on the Energy Strategy 2020, which in turn is based on the Energy Concept 2013, and it considers that natural resources are becoming scarcer and availability more difficult. Thus, the strategy seeks to de-

velop solutions for sustainable production, the best possible storage, as well as efficiency improvements and a reduction in consumption. Furthermore, considering that it is also necessary to have a long-term vision, the government has integrated the Energy Vision 2050 into the Energy Strategy 2030, outlining a future in which energy demand in Liechtenstein is reduced by 40 percent compared to 2008. The most important challenge is to reduce energy-related greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050, while maintaining energy reliably available and affordable in the future. (Ministry of Infrastructure, Economy and Sport, 2020)

In the same direction, Liechtenstein's Climate Strategy 2050 represents another key document concerning the country's strategy to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainability. In particular, it sets the 2030 target to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 55% compared to 1990 levels, with at least 40% of reductions achieved domestically, and it sets sectoral reduction targets for energy, agriculture, industrial gases, waste, and land use. The strategy emphasizes the importance of climate action as both a challenge and an opportunity for innovation and economic growth, and it highlights the unique challenges and opportunities for climate action in the Alpine area, emphasizing the importance of preserving the Alpine ecosystem and addressing the specific impacts of climate change on mountainous regions. The strategy includes measures tailored to the Alpine environment, such as sustainable land use practices and protecting biodiversity. (Ministry of the Interior, Economic Affairs and Environment, 2023)

### 3.2.2 Subnational level

An expert group has been established to share experiences and promote projects related to energy and the environment in the Sarganserland-Werdenberg region. This group, formed from the former Regional Energy Commission, is divided into two subgroups: Environment and Energy. The Energy subgroup is dedicated to addressing issues related to the energy transition. One of their significant initiatives is a photovoltaic campaign, implemented in collaboration with the St. Gallen Energy Agency, aimed at increasing the adoption of solar energy. Additionally, the subgroup is working towards the creation of an "Energy Region," which involves participating in the national funding programme to support sustainable energy projects. Most municipalities in the Sarganserland-Werdenberg region have already achieved the "Energy Town" certification, reflecting their commitment to energy efficiency and renewable energy.<sup>7</sup>

### 3.2.3 Local level

Liechtenstein promotes itself as the first "Energy Country"<sup>8</sup> in the world, and that is because all municipalities have met the strict requirements to achieve the "Energy City label". The latter is a certificate awarded to municipalities that have pursued above-average efforts in the field of their municipal energy and climate policy, according to the existing room for maneuver, and whose quality and commitment is audited every four years. The initiative is conducted by the Energy City Sponsoring Association.

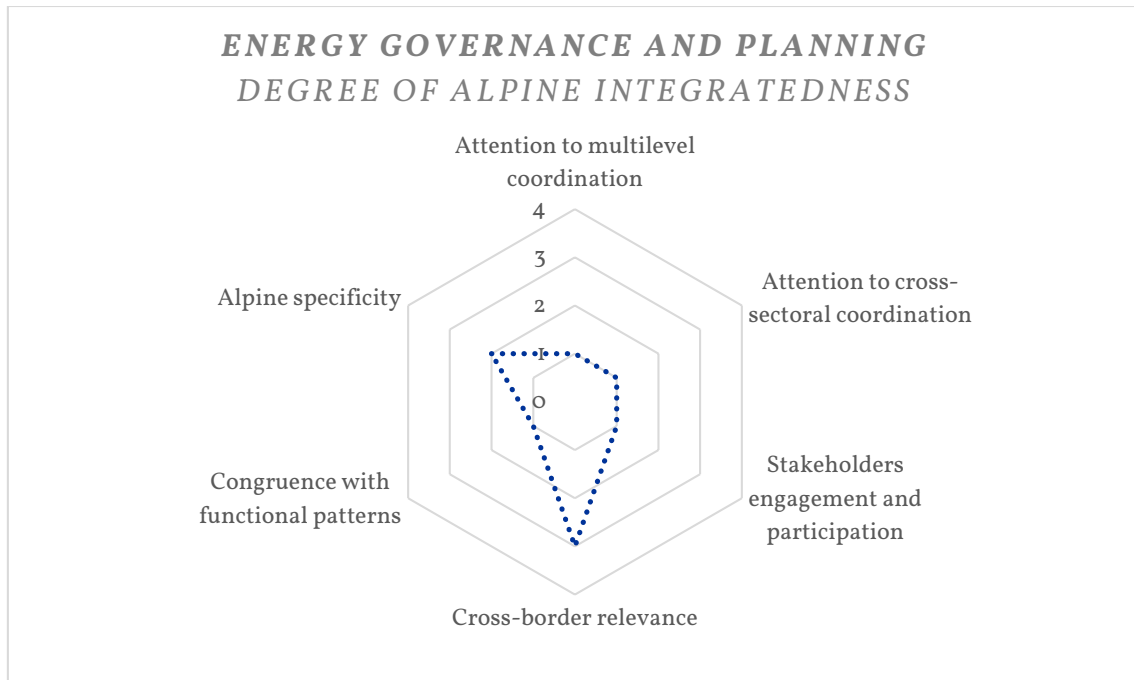
### 3.2.4 Degree of Alpine Integratedness

The degree of Alpine integratedness of energy governance and spatial planning is synthesised and visualised in Figure 6.

<sup>7</sup> Further information available at: [Sarganserland-Werdenberg region](#)

<sup>8</sup> Further information available at: ["Energy City Country" Liechtenstein](#)

**Figure 6**  
**Degree of Alpine Integratedness – Energy governance and planning**



Source: authors' own elaboration

#### 3.2.4.1 Attention to multilevel coordination

For what concerns energy sectoral policies, the attention to multilevel coordination does not seem a priority.

#### 3.2.4.2 Attention to cross-sectoral coordination

The analysed documents did not provide coordination with the other sectoral policies under investigation.

#### 3.2.4.3 Stakeholders' engagement and participation

According to the analysis conducted, the preparation of the described instruments did not foresee the engagement of stakeholders beyond the public sector.

#### 3.2.4.4 Cross-border relevance

Cross-border relevance is an element which clearly emerges in the context of Liechtenstein's energy instruments, and it is mostly evident at the subnational level with the case of the environment expert subgroup in the Sarganserland-Werdenberg region.

#### 3.2.4.5 Congruence with functional patterns

The presented documents did not provide any congruence with functional patterns.

#### 3.2.4.6 Alpine specificity

The described instruments dedicate a limited attention to Alpine specificity, since only the Climate Strategy 2050 highlights the unique challenges and opportunities for climate action in the Alpine area,

emphasizing the importance of preserving the Alpine ecosystem and addressing the specific impacts of climate change on mountainous regions.

### 3.3 Water governance and planning

Liechtenstein implements EU legislation on water, following the integration of key elements of EU water legislation into the European Economic Area Agreement. The office responsible for all matters relating to environmental protection is the Amt für Umwelt (Office for Environmental Protection), which is also the point of contact for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Other important areas of responsibility are advising and informing the public, participating in the preparation of new national and international environmental protection regulations and monitoring compliance with legislation in the areas mentioned.

In 2017, the country launched 'Waterfootprint Liechtenstein', the rationale of which is '*drink tap water; donate drinking water*', in accordance with the Goal 6 of the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN. The project aims to provide access to high-quality water for every resident of the Principality of Liechtenstein — i.e. to improve the living conditions of around 38 000 people in need. To date, a total of 22 009 'water footprints' have been activated in Liechtenstein (Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein, 2019) (European Environment Agency, 2020). Table 6 presents the main documents regarding water governance in Liechtenstein.

**Table 5**  
**Main water governance and planning documents**

Level	Name (native language and English)	Prepared by?	Statutory vs non-statutory	Mandatory vs non-mandatory	Binding (for whom) vs non-binding	General character of the document (i.e. strategy/vision, co-ordination, programme, regulative)	Relevant for the analysis?
National	<i>Klimastrategie Liechtenstein 2050</i> (Climate Strategy Liechtenstein 2050)	Liechtenstein Government, Ministry of Home Affairs, Economy and Environment	Non-statutory	Non-mandatory	Non-binding	Strategy/Vision	PARTLY
Sub-national	Expert Group 'Environment'	Sarganserland-Werdenberg Regional Association	Non-statutory	Non-mandatory	Non-binding	Committee	PARTLY
Local	n.a.						

Source: authors' own elaboration

#### 3.3.1 National

Liechtenstein implemented key water management policies aimed at ensuring sustainable use and protection of its water resources, also in an effort to be in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The *Klimastrategie Liechtenstein 2050* (Climate Strategy Liechtenstein 2050) is a key document

that includes measures related to water management, such as improving water efficiency, implementing measures to reduce water consumption in households, agriculture, and industry; protecting water resources, ensuring the protection and sustainable management of water bodies, including rivers, lakes, and groundwater; promoting practices that ensure the long-term availability of water resources, such as rainwater harvesting and the use of water-saving technologies (Ministry of the Interior, Economic Affairs and Environment, 2023). These measures are crucial for adapting to climate change impacts and maintaining the health of ecosystems in Liechtenstein. Furthermore, in 2017 the country also launched an interesting initiative named “Waterfootprint Liechtenstein”, through which Liechtenstein is aiming to become the first country to provide access to high-quality water to one person for every resident of the Principality of Liechtenstein, while at the same time encourages to donate to provide access to safe drinking water in developing countries (the rationale of the campaign is indeed “drink tap water; donate drinking water”). (European Environment Agency, 2020)

### 3.3.2 Subnational level

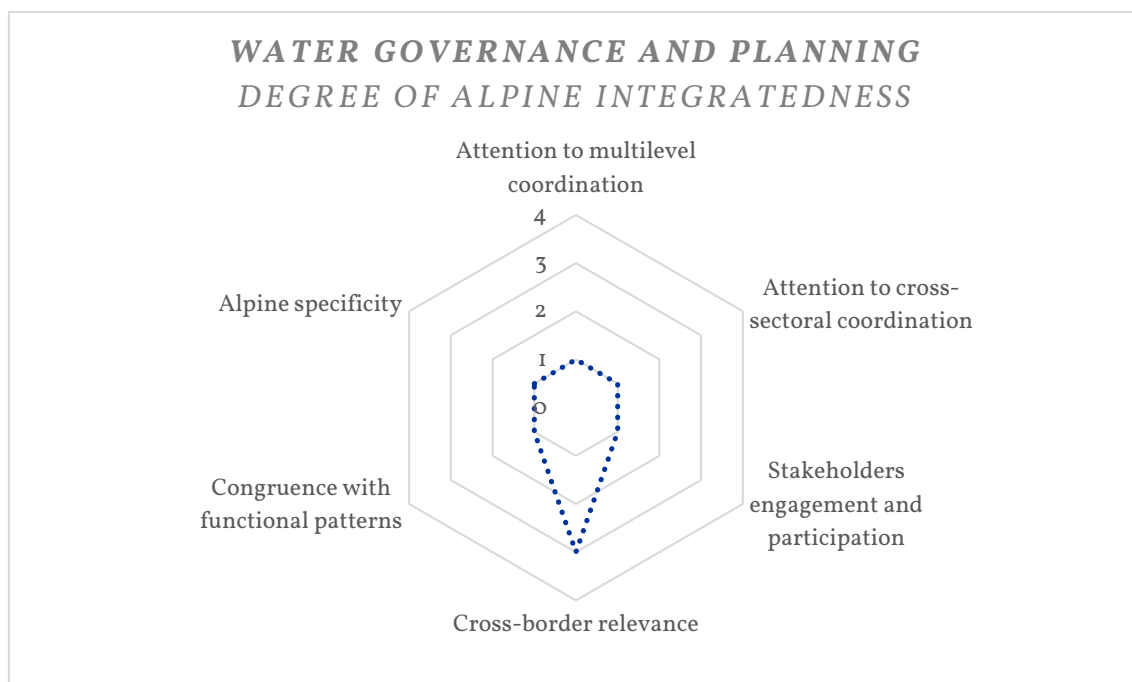
As already mentioned, in the Sarganserland-Werdenberg region an expert group has been established to share experiences and promote projects related to energy and the environment. The Environment subgroup focuses on environmental policy and the promotion of ecological projects. They discuss and expand successful initiatives within individual municipalities to other areas in the region. Key focus areas include promoting biodiversity through various conservation efforts and controlling invasive plant species (neophytes) to protect local ecosystems. Furthermore, the subgroup organizes and promotes litter pick events, which are community clean-up activities aimed at reducing waste and enhancing the natural beauty of the region. These events also extend across the border into the Principality of Liechtenstein, fostering cross-border cooperation in environmental stewardship. Together, these subgroups aim to foster a collaborative approach to tackling energy and environmental challenges, ensuring sustainable development and ecological preservation in the Sarganserland-Werdenberg region

### 3.3.3 Degree of Alpine Integratedness

The degree of Alpine integratedness of water governance and spatial planning is synthesised and visualised in Figure 7.

**Figure 7**

#### Degree of Alpine Integratedness – Water governance and planning



Source: authors' own elaboration

#### **3.3.3.1 Attention to multilevel coordination**

For what concerns energy sectoral policies, the attention to multilevel coordination does not seem a priority.

#### **3.3.3.2 Attention to cross-sectoral coordination**

The analysed documents did not provide coordination with the other sectoral policies under investigation.

#### **3.3.3.3 Stakeholders' engagement and participation**

According to the analysis conducted, the preparation of the described instruments did not foresee the engagement of stakeholders beyond the public sector.

#### **3.3.3.4 Cross-border relevance**

Cross-border cooperation is particularly relevant in Liechtenstein's water management policies, and this is particularly evident in the establishment of the Sarganserland-Werdenberg region Environment expert group, through the promotion of cross-border cooperation environmental activities.

#### **3.3.3.5 Congruence with functional patterns**

The presented documents did not provide any congruence with functional patterns.

#### **3.3.3.6 Alpine specificity**

Despite being aware of the Alpine territorial dynamics, the analysed documents do not seem to be particularly characterised by a high degree of Alpine specificity

## 4 Summary and concluding remarks

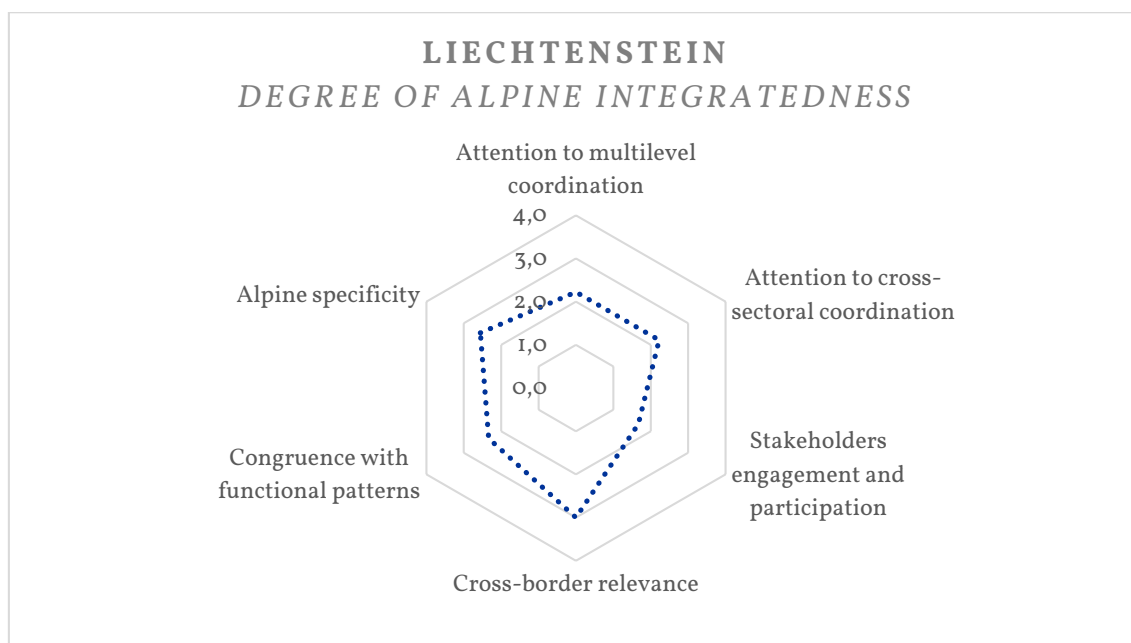
### 4.1 Spatial and sectoral governance and planning in Liechtenstein

From the analysis of spatial governance and planning instruments in Liechtenstein it is evident how the national level is the one mainly responsible for the preparation of any regulative and strategic plan and coordinating the lower levels in their implementation. However, a strong authority is left to municipalities when it comes to the design of local building codes. The subnational level in Liechtenstein is not particularly relevant in terms of spatial planning, with the exception of the Vision 2050 Spatial Development Strategy which, however, interests only a part of the municipalities of the country. Similarly, for what concerns sectoral policies, the majority of the instruments analysed are elaborated and coordination by the national level.

### 4.2 Degree of Alpine Integratedness of spatial governance and planning in Liechtenstein

The degree of Alpine Integratedness of spatial governance and planning in Liechtenstein is synthesised and visualised in Figure 8.

**Figure 8**  
Degree of Alpine Integratedness of spatial governance and planning



Source: authors' own elaboration

#### 4.2.1 Attention to multilevel coordination

From the analysis of the presented instruments emerged how Liechtenstein prioritizes less the multi-level coordination among the different layers of governance. In some case, this focus can be identified in the subnational or local spatial planning instruments, as far it is required to integrate national regulations into lower levels instruments. On the other hand, among the sectoral policies under investigation, the main instrument for transport planning, presents a relatively high attention to the coordination with any other level of government.

#### 4.2.2 Attention to cross-sectoral coordination

For what concerns the cross-sectoral coordination with different public policies, the greatest attention is provided through the subnational and local level instruments analysed. Indeed, the Werdenberg-Liechtenstein agglomeration and the Vision 2050 Spatial Development strategy encompass different policy areas, while at the national level the coordination is more limited.

#### 4.2.3 Stakeholders' engagement and participation

The analysis showed that, in Liechtenstein, the preparation of spatial governance and planning instruments does not foresee the engagement of stakeholders beyond the public sector, with the only exception of some local level instruments where, despite not being obliged by law to conduct a consultation, municipalities often do so for the preparation of a new local Building Code.

#### 4.2.4 Cross-border relevance

The most important example of cross-border cooperation applied to public policies in Liechtenstein is the Werdenberg-Liechtenstein Agglomeration Association, whose aim is indeed to strengthen cross-border cooperation, joint development of future perspectives, and implementation for the agglomeration as well as the efficient fulfilment of public tasks. Also, Vision 2050 presents moderate attention to topics of cross-border relevance, as it is oriented towards the protection of natural landscapes, which also have ties with neighbouring countries. Thus, it can be said that the attention to cross-border cooperation is more evident at the subnational level, and to a lesser extent at the national level.

#### 4.2.5 Congruence with functional patterns

For what concerns patterns of functionality, the Spatial Development Strategy, at the national level, promotes cooperation across spatial, subject-specific and institutional boundaries, while the instruments analysed at the subnational level have a strong congruence with functional patterns, especially in the case of natural areas. Generally speaking, a greater congruence with functional patterns can be traced more at the subnational level, particularly in the Region Sarganserland-Werdenberg.

#### 4.2.6 Alpine specificity

From the analysis emerged that, broadly speaking, Liechtenstein's spatial governance and sectoral planning policies do not seem to be explicitly characterised by a high degree of Alpine specificity, despite having a good understanding of it. However, there are some exceptions to this, as for instance with the Mountain Area Remediation which has a high level of Alpine specific, as it is entirely focused on the sustainable development of the Alpine region. For what concerns the sectoral policies under investigation, the Climate Strategy 2050 is the main strategic document which highlights the unique challenges and opportunities for climate action in the Alpine area, emphasizing the importance of preserving the Alpine ecosystem and addressing the specific impacts of climate change on mountainous regions.

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The ESPON EGTC is the Single Beneficiary of the ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme. The Single Operation within the programme is implemented by the ESPON EGTC and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

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