**Liechtenstein**

Liechtenstein is a quaint little country nestled in the Swiss Alps between Austria and Switzerland. Completely landlocked, this country has no main ports or waterways so it relies on surrounding countries for trading. The borders of Liechtenstein are made up of two separate countries, with 34.9Km of Austrian land and 41.1 Km of Switzerland land encompassing it. This makes it one of only two countries in the world to be completely landlocked. The country itself has a total mass of 160sq Km, all of which is land. It contains 0 Km of water. The size of Liechtenstein is comparable to about .9 times the size of Washington DC.

The country itself is located at 47 degrees N and 9 degrees 32 E. This country is dominated by the Alps, which makes for some rugged living. However, there is a valley in the lower western edge. The Rhine River Valley is famous for its wine producing grapes. In this country, elevation extremes do exist. The lowest of the two extremes is on Ruggeller Riet sitting at 430m. The highest is atop Grauspitz reaching toward the sky at 2,599m.

The history of Liechtenstein is fascinating. Originally acquired by the Austrian family Liechtenstein in 1699, the country itself became solely independent from the Holy Roman Empire in 1719, under the families name. Being a small country itself, Liechtenstein was completely neutral, like its bordering country Switzerland, during both world wars. The constitution was
enacted on 5 October 1921. The national Holiday is Assumption Day, which occurs on 15 October.

The entire population of Liechtenstein as of July 2003 was 33,145 people. This would be equal in size as a modern suburb, here in the United States. The Highest populated city is the capital Vaduz. Here is a “fun fact” for you: More people attended the ball drop in NYC on New Years Eve, than the entire Population of Liechtenstein. The largest age group is between the ages of 15 and 45. The male to female ratio is almost one to one.

The currency of Liechtenstein is the Swiss Franc; the country has participated in a customs union with Switzerland. This country is absolutely dependent on neighboring Switzerland for its money exchanges, as well as, Socio-economic values. Switzerland plays an important role for networks, telecommunication and even ISPs.

There are two main ways one can achieve higher learning in Liechtenstein. Students can either stay in school, which is thirteen years long (12 years general studies, one year skill training, instead of twelve, like in the U.S.), and attend college afterwards or join the workforce. 65% of all college age students go to Switzerland or Germany for their college education.
The official language of Liechtenstein is German with Alemannic dialect. However, some of the population does speak Swiss and Austrian. The English language is well known in Liechtenstein, by the baby-boomers, because of study in school.

Like most other European country’s, Liechtenstein has deep religious values and beliefs. The main religion in this small country is Roman Catholic, however, 7% of the country’s citizens are Protestant. Churches are abundant throughout the chiseled landscape. Nearly 80% of the citizens attend services regularly. The elders of the local communities tend to stick with the old religious philosophies, while the younger generation has adopted the new church mentality.

The Rhine River Valley is the center point of Liechtenstein agriculture. This area produces grapes for wine production, as well as, crops for personal use. The hops and barley industry is well adapted for this region.

Liechtenstein has been a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the EU since May 1995.

The food of Liechtenstein ranges widely because of its great diversity of citizens. German and Swiss foods influence 90% of the marketplace.
Fun Facts:

Unemployment rate: 1.3%

ISPs: 44

Natural resources: Hydroelectric Potential

Median age: 38

Literacy: 100%

Countries Formal name: Principality of Lichtenstein

Jamie May