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RELATIONS VADUZ - BERN AND THE PARTICIPATION OF LIECHTENSTEIN IN THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS. POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE

Krzysztof Koźbiał*

ABSTRACT

Liechtenstein is an example of a European microstate, and is also characterised by a specific type of relationship with his neighbour – Switzerland. Reorientation of the foreign policy of Vaduz towards Bern was a consequence of the First World War. The most important of the agreements between both countries was a Customs Treaty concluded in Bern 1923. One year later Swiss franc was introduced as a legal tender in the Principality. Relation with the Swiss Confederation have not imprinted a negative stigma on the participation of Liechtenstein in the process of European integration. The Principality is, for example, since 1995 a member of the European Economic Area (without Confederation). In the future, potential membership of Liechtenstein and Switzerland in the European Union cannot be excluded. This would require a change in attitude of the government in Bern. Currently, the connection with Switzerland is just one of the options for Vaduz, but not the only one.

Key words: Liechtenstein, Switzerland, European integration, customs union

Introduction

Liechtenstein is in many respects a typical example of a European microstate. In addition to other various attributes, the smallest countries of the Old Continent are also characterised by a specific type of relationships with their neighbours¹. They are mostly of political (representation on the political arena), economic (customs and monetary union) and military (providing defence) nature. Being bound together with their neighbours, such small countries could effectively survive on the political map of Europe. Therefore, it is fully justified to call these bonds long lasting, although their evolution or perhaps even

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¹ Andorra is an exceptional case as it is linked to its two neighbours.

termination cannot be ruled out. Thus, one should ask whether Liechtenstein is able to function in the integrating Europe without Switzerland. Is the relationship of the two countries going to survive in its present form or is it subject to changes? Finally, are there any reasons allowing various scenarios for the future?

1 The relationship between Liechtenstein and Switzerland before the year 1918

Liechtenstein, existing within the present borders since 1712, was traditionally bound to its eastern neighbour. This resulted mainly from the Liechtenstein family's ties with the Habsburgs and the fact that the rulers resided on a permanent basis in Vienna until 1938.

The consequence was a closer connection with Austria in other areas of interest as well, typical of the relations between small countries with their neighbours. In 1852, the two countries signed an agreement abolishing customs duties and taxes and moving the Austrian border controls as far as the Rhine. Since 1880, the Viennese diplomats represented Liechtenstein, a few years later the courts of Austria became the courts of appeal for this Alpine Principality. Austrian currency was also adopted (Kozbiał, 2009, pp. 198-199).

The bonds with Austria ended as a consequence of the First World War and in its aftermath. Defeated and cut down territorially, the eastern neighbour was no longer an attractive partner in far-reaching cooperation, even for a microstate. As a result, the existing customs, political, monetary and postal agreements were broken². The internal events leading to the creation of political parties were equally significant. One of these parties opted very clearly for severing close relations with Vienna. From the perspective of decades, the reorientation of the foreign policy of Vaduz towards Bern appears to be understandable and logical. It resulted in tangible benefits to the Principality.

The far-reaching 19th Century agreements with Austria did not mean that the relations with the western neighbour were completely neglected. On the contrary, they were already visible in the first decades of the 19th Century. The first agreements were signed with the neighbouring Swiss cantons: Graubünden

² Customs agreement expired on September 1, 1919; a new postal agreement was signed in the spring of the following year. The Austrian crown stopped to be used as it was rapidly losing its value.

and St. Gallen. They concerned the freedom to change the place of residence. Subsequent agreements were enforced by natural factors, and in 1837, an agreement referring to the regulation of the Rhine was signed with the canton of St. Gallen. A year later, an agreement on freedom of changing the place of residence was signed with the entire Swiss Confederation (Batliner, 1973, p. 24).

At the turn of the 60s and 70s of the 19th Century some ventures bringing together neighbours were undertaken: three bridges were built on the Rhine (from the Principality's side in Vaduz, Balzers and Bendern). In 1874, the neighbours agreed on the possibility of settling of their citizens, 12 years later free practice of the profession by medical personnel was allowed on both sides of the Rhine. These proceedings were positively perceived by the citizens, which resulted in their hesitant attitude towards extending the relations with Austria (Kozbiał, 2010, p. 210). It was realised that there existed a viable alternative to the relationship with the eastern neighbour.

The relationship between the two countries also concerned subordination to the Church. Until its own bishopric was established (1997), the Principality had belonged to the diocese of Chur.

The First World War and its consequences proved to be crucial. Generally discernible shortcomings, the lack of employment and even life prospects caused waves of migration. Seasonal workers sought employment abroad, mainly in Switzerland. They later joined the supporters of closer cooperation with Switzerland. The fact that at the turn of 1918 and 1919 Switzerland was a more reliable partner and at the same time a protector of the Principality began to be recognised also by the authority of the state.

2 Establishing a customs union and further development of contacts

The most important decisions, in force to the present day, were made in the years 1919-1923. Interrelationships involved political and economic aspects. Firstly, in 1919, the government of the Principality applied to Bern with a request for the microstate to be represented by the Swiss diplomacy. The request was accepted and the solution is in operation to the present times³. The Principality

³ Three forms of presence of Liechtenstein in the international forum have developed: through direct representation by Switzerland (its representative is involved in the negotiations), through the

has its representatives wherever it has been considered desirable for the interests of the state. Currently these are Bern, Berlin, Vienna, Washington, Brussels (the EU), Strasbourg (the Council of Europe), New York (at the UN) and Geneva (permanent mission at EFTA).

In 1920, in accord with the legislation of the Principality, the Swiss franc replaced the Austrian currency used before. This was a practical decision, especially important from the point of view of the citizens who already used the currency on a daily basis as more secure legal tender not undergoing the loss in value (Gesetz, 1924)⁴. The currency was used in the calculation of the state budget, and to pay all liabilities. The decision, however unilateral, was stabilising the country in economic terms. Monetary agreement between the two countries became known only in 1980, the so-called Monetary Treaty (Währungsvertrag, 1981).

Then, in November 1920, the Alpine neighbours entered into an agreement known as the Postal Treaty (Übereinkommen, 1922). Despite close cooperation, the Principality retained the possibility to emit its own postage stamps, highly valued by the collectors also nowadays.

These agreements created a favourable atmosphere for talks on enhancing cooperation. The change of government in Vaduz also had a positive influence on this process. After the elections of 1922, the strongest group in the Landtag was the Volkspartei, which opted for considerable deepening of the relations with the western neighbour. Its leader **William Beck** had advocated closer cooperation with the neighbour for several years. The negotiations on the customs agreement were supported by the opinions of recognised international academic authorities who emphasized, above all, the economic benefits of a possible agreement to the microstate (Kožbial, 2010, p. 214).

An important aspect of the relationship, though not regulated by any agreements, but by practice, was the impact of the Swiss political solutions on the political system of Liechtenstein based on a new constitution adopted in 1921. This impact suggests the conclusion that some systemic solutions still used today have their roots in the political system of Confederacy.

possible presence of representatives of the Principality, but the plenipotentiary for specific issues is held by a Swiss diplomat, and finally through the direct participation of Liechtenstein's diplomats. At present, the third form is prevailing.

⁴ Swiss franc was introduced as a legal tender in 1924.

Practically, under the influence of the Swiss political scene the formation of the party system of the microstate took place. Educated in Helvetia, lawyer **Wilhelm Beck** became the leader of a group called VP (Volkspartei), strongly supporting the democratisation of the political system, weakening of the position of the ruler, as well as strengthening the bonds with Switzerland. It had an impact on future bilateral ties, the more so that up to the end of the 20s of the 20th Century the group set the tone of the external policy when it signed the main agreement with Helvetia (Kozbial, 2013, p. 43, 179).

Under the influence of the Swiss example, the political system of Liechtenstein also adopted solutions characteristic for direct democracy in the form of a referendum and civic initiative. The first referenda in the Rhetian Alps region took place in 1919. In subsequent years, this instrument has been used so often that presently in terms of the number of referenda held the state holds the second place, just after Switzerland.

The most important of the agreements was a Customs Treaty concluded in Bern on the 29 March 1923. It came into effect on the 1 January of the following year. Its principal provisions are as follows (Vertrag, 1923):

- inclusion of the Principality in the Swiss customs territory (Article 1);
- application of the legislation on customs matters in Liechtenstein, as well as of international agreements in the field of customs and trade (Articles 4, 5, 7);
- while implementing the regulations Liechtenstein is entitled to the same rights as the Swiss cantons (Article 6);
- prohibition of establishing by Liechtenstein its own customs arrangements for the duration of the validity of the agreement with Switzerland (Article 8) (Prange, 2000, p. 62)⁵;
- taking over customs control of the microstate on the border with Austria by the Swiss customs administration (Article 11).

The agreement was drawn up for five years with the possibility of renewal if neither of the parties renounced it one year before that date (Article 41). Currently, the notice period is also one year.

The experience of the following decades shows clearly that the agreement

⁵ The regulation was changed only in 1990 and since then Liechtenstein could be a partner in separate agreements or a member of international organisations proposing customs relations without breaking the links with Switzerland.

has stood the test of time. It has been especially beneficial to the Principality which, being such a small country, is not forced to bear the costs associated with maintaining a separate customs administration. At the same time, this is the solution used by other European state organisms defined as microstates.

The customs union of the two countries should be classified as the most important interconnection. Later, however, new contracts were drawn. An example is the 1941 agreement, under which the citizens of Helvetia were able to settle in Liechtenstein without any hindrance, which for a long time placed them in a privileged position in relation to citizens of other countries. Today, the Swiss are the largest group of foreigners in the Principality, there are nearly 3600 of them, representing almost 29% of all foreigners in the country (Bevölkerungsstatistik 2013, p. 12).

In the 90s of the 20th Century due to the discussions on the creation of the European Economic Area (EEA), and because Switzerland did not enter into this Agreement, the customs treaty between the two countries was subject to adjustment processes. The most important change was to grant priority to the laws of the EEA over the Swiss federal law; in case of the products originating from the EEA countries customs officers had to apply the regulations of the EEA (Friese, 2011, pp. 209-210). It was a decision of utmost importance. In 1995, following the Swiss example Liechtenstein introduced VAT and sanctioned in this regard the relevant Swiss legislation (Friese, 2011, pp. 211-212).

While analysing the relationship between Switzerland and Liechtenstein, it should be noted that they are characterised by the lack of common authorities. In result, the relations ought to be treated as special and privileged. Switzerland is a prevailing party having the impact on the creation of legislation, which also applies to its smaller neighbour (Gyger, 1975, p. 61). On the other hand, the microstate is in power to renounce the agreement if it considers it detrimental to its interests. Therefore, these are not unconditional and everlasting bonds.

Contacts Vaduz-Bern did not only affect economic affairs. Agreements in other areas of life were reached as well. Not being the subject of this article, they are not discussed here; however, one can mention, among others, the abolition in the Principality of privileges for the Swiss as an example of measures aiming at the restriction of influx of foreigners onto the local labour market. Since November 1981, the Swiss have been subject to the same limitations as the citizens of other countries, and nowadays their status is on a par with the nationals of EEA countries. Finally, the two countries have become members of the Schengen Area. The Swiss Confederation acceded to it in

2008, the Principality of Liechtenstein in December 2011.

It is difficult to provide an explicit characterisation of the relationship between the two countries. Undoubtedly, there is a partial inequality of the parties. Terms such as patronage, favouritism or quasi-protectorate seem to be not exactly relevant (Gyger, 1975, pp. 62-64). Currently, these contacts, their scope and degree of dependence of Liechtenstein from Switzerland, are completely different from what they used to be 90 years ago. In the opinion of the author, Vaduz is not doomed to cooperate with Bern at all costs. At the moment of severance of the links with Austria after the First World War, the choice was in fact only one - close relationship with the other neighbour.

3 Liechtenstein and the integration processes in Europe

The Principality of Liechtenstein was gradually undertaking the attempts to open up to wider integration processes ongoing on the Old Continent in the post-war period. It joined the continental integration groups only in the 90s of the past century. Not accidentally, these decisions are associated with the person of **Prince Hans Adam II**, who succeeded to the throne in November 1989.

Thanks to the participation of Switzerland in the EFTA, Liechtenstein was included in the provisions of the so-called special protocol providing for its involvement in the Convention of the EFTA (Ławniczak, 1971, p. 32). Similarly, through the links with the western neighbour the Free Trade Agreement between Switzerland and the EEC from 1972 was also in force on the territory of Liechtenstein. This was a crucial factor in the economic relations of the Principality as it allowed duty-free access of industrial products to the EEC countries markets. From the point of view of Vaduz, the most important part of it was the access to the markets of Germany and Austria. The Principality became a fully-fledged member of the EFTA in 1991. At the same time, the talks were in progress about its joining the economic area that was just being created (Kozbiał, 2012, pp. 20-22; Breuss, 2011, p. 131-133).

The idea of joining the EEA aroused controversy at the foot of the Rhaetian Alps. Unknown was Switzerland's attitude towards the new initiative. **Prince Hans Adam** supported the idea of entering the organisation which would bind Liechtenstein more strongly than before to the integration process. He believed that the decision of the society should be positive regardless of the outcome of voting in Bern. However, it came to a dispute over the date of the referendum,

because the parliament and the government opted for it to be held following the analogous voting in Switzerland. Eventually, the people of the Principality were not guided by the negative decision of the Swiss. On the 13 December 1992, the majority of the citizens voted in favour of joining by their microstate the European Economic Area.

The Swiss society's decision was opposite, which aroused doubts concerning the membership of the Principality in two different customs zones. The adjustment in this regard was the subject of negotiations with Switzerland. The problem was sorted out by changing the contents of the Customs Treaty of 1923 and concluding successive contracts with Bern. The EEA Council then adopted the so-called adjustment protocol. Agreements with Switzerland enabled actual accession of Liechtenstein to the international conventions and organisations that dealt with the spheres coinciding with customs agreement of both parties. To guarantee proper implementation of the EEA Agreement a joint commission was established. The only agreement with the Confederation that was adapted to the EEA Agreement was the Monetary Treaty (Gstöhl, 1999, pp. 156-157; Friese, 2011, pp. 241-242; Frommelt, Gstöhl, 2011, pp. 13-16).

Liechtenstein finally joined the European Economic Area on the 1 May 1995, after having accepted the changes in the subsequent referendum. In addition, in this case, the Principality has the right to withdraw from the agreement after a 12-months' notice.

The agreement provides special regulations for the Principality. In some areas (e.g. veterinary matters), the microstate is not subject to the regulations of the EEA in their entirety, but to the agreements with Bern, or those made between Switzerland and the EU. Restrictions apply also to the labour market in Liechtenstein, due its size very sensitive to the influx of workers from abroad. Vaduz has the possibility of introducing restrictions on the right of residence (Friese, 2011, pp. 246-247). It seems a mutually satisfying solution, because the country, if it allowed full freedom of movement of people, could become the target place of residence for a number of EEA nationals wishing to pay much lower taxes than in their homelands. The membership in the Area also meant implementation of the EU legislation. By the end of 2011, there were already 6300 such deeds (Kozbiel, 2012, p. 23). This can be perceived as a kind of prelude to the membership in the European Union in the indefinite future.

As a complement to the involvement of Vaduz with Brussels, the agreement on the taxation of interest earned on savings was signed in 2003. Based on this agreement 1/4 of the collected amount stays the country in which the savings

are deposited, the remainder is transferred to the home country of the owner. Such agreements were also signed with other European microstates in order to avoid transferring their money out of the EU (Kozbiał, 2012, p. 17).

The final step towards the Principality's participation in the process of continental integration was the incorporation into the Schengen Area in December 2011 (Schengen, 2011). Thus, Liechtenstein after fulfilling all the criteria became the 26th – and the last so far (until the 31 March 2015) – member of the Area.

The analysis of the participation of this Alpine microstate in the integration processes of the Old Continent allows to observe its strong business relationship with the European partners. In the 4th quarter of 2014, Liechtenstein exported goods worth 896.6 million francs. The EEA share in this sum amounted to 59.0%. The largest recipients of goods from this country were Germany (24.2%), the USA (14.0%), Austria (9.8%) and France (9.0%). On the other hand, imports amounted to 489.1 million francs. The Principality was importing goods mainly from the member states of the European Economic Area (85.9%), mostly from Germany (39.3%), Austria (30.7%) and Italy (3.7%) (Amt für..., 2014)⁶. These figures clearly show the economic links with Europe. In fact, the economy of the Principality is dependent on the European markets, which are the recipients of products from the Rhaetian Alps. It became apparent when the global crisis started in autumn 2008 with the collapse of Lehman Brothers bank. The links with the EEA market resulted in a noticeable drop in exports from Liechtenstein in 2009, by as much as 27.4% and in imports decline by 21.8%. Thus, the value of exports in this country almost equalled that from 2003 (Statistisches, 2014, p. 171)⁷.

It is also important to recognise issues related to the European integration in the official foreign policy objectives of the Principality. These include both relations with its neighbours, which the state authorities consider one of the main priorities, as well as the participation in the EEA and the association within the Schengen zone. This relation is referred to as an important factor that leads to the realisation of an objective, which is the confirmation of the sovereignty and independence of the state. At the same time, an indirect target is to

⁶ Statistical data do not include Switzerland, with which the Principality constitutes a common customs territory.

⁷ In 2010, the Principality's exports increased by of 7.9%, in 2012 only 1.2%.

maintain the economic position, among other things, through the access to broad markets and the internationalisation of trade in the analysed country.

The Government of the Principality does not exclude other scenarios, as evidenced by the establishment of the working group dealing with the European integration in 2009. Liechtenstein participates in regular political dialogue with the EU, both at ministerial as well as expert level. The challenge for the future is probably participation of the EFTA States in a variety of specialised agencies and institutions, which sometimes are simply advisory bodies in relation to the European Commission. The same applies to the future financial impact of the European cooperation on the Principality, especially when it comes to the possible anticipated growth of expenses. The involvement in the process of European integration does not change the fact that it is Switzerland who is considered the most important partner with whom the microstate is connected not only by numerous agreements of economic and social character but also continuously deepened political contacts (Prioritäten, 2012, pp. 13-17, 27-28).

According to the author, it is the economic factor that will decide in the future about Liechtenstein's stance on the process of integration in Europe. Thus, the microstate dependent on the common market will be more interested in the efforts to return to sustainable economic growth, even if this requires a closer integration.

4 Scenarios for the future

The answer to the question about the prospects of further participation of the Principality in the integration process of the continent is complex. In our opinion, it depends on both the further development of the European Union itself and on the relations between Brussels and Bern. These appear to be complicated and the present solution in form of bilateral agreements, by all means acceptable to Switzerland who selects the areas of cooperation that seem to be the most beneficial, is presently optimal from the point of view of Bern (See: Tomczyk, 2012, pp. 217-233). The possibility of Switzerland's accession to the EU is now highly unlikely. This does not mean that it can be completely ruled out.

The experience of the past over 20 years of relations between Bern and Vaduz seems not to allow the exclusion of any scenario of events, including even the membership of Liechtenstein in the European Union. The situation differs significantly compared with the year 1992 when Vaduz decided for the first time to join the EEA. Currently, the connection with Switzerland is just one

of the options, since even the relationship with the EU closer than the existing one is to be seriously considered. Thus, Vaduz is no longer "doomed" to only one possibility. Paradoxically, thanks to the integration the opportunities for external activities of this microstate have expanded, at least in the economic sphere.

Future relations between the EU and Liechtenstein, taking into account the impact of the Swiss policy, should be considered according to the following scenarios:

4.1 Maintaining the status quo

In this case, Liechtenstein remains a member of the EEA, but does not join the European Union, whereas Switzerland continues outside the two areas of cooperation. This would mean no change in hitherto mutual contact, and probably only quantitative increase of the EEA and the EU legislation implemented in the Principality.

4.2 Switzerland joins the EEA of which Liechtenstein is already a member

With the accession of the Confederation to the European Economic Area, both countries would be the members of the Area. From a practical point of view, such decision would in no way change the position of Vaduz, whereas from the point of view of Bern it would mean a step towards deepening the involvement in the processes of co-operation on the continent.

In the current situation, it is difficult to suppose that Switzerland will decide to make such a decision. Undoubtedly, this would mean a kind of shift in the current policy of the government in Bern.

4.3 Liechtenstein and Switzerland both join the European Union

According to this scenario, the two countries could become members of the Union. In view of the relations between them, the most sensible solution would be their simultaneous accession to the organisation. It seems disputable and controversial whether such a move is possible, especially on the part of Bern. In our opinion, such development is difficult to imagine now. Taking into account economic factors, this move would be unprofitable for Switzerland who would undoubtedly become a net contributor to the EU budget. However, given the

dynamic development of international relations, this option should not be ruled out in the future.

It should be kept in mind that Helvetia is not completely excluded from specific areas of cooperation with Brussels. They are included in the so-called Swiss bilateral agreements with the European Union (Bilaterale I of 1999 and Bilaterale II of 2004), which has proved to be a relatively favourable solution for the Alpine country. However, in case of such a decision, the most important decision-maker - due to the nature of the political system - is the Swiss society that would have to give their consent in a national referendum. Without a doubt, it would be quite a landmark for the European integration process. Currently, there is no indication that the Swiss could opt for such a move (see more: Tomczyk, 2014, pp. 81-97)

In the survey conducted in November 2014 on a representative sample of more than 1200 people, only 6% considered joining the Union as a desirable objective for further development of mutual relations. The European Union and its institutions do not enjoy the trust of the respondents. On a scale of 1 to 10 the level of trust in the EU stands at 4.9. In this situation, it is difficult to imagine Helvetia's membership in the Union. At present, it seems decidedly out of the question (Beziehungen 2015, pp. 2-7).

In Liechtenstein, the decision about the accession to the EU would also require a vote of the citizens. Given the results of the referenda on joining the EEA, most likely it will not be a problem to get the majority of votes in favour of such a solution.

4.4 Liechtenstein joins the European Union

This solution has never been ruled out by the authorities of the Principality, and still has never become the objective of its foreign policy. The country's small size would not be probably an obstacle to the potential realisation of this scenario. It seems that the size of the state is the most important problem on the way to the accession in the Union, though from a formal point of view, it is not an obstacle. Currently, the smallest in terms of population EU Member State (Malta) has 11 times more inhabitants than the Alpine microstate. In the present institutional structure of the EU, the Principality's active participation in the organisation would be difficult, perhaps even impossible. Undoubtedly, modest human resources would create a problem in terms of staffing the positions in the EU institutions and the creation of personnel and consultancy background for

the functioning of the state in the structures of integrating Europe.

4.5 Liechtenstein leaves the EEA and values its relationship with Switzerland above the membership in the Area

In the author's opinion, also this scenario seems unlikely. Even as a member of the EEA Liechtenstein still maintains its close links with the western neighbour. Staying in the Area does not jeopardise the relations with Bern, one cannot speak of conflicting decisions in this sphere of interests. In a word, being in the EEA does not preclude relations with Switzerland, therefore, Liechtenstein can hardly be expected to step out of the EEA. It would be detrimental to the economy of the microstate since due to the membership in most extensive European economic cooperation zone the enterprises of the Principality gain access to over five hundred-million-consumer market.

While analysing possible scenarios for the Principality's stance on the process of integration of the continent in the future, one should consider the most important determinants of the policy of Vaduz. In the author's opinion, the membership in the EEA is definitely beneficial to the microstate, first because it protects its economic interests. The main benefit is the participation in the European common market – a factor of no small importance for any export-gearred national economy of a small size. At the same time, not being a member of the European Union, Liechtenstein can be flexible about decisions concerning the areas in which it would possibly like to extend its share in the integration. Moreover, the EU side has been inclined to make some, already mentioned, concessions to the smaller partner.

On the other hand, the participation in the EEA, without membership in the EU, has several downsides. The most significant seems to be relatively limited right to co-decide on developmental trends in the Area.

Therefore, the economic considerations undoubtedly prevail when it comes to the further membership of Liechtenstein in the EEA. Even close ties with the western neighbour do not seem to outweigh these benefits, as already proved by the convincing statistical data on external trade relations with the member states of the Area.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it should be noted that so far the relations of Liechtenstein with the Swiss Confederation have not imprinted a negative stigma on the

participation of the Principality in the process of European integration. On the contrary, in the early 60s of the 20th Century, when the EFTA came into existence, Switzerland was the promoter of the idea of including the neighbouring microstate in the agreement. This was due to the specific contacts between the two countries and their establishment of customs union.

The turning point came in the 1990s when only Liechtenstein was a member of the EEA. The existing arrangement seems to satisfy both sides. The relationship Vaduz-Bern does not entail negative consequences as far as the broader participation of the Alpine Principality in the European integration is concerned.

In the future, changes in the attitude of the two countries towards European integration and even their potential membership in the European Union cannot be excluded. This would indeed require, first of all, a change in attitude of the government in Bern, as well as a change in attitude of the Swiss society towards possible accession to the EU. The authorities in Vaduz however, are not, as in bygone days, bound by the Swiss decisions, which they expressed clearly when deciding to join the European Economic Area.

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