

Chapter 17. Luxembourg

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1. Introduction

During the last century, migration has largely contributed to the economic and social development of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg .

In 2006, Luxembourg's population amounts to 450,000, with foreigners counting up to 38% of the total population. Most of them are citizens of the EU Member States, while only 5% come from third countries.

The implicit and very effective policy which has been carried out by the authorities was centred on accepting almost only white, catholic, European immigrants.

The active population comprises 38% of people crossing the border each day from France, Belgium and Germany. 36% of these are Luxembourgers while and 26 % are foreigners.

The unemployment rate over the last 20 years has been approximately 2 to 3 %, having risen up to 5 % in the beginning of 2006.

In the Grand - Duchy immigration is a triple challenge : it is necessary for economic growth, no demographic survival without it and democracy's deficit is questioned by it.

2. Major developments in immigration policy in the last 15 years

The last quarter of the 20th century was a period of almost full employment and saw the creation of many new jobs, as well as an increase in the active population.

There was no real debate on immigration: it merely took place, and it was perceived as a "win/win" situation.

The only discourse present, was regarding the successful and smooth integration everybody was supposed to achieve. Indeed, there was no explicit policy regarding immigration.

The Law on the entry and residence of foreigners was passed in 1972, and only a few minor changes have taken place since then. The law was conceived for non-EU workers. As Portugal (which used to be the main provider of working force) has since then become a member of the EU, this legislation is now only applicable to a small part of the foreigners: migrants from third-countries.

The only real debate which took place during that period was about the voting rights of EU nationals at the local and European levels, as mentioned in the Maastricht Treaty.

The debate on the rise of pension levels

It is important to note that the debate about pensions has been ongoing for the last 15 years. It has led to the creation of a political party (ADR) which asks for a fair deal regarding pension levels in the public and private sectors. Indeed, the number of the party's MPs before 2004 amounted to 7 MPs out of a total of 60 parliamentary seats. In the 2004 elections, however, it lost 2 seats and it has had plenty of internal problems in Spring 2006. The lost seats went to the christian party CSV.

In the present pension system based on repartition, the constantly growing working population produces more than needed to pay for pensions. As a result, there is political pressure to raise the pension levels.

However, the present level of pensions can only be maintained for the next generations provided the active population continues to grow. In his address to the Parliament in May 2001, the Prime Minister launched the discussion about a potential future of a state with "700,000 inhabitants." Using a demographic projection based on a 4% growth of the economy and of the active population in the next 50 years, and starting from the country's then 440,000 inhabitants, he tried to show that higher pension levels in the future require a larger number of contributors.

The debate was simplified as if those 700,000 people were a main policy objective.

Environment, transport, and quality of life would be endangered. The fact that any growth of population could only come from foreigners was only an implicit argument. Nevertheless, an important reform of pensions levels was adopted after a roundtable with social and economic actors in 2001: higher pension levels, without higher contributions. Employers disagreed, arguing the system would not be functional in a few years.

The debate was so much focused on the figure of 700,000, which was supposed to be reached in 2050, that closer projections, such as the one according to which the Luxembourg/foreign residents rate could reach 50/50 within a decade, were neglected, as well as the possible increase in border-crossing workers, who could reach 300,000 in the year 2050!

The restrictive asylum policy and the regularisation campaign

In the early 1990s, Luxembourg received a few thousand refugees, mainly from Bosnia.

There was no legislation on asylum: asylum-seekers were instructed to find a job and accommodation and could stay, just like migrants.

With the Kosovo war, a few other thousands refugees arrived in Luxembourg. Meanwhile, a Law on asylum was passed. There was no more question of integrating them. One should note

that there was no change in the economic situation in Luxembourg: each year, five to six thousand newly created jobs had to be done by newcomers crossing the border, or by immigrants.

In the spring of 2001, a regularisation campaign took place, as a first, "one-shot action" . The conditions to be fulfilled were the following: the applicant had to prove his/her presence in Luxembourg before 1 July,1998, or to prove that s/he had worked illegally since 1 January, 2000. People from Kosovo were entitled to regularisation if they had arrived before 1 January, 2000. People fulfilling one of these conditions were given 6 months to find a job.

The "*sans-papiers*" were a semantic creation in Luxembourg as in the prosperous years, illegal immigrants were legalised every day. In the early 1970s, most Portuguese immigrants came illegally but were legalised almost as soon as they arrived. Indeed, economic needs overran the official procedure.

The regularisation had the (non admitted) purpose of getting a few hundred people out of the crowded asylum procedure. However, many asylum seekers were excluded, namely those from Sandjak, an area covering the south of Serbia and the North of Montenegro which is host to mainly Muslims.

At the end of the campaign, 2,850 people had been regularised, 2,007 of whom came from former Yugoslavia, and practically all of whom were asylum-seekers. The total number amounted to 1,554 applicants, 64% of whom obtained a work and residence permit.

As the asylum procedure is very strict (recognition rate of refugee status in Luxembourg: 2 to 5 % a year), most asylum-seekers receive a negative answer. This is the case for almost all Muslims from the Sandjak: hundreds and hundreds were invited to return. As those invitations are not very successful, the government started expulsions of rejected asylum-seekers on 5th November, 2002.

However, when the government started repatriating asylum seekers whose cases had been dismissed, it became clear that a large number of them had been living in Luxembourg for three, four, even five years, and that their children were, in general, well integrated in Luxembourgian schools. This was the case, for instance, with asylum seekers from Montenegro. In order to exercise pressure on the government, on May 17th 2003, those persons whose cases had been dismissed organised, jointly with ASTI, a human chain of 2000 persons, which linked the Ministry of Employment to the Ministry of Justice, and demanded that the status of those individuals who had been in Luxembourg for 30 months (30 months equals legal) be regularised.

Three weeks later, the Prime Minister received a delegation of the protesters, and confirmed that the government would carry out the “assisted” repatriations in the summer of 2003. To apply pressure to those persons whose claims had been dismissed, and to make them leave of their own free will, the government cut off their food supplies. In protest, the persons concerned met six times on consecutive Fridays in front of the offices of the Prime Minister, at a time when he held his weekly press conference. Media coverage was guaranteed. After six weeks, food supplies were restored.

As the economic predictions dropped from 3-4 % to 0,5-1 %. the debate on the future "700,000 inhabitants state" seemed far away, but the question of the funding of the pension system remained. The demographic challenge still existed given that in 2001, 37% of the population (i.e. foreigners) had 2,736 children, as compared to the other 63% (Luxembourg inhabitants) who had only 2,723. Indeed, the ageing population appears to be in need of young people and, given the low birth rates in Luxembourg, this young population needs to come from abroad. So even with slower economic growth the necessity of further

immigration is obvious.

3. The immigrant population in Luxembourg

Luxembourg depends largely on the expertise of its foreigners. This situation developed at the end of the 19th century when individual workers were called upon for temporary engagements between 1 and 3 years on a rotation basis. From 1960 onwards, in a reaction to economic boom and a declining birth rate, the government endorsed a policy of familial immigration.

Table 1: Foreign nationals by country of citizenship as of January 1st,2003

Portuguese	66 876
French	24 603
Italians	20 658
Belgians	15 967
Germans	11 556
Serbians & Montenegrans ?	8 397
British	5 690
Dutch	4 258
Spanish	3 448
Bosnians	2 718
Danish	2 352
Cape Verdians	1 938

USA	1 703
Greeks	1 416
Swedish	1 472
Irish	1 313
Russians	1 086
Fins	941
Poles	885
Austrians	661
Swiss	542
others	14 740
Total foreign nationals	193 220

Source : IGSS¹ 1.1.2003

Most foreigners are white, European, Catholics. Of these, the Portuguese constitute the majority. The percentage of non-EU foreigners is about 5 % of the local population and is made up of numerous nationalities such as people from former Yugoslavia, USA, Cape verdian islands, etc.

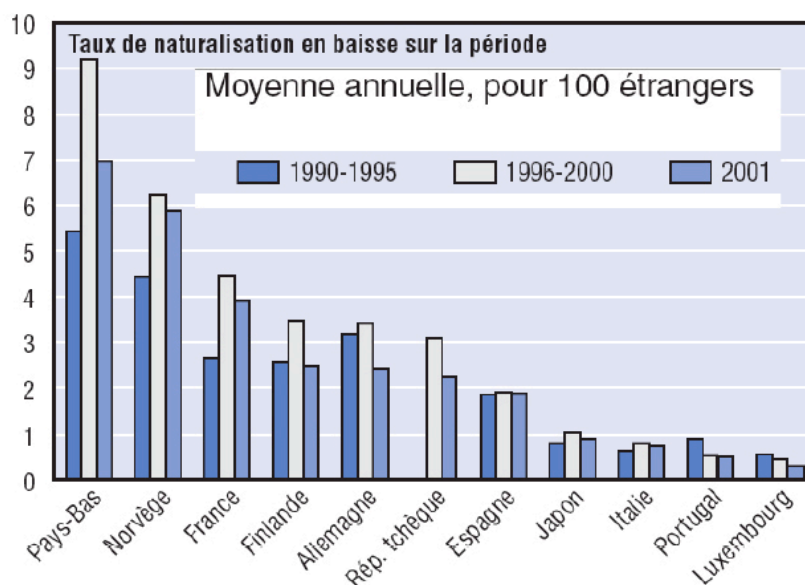
Luxembourg counts the highest percentage of foreigners among all OECD countries but, at the same time, it has the lowest rate of naturalisation.

Illustration 17.1: Rate of naturalisation; annual average per 100 foreigners

¹ IGSS Social security general inspection

Taux de naturalisation

source: SOPEMI OCDE 2004



source : SOPEMI , OCDE 2003

The proportion of naturalisations by country of origin shows some clear trends. It is mainly citizens from non-EU countries who choose to become EU citizens of Luxembourgish nationality. Citizens from other European countries who live in Luxembourg generally choose to adopt a new nationality only if requirements to do so appear reasonable, uncomplicated, and if they are allowed ‘double’ nationality.

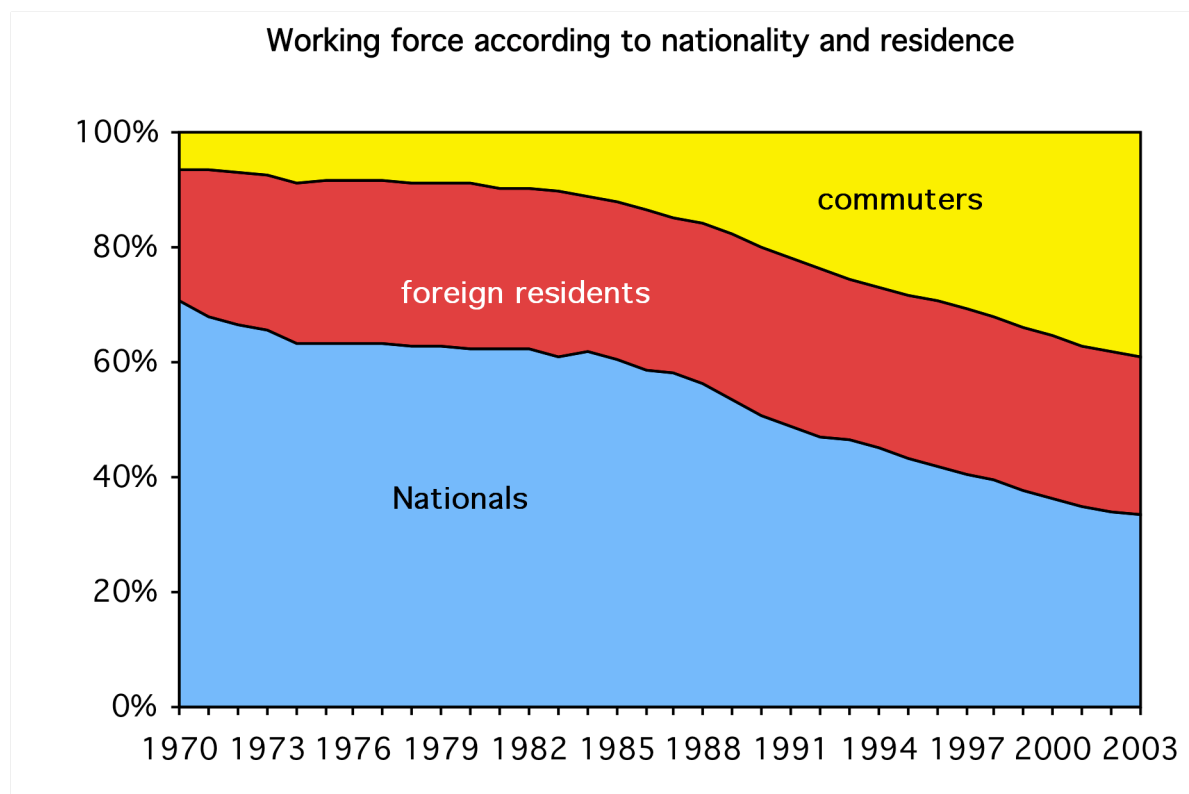
Luxembourgers work mainly in the civil service and concede the production and innovation sectors to others. One-third of the workforce in Luxembourg is comprised of Luxembourgers while the rest is made up of foreigners residing in Luxembourg and by commuters from around the Luxembourgish borders. Indeed, for some 15 years now the workforce represented

by commuters from neighbouring countries has come to represent approximately 38% of employees.

The **admission of migrants** is based on a 1972 legislation . There are basically three work permits. The first is for one year and one employer, the second for four years in the same economic sector, and the third has neither time nor sector limitation. The residence permit is valid for five years.

The employer has to prove that s/he could not find an EU employee who was suitable for the job and, therefore, must look for a non-EU national. With regard to family reunification, unfortunately, no data is available. However, overall, it occurs mostly without problems despite not having a legal framework within which to base itself.

Illustration 17. 2: Evolution of the working force



Source : Statec²

The **independant worker** has to provide a bank guarantee of 12 350 euros per family member. The conditions for admitting an independant worker are written down on an information sheet edited by the Ministry of Justice, again, without any legal base. The

² Statec: governments statistical office

authorisation runs for one year : Another year's period may be conceded provided there is sufficient revenue.

The information sheet specifies in its last line that family reunification for independent workers can be realised after 3 years of stay.

4. Immigrant rights and participation in public life - issues of immigrant integration

In Luxembourg, the debate about the civic participation of foreigners focuses on the right to vote in municipal elections. It has centred on this demand and on the open discourse led by the NGO ASTI (Association in Support of Foreign Workers), which was founded in 1979. It started to popularise this idea through debates and through a big annual celebration, the Festival of Immigration, whose slogan is 'to live, to work and to decide together'.

*History of democracy equals economic history*³

If the right to vote was historically linked to real estate, fiscal duties, and masculinity, in many countries the ultimate barrier is formed by nationality. In case this last requirement is softened, economic grounds speak in favour of a policy of granting political rights on the basis of residence. Given the important role of foreigners to economic development, political integration of this workforce is inevitable. Without the immigrants' contributions, the social and insurance system could not persist in its current form. The ageing of the electorate has had negative effects in recent years. The political parties that advocate a conservative stance

³ Pauly, Michel, 2004 history of democracy equals economic history, in forum 241, October 2004, pp. 44-51

towards pension policies. Their ageing voters did not favour a rearrangement of the contributions. It is only through the partaking of younger (foreign) voters that will there be a chance for these new policies which promise modes of financing and are geared towards the future, to find an electorate. This latter may explain why Luxembourg's conservative Prime Minister put forth a rather surprising proposal to allow double nationality. In this way, he will be able to mobilise a younger electorate whose main preoccupation does not lie with the conservation of their pension rights but rather with merely making a living.

With regard to the right to vote, the only way forward is that it must be bestowed upon those affected by the decisions taken by those elected. The theory behind this reasoning is that of the canonical right 'quod omnes tangit debet ab omnibus approbari' (what affects everybody must be decided upon by everybody). According to Pauly Today there can only be one requirement for the gaining of the right to vote, and this must be residency. All citizens residing in a particular country (the term 'residency' must be determined) must be allowed to choose their representatives in parliament. In this case, the issue of nationality would lose its importance

Voting rights : from revendication to a timid application

Political participation was granted thanks to an EC directive⁴ on the local right to vote, which stipulates that a member state with more than 20% of citizens from other EU citizens may obtain derogations as to the duration of stay, the passive right to vote, and the composition of electoral lists. Similar derogations have been obtained by Luxemburgian authorities in the field of European elections and the admission of EU nationals to these elections.

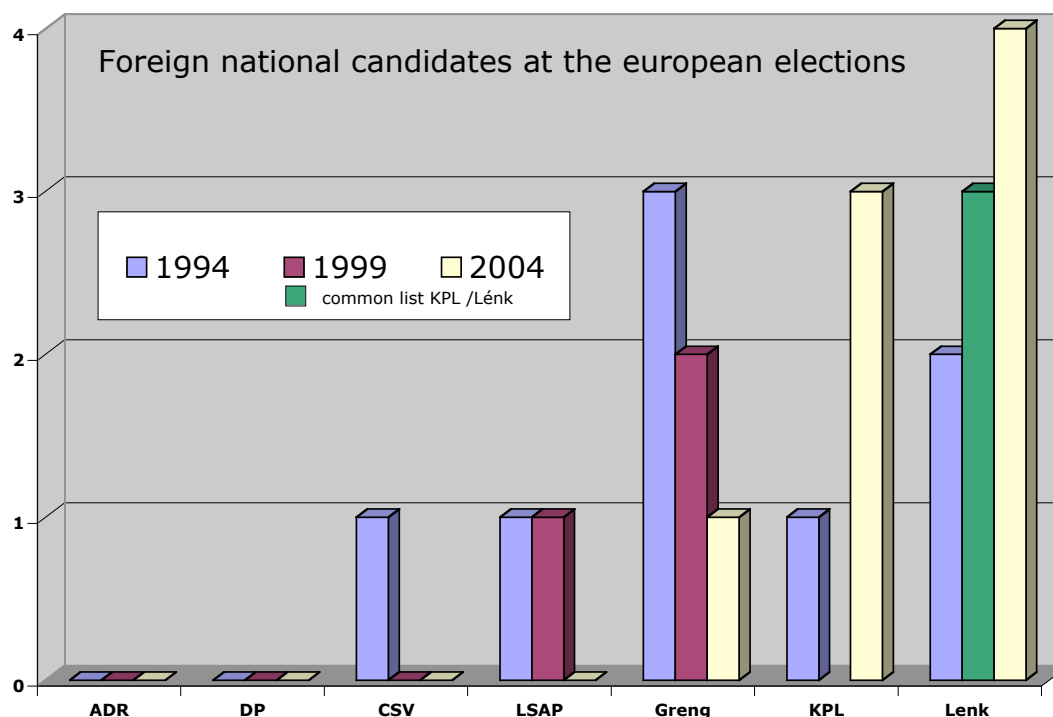
⁴ EC directive 94/80 1994

Of the 3226 candidates standing for election at the 1999 communal elections, 138, or 4.3%, were foreigners. This, however, is in contrast to the figures for EU citizens resident in Luxembourg which at that time, comprised 32.1% of the population. Moreover, we note that few immigrants (13.1%) are registered on the electoral lists.

EU citizens are under-represented, while non EU citizens are not represented at all in local decision making processes. Generally, local political activists with EU citizenship tend to be younger and better qualified than the average Luxembourg and foreign population, which shows that the interest in voting of foreigners is largely due to their socio-economic situation.

In terms of European elections, non-Luxembourgish citizens may, since 1994, both elect and be elected through the Grand-Duchy's lists for the European Parliament. Eight foreign candidates stood for office in 1994, six in 1999 and eight in 2004. In 2004, none of the main parties was represented by a non-Luxembourgish national.

Illustration 17.4: Foreign candidates at the European elections 2004



Source: electoral lists for the European elections, ASTI

Key: ADR = right, DP = liberals, CSV= christian party, LSAP = social democrats, Greng = greens, KPL = communist, Lenk= left

Registration on the electoral lists for the elections of October 2005⁵

Regarding the October 2005 elections, 23,937 foreigners had registered on the electoral lists. Of these, 22,706 were EU citizens and 1251 were from third-party countries. This represents an increase of 73% as compared to 1999. The highest increase was among Portuguese nationals (+117%), followed by the Italian nationals (+82%), British nationals (+60%) and French nationals (+52%). Overall, the rate of registration for the communal elections was 15%. Among EU citizens the rate was 17% and for non-EU citizens it amounted to 6%. Among the nationalities most strongly represented were Italian (21%), Portuguese (20%) and Dutch (19%). Citizens from those countries who joined the EU in 2004 were only represented by 3%.

⁵ SeSoPi 2004, Sesopi is a catholic research center

It is worth noting that the growing number of registrations on the communal electoral lists has direct consequences on the proportion of foreign voters in relation to the overall electorate. In 1999, out of 100 voters, 6 were foreign and 94 Luxembourgish. Today the ratio is 10 foreigners to 90 Luxembourgers. Indeed, in certain communes, the electoral weight of foreigners is above average. Larochette, for instance, has the highest ratio with 33% of non-Luxembourgish nationals, followed by Medernach (18%) and Sandweiler (18%).

The political parties

Theoretically speaking, all political parties present in Parliament accept non-Luxembourgian nationals as members. It is, however, impossible to know how many or what percentage. It is important to notice that some parties such as the CSV (Social-Christian), LSAP (Social-Democrats) and the Green Party have specific internal structures for foreigners wherein luxembourgers and foreigners discuss about their party's issues. This is notably the case for the LSAP's 'Group for Political Integration' which, however, does little to publicly promote its proceedings.

As an indication, below are some relevant figures obtained through a mail-survey carried out in November 2004 by the author and aimed at the political parties and unions:

The CSV (Social Christian) counts 250 foreigners for 9800 members.

The LSAP (Social Democrats) counts 5.69% of non-nationals, namely Portuguese (24.31%), Italians (22.15%), French (13.54%), Belgians (10.46%), Germans (15.38%) and others (14.16%). No reply was received from the DP (liberals). The Green Party does not classify its members in terms of their nationality, but estimates them to amount to approximately 10%.

The ADR does not distinguish nationalities, but estimates approximately 5.18% of foreign-nationals on their communal electoral lists of 1999. No reply was obtained from the left wing parties.

Unions

The OGBL (social democrat orientation) counts some 45% of foreigners among its 57000 members. The LCGB (christian orientation) counts some 37.41% of non-nationals among its 40 000 members.

NGOs

In July 2004, 140 associations fulfilled the requirements needed to take part in the votes of the national consultative body CNE. Of these, only 40 exercised their right to vote, which shows their limited interest in this body. The political spokesperson for these associations is the CLAE, the ‘Comité de Liaison et d’Action des Etrangers,’ which recently changed its name into “Comité de Liaison des Associations d’Etrangers” . Its objectives are:

‘To promote the integration of foreigners into Luxembourgian society, and to gain citizenship for every foreigner residing in Luxembourg. To defend the rights and interests of foreigners and to promote cultural diversity in Luxembourg. To facilitate the contact between associations and institution in Luxembourg, to encourage intercultural exchanges and to support and promote associative (social) life. To fight against any form of racism and xenophobia as well as all other forms of discrimination and exclusion. To promote the creation of a Europe in which the rights of migrants and minorities are respected.’ (CLAE, book of statutes, 2000)

The CLAE has signed an agreement with the Ministry for Family. This agreement allows it to employ a permanent staff of a dozen persons for its political, cultural, and social activities. Until 2003, the CLAE organised training and information seminars for members of communal consultative bodis (CCEs). It can be estimated that some 100 associations are members of the CLAE.

The CLAE was created in 1985 by the ASTI⁶ and generally holds a moderate public profile in terms of its political engagement. The public perception of the CLAE is primarily shaped by the Festival of Immigration, inaugurated by the ASTI in 1981 with the aim of gaining support amongst public opinion in favour of the right to vote for foreigners. The political aims are no longer the main aspect of this event and have been put into the background in order to stress the cultural element.

Internal differences have hindered the participation of the one hundred or so associations which form the basis of the organisation. Again, the organisation failed to take a common stand with the unions OGB-L and LCGB on the debate on the parliamentary committee of spring 2004. CLAE refused to participate in a common paper about a new migration policy launched by the Unions and the NGO community in June 2005.

Most Portuguese associations are grouped in the CCPL, the Confederation of the Portuguese community in Luxembourg that holds a biannual conference. The CCPL counts 10 associations for Portuguese parents of schoolchildren and 14 Portuguese folklore associations.

⁶ The ASTI (Association de Soutien aux Travailleurs Immigrés) is an NGO with some 700 members of 25 different nationalities. Characteristic of the ASTI are its mixed composition of Luxembourgers and foreigners, the work it carries out in the northern parts of Luxembourg City, and its wish for independent political activity.

Overall, 84 associations of all kinds belong to the membership of the CCPL. The Confederation regularly speaks out in public, notably during its congresses and in the Portuguese press in Luxembourg. Other interventions mainly take place within the communities, aimed directly at Portuguese authorities. The CLAE has often reproached the CCPL for promoting a restrictive communitarian approach instead of a brighter transnational one. The relationship between both seemed to have normalised for some time, the current president of the CCPL drawing his pay check from the CLAE but on its 2006 spring congress CCPL took a very critical public position about CLAE.

Both ASTI and CCPL did not assist to the 2006 General Assembly of CLAE claiming the non respect of the internal rules.

On integration

While the governmental programme requires that language and civic education courses be followed by foreigners wishing to acquire the Luxembourgish nationality, it remains silent on integration courses for the new arrivals. Nevertheless, the relevant department of the Ministry of Family has set up an informal group consisting of officials and of NGOs to discuss integration courses. Th group did not meet during a whole year.

A seminar was held at the end of May 2005 in Luxembourg, which brought together government representatives, experts from France, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands, for an exchange of views on current practices with regard to integration courses. For the moment the only conclusion is a modest pilot project on integration courses.

5. Public and media discourses on migration

Different terms for different types of immigrants

As stated above, unlike other EU member states, Luxembourg is characterised by little unemployment and an increasing workforce due to immigration. The continuously growing foreign population and the traditionally good integration seem to be accompanied by a changing discourse. The arrival of a significant number of asylum-seekers, especially since the end of the 1990s, may have contributed to this change. The population was accustomed to the many foreigners who were usually employed in the numerous positions created in the past, as well as in the new ones. However, suddenly, the reference to foreigners' "laziness" became easy, as the government did not explain why it did not and does not allow asylum-seekers to work.

The open attitude of all the traditional political parties was not challenged by the openly rightwing party, as it never obtained more than 3% of the votes (1999 general elections). On the other hand, the ADR party nibbled votes on the conservative side, namely from the Christian party's voters. ADR's populist approach is not openly xenophobic, yet its restrictive views on immigration influence other parties. After 15 years of coalition between Christians and Social Democrats, the 1999 elections brought a Christian-Liberal coalition. The Liberals won due to the huge support they received from civil servants and from their influential Union CGFP, which tries to keep public jobs for nationals.

The discourse regarding foreigners has become more rigid, even restrictive at times, while the number of foreign workers has continued to grow. In parallel, significant numbers of asylum-seekers are present in the country. The Prime Minister remains on the foreigners' side, while the Minister of Justice is still a hardliner promoting law and order. 9/11 had effects in Luxembourg, too. The muslim community was close to obtaining both formal recognition and public financing (just like the catholic, protestant, orthodox and jewish communities do),

when accusations and speculations were launched. There were no openly anti-Islamic reactions, but suspicions developed. The fact that a large part of asylum-seekers from the Sandjak region were Muslims contributed to confuse the situation.

Finally, the immigration of highly qualified people is not mentioned in the official discourse as it simply takes place, without difficulty.

Immigration in discussion.

At the end of the parliamentary discussions on regularisation and refugees in winter / spring 2001, the House adopted a resolution calling for a larger debate about immigration. The proposal came from the Green party.

To this effect, the Special Parliamentary Commission on Immigration was created. This occurred in the context of the "700,000 inhabitants state" debate as well as the pension debate.

In November 2004 Lionel Fontagné a French expert also broaches in his report for the government about competitiveness the questions relating to immigration and integration. To contribute to an unblocking toward reforms, Fontagné proposes to open the public service to foreigners: " ... and nothing decisive can probably be done without changing the balance of the political economy. (...) [the fact that] the dynamic of employment is based essentially on employees who migrate or commute, while voting is concentrated among the working and non-working populations of the public sphere, is a source of blockage, which could be solved by reexamining the questions of dual nationality/citizenship and political participation of foreigners in elections."

Both reports went on without results and consequences.

Towards the 2004 elections

In the run-up to elections, the Prime Minister, a man of conviction and the social soul of the government, committed an unusual blunder. On January 16, 2004, during his weekly press conference, he admitted to a lack of concern on behalf of the government and pointed his finger at the new guilty parties: "African asylum seekers – drug traffickers!" This stemmed from the fact that some African asylum seekers had engaged in drug trafficking, thereby, stigmatising the whole African community in Luxembourg

A few days later, on January 20th 2004, his Minister of Justice followed suit when, speaking on the television station RTL, stated that some thirty African asylum seekers had been imprisoned for drug trafficking. When the journalist retorted the prison officials mentioned only 11 individuals, to which the Minister responded that all those who had been imprisoned in the past, and released, should also be included.

Despite such open statements, the result of the elections proved to be in their favour. The Christian party gained a further 5 seats, thereby increasing its seats to 24 (of a total of 60); its governmental partner, the liberal party, lost 6 seats, while the socialist party gained one and now has 14 seats. Hence, a Christian-Socialist coalition forms Luxembourg's government of today. On the question of asylum, the socialists extract a few miniscule concessions. But no regularization as provided for by the socialist program. The law on immigration dating from 1972 will be modernised; a dose of dual nationality will be introduced.

The major challenge : school and qualification

More than elsewhere, the children of immigrants run into unavoidable obstacles in the Luxembourgian educational system which is trilingual. The Luxembourgian, German and French languages co-exist side by side, and half the students leave school without a certificate

or a diploma. In general, it has been observed that the Luxembourgian children encounter many difficulties in French, whereas the children of immigrants fail because of German, which is taught on the basis of an extensive knowledge of Luxembourgian, which foreign children often do not have. While the overall failure rate is 4.9% for children in primary education, it is 3.6% for Luxembourgers and 11.9% for Capeverdian children. There have been some parliamentary documents and debates on the educational situation of foreign children over the past 25 years, but they have not led to any far-reaching legislative actions. Efforts have been made in the area of language teaching, and some pilot projects have been set up.

Nevertheless, the education of foreign children remains a major challenge. Characteristic of this challenge is that fact that there are 41.4 % foreigners in the elementary schools, 13% in the high schools, and 60.4 % in the modular classes of technical education. The last two editions of the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) programme of the OCDE have ranked Luxembourg among the last in the field, and they have emphasised the selective character of Luxembourgian education and its socially unjust character which exacerbates social inequalities instead of reducing them. The result is an excess number of failures. Indeed, at the age of 15 years, half of the children will have repeated a class at least once.

6. Concluding remarks

In the near future, Luxembourg will face a multiple challenge in the field of immigration and integration. The revision of the 1972 law is scheduled for 2006/2007. It will be a challenge for politicians to demonstrate the political will for a real immigration and integration concept. Unfortunately those two aspects are run by two Ministers of two different parties, thereby complicating matters further both in terms of consistency and ideological compatibility.

Luxembourg has to create a new legislation and larvishes between the known necessity of immigration and the growing reticencies in the population. Fortunately all tentatives of a right wing openly xenophobic political group or party have, thus far, failed.

The risk of a kind of soft political apartheid exists and even if the Prime Minister has stated in Parliament that "*The participation of the greatest possible number of people in the process of decision making is for us a national interest.*" Nothing, however, has happened since then in that field.

According to the experts of Statec, the population of Luxembourg will grow, but only thanks to the addition of foreign workers. The social cohesion may be put to a rough test, given that the autochtonous population fears becoming a minority. The 2003 annual report of the OCDE identifies four immigration-related challenges for the Grand Duchy. The first is integration through education and training. The second is the overloading of the infrastructure, namely the means of transport. The third, an overheated housing market and, finally, the survival of the welfare state, which entails expenditures for health and ageing.

The legislation regarding citizenship will be changed. Will there be a real opening to double citizenship or simply a face lifting of the legislation ?

In the field of transposition of EU directives the Grand Duchy shows little enthusiasm. The directives against discrimination have a five year delay, and no action regarding family reunification or long term residents directives has been made.

In terms of registration for elections for instance, the overall increase of registrations across all social strata and geographical regions shows the positive impact of a well-targeted information campaign. A mobilisation campaign bears its fruits only if there is sufficient political engagement, targeted proceedings and adequate sensitisation campaigns. The efforts targeted at the Portuguese community must be continued and widened to include, for example, the Capeverdean community whose registration rate is very low for a community that has been present in Luxembourg for three decades. The work that has been carried out so far must be continued and the activities and meeting points should be used to their best extent as these have been proved efficient means.

The future will be decisive. Indeed, the *laissez faire* attitude of the last decades can not be adapted anymore to the present reality and the forecasted evolution.

Serge Kollwelter

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