Youth policy in Luxembourg

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Report by an international panel of experts appointed by the Council of Europe

John Demanuele (Chair)
Gill Jones (Rapporteur)
Petar Mitev
Pau Serracant Melendres
Ralf Simon

Contents

Preface

In recent years, the Council of Europe has undertaken a series of intergovernmental reviews of national youth policies in Europe. Reviews of Finland (1997), the Netherlands (1998), Spain (1999), Sweden (1999), Romania (2000) and Estonia (2000) are already available.

This report represents the findings of a panel of experts invited by the Council of Europe to undertake an independent review of youth policies in Luxembourg. In undertaking our task, we have been informed by the National Report prepared by two researchers (Mr Georges Wirtgen and Mr Hendrik Otten. In this respect, the Service National de la Jeunesse (SNJ) hosted two 4-day visits by the panel, and arranged many visits and meetings with key players in the Luxembourg youth policy field. We would like to express our appreciation to all the people we met during our visits, and to thank them for their openness to our many comments whether critical or appreciative, and for their willingness to respond to our many questions during site visits and meetings. The panel would like to extend its warmest thanks to all our hosts in Luxembourg, for their hospitality and enjoyable company on social occasions.

We all hope that this independent evaluation report represents an accurate and sincere commentary on youth policies, being based on the data available, and undertaken in appreciation both of the specific context in which Luxembourg policies are created and implemented, and of the circumstances in which young people in Luxembourg study, work, play, and otherwise spend their daily lives. The report is therefore based on our interpretation of data provided to us, either formally or informally, and either written or verbal. It is very likely that inaccuracies will have crept in, and that aspects of this report will reflect our misunderstandings of complex structures and provisions. Furthermore, by its very nature, the report tends to analyse in more detail problem areas than the manifold and important achievements of youth policies in Luxembourg. We hope, however, that despite these inevitable failings, our work will prove to be of value to policy makers, professionals and volunteers working with young people, and ultimately to the young people themselves.

Finally, while the report is a collective venture involving all members of the panel of experts, the rapporteur alone, assumes full responsibility for some opinions and remarks. It should also be noted that the report does not necessarily reflect the views of the Council of Europe Secretariat.

Gill Jones, Rapporteur
(on behalf of the panel of experts)
December 2001

Executive summary

Scope of the report

This intergovernmental review of youth policies in Luxembourg was undertaken by a panel of experts on the basis of information gained through the National Report, which described the living conditions of, and policy structures and provisions for, young people in Luxembourg. This was supplemented by a range of additional documents, and particularly through two study visits to Luxembourg during which we met a range of policy makers and practitioners, and encountered a range of views on current policies and emerging needs. Our principal aim was to undertake a critical analysis of youth policies in Luxembourg, to identify gaps in provision and research, to make recommendations on the basis of our analysis. We hope that our work will stimulate debate within Luxembourg, and that it will contribute to the development of understandings of youth policy in Europe more generally.

This report is timely, following close on the heels of the EC White Paper (2001) *A New Impetus for European Youth.* There is a widespread need for youth policies to be reviewed across Europe. This is partly in the light of changing patterns of youth, and partly a response to the need for some standardisation in policy and provision across the EU. Briefly, the ways in which young people make their transitions into adult life are very different from the ways in which their parents did, a generation ago. Transitions are more extended, more complex, and more imbued with risk. Young people, now defined, in the European Commission White Paper as aged up to 25 years, have new and different needs.

The concept of "youth policy" is thus changing. There is a slow but gradual trend away from the more traditional focus on youth work towards a policy perspective which recognises that young people may need support to enable them to make successful and fulfilling transitions into adult life. This latter perspective is both a life course perspective and an holistic one. It requires that the definition of youth policy be extended to include education, employment, housing and welfare policies, for example. Young people now experience a more complex and extended period of dependent youth than they did when traditional youth policies were devised. By 'young people' we normally mean those aged between 15 and 25, but for the purpose of this report we accept the Luxembourg definition of 12-25 years. Traditional youth policy tends to be focused on young people in their teenage years. (Chapter 2).

Main findings

There is no doubt that many aspects of Luxembourg youth policy are impressive. The youth work undertaken in the "Maisons des Jeunes" and study centres reaches a large number of young people across the country. There are some innovative projects at local level, and some imaginative approaches to developing provisions for young people in rural areas. The panel was particularly impressed by the Forum pour l'emploi and the Kulturfabrik, even though these were not exclusively within the domain of youth policy (or perhaps because of this).

At the same time, however, there appear to us to be areas of youth policy which are not working as well as they might. We have identified several areas of youth policy which have given us cause for concern, and are heartened to know that many of these concerns are shared and widespread, so that, as a result, many policy areas are currently already under review. These include the juvenile justice system, and routes through secondary education. We hope that the reviews in these policy areas will take some account of our comments.

– One of the major policy themes in Luxembourg, extending well beyond the youth sphere, is the policy of 'multiculturalism'. This is aimed at the integration and political participation of immigrant groups. In practice, this seems to take the form of separate co-existence with little interaction.

– We have suggested that the emphasis of the education system is so heavily on integration into the mainstream that the needs of some groups are not being met, and that the system itself is contributing to their situation as disadvantaged. In particular, we had concerns about the ways in which the education system fails many young people by introducing divisions between them based on language ability, by over-stressing language teaching to the detriment of other subjects, by putting too many unqualified young people into the labour market, and by failing to intervene at a stage in a child's life when disadvantage could be redressed. Those young people who leave school without qualifications are protected from unemployment to some extent by the current labour shortage in Luxembourg. Current schemes aim to increase employability among those without jobs, we must question why there are so many unqualified school leavers and ask what can be done to provide an educational structure in which they can leave school with qualifications.

– There are many young people with needs in Luxembourg, ranging from the needs of potential students for a local university, to the probable but unrecognised wide-ranging need for affordable housing. There are also the needs of young people with disabilities or learning difficulties not only not to be discriminated against but also to be able to maximise their

abilities and gain access to a good education, good jobs and quality housing. It appears that while the structures of youth policy in Luxembourg could be shifted without much difficulty to allow these needs to be met, currently they are not being met. Some of them are not even being recognised.

– The concentration on the mainstream, and the stated aim of integrating all into the mainstream, appears to be detrimental to those who cannot fit in, and who have particular needs of their own. Any state, however wealthy, will contain people who are failed by the system, and since the causes and consequences of social disadvantage change over time, it is therefore essential that social policies should be constantly under review. There are inequalities among young people, and these should be addressed. A focus on integration should contain a recognition of varying need. It appears though that some childhood disadvantage is allowed to continue through into adulthood without intervention until it is too late.

– Though youth is defined as 12-24 years, provision in Luxembourg seems to cater mainly for teenagers. Policies for young people of 20 and over will inevitably be aimed at helping their transition into the adult social world, rather than retaining them in the social world of young people. Perhaps Luxembourg has a specific problem in relation to the older age group. The combination of the high level of in-migration of workers from other parts of Europe (either as commuters or as residents) with the high level of out-migration (possibly temporary, possibly not) involving young people going abroad to study confuses both the statistics and the definition of youth policy. The net result of these two movements is that there is a loss of young people of HE student age in Luxembourg, and an over-representation of lower-achievers among residents in this age group. One-third of the population of 18-23 year olds are 'missing' from Luxembourg, attending universities abroad. However, this 'selection out' means that those in the age group who are living in Luxembourg are perhaps those with the greatest needs.

– In Luxembourg there is a strong expectation that families should be responsible for and support young people until the age of 25 years. This expectation is backed up by a Mediation Service which aims to work with young people whose relationship with their parents has broken down. There does not seem to be any other welfare provision for young people. It is their parents rather than themselves who are the recipients of welfare payments aimed at redressing poverty. The housing and welfare needs of young people are under-recognised, because of a lack of research, and the general invisibility of over-18s in youth policy and provision. The emphasis on parental responsibility – to provide a home and to provide financial

support – must disadvantage those from poor families, and also those who do not get along with their parents (or whose parents are separated).

– The structures underlying youth policy in Luxembourg have been shifting over recent years and are presumably also under constant review. There are examples of vertical structures – from Action Plans to local implementation – working well. The scope for horizontal (or transverse) structures to be developed has not yet been exploited. This would be the means whereby policies for transition could be developed. Participation of young people in policy making is still in its infancy, and limited to teenagers. The possible establishment of a university in Luxembourg may change this. There is a conflict between state demands for more professionalism and accountability in youth provision, and the prevailing ideology that youth work is an important aspect of non-formal education which should be undertaken on a voluntary basis.

– Policies need to be based on research evidence. While the National Report shows that a lot of research has been done on growing up in Luxembourg, it also shows the gaps. There seems to be a need for research on the processes involved in transitions to adulthood. There are no data on the outcomes for school leavers, or on the destinations for graduates. There is very little on household and family formation, and nothing on early housing careers. There is an urgent need for a longitudinal study of school pupils, to see what happens to them. To help policy makers in Luxembourg, it might be necessary to examine the transition right through from primary school, to identify the reasons for drop out, low qualification rates, entry into the labour market, and patterns of out-migration and return among those going on to HE. It would be difficult and expensive to maintain contact with migrants and those who drop out of the system, but would be well worth the expense.

Conclusion

Our overall conclusion is that the current formulation of youth policy in Luxembourg, while fulfilling its own aims in an exemplary way, needs to take on board new challenges facing young people between 15 and 25 and to recognise all the domains in which young people become adult. This should be part of the process of review and modernisation of youth policy, a necessary process in all countries.

Gill Jones

19 December 2001

1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

It would clearly not be possible to understand Luxembourg today without some knowledge of its complex history. The National Report makes it clear that Luxembourg, being a very small country lying between France and Germany, with Belgium to the north, and with a history of threatened sovereignty, has managed to retain a national identity almost 'against the odds'. On the one hand it benefits economically from its strategic position at the crossroads, and indeed its wealth is a consequence of this, but on the other hand its strategic position has resulted in a history of invasion and response, as its national sovereignty has come under threat.

The current 'threat' comes from globalisation. The forces of globalisation (including shifts in the structures of capitalism, involving global movement of finance and labour) tend to produce responses which emphasise the local and the traditional (Giddens, 1994). The sociologist Zygmunt Bauman has called the overall pattern of these countervailing but interdependent trends 'glocalisation'. Luxembourg would seem to provide an example and reflect the ambivalence of this position. On the one hand Luxembourg needs foreign investment, needs to be a global financial and legal centre, needs to encourage new technologies, needs to supplement its labour force, and so on. On the other hand, in doing so its population becomes more heterogeneous. The problem which faces Luxembourg is one shared with many nations in the contemporary world: how to retain a sense of national identity when its economic and social boundaries are becoming more and more permeable.

Against this wider political, social and economic background, youth policies in Luxembourg need to operate at three different levels. First, they must address the social conditions of the wide range of young people who live in the country, whatever their ethnic or cultural group, gender or social class. Secondly, they must ensure that the structures are in place to enable young people to make a 'successful' transition to adult life. Thirdly, since its young people represent a nation's future, investment in young people now should be seen to be a long-term investment, not only in terms of Luxembourg's internal security and well-being, but also in terms of its position in the world.

1.2. Aims and objectives

The *National Report for Luxembourg* (Otten and Wirtgen, 2001) is an important resource document, which provides much of the background information needed for effective government youth policies. The aim of this review document is not to repeat the detail of the National Report, but to comment on its content in terms of research and especially policies for young people in Luxembourg.

Our immediate aims in preparing this review document are:
– To undertake a critical analysis of youth policies in Luxembourg;
– To identify the main issues which concern young people in Luxembourg, and recommend areas for further research;
– To consider whether the needs of young people in Luxembourg are being addressed and met by current policy structures, and identify areas where gaps in provision exist;
– To make recommendations for policy and practice which will at least stimulate debate on the content and delivery of youth policies;
– To contribute to a common understanding of youth policy in Europe.

1.3. Panel membership

The international panel of experts, comprising researchers and representatives from statutory bodies, brings a range of youth research and policy expertise to these tasks. The panel embodies knowledge about divergent member states, with very different national characteristics. It consisted of:

John Demanuele – Member of CDEJ, Malta (*Chair*)
Gill Jones – Researcher, Professor of Sociology, Keele University, UK (*Rapporteur*)
Petar Mitev – Researcher, Professor of Sociology, Bulgaria
Pau Serracant Melendres – Researcher, Catalan Youth Observatory, Spain
Ralf Simon – Advisory Council, Council of Europe, Germany

1.4. Working methods

The main source of our information is the excellent *National Report on Young People in Luxembourg* (Otten and Wirtgen, 2001), which appears to draw on all the available research on young people in Luxembourg, and is based on a full knowledge of the databases available. We would like to congratulate the team of authors on a very thorough and stimulating document which conveys a very real sense of the context, structure and form of youth policies in Luxembourg, together with a clear analysis of the social conditions in which young people in Luxembourg live.

Inevitably There are gaps in the National Report, both in research on young people and in policies for them, and much of this report will focus on those gaps. This is not to diminish in any way the work which is represented in the National Report, but rather to argue the case for the gaps to be filled.

The panel received copies of the National Report prior to the first study visit, when it was presented by the authors, Hendrik Otten and Georges Wirtgen. The panel made two 4-day study visits to Luxembourg, hosted by Franz Müller (Director, SNJ) and detailed below, at which presentations were made by most of the key players in terms of youth policies, as indicated. Through these formal presentations, and the formal and informal discussions which followed them, the panel gained some insights into youth policies and provisions in Luxembourg, and heard both enthusiastic and critical views from the people we met. We also visited some of the 'flagship' centres, such as Maisons des Jeunes, which constitute perhaps the core of Luxembourg youth provision.

Broadly speaking, the first visit was an orientation visit and was designed to help us understand the policy structures, and visit some sites in and around Luxembourg city, while the second allowed further exploration of rural issues, and of policy and provision which went beyond the core Luxembourg definition of youth policy (see below). If there had been an opportunity for a third visit, we would have wished to see facilities for homeless young people, and to hear more about welfare systems, and about the policies relating to Child Protection and Juvenile Justice.

Outline work schedule

23 May 2001	Circulation of draft National Report to panel members
20-24 June 2001	Panel's first study visit to Luxembourg
	Meetings with representatives of: the Ministry for the Family, Social Solidarity and Youth, the Service National de la Jeunesse (SNJ), the Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse (CSJ), the Conférence Générale de la Jeunesse Luxembourgeoise, the Conference National des Eleves, Entente des Maisons des Jeunes, CESIJE, CNIEJ, Centre de Médiation, Agence Nationale du Programme 'Jeunesse', CAJL, SESOPI, CLAE, and CePT, and with the authors of the National Report. Visits to SESOPI, CePT, and to Centres Résidentiels Nationaux pour Jeunes (study centres) at Marienthal, Hollenfels, Eisenborn and Larochette.

26-29 September 2001	Panel's second study visit to Luxembourg
	Meetings with Madame la Ministre Marie-Josée Jacobs; representatives of: Ministère de la Famille, de la Solidarité Sociale et de la Jeunesse; Ministère de l'Education Nationale de la Formation Professionnelle et des Sports; Directrice de l'Education Différenciée; Administration de l'Emploi. Visits to Dudelange, Diekirch, Weicherdange, Troisvierges and Vianden, to see Maisons des Jeunes, Kulturfabrik, N-E regional SNJ, Lycée Classique, and Forum pour l'emploi.
Mid-November 2001	Draft Panel Report circulated to panel members for comments and to the Luxembourg team to check factual accuracy.
21-24 January 2002	Presentation of Review, Luxembourg

1.5. Organisation of this report

The review will explore the specific characteristics of Luxembourg and the problems these present for youth policy-makers and examine what we mean by youth and youth policy in Chapter 2. The review then broadly follows the format of the National Report in picking up its analysis of the living conditions of young people in Luxembourg and linking this to policy structures. Thus, we then explore different strands of transition to adulthood in turn and consider, as far as we are able, policies in relation to education, employment and unemployment, housing and homelessness, and social protection (in Chapters 4-7). Chapter 8 considers the provisions which feature most strongly in the Luxembourg case, and which are perhaps more traditionally associated with youth policy: Participation, Youth Work, and Youth Centres. In Chapter 9 we briefly review the policy structures as described in the National Report. Our last chapter identifies aspects of youth policy in Luxembourg which we would want to single out for praise, points from our report which we would wish to highlight, and some recommendations for future research, policy and practice.

2. Youth and youth policy

2.1. A question of perspective

The concepts of "youth" and of "youth policy" vary nationally and historically, and therefore need to be kept under constant review. One of the purposes of the Council of Europe programme of intergovernmental reviews is to develop an understanding of distinctive and common themes which could inform European-wide policy initiatives. The specifics of national contexts, embodied in the National Reports, are thus brought into a more general context through the work of the international panel of experts.

The *National Report on Young People in Luxembourg* and this review by the international panel are both based on frameworks of organising principles. In both cases, youth is defined as the age group 12-25, the upper age limit following the commonly accepted current cross-European definition. It will become clear to the readers of the two reports, however, that their definitions of what constitutes youth policy vary. While the National Report describes the very strong emphasis of Luxembourg youth policy on social participation, leisure and non-formal educational activities (and the cover design includes the quotation, "Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind"), the emphasis of this review in contrast will take a life course approach, focusing on young people's transitions to adulthood, and the extent to which policy structures exist to help this progress. The difference is between seeing young people as "being" or as "becoming". This is not only a dichotomy of perspectives, an either/or, but presents a real and constant dilemma to those who conduct research on young people, who devise policies for them, and who are involved in service delivery.

The different theoretical perspectives lead to different policy structures. Thus, a Luxembourg view of "youth" as "being" leads to a definition of youth policy in terms of youth work, and youth organisations. A perspective of youth as "becoming", comprising young people in the process of becoming adult, leads to a more holistic policy approach which includes structures for enabling young people to establish themselves in the labour market, in the housing market, and to hold rights within the structures of welfare. Stafseng (2000) in the Council of Europe review of policies in Estonia comments that these two approaches are age-related, thus, policies stressing activities for young people tend to be more directed at young people in their teens, while policies focused on strategies for becoming adult are more likely to include those at the upper end of the age range.

Overall the trend is towards governments gradually taking the route towards recognising the difficulties contemporary society poses for young people in transition, and moving away from the concept of young people as a static and homogeneous group which poses a problem for society. The National Report goes part of the way towards reflecting this trend, by indicating the need for holistic policies (referred to by the term "global policies"), but it still does not recognise the transitional needs of young people. Thus, Luxembourg youth policies can be characterised as peripheral policies explicitly set up for young people rather than core ones, focusing on the transitions to social and economic independence in the labour market or housing or welfare (and therefore overlapping with policies for adults).

The conceptual tension outlined above between the two approaches represents the central theme of this evaluation report. Previous national reviews have also taken distinctive perspectives of young people and youth policies. Each appears to have been guided by a central theme. Among recent reviews, for example, the report on the Netherlands defined young people as within the very wide age group 0-25, and focused on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. The Estonian report focused on education, and defined young people as recipients of formal and informal education. The Finnish report focused on integration and participation. The Council of Europe (2000) itself has identified themes of participation, citizenship, democracy, tolerance, non-formal education and leisure activity, young people with special needs and young people in specific circumstances. It makes it clear that different themes become dominant in different countries. The recently published EC White Paper on youth policy (*A New Impetus for Youth*) suggests a new framework for European co-operation which includes "taking better account of the 'youth' perspective in other policy initiatives", but places its own main emphasis on participation. The needs of young people may be more appropriately provided for in employment or housing ministries, but as the White Paper argues (p.19), "ministers responsible for youth policy should also ensure that youth-related concerns are taken into account in these other policies". Youth policies are thus a part of the wider policy structure and cannot be evaluated in isolation.

Appropriate policy interventions are concerned with integrating young people into the wider social world, rather than marginalising them from it. Indeed, integration is a constant theme of youth policy in Luxembourg. This report will show how the theme can be developed further and more positively. Social research can assist, by providing evidence of the ways in which patterns of transitions and young people's needs change over the life course, with age, and over historical time. All governments can also draw on cross-national European comparison, since, even though each country is in a

unique position historically, socially and economically, there are also common trends and common needs pertaining to young people across Europe.

2.2. Transitions to adulthood

Increasingly across Europe, policy-makers are recognising that it is important to retain an understanding of the place of "youth" in the individual life course. The National Report itself refers to the need to avoid over-compartmentalisation in youth policy and the importance of addressing the needs of young people in transition to adult life (p. 104). It stresses that young people are not a homogeneous grouping and that the social conditions in which they live are changing fast. It is important therefore to think about what is meant by transition to adulthood, to identify ways in which this is changing, and to understand the nature of diversity in youth. The National Report provides some indication of this, but we can also draw on European trends, from which Luxembourg is not immune.

If, as a working definition, we think of "childhood" as a period of social and economic dependence (on parents or other carers) and 'adulthood' as the achievement of independence, then "youth" can be seen as a period of transition from one to the other, characterised by changing degrees of semi-dependence (Jones and Wallace, 1992). According to much European research on youth (IARD, 2001; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; or Jones, 2002[1]), young people's experience of youth is undergoing significant change, partly because of their own changing expectations, partly because of changing socio-economic and policy structures, and partly because of wider global change.

There is no longer a normative ordering along a unitary pathway to adulthood (comprising a school-to-work transition followed some years later by a household-and-family-formation transition). This kind of pathway was perhaps uniquely prevalent in the 1950s and early 1960s, but nevertheless persists as the model on which policies are based. Instead, the transition to adulthood can be broken down into different but inter-connected strands or pathways (including into employment, and household and family formation). "Progress" to adult independence may involve backtracking (such as dropout from and re-entry into education or training, returns to the parental home, and tentative partnership formation and cohabitation). Young people can become adult according to one criterion but not another. Thus they can become economically independent but still live in the parental home, or live independently but with parental support. A holistic ("global") approach to

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1. Jones, G. (2002, forthcoming) *The Youth Divide* provides a summary of the large UK programme of research on transitions in youth funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

research and policy is needed to understand the new character of youth transitions and identify young people's needs. Policy interventions which affect one area of young people's lives are likely to affect other areas as well.

Key points include the following:

– The period of youth has been extended and has become more complex. There are now more likely to be intermediate stages between school and entry into the labour market, between living in the parental home and having a home of one's own, and (perhaps) between being a child in a family and being a parent or partner in one. Each of these stages is, however, potentially problematic. The significance of individual events (rites of passage perhaps) within these transitions has changed. Since household formation has become more separated from family formation transitions, leaving home has become a more important life event in itself (Jones 1995). Similarly, leaving school becomes less significant when it is not accompanied by starting employment.

– The end product, adult citizenship, is less secure and less clearly defined: access to the labour market, an independent home, and a stable family life is more in doubt than before, in what has been termed the "risk society" (Beck, 1992). Though young people still aspire to conventional constructions of adulthood (job, home and family, though not necessarily in that order), we should beware of seeming to judge them on outdated criteria of "success" and "failure".

2.3. Inequalities in youth

There is longstanding variation in patterns of transition to adulthood between social groups. Across Europe, there is variation between northern and southern countries in the ages at which people leave the parental home, for example. There is also variation within nations: typically and historically, middle class transitions have been more protracted than working class ones. Women have similarly entered partnerships and become parents earlier than men. Social class and gender differences such as these may be changing, but they are not disappearing. In the UK it has been found that while more and more young people are following patterns of extended dependence previously associated with the middle class, and gender differences are gradually reducing, there is at the same time an increasingly distinct polarisation. At the "bottom end" are young people for whom transitions to adulthood are more accelerated and more imbued with risk. These young people are sometimes also identified among the "socially excluded", and may include teenage parents, unqualified school leavers, and homeless young people.

Social exclusion is generally identified where individuals are excluded from employment, housing, health care, etc. However, all young people are to

some extent excluded from aspects of the wider (adult) society. They are marginalised as an age group. But young people are also a heterogeneous group, and people who are of the same age may be at different stages in their transitions to adulthood, and suffer social exclusion in different forms and to different degrees. Being "in transition", some may not yet be seeking employment and housing, or they may not yet be taking responsibility for their own health care; others, however, may have sought these but failed to gain access to them.

Part of any youth policy programme will need to concern itself with currently excluded groups: these will be the most visible, and probably also those who are identified as social problems (often meaning the problems for society, rather than the problems of society for young people). Young people who are identified as excluded and in need of support are only the tip of the iceberg, but it is they who are targeted for positive or negative intervention. These may include homeless and jobless young people, or teenage parents; they may include young people who have turned to drugs, alcohol or crime. Because many dimensions of inequality may be crosscutting, then we find that many in these groups are disadvantaged by social class, gender, ethnicity, and disability. In catering for the mainstream, or targeting the most easily identified groups, we should be careful not to close our minds to those who may be excluded but are less visible and pose fewer problems for society. Research might indicate new forms of social exclusion and identify hitherto unknown vulnerable groups.

2.4. Social protection: the state or the family?

The relationship between the child and the wider society (citizenship) is to a great extent, and for better or worse, mediated by parents or other carers (thus, for example, welfare benefits are paid to parents rather than to children, and child poverty is measured at the level of a child's household rather than that of the individual child). The young person is possibly in an even more anomalous social position, half citizen in their own right and half citizen-by-proxy, via their parents or carers. Thus, inequalities (and advantage or disadvantage, integration and exclusion) accrue to young people in part directly as individuals, and in part indirectly via their parents. Individual characteristics may not therefore provide adequate indicators of social disadvantage and exclusion in youth: family characteristics may also need to be taken into account.

The extension of the period of dependent youth raises the question of who young people should be dependent on. In northern Europe, where the welfare state is currently under threat, responsibility is increasingly being shifted onto parents precisely at a time when there is increased likelihood of marital

breakdown, and an increased chance that young people will not be living with their two natural parents. In the countries of southern Europe, where families have always held the major responsibility for young people and where family breakdown is less common, there may be less of a problem. The issue though is whether parents are either willing or able to provide care and economic support for their children, and perhaps also whether young people are willing to defer the achievement of adult independence.

Perhaps one of the main changes in recent decades has been that young people are seeking independence earlier. This dynamic is likely to continue with or without state support, and with or without family support. Thus, some young people leave home without resources and despite the risk of homelessness, because they need to become independent of their parents (Jones, 1995).

These issues will increasingly create problems for youth policies which focus on the young people as an individual without taking full account of their family contexts. All policies for young people affect their families, and many family policies affect young people.

3. Language and multi-culturalism

3.1. Introduction

The National Report describes the living conditions of young people living in Luxembourg whatever their nationality, and makes the point that one in three of young people who are resident in Luxembourg do not have Luxembourg nationality. This distinction between resident nationals and resident non-nationals was identified to the panel as one of the main features affecting youth policies. It certainly appears to have a major influence on policy thinking.

3.2. Immigration to Luxembourg

For economic reasons, and indeed as a member of the EU, the country has had to open up its borders and allow immigration. For the most part this has been by white southern Europeans, responding to labour market needs in the host country. There are very few non-European immigrants, with the exception of a small group from West Africa (Cape Verde Islands). The National Report shows the increasing representation of other nationalities within the Luxembourg population, from 26% in 1981 to 37% in 2000.[1] Immigrants are mainly from other European countries, particularly Portugal and Italy, though the neighbouring countries of France, Belgium and Germany are also fairly well represented. In all, 13% of those living in Luxembourg in 2000 are Portuguese, compared with 8% in 1981, a small but significant increase. Incoming migrants more than make up for attrition among the Luxembourg population,[2] and as a consequence, the overall population has grown. Among young people 12-24 years of age, 57% are Luxembourg nationals and 43% are foreign nationals, with Portuguese as the largest single group.[3] These demographic changes have led to concerns about the nature of Luxembourg nationality and identity.

In the last few years around 5000 refugees have also entered Luxembourg. The country was not prepared for this influx, which led to the adoption of legislative measures as matter of urgency.

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1. If this figure includes 2nd generation immigrants, it may be an indication of differential birth rates rather than increased immigration.
2. the Luxembourg population figures include students temporarily away at university.
3. The National Report distinguishes between Luxembourg nationals and foreign nationalities but does not indicate whether among Luxembourg nationals there are people of, for example, Portuguese origin.

3.3. Language

Language use is an important subject in Luxembourg, and our comments below (Section 4.2) in relation to education selection and the school curriculum reflect this. The National Report notes that 81% of the population speaks Luxembourgish in their own homes, while around 8% speak Portuguese. However, Luxembourgish is mainly for oral rather than written purposes. The other languages of Luxembourg, French and German, tend to be used for written communication. The Language Act 1984 deliberately avoids using the term "official language", and makes it clear that the administration in responding to an application should use the same language as the applicant (National Report, p.17).

We understand from the Ministry of Education that attempts to develop a language policy are recent, and that most of the debate is on which language is the most "important" or most "integrative". Language can constitute a means of differentiation and inequality. Nico Weber is quoted in the National Report as saying:

> French is what keeps the country together, multilingualism is what keeps it going, and *Lëtzebuergesch* is what sets it apart.

While it is very understandable that feelings about retaining the national language are strong, its use may ultimately also depend on its perceived value. It seems likely that with the increase in international banking and hi-tech industries in Luxembourg, English will become a more commonly used language, as elsewhere.

In the meantime, however, there is a requirement in the education system that children from immigrant families should become proficient in Luxembourgish, German and French and indeed educational achievement may depend on a high level of multilingualism (see Section 4.1 below). Opinions appear to differ whether or not this is "a good thing" (for example providing valuable transferable skills and thus increasing employability abroad), or whether it increases the disadvantage of immigrant groups and devalues their native language and culture.

3.4. Citizenship

The law on Luxembourg nationality was revised in 2001. Children born in Luxembourg and with no other nationality, or born abroad to a Luxembourg citizen, or born in Luxembourg of parents unknown, are all citizens. Children can obtain citizenship by being adopted by a citizen. Foreign nationals can apply for naturalisation in some circumstances if they are over 18 years and have lived for the previous five years in Luxembourg. The law does not allow dual nationality. Applicants for naturalisation must have lost their previous

nationality, and must be able to justify the application in part by being able to speak Luxembourgish or being willing to learn to speak it. Thus immigrants (or their children) who are uncertain whether they will stay in Luxembourg or return to their (or their parents') country of origin may not wish to make the commitments involved in applying for Luxembourg citizenship. Portuguese and other immigrants may prefer to retain their original national identities if they do not feel that there is a secure future for them in Luxembourg.[1] Perhaps this is why it is comparatively rare for immigrants to Luxembourg to gain citizenship, in comparison with other EU countries (Eurostat, 2000).

Project Horizon offers citizenship education for immigrants, and is concerned with socio-cultural education, and education for immigrant parents. It is also concerned with increasing political participation among immigrants. The last municipal elections were the first time when minorities became eligible for election. CLAE (an umbrella organisation concerned with citizenship) argues that there is a need to improve the concept of citizenship and nationality in Luxembourg. While Luxembourgers and other European Union (EU) citizens have the same rights on paper, the rights of non-EU nationals are not clear.

3.5. Multi-culturalism and cultural pluralism

A very important part of government policy relates to multi-culturalism. The expectation of the Luxembourg Government is that incoming groups should be integrated into Luxembourg life and culture. The challenge faced by the government is to create an environment for integration, and particularly political participation among minority ethnic groups.[2] It was a theme which recurred throughout our visit meetings and the National Report, and a theme to which we will return below. There is a real need, clearly identified, to ensure full participation of minority ethnic groups in Luxembourg society. The question is whether the aim should be assimilation (whereby immigrants are accepted into, and adopt, Luxembourg culture), or cultural pluralism (involving both participation and recognition of cultural difference).

Two organisations that we met were specifically set up to deal with immigration issues. SeSoPi is part of the Roman Catholic Church dealing with migration, liaising with relevant ministries and engaging in pastoral work. Its aim is the integration of immigrants. CLAE engages in lobbying and civic and

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1. It is common practice among immigrants to many countries that they retain a foothold in their countries of origin, sometimes sending money to their relatives "back home", and sometimes returning there to inherit a family home, or when they have saved enough capital to set up a business there.
2. The broad policy was identified by Mme Jacobs, the Minister. We are using the term "ethnicity" here to refer mainly to white ethnicity, reflecting cultural belonging and difference.

cultural education. It produces dictionaries to and from Luxembourgish. It stresses also the need for education of the Luxembourg population which it views as lacking understanding of cultural difference, and the need to improve the reciprocal images of the different ethnic groups in Luxembourg. CLAE attempts to raise awareness of other cultures through cultural festivals ("Festivals des Migrations") and provides help for "illegal" immigrants, which are at the centre of the debate about racism.

A third organisation with which the panel had no contact, ASTI (Association de soutien aux travailleurs immigrés) provides also support of various kinds for migrant workers.

In Luxembourg, multi-culturalism mainly takes the form of separate co-existence. In our meeting with CLAE and SeSoPi the point was made that cultural difference was not an issue in Luxembourg: thus, different ethnic groups can co-exist without conflict, but at the same time there was little interaction between them.

> We therefore submit that Luxembourg's present-day multi-cultural society is marked much more by living alongside at a distance (already an improvement on some other European societies!) than by living with each other. (National Report, p. 137).

Lack of understanding of cultural difference is not the same as multi-culturalism. We were surprised to hear the Italians and Portuguese criticised in one meeting for having their own supermarkets and their own football teams. There was also criticism that the football team was keener to play in the Portuguese league than the Luxembourg one. This may represent a rather extreme minority view, but it does suggest that true multi-culturalism has still some way to go in Luxembourg. The presence of ethnic minority groups in Luxembourg potentially adds to the richness of the country and cultural diversity should be celebrated, not repressed.

We return to the need to cultural pluralism at various stages of this evaluation. One of the policy and research issues is whether people of immigrant origin are disadvantaged in the school system, or whether (when social class etc. are controlled for) they fare no worse than their equivalents among the longer standing Luxembourgish population. There may be evidence on both sides of this argument.

4. Education

4.1. Introduction

Education is currently the remit of two separate Ministries: the Ministry of National Education (Primary and Secondary Education) and the Ministry of Culture, Higher Education and Research. Education programmes are developed by the Ministries and their implementation then devolved to local level.

Education policy and provision in Luxembourg – and especially the routes through education – are under review. There appear to be a number of indications that the education system is not functioning well, we identify some of these below. Firstly, the bipartite education system appears to be socially divisive, and educational achievement may be based on accident of birth rather than merit. Secondly, it appears that while the system works relatively well for the mainstream pupil, it works less well for those out of the mainstream. Thirdly, the question of whether the system works or not is largely a matter of speculation, since there are insufficient statistical data on outcomes from education. The increasingly common question among governments is the extent to which education adds value – though admittedly this is a notoriously difficult question to answer. If it merely reinforces pre-existing inequalities it clearly does not.

Integration, as indicated above, is one of the principles guiding education policies. Around half of all school students are "of foreign origin", and this is indicated in the National Report as a major problem in education in Luxembourg. The question is whether the education system is flexible enough to serve the needs of the young people passing through it, or whether young people have to adjust to fit in, or drop out. The review of education should consider the advantages of greater flexibility. Arguably, the current emphasis on integrating into a 'mainstream' has adversely affected several social groups whose particular needs are yet to be addressed.

4.2. Secondary education

Selection

Luxembourg operates a bipartite secondary education system, within which 31% of pupils are in general secondary education (ESG) and 69% in technical secondary education (EST).[1] This would seem to represent a very

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1. The panel visited a secondary school in each of these two sectors.

traditional approach to secondary education which makes little allowance for "late developers", and which is likely to crystallise early social disadvantage. Selection at 12/13 years occurs on the basis of orientation advice given by school guidance counsellors to parents. Children with learning difficulties are advised to enter the less demanding EST system. There is a higher proportion of males and of "foreigners" in technical secondary education, and a danger that selection is made on the basis of ethnic grouping, since advice is often given on the basis of language skills. Children of Portuguese origin tend, for example, to be guided into EST when they are at primary school. Even with this selection process, ESG appears to allow a high degree of underachievement, and an average 10% of pupils have to repeat the year, and 10-14% fail their final examinations.

Language requirements

In order to progress to ESG, children have to be proficient in French and German. This disadvantages young people from families where other languages are used. Young people from these families are nearly three times as likely to be in EST than in ESG. The National Report, quoting SeSoPi, suggests that the education system is biased against those who speak Latin-based languages (who have difficulty with German), and results in their marginalisation. CLAE have recommended that secondary school education should be in Luxembourgish and that French and German should be introduced gradually in secondary education. Given the enormous richness of the Portuguese language, its global value and wealth of literature, it seems extraordinary that proficiency in Portuguese is not exploited.[1]

Arguably, there is too much emphasis on perfection in language skills; the emphasis needs to shift to communication skills instead. The very strong emphasis on language proficiency in Luxembourg has resulted in around half of school time being taken up with language classes, to the detriment of teaching in other subjects (that is, sciences).

Low achievers

The Luxembourg education system fails most obviously when it is realised that a large share of school students leave with low or no qualifications. The main reason for this is that there is no structure of examination or qualification at intermediate stage, and so there are no diplomas to be gained by early school leavers. With its labour shortage and high wages, the labour market plays a part in encouraging young people to leave education too soon. However, it also appears that many young people fail to adjust to

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1. While some municipalities have experimented with native language classes at primary school level, nothing similar exists at secondary school level (National Report, p.34).

secondary education and effectively "drop out" at an early age. During our visit to the Forum pour l'emploi, we heard about the difficulties of trying to redress the deficiencies of the secondary education system among young adults who had been out of the system for several years. There appears to be a gap in provision here, and appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that children of school age are receiving education appropriate to their needs.

Some provisions are intended to redress the problems which are arguably caused by the education system itself: in other words, they are not designed to tackle the core of the problem, only its outcomes.

– A **Preparatory Stream for Technical Education** exists for those unable to make a direct transition from primary school into EST, catering for 12/13 to 14/15 year olds. Many of the young people involved in this are Portuguese and/or working class. The last year of compulsory education is 15, but Preparatory Scheme students can continue in education at the lower levels of ESG, though only 10% do. Alternatively, they can join a vocational training scheme with employment, or start an apprenticeship at 15 years; around 65% take one of these routes. Around 10% go into jobs (for instance as cooks, plumbers or painters). There is follow-up of school leavers to check that they are in education, training or employment, and have not dropped out of the system. However, it is possible that some will have already dropped out of the system and will not have been followed up.

– The **National Centre for Continuing Professional Education** enables school leavers to obtain qualifications, and is not age-based. Perhaps the emphasis should shift to developing systems of vocational qualifications at school, so that more school leavers can improve their employment chances, and far fewer leave without qualifications of any kind.

– The stated aim of **Action Locale pour les Jeunes** is "to make the transition from school to active working life as smooth as possible", and short training schemes are provided for vulnerable school non-achievers at age 12 years. Most of those who want it can apparently get 7-day training in life skills and help with developing life plans, help with budgeting, and so on. Normal secondary education does not contain social education of this type because the curriculum is already too full.

4.3. Special needs

The Ministry for Health is responsible for child health, school health – in terms of psychological, physical and social health. Until the WHO-funded study of school-age health and well-being, there was little data on young

people's health generally. Overall, however, Luxembourg has a good track record in terms of child health and health promotion in schools.

The welfare of young people with disabilities[1] involves collaboration between the Ministry for Education (which provides education) and the Ministry for the Family, Social Solidarity and Youth (which provides accommodation). An earlier policy to educate young people with disabilities in special schools was abandoned with the 1994 Act and the aim became to integrate them fully into the school system. The question of identifying health and educational needs while children are of school age is being addressed, but the education system is based on an ideology of equality which discourages positive discrimination. Disability groups are not represented on the Youth Council and we can only assume that the needs of young people with disabilities – as constructed by young people themselves – are not being addressed. It was suggested to us that children with disabilities are too invisible in Luxembourg, though since 2003 will be the Year for People with Disabilities, perhaps they will receive more attention.

Three issues arose during the study visits regarding special needs:

– There is provision for children with special needs in primary education, but not at secondary level. There is a move to get this established in Luxembourg so that children do not have to go abroad to schools where appropriate special provision exists.

– Although it is estimated that around one in ten school children may be dyslexic, the condition is not compensated for in the education system, and dyslexics are therefore very disadvantaged. We understand that there has recently been a change of emphasis from treatment (with dyslexics attending special classes) to prevention (on the basis that with greater integration into the mainstream, some dyslexics will overcome their problem). At the moment it does not seem that their needs are being sufficiently recognised or met, since many dyslexics are entering EST because of the selection system, rather than being helped through ESG and into Higher Education.

– Our visit to the Forum pour l'emploi showed that family problems among primary school children were not being identified by schools, even though they may affect their attendance and achievement.

– We understand that there is a school mediation service (separate from the Mediation Service described below) which deals with issues such as bullying.

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1. "Disability" is the term of preference among those with disabilities rather than "handicap" since a disability does not necessarily handicap a person.

4.4. Higher education (HE)

There are currently no universities in Luxembourg, though there are 3 colleges at which HE courses can be undertaken, leading to qualifications in technical engineering, primary school teaching and social work. These courses can represent the first two years of a degree course completed elsewhere. HE comes within the general responsibility of the Ministry for Culture, Higher Education and Research therefore.

It might be expected that a population of 400 000 could sustain a national university, and that this would have a beneficial effect on culture more generally, including and increase in research activity, increased library provision, in Luxembourg, as well as supplying the needs of local industry. On our second study visit we were informed that a decision had been taken to start a small university in Luxembourg, though it is not yet decided what form this will take.

Since there are no universities in Luxembourg, most Luxembourg students enrol at foreign universities. Most live abroad, migrating out mainly to other neighbouring EU countries. A small population of around 5 000 HE students lives in Luxembourg and commutes abroad to study. It seems that students from Portuguese immigrant families sometimes return to Portuguese universities for their studies.

It is roughly estimated that participation in HE is between 27 % and 33 %. The only figures available on HE participation are based on proportions receiving family allowance benefit for study purposes. This lack of accurate statistics is a serious deficit, and suggests that a longitudinal school-leavers survey is needed to clarify such issues as the destinations of school-leavers, the proportion of HE students studying abroad, and labour market destinations of graduates. According to anecdotal evidence, graduates tend to return to work in Luxembourg, but it would be helpful if there were empirical evidence of this. Where do graduates go? Do they return to live and work in Luxembourg when they graduate? To what extent are they included (either at present as 18-22 year old students living abroad, or later as 22-25 year-old returners) in youth policies – or even youth research?

5. Employment and unemployment

5.1. Luxembourg labour markets

We have very little information about labour markets in Luxembourg, either in terms of the industries represented or the types of jobs available. The National Report describes the demise of the iron and steel industry between 1970 and 1999, when the numbers of workers fell from 14 379 to 2 595, but points out that it is still the largest private employer in Luxembourg. As elsewhere globally, manufacturing jobs are giving way to service industry ones, and the National Report points out the increasing significance of banking and telecommunications in the Luxembourg economy. These jobs are likely to require graduates. It would be helpful to know what non-graduate entrants into the labour market actually do, as well as whether Luxembourg students return to work in Luxembourg after they have graduated.

We understand that there is a labour shortage at every level, and this is the reason for workers commuting into Luxembourg from neighbouring countries for higher level jobs in the labour market, while immigrant groups take the lower level jobs. The National Report indicates that the number of commuters rose from 13 400 in 1980 to an estimated 78 400 in 1999. It is estimated that the current figure is around 90 000 commuters daily, and that in 2000, commuters took up 80% of the newly created jobs.

A central feature of the labour market in Luxembourg is the high rates of pay, even for the kinds of manual and low-grade service jobs taken up by immigrant workers. This is what attracts foreign commuters and immigrants to work in Luxembourg and (presumably) also attracts Luxembourg students to return after completion of their studies. In meetings, it was mentioned that young people from neighbouring countries are trying to enter the Luxembourg labour market because the jobs are well-paid, and that as a result there is over-credentialism – i.e. many workers are over-qualified for their jobs, e.g. in supermarkets. The result is that there are very few opportunities for those without qualifications. As long as there is full employment, this may not be a problem, but employers already cannot afford to take on staff in some cases. Should economic circumstances change, and a recession return, there will be increased over-credentialism, causing an increased demand for lower-level jobs among Luxembourg nationals and higher unemployment among those without qualifications.

In 1997, 32% of young people in Luxembourg were in employment. In general young people are entering the labour market later, as they extend

their education. There are apparently indications that young people's wages are falling in relation to those of adults.[1] This may reflect a pattern found elsewhere in Europe whereby the "traditional" youth labour market catering for school leavers is shrinking and the jobs in it are increasingly likely to be low grade and low paid.

5.2. Unemployment

The unemployment rate is generally low in Luxembourg, at 2.6% in April 2000 according to the National Report. At the same time around 300 young people were registered unemployed, and an additional 800 were on government training schemes for the unemployed. Unemployment, especially longer-term unemployment, is mainly among unqualified young people from working class families. In practice this often means young people from immigrant families. We suggested in Chapter 4 on education, above, that the combination of a labour shortage and high wages may be an important factor in causing the high level of unqualified school leavers.

It is frequently observed that when there is an economic recession, it is the young workers who first lose their jobs (and as a corollary, first regain employment when the recession ends). Apart from training schemes (see below) it is important to protect young people from unemployment by raising the level of their academic and vocational training through the normal processes of education. Failing this, and with growing pressure from more qualified job applicants, there is a very great risk of increased youth unemployment in the near future.

5.3. Schemes for young unemployed

The principal schemes for unemployed young people are designed to ensure their entry into the labour market rather than to improve their labour market position through education. The 1999 Employment Action Plan contains the following measures (somewhat equivalent to the New Deal in the UK) for young people under 30 years of age, guaranteeing them benefit amounting to 80% of the RMG (Guaranteed Minimum Income):

– Contrat d'Auxiliaire Temporaire du secteur public (CAT PU) – temporary employment (12-18 months) in the public sector.

– Contrat d'Auxiliaire Temporaire du secteur privé (CAT PR) – temporary employment (max 12 months) in the private sector.

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1. This would be expected if more young people are staying in education, since the tendency would be for the youth labour market to focus more and more on lower grade and lower paid jobs.

– Stage d'Insertion en Entreprise (SIE) – company insertion training pro-
  gramme.

It is through these schemes that some young people are able to undertake
voluntary work in youth organisations such as the Maisons des Jeunes.

The panel visited a CAT-PR project run by an NGO. The Forum pour l'em-
ploi, in Diekirch, organises Community Service at Minimum Wage level for a
maximum 1-1½ years according to age. It was started 2½ years ago in a dis-
used factory. It caters for "low achievers", some of whom have not had any
secondary education, and aims to increase employability. Many clients come
from problem families and some have drug problems. A social worker is
employed at the Forum to help with personal and family problems. Some are
illiterate, and get referred to the CNFPC. In the last year, clients included 55
Luxembourgers and 11 Portuguese. The kinds of jobs include gardening and
laundry work. The Forum staff help clients to find employment in small local
firms where they will find it easier to cope. One of the continuing problems
is that of people living in difficult family circumstances, who have to continue
to live in the family context which may have been a cause of their problems.
This would mean that the good done through work and counselling at the
Forum is undermined. There has been some discussion among the staff
about whether a supported hostel should be attached to the scheme, and
this would seem to be an interesting proposal.

It is because of a failure in the child protection system that some clients have
dropped out of the education system at primary school age, and continued
to live in families which may be dysfunctional, without any attempt to
remedy their situation through early intervention. Too much is left to the
staff at the Forum, and the intervention comes too late. The Forum staff are
attempting to redress the deficiencies of a system which they say tends to
sweep problems under the carpet.

6. Housing and homelessness

6.1. Introduction

It is only relatively recently that leaving home became distinct from family formation as a youth transition. Before the extension of education and especially the expansion of higher education, young people would usually leave home when they married. Now, with the age of marriage or cohabitation, and the age at the birth of the first child getting higher and higher, other reasons for leaving home have come to the fore. This is now an area where research, policy and provision need to be developed hand in hand to ensure that young people's housing needs are met, and that homelessness does not increase.

There is no legal framework for providing housing for young people who are unable to live in the parental home because of conflict with (or in) their families. The Mediation Service is described in the next chapter. If it fails, then there must inevitably be a high risk of homelessness.

6.2. Leaving home

The median age for leaving[1] the parental home in Luxembourg appears to have increased from 23 years in 1985 to 24 years in 1997 (*National Report,* p. 61), and this increase is apparently mainly for financial reasons. The report suggests that students tend to live at home but presumably, being based on residents in Luxembourg, does not include the many students who are living away from home at universities in other countries. There is certainly scope for more research on patterns of leaving home and household formation in Luxembourg, but this will need to include information on students living abroad.

6.3. Housing provision

The question which research could address in the future is the adequacy of housing provision, and housing market structures, for changing housing need among young people. With more young people staying in education, and family formation occurring later in the life course, there is likely to be an

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1. Patterns of leaving home can be complex and statistics can confuse. Many young people leave home more than once, and it should always be made clear whether what is being measured is the first time or the most recent time a young people has left home. Housing need first arises on the first of these occasions (Jones, 1995).

increase in housing demand from single young people, including graduates returning from study abroad to work in Luxembourg. The panel had very little opportunity to learn about the Luxembourg housing market and the extent to which it catered for young people, and we were left wondering where young people live when they leave home, whether in their teenage years, or in their early twenties. Young people need affordable housing which provides appropriately for their needs. Many of them are still single when they are looking for this. Many of them may need to have housing provision which is flexible enough to allow them to move geographically from one labour market to another. Does the Luxembourg housing market provide this?

Housing is the responsibility of the Ministère des Classes Moyennes, du Tourisme at du Logement. The National Report indicates that housing subsidies exist, and that around a quarter of beneficiaries are under the age of 25 years.

6.4. Homelessness

Some young people are clearly identifiable as having housing problems: these are the ones who are roofless – sometimes known as "rough sleepers". There are also more invisible forms of homelessness ("hidden homelessness"), which includes (according to the UN definition) insecure, temporary and poor quality accommodation, such as sleeping on friends' floors, etc. The National Report itself did not discuss homelessness, though lack of access to housing is a key indicator of social exclusion. The panel was however informed that there were around 60 homeless people in Luxembourg, and that these were mainly under the age of 30 years, and were mainly unemployed and unqualified. We did not clarify which definition of homelessness was being used.

Since it is very likely that homeless young people may suffer from multiple disadvantage, such as unemployment, a disadvantaged family background, lack of family support, early history of truancy and low educational achievement, and perhaps also current behavioural problems, there should be appropriate provision for them, including supported hostels. Even though numbers of homeless young people are small, this is an area where families cannot be assumed to provide housing and support. According to Paul Schroeder, mediation lawyer, there are foyers in Luxembourg for young workers, but we have no information about whether these provide accommodation for homeless and jobless young people.

7. Social protection

7.1. Poverty

Luxembourg is a wealthy country with low unemployment. Nevertheless, welfare provision is needed for the poor or socially excluded, however poverty or social exclusion are defined.

The National Report indicates that 10% of young people aged 16-24 years are living in poverty (based on 40% of the average income) and argues that:

> Youth policy should devote itself to these young people, who risk definite marginalisation, and make additional arrangements for support and integration. (National Report, p.47).

In this chapter we consider whether existing arrangements are based on the assumption that parents will provide for young people, and whether there is evidence to show that this assumption is well-founded. We then consider alternative arrangements to protect young people in poverty.

7.2. Young people and their parents

In Luxembourg young people are the responsibility of their parents until the age of 18 years. In consequence, it is the parents who receive benefits rather than their children and we assume that the children are expected to be dependent on their parents and to benefit from their parents' welfare entitlements if necessary. Where young people are in education, their parents can receive financial support for them until they are 27 years of age, otherwise this ends with the age of majority.

According to Eurobarometer (p.39) 58% of young people aged 15-24 in Luxembourg received financial support from their parents or families; the Plan Communal Jeunesse survey of 15-20 year-olds give an equivalent figure of 84% from parents and 49% from families. This means that there are many young people who do not receive financial support from their families and who may need social protection in the form of state benefits. It seems that the welfare of the child may be taking second place to the welfare of the parents. A discussion about whether there should be an ombudsman for children has developed since 1996.

Mediation service

One reason why parental support may not be forthcoming is because of the quality of the relationship with parents. Where the parent-child relationship is poor, parents may not be willing to provide continued support. One of the functions of the Mediation Service, set up in 1998 following the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, is to provide mediation between children and their parents. It also provides information on legal and social services and other forms of mediation, including in criminal cases between offender and victim. There has been a move from referral to a lawyer, to mediation as a more suitable and better alternative. In 2000 there were 168 cases involving young people and 60 cases involving family problems.

Child protection

The experience of many of the clients in the Forum pour l'emploi suggests that there is little attempt to intervene in family problems even when children might be at risk. The mediation service may help some of those in need, but others are apparently left to their fate. The Children and Young People Protection Act 1992 is apparently the subject of ongoing debate. In the meantime, parents are still responsible for young people until the age of 18 years. Though the Act gave the juvenile courts the power to undertake preventive action, The National Report indicates (p. 81) that:

> the very principle of removing young people from their family environment, deemed incapable of bringing up the young person, and taking steps to take care of or place him/her is strongly contested.

Arguably, there is a need to reform the system, to expand and extend the role of the youth protection service, including the monitoring of children at risk. Young offenders under the age of majority are dealt with by juvenile rather than adult courts (though there are some exceptions). However, we did learn that Youth Court decisions are currently based on one judge's individual decisions and not on expert recommendations based on the child's welfare. There is currently a special commission in Parliament working on this issue.

7.3. Individual entitlements

If state benefits are paid to parents for young people in full-time education until the age of 27, what are young people entitled to themselves, if they are not in full-time education? They reach the age of majority at 18 years, but when do they begin to be treated as adults (rather than dependants of their parents) within the social security system?

Guaranteed minimum income

Until 1999, only those over 30 years of age were entitled to the RMG (Guaranteed Minimum Income). The age limit was then reduced to 25 years (or lower if people were unable to work because of illness or disability, or if they had child-care responsibilities – a group of 647 in 1999). Some young people can receive a lower rate of RMG. Young people registered on 'temporary auxiliary contracts' or 'insertion traineeships' have the right to 80-100% of the RMG for a period of 3 to 12 months. This provision covers young people who are acting as volunteers in youth organisations. The RMG is set at a level which is similar to that of unemployment benefit. Since there is no separate minimum wage in Luxembourg, there seems to be little incentive to encourage unemployed young people to seek employment.
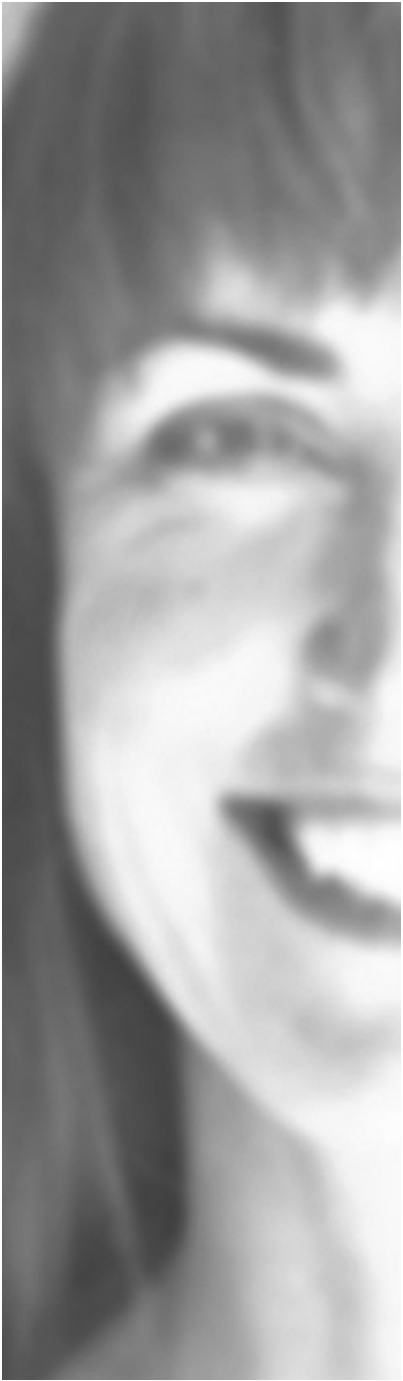
8. Youth work and other provisions

8.1. Introduction

In the last few chapters of this report the focus has been on the gaps in policy and provision, but this is far from the full story.

The central feature of youth policy and provision in Luxembourg is in the field of youth work and structures to enable and facilitate political participation. The most important tool to develop youth work at local level is the system of 'Action Plans' started in 1998 and supported by the government. These are discussed in the next chapter. Many of the current structures are of recent origin, relating to implementation of the Action Plans, and many are still in the process of developing systems of accountability and evaluation.

The principal aim of current youth policies in Luxembourg is 'active participation by young people in their community life' (National Report p. 103), and this is addressed through a range of youth work services. As the National Report indicates (and Chapter 10 below) these structures involve co-operation and collaboration between the national and local government, and between statutory and non-statutory bodies. The National Report (p. 109) expresses some concern however that the desired outcome of participation in community life is not being achieved through current structures, and that while the government may be committed to this, young people themselves are more interested in leisure and sports activities. If the objectives of greater participation among young people are achieved, and if the staffing of youth organisations becomes more professionalised, and if funding organisations (local and national) demand increased accountability and justification of costs, then it is likely that differences in aims will become intensified.

8.2. Centres de rencontres, d'information et d'animation pour les jeunes

Youth centres in Luxembourg, often called Maisons des jeunes (MJs) do not provide residential accommodation. Nevertheless they do provide space for a range of daytime and evening activities, mainly it appears for young people in their younger teenage years. Thus, though the Youth Service in theory caters for 12-20 year olds, participation is mainly among 12- 26 year olds. There are currently 28 MJs. The National Report indicates that MJs play a central role in Luxembourg youth policy, combining broader goals with practical training aspects.

The National Report points out that the MJs are attended mainly by young men, with young women severely under-represented. As it points out, it is important to understand whether young women of Portuguese families, for example, should be encouraged to join, or whether there would be cultural barriers to their doing so. Perhaps the gender patterning which leads young women to engage in same-sex friendships conducted at home, rather than peer group activities is persisting in Luxembourg, and should be respected.

The panel visited the MJs in Dudelange, and Diekirch. These provide a sanctuary for young people, a meeting place, and a locus for a range of activities. They appeared to be very relaxed and friendly places, often converted from houses and centrally situated, some with colourful graffiti-decorated walls, and well equipped with training equipment such as computers and audio-visual equipment. Typical organised activities include audio-visual initiatives, to allow young people to make films about their communities, and training in how to use the internet. The Dudelange MJ has two professional workers and also volunteers aged around 22 years, who generally have been clients earlier.

8.3. Non-formal education and training

A central feature of the work of the SNJ is the development of training programmes for youth workers. These are extensively described in the National Report (pp. 125-132). The policy is defined in Action Plan 3, but has evolved over a longer period. Training in youth work, through short courses, is provided for young people aged 16-20 (and thus itself is a form of youth work) and culminates in certificates which allow the holder to work as group leader or assistant group leader. Between 1986 and 1999, 3536 such certificates were issued. Apart from the SNJ other organisations can provide this training. Because voluntary youth work plays such an important role in Luxembourg youth policy, the quality of training of youth workers has gained in importance and the Youth Ministry (incorporating the SNJ) is responsible for quality control.

Recently established training courses also train young people as mediators in schools, dealing with bullying, violence, conflict, etc.

There has been considerable progress in professional youth work since its inception only 10 years ago, but the majority of youth work is still undertaken by young volunteers (see also Section 9.3 on this point). A very small number of young people undertakes voluntary work in Europe and there are also 18 incoming volunteers from other EU countries. The panel visited the SNJ residential training centre at Eisenborn and met a number of these trainee volunteers. The Youth Hostel Association is one of the hosting

organisations for European youth programmes, and provides accommodation and training for the volunteers.

8.4. Sport

Young people in Luxembourg can benefit from the highest density of sports provision anywhere in the world. They can have daily contact with sport at least at secondary school level, but it seems that there is a break in this pattern as people get older, and as many leave Luxembourg to study abroad. There are perhaps inadequate facilities for those who have left education, who cannot become members of a youth centre or sports association, who may live in a more rural area and find transport difficult. Facilities tended to provide for the mainstream and not be sufficiently directed towards more socially excluded groups, including young people of immigrant origin. Sports policy and provision therefore mirrors other aspects of youth policy in catering for younger teenagers but not providing adequately either for the over-18s or for the more disadvantaged groups.

8.5. Other provision for young people

Under the various Action Plans a range of specific local projects have been set up for young people. While most of these were originally focused on Luxembourg City, increasingly they reflect recognition of the needs of young people outside the capital, including in the more rural areas of the north. The following list is intended to provide an indication of the range, rather than to be exhaustive.

– Information - the NYIC runs a mobile information centre, which also sells the International Youth Card, and provides lower cost access to the Internet. The information bus does not provide information on sexual behaviour or drugs and alcohol. It was not clear which age group it caters for. Many other centres have information points for young people (under the Actions Locales pour Jeunes, or Action Plans). Brochures cover issues such as bullying in schools, drugs education, and information about where young people can go for further advice and help.

– The Addiction Centre is an establishment with official recognition of its public usefulness ("d'utilité publique"), opened around 5 years ago, but was originally proposed by the inter-ministerial group. It is mainly concerned with reaching adults, regarded as the responsible group, and does not see the problem as located in young people. It provides training, undertakes research, and contains a library. It provides a telephone service for addicts, and is gradually becoming engaged in providing a counselling service for the families of addicts, sometimes involving ex-addicts as workers. It is engaged with the police in drugs education. Its concern is

with addictive behaviours (alcohol, drugs, smoking, gambling, worka-holism, etc). Luxembourg has similar levels of addiction to elsewhere, though heroin addicts are more likely to retain links with their families. The point was made that prohibition of drugs makes primary prevention difficult, and that treatment programmes should be legally permitted.

– *Action locale pour jeunes* helps young people with finding their first jobs, writing their CVs etc. Several local municipalities offer holiday jobs to over-18s in July and August. TSE schools sometimes have links with local industry.

– Ecology education is a feature of some of the study centres, including those we visited.

– Recognising that young people in more rural areas often have transport problems, some local authorities have got together to provide transport (the Kino Express in Dudelange is a bus which takes young people into Luxembourg City for the cinema) to recreational facilities. In rural areas, young people are more likely to meet in youth clubs they set up on their own, often supported by local authorities.

– The Kulturfabrik (an innovative cultural centre) was converted from an vast abattoir into an arts and cultural centre in Esch-sur-Alzette with a grant from the government of €1.93 million and receives currently around €308 thousand in annual running costs. It provides space and facilities for art classes, pottery workshops, rehearsal rooms for pop/rock musicians, an art gallery and two theatres. There is also a restaurant. The clients are not only young people but include adults with learning diffi-culties and younger children. It is a very impressive place and will hope-fully play a major part in developing artistic and cultural expression among local groups.

– Many of the towns and villages in Luxembourg are twinned with towns abroad and arrange exchange visits for young people.

9. Policy structures

9.1. The issues

The National Report tells the history and current framework of youth policy structures in Luxembourg and there is no need to repeat it here. The underlying principle of youth policy structures in Luxembourg is that all policies for young people should be brought together, so that young people are treated as an integral group. In this chapter on policy structures, two questions concern us. The first is whether existing structures appear to work in terms of current youth policy priorities. The second is whether existing structures could allow for youth policies to develop in a more holistic way. If Luxembourg were to move towards a more holistic youth policy agenda which took the broader view of youth advocated in this review, then this second question is also important. It is therefore dealt with briefly below.

In the course of the panel's study visits, we met representatives from a range of youth organisations. We also met on both visits a number of representatives from the relevant Ministries, quangos and NGOs, and municipalities, as well as of young people themselves. How do these different levels work together to produce effective policies? As the National Report (p. 103) itself indicates, there are important current issues concerning the policy structures, in respect of:

– the relationship between vertical policy structures;
– the relationship between transverse policy domains;
– the balance between volunteering and professionalism; and
– the effectiveness of young people's participation.

This chapter of the report seeks to avoid getting bogged down in the complexity of the policy structures by focusing on these themes.

9.2. Vertical structures

Vertical structures are defined here as the national, municipal and grass roots. We are mainly concerned with the links and relationship between these levels, the ease of communication between them.

Government priorities are fixed at the start of every 5-year term. There is variation between political parties in the emphasis placed on youth organisations or on disadvantaged groups. Government policy agendas are broadly defined by the central government through Action Plans, but responsibility

for their interpretation and implementation is largely devolved to local level. There have been three Action Plans specifically concerned with youth policy:

1. The Action Plan for Participation by Young People, 1997.

    This emphasised the need for active participation and learning through participation. It was supported through the Municipal Youth Plan of the same year which aimed to institutionalise co-operation between local and national levels.

2. The Action Plan for Communication with Young People, 1998.

    This set out an information policy for young people (under the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child), and created a structure for the development of information centres (co-ordinated by CNIEJ), Municipal Information Points, the information bus, and Youth Cards. Specific provisions broadly within this plan include the Mediation Centre and the Drug Addiction Prevention Centre (both described above).

3. The Action Plan for Youth Work, Voluntary Action and Partnership, 1999.

    This aims to review all youth policies to ensure synergy and coherence, but focuses on voluntary youth work and in particular the role of MJs and the SNJ.

National frameworks need to be flexible enough to be adapted according to local need but at the same time they need to ensure some evenness of provision. As far as youth work is concerned, this is achieved through the Service National de la Jeunesse (SNJ). The SNJ has a very clearly defined mandate to create an infrastructure for non-formal education and youth participation. It has played a key role in the development and delivery of youth work in Luxembourg. It has been in existence since 1984, and came under the aegis of the Youth Ministry in 1994.

The Conference Générale de la Jeunesse Luxembourgeoise (CGJL) is the central umbrella organisation for youth organisations in Luxembourg, and has the function of liaising between them and the national government. It was founded in 1961 and restructured into a non-profit organisation in 1987. Because of differences between its member organisations, its role in representing them has been particularly difficult, but the potential value of the CGJL has not been fully exploited. The National Report points out that as a result, the CGJL has missed opportunities for an active political contribution to the Action Plans. It is clearly important that these differences should be addressed, if the CGJL is to play a fuller role in agenda-setting, but it may not be feasible to expect youth organisations to speak with one voice. The CGJL is concerned with ecology, social and gender equality, sustainability, international development etc. It acts not only at national level but also though the European Youth Forum at European level. The organisation also

has a funding problem. In many European countries, it is recognised that youth organisations need minimum subsidies to supplement the subsidies they receive through projects, since much of their work is not project-related. The panel considered that the Luxembourg government should legitimate and support the role of the CGJL (which currently has only one paid staff member) by providing more financial support.

The Plan Communal Jeunesse 1997 (Municipal Youth Plan) attempts to insti-tutionalise concerted action between the national and the local levels. The National Report points out that local politics matter in Luxembourg, since there is no middle tier between the state government and the municipalities. Grassroots ideas can shape policy developments. Some municipalities use local youth committees to plan and implement youth projects. Thus, for example, Youth Councils can propose projects and look for partners to set these up. The Plan Communal Jeunesse gives the municipalities an instru-ment for planning medium-term youth policies at local level. Plans are drawn up in consultation with young people, through Youth Forums (see below). It has been implemented by eight municipalities, but others are currently plan-ning its implementation.

Participation of young people in policy-making

It is not only through participation in voluntary youth work but also through participation in policy-making that young people can potentially learn to experience democracy at first hand. Organisations such as youth forums and representation on local and central decision-making bodies can be seen as important forms of empowerment. The danger is always that participation can be seen as token rather than real by the adult population. The other problem is that of representativeness. To what extent do the young people who actively try to engage in politics of this kind actually represent young people in general?

– Every secondary school has a school council with elected members, which sends representatives to the Conference Nationale des Elèves (National School Student Council). The organisation works on a tiny budget, but is state financed. It appears to be somewhat undeveloped as a lobbying structure, though it advised on the White Paper in 2000. Furthermore, there was criticism that the CNE was not very democratic, and that attempts to make them more democratic were based on "political play rather than reality". There was a need to improve liaison with immigrant groups and students. Young people with disabilities are not represented on the CNE. This grouping feels its role is completely token. These school representatives can advise on education policy, but not youth policy more generally. The feeling was that the government was only interested in listening when young people ratified policies, rather than criticised them.

They feel that they cannot put pressure on the government on issues which concern them, that they do not get sufficient access to information, and that they are being manipulated.

– Youth Forums then discuss specific needs at local level. Meetings of the Conseil supérieur de la jeunesse are held every two months for communication between young people, local authorities and the ministry. The aim is integration of young people into decision-making processes, but participation is mainly among 12-20 year olds. Through these structures young people could if they wish by-pass youth organisations (including the CGJL) and have direct access to ministers. There have also been National Youth Forums.

– If a Luxembourg University is established, then participation is likely to include students through their Students Union, and representation among some over-18s at least could be developed.

9.3. Horizontal structures (transverse policy domains)

At the start of this chapter, we posed a second question: would the existing policy structures allow youth policies to develop in a more holistic way? There appears to be a political recognition of the need to broaden out the definition of youth policy. The Action Plan 3 includes a holistic agenda: one of its aims is "to ensure the socialisation of young people and their preparation for the many changes in the economic and cultural domains". This paves the way for policies and provision to develop in the fields of welfare and housing, for example. There are also Action Plans in each area of government policy which overlap with some of the transition policy needs identified in this review. Thus the National Employment Plan (1999) included provision to integrate unemployed young people into employment.

The Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse (CSJ) was set up in 1984, and comprises representatives from various ministries dealing with youth issues (the Ministries for Employment, Justice, Education, Health, Culture and Family, Social Solidarity and Youth), plus delegates from five NGOs, and is chaired by the Ministry for Youth. It is a discussion forum, but is not involved in agenda setting and has no official decision-making power. It was this body which discussed and agreed the structure and methods of the National Report. Some of the gaps which we have identified in the National Report may be accounted for by the fact that neither the Ministry for Social Security nor the Housing Ministry is represented on the CSJ. Surprisingly, the CSJ is not represented on the Sports Council or the Employment Council. It appears to be a somewhat under-developed resource, perhaps marginalised and sometimes side-stepped (see National Report, p. 106). Should it become responsible for the evaluation of policy and provision affecting young

people? Should the Housing and Social Security Ministries be recruited? Should it be better linked to wider organisations?

9.4. Volunteering and professionalism

We met a number of practitioners who felt unsupported by these structures. The SNJ has a commitment to voluntary youth work, which it sees as central to its philosophy, but the question here is whether the balance in staffing between volunteers and professional (paid) workers in different organisational structures is appropriate. This issue cropped up in relation to the Maisons des Jeunes (MJs), the CGJL (which, as we suggest above, would benefit from the funding of additional staff posts) and also the CNE, or National Youth Council (which, we were told, was staffed by voluntary workers only, and urgently needed a professional worker to develop and co-ordinate liaison with student and immigrant groups). Feelings on this issue were very strong among some of the people we met during and following a meeting at an MJ in Luxembourg, and we are therefore reiterating them here. The suggestion is that too much emphasis is placed on volunteering.

MJs form a focus for youth work in urban areas (as indicated in Section 8.2). The projects are co-funded between the Ministry and the municipalities, and there is a clear financial commitment to providing for this important feature of youth policy. The state is demanding more accountability and more professionalisation (see National Report, p. 123), but without providing additional funding for this aspect of the work. Many staff feel hard-pressed, isolated and unsupported by the Centre. There is a high turnover of staff, and Luxembourgers are leaving the youth sector. The feeling was that volunteers are being asked to do too much. It was suggested that professional workers should be employed to undertake the bureaucratic work, and volunteers to be responsible for the activities involving young people. There was a strong feeling that there was a need to create a better climate of co-operation between the parties involved. Clearly, these very real concerns need to be addressed, if volunteers are not to feel that their goodwill is being exploited.
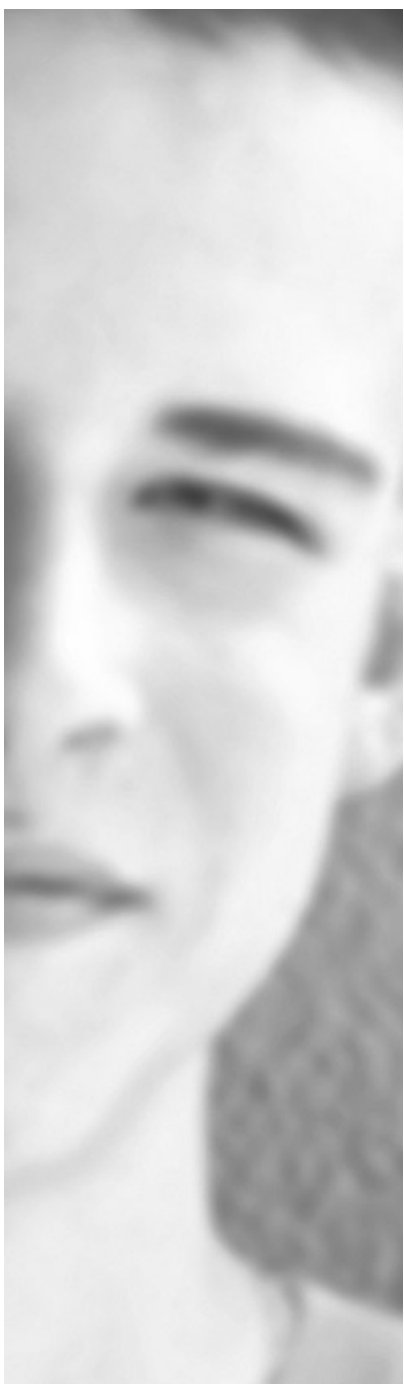
10. Conclusions and recommendations

10.1. This review

In previous chapters of this review we have discussed the various perspectives which inform youth research and policies in Europe, and have commented on the particular conditions which affect young people in Luxembourg. We have not restricted our focus to youth work, the explicit focus of youth policy in Luxembourg, but have extended our concern to other aspects of the lives of young people, and specifically to the problems faced by many young people as they become adult. Many of these problems were also highlighted in the National Report. We have expressed a number of concerns about youth policy in Luxembourg, but we hope that we have also indicated some of the achievements we have seen. This final section contains some of our tentative conclusions, drawn from our interpretation of the data provided for us in the National Report and by informants from the policy and practice fields. Inevitably we are focusing on areas where policies are needed or are appearing not to work, and where we feel that a re-think is needed.

10.2. Youth policies in Luxembourg

The 1996 Youth Ministry Policy Guidelines (Lignes Directices de la politique du Ministère de la Jeunesse) refer to the need to overcome compartmentalised views in order to meet the needs of young people. It recognises that with changing social conditions specific provision should be made for young people in the stage of transition to adult life (National Report, p.104). Many of the changing conditions within which young people make their transitions to adulthood in Luxembourg are indicated in the first part of the National Report. One might indeed expect that the following sections of the report would concern themselves with policies to improve these living conditions, but this is not the case. In practice youth policies in Luxembourg follow very traditional lines and policies to assist transition are under-developed. In Chapter 2 of this review we highlighted the differences in perspective between "traditional" policies aimed exclusively at young people and emphasising youth work and youth participation, and the trend across Europe towards more holistic policies which aim to ease the transition to adulthood. Though Luxembourg policies appear to be a little ambivalent about which way they should be directed, Luxembourg is clearly traditional in terms of practice and provision. So far the attempts to become more holistic have been tentative. What is core to current Luxembourg youth policy would still be regarded as peripheral if a wider perspective were taken.

There is no doubt that many aspects of Luxembourg youth policy are impressive. The youth work undertaken in the Maisons des Jeunes and study centres reaches a large number of young people across the country. There are some innovative projects at local level, and some imaginative approaches to developing provisions for young people in rural areas. The panel was particularly impressed by the Forum pour l'emploi and the Kulturfabrik, even though these were not exclusively within the domain of youth policy (or perhaps because of this).

At the same time, however, there appear to us to be areas of youth policy which are not working as well as they might. In the previous chapter we highlighted some of the organisational and structural problems we identified, and in particular the dangers of relying too heavily on a voluntary and temporary work force, and the problems of representation and participation of many different voices in democratic structures.

10.3. Towards a new agenda?

We have identified several areas of youth policy which have given cause for concern, and are heartened to know that many of these concerns are shared and widespread, so that, as a result, many policy areas are currently already under review. These include the juvenile justice system, and routes through secondary education. We hope that the reviews in these policy areas will take some account of our comments. We have suggested that the emphasis of the education system is so heavily on integration into the mainstream that the needs of some groups are not being met, and that the system itself is contributing to their situation as disadvantaged. In particular, we had concerns about the ways in which the education system fails many young people by introducing divisions between them based on language ability, by over-stressing language teaching to the detriment of other subjects, by putting too many unqualified young people into the labour market, and by failing to intervene at a stage in a child's life when disadvantage could be redressed.

There are many young people with needs in Luxembourg, ranging from the needs of potential students for a local university, to the probable but unrecognised wide-ranging need for affordable housing. There are also the needs of young people with disabilities or learning difficulties not only not to be discriminated against but also to be able to maximise their abilities and gain access to a good education, good jobs and quality housing. It appears that while the structures of youth policy in Luxembourg could be shifted without much difficulty to allow these needs to be met, currently they are not being met. Some of them are not even being recognised.

10.4 Need for preventive work and to redress disadvantage

We heard criticism from some of the staff we met who worked in policy or practice fields that the tendency in Luxembourg was to deny problems, to sweep them under the carpet. The concentration on the mainstream, and the stated aim of integrating all into the mainstream, appears to be detrimental to those who cannot fit in, and who have particular needs of their own. We have briefly discussed the problems concerning young people with special needs in the education system, and especially issues concerning those with learning difficulties and those with disabilities. Any state, however wealthy, will contain people who are failed by the system, and since the causes and consequences of social disadvantage change over time, it is therefore essential that social policies should be constantly under review. There are inequalities among young people, and these should be addressed. A focus on integration should contain a recognition of varying need. It appears though that some childhood disadvantage is allowed to continue through into adulthood without intervention until it is too late. For example, the child protection system should be providing some means of ensuring that children do not drop out of the system at primary school age and remain out of the system until adulthood.

10.5 Policies for young people 18-24 years

Given the empirical evidence that young people are a heterogeneous grouping with different needs according to their degree of social and economic independence, it becomes difficult to conceive of or justify youth policy and provision which takes a narrow age focus. According to the National Report, youth is defined as 12-24 years. However, youth provision in Luxembourg seems to cater mainly for teenagers.

This could be because of the difficulty in identifying and reaching an older age group with traditional youth work. Policies for young people of 20 and over will inevitably be aimed at helping their transition into the adult social world, rather than retaining them in the social world of young people. However, Luxembourg has a specific problem in relation to this older age group. The combination of the high level of in-migration of workers from other parts of Europe (either as commuters or as residents) with the high level of out-migration (possibly temporary, possibly not) involving young people going abroad to study confuses both the statistics and the definition of youth policy. The net result of these two movements is that there is a loss of young people of HE student age in Luxembourg, and an over-representation of lower-achievers among residents in this age group. We cannot help but note that one-third of the population of 18-23 year olds are 'missing' from Luxembourg, attending universities abroad. This 'selection out' means

that those in the age group who are living in Luxembourg are perhaps those with the greatest needs, but it is difficult for social policies to provide for such a shifting population.

10.6. Need for research

Policies need to be based on research evidence. While the National Report shows that a lot of research has been done on growing up in Luxembourg, it also shows the gaps. Specifically, the National Report indicates that over-all national statistics are inadequate, and that the many local qualitative studies may not provide sufficient evidence for policy development. There seems however to be a great need for research on the processes involved in transitions to adulthood. There are no data on the outcomes for school leavers, or on the destinations for graduates.[1] There is very little on house-hold and family formation, and nothing on early housing careers. There is an urgent need for a longitudinal study of school pupils, to see what happens to them. In the UK, for example, the Youth Cohort Study and the Scottish School Leavers Studies, based on cohorts of young people in their final com-pulsory year at secondary school, provide invaluable information for educa-tion and training policy. To help policy makers in Luxembourg, it might be necessary to examine the transition right through from Primary School, to identify the reasons for drop out, low qualification rates, entry into the labour market, and patterns of out-migration and return among those going on to HE. It would be difficult and expensive to maintain contact with migrants and those who drop out of the system, but would be well worth the expense.

10.7. Finally...

Our overall conclusion is that the current formulation of youth policy in Luxembourg, while fulfilling its own aims in an exemplary way, needs to take on board new challenges facing young people from 15 to 25 and to recog-nise all the domains in which young people become adult. This should be part of the process of review of youth policies, a necessary process in all countries.

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1. The need for further research on the outcomes for school leavers has also been identified by the Chambres des Députés, Débat d'orientation sur une école de l'intégration, No. 4615, 29.11.2000.

Appendix 1

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Appendix 2

Organisations with their abbreviations and English translation

Full name	Abbrev	English translation
Association Soutien aux Travailleurs Immigrés	ASTI	Immigrant Workers' Support Association
Centrale des Auberges de Jeunesse Luxembourgeoises	CAJL	Youth Hostels
Centre de Prévention des Toxicomanies	CePT	Addiction Prevention Centre
Centre d'Etudes sur la Situation des Jeunes en Europe	CESIJE	Centre for Research on the Situation of Young People in Europe
Conférence Générale de la Jeunesse Luxembourgeoise	CGJL	General Conference of Luxembourg Youth
Centre de Liaison, Info et Aide pour les Associations d'Etrangers au Luxembourg	CLAE	Liaison, Information and Aid Committee for Associations of Foreigners in Luxembourg (umbrella organisation)
Centre National d'Information et d'Echanges de Jeunes	CNIEJ	National Centre for Information and Youth Exchanges
Conférence Nationale des Elèves		National School Student Council
Conseil Supérieure de la Jeunesse	CNE	Higher Youth Council
Enseignement secondaire général	ESG	General secondary schools (lycées)
Enseignement secondaire technique	EST	Technical secondary schools
Fédération Nationale des Eclaireurs et Eclaireuses de Luxembourg	FNEL	Scouts and Guides Associations
Maisons des Jeunes	MJ	Youth Centres
Revenu Minimum Garanti	RMG	Guaranteed Minimum Income
SeSoPi Centre Intercommunautaire	SeSoPi	Inter-Community Centre, associated with RC Church
Service National de la Jeunesse	SNJ	National Youth Service (co-ordinated the National Report)

Appendix 3

**Opinion of the Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse
of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg**

The Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse, which comprises representatives of the ministries concerned with youth questions, the Luxembourg General Youth Conference and youth movements, and whose responsibilities include giving opinions on all youth questions, takes note of the international report prepared by the Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport.

The Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse congratulates the Directorate of Youth and Sport on this review exercise, which makes a real contribution to the development of youth policies in the member states. Having examined the report, it also wishes to congratulate the Expert Group on its general conclusions, which provide valuable pointers for the Grand Duchy's future youth policy. Given the extent of the challenges, and having regard to the prospects outlined in the report and the European Commission's White Paper, Luxembourg intends to organise wide-ranging consultation, to help it to determine the future thrust of its youth policy. A national forum, to which all those concerned with youth work were invited, was organised on 13 April 2002. This marked the start of the consultation process, and working parties, focusing on various priority themes, will be meeting throughout the year. 2002 will also see the start of an ongoing assessment process, covering the aims and working methods of youth policy – a process based on participation and dialogue, which should help us to work out a policy matching the needs of young people in our country.

At the same time, it must be emphasised that, when the report was officially presented in Luxembourg on 22 January 2002, the members of the international group of experts had different reactions to its findings and conclusions. The differences centred on the multi-cultural nature of Luxembourg society. In this connection, the members of the Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse noted that the report had been based on a national assessment report and a number of fact-finding visits, carried out in 2001. The Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse regrets that some of the statements contained in the report generalise from a few isolated comments, and have not been critically analysed. The same applies to some of the things said about the Luxembourg school system and child welfare.

Finally, the Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse wishes to emphasise the conclusions of the Consultative Meeting on national youth policy reviews in Council of Europe member states (Luxembourg, 16-17 December 2000), and particularly the statement that the aim of the exercise will be "to try and

re-constitute a picture of the framework of guiding principles. Each country has a different idea of what youth policy is about and how it should be implemented. But some issues appear across national reports and they should be extracted as elements of youth policy".

Considering that "the specificity of national youth policy reviews resides in their potential for generating comparable data for the purposes of the elaboration of a (pan-)European youth policy report" (Consultative Meeting, Luxembourg), the Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse stresses that the training, activity and information aspects of any youth policy matching the needs of young people must be given extensive vertical backing. This solid vertical axis holds the key to developing a horizontal approach, giving young Europeans the fresh impetus referred to in the White Paper, and ensuring that other policies take fuller account of them.

Finally, the Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse reiterates its conviction that the report's general conclusions regarding the importance of horizontal structures, and the need for research on youth questions, can have an enriching effect on youth policy in Luxembourg.

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Opinion adopted by the Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse
on 23 April 2002

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This report is part of a series of international reviews of national youth policies carried out by the Council of Europe in collaboration and consultation with government agencies and ministries responsible for the development and implementation of youth policy, as well as with non-governmental youth organisations. An international review group has been given the responsibility of preparing a commentary on youth policy in Luxembourg. This study outlines its strengths and weaknesses, drawing where appropriate upon broader international evidence and debate.

The international review process was established to fulfil three distinct objectives:
– to advise on national youth policy;
– to identify components which might combine to form an approach to youth policy across Europe;
– to contribute to a learning process in relation to the development and implementation of youth policy.

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