



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de l'Éducation nationale,
de l'Enfance et de la Jeunesse



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THE LUXEMBOURG EDUCATION SYSTEM AN OVERVIEW



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About the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

Because of its small population (626,000 inhabitants in 2020, in an area of 2,586 sq.km.), it is easy to forget that the Grand Duchy is a sovereign state in its own right. It is a founding Member State of the European Union, which it presides on a rotating basis.

Although the population is small in terms of numbers, it is extremely diverse: more than 47% of residents are foreigners, of more than 170 different nationalities; 84% are nationals of a European Union member State.

Cross-border workers from France, Belgium and Germany also play a key role in the Luxembourg economy: more than 200,000 come in to the Grand Duchy each day to work.

Immigration and cross-border mobility are reflected in the working population, 73% of whom are foreigners (46% cross-border workers and 27% foreign residents)¹.

Diversity goes beyond passports: it is reflected in the languages spoken², people's socio-economic origin, their migration experience, family and social histories, and their talents.

As a result of strong political determination, Luxembourg's education system has considerably evolved in recent years, in keeping with developments in Luxembourg society and an international environment that features digitalisation and globalisation.

This brochure provides an overview of the organisation and current functioning of the education system. It is intended for use by anyone, whether in the Grand Duchy or elsewhere, wanting to find out about the subject.

More detailed information is available on the Ministry's website at www.men.lu, and in the full brochure entitled [The Luxembourg Education System - 2020](#).



¹ Diploma of classic secondary studies and Diploma of general secondary studies

² Also a "1+GED" class added to the subject area educator
Luxembourg schools also offer adults the possibility to take the DAES (Diplôme d'accès aux études supérieures), which is equivalent to the Luxembourgish secondary school leaving diploma (Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires) and gives access to higher education.

¹Source : STATEC, *Population et emploi*, 2019

²In 2019, the language most widely spoken at home by more than 63% of pupils enrolled in public education was not Luxembourgish. Nearly 44% of pupils in public education do not have Luxembourg nationality.



C H A P T E R A

CHILDREN UP TO 4 YEARS OLD



A. Children up to 4 years old

The structures for very young children operate according to the general objectives and educational principles determined at the national level by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth.

1. Education and childcare structures

Several types of structures look after children, from a very early age up to 12 years old. Collective education and childcare structures may, as appropriate, be called *crèches* (early child care provision, nursery), *mini-crèches* or *foyers du jour* (daycare centres), *maisons relais* (childcare centres), or *foyers scolaires* (school childcare centres).

There are collective education and childcare structures operating under a convention with the government, and commercially orientated private collective education and childcare structures.

A parental assistant takes care of children in his/her home, during the daytime or overnight.

2. The childcare cheque scheme

Under the childcare cheque scheme (*Chèque-service accueil - CSA*), the government provides financial aid for out-of-school childcare. It applies to children under 13 years old or those still in elementary school. The child's parents must be resident in the Grand Duchy, otherwise at least one parent must work in the Grand Duchy and be a national of a European Union member State. The CSA scheme is a system that provides free and reduced-price childcare.

3. Free plurilingual education

During 20 hours of free supervision in a collective structure under the CSA scheme, children from 1 to 4 years old are introduced to French and Luxembourgish in a playful way suited to their age. Value is also placed on the child's mother tongue.

4. Optional schooling from the age of 3

Elementary education is organised in four learning cycles (see page 14).

Cycle 1 corresponds to pre-school education. The first year (for children aged between 3 and 4), also called early childhood education (*éducation précoce*), is optional. One of its purposes is to continue the playful discovery of French and Luxembourgish started during plurilingual education.



C H A P T E R B

CHILDREN FROM 4 TO 11 YEARS OLD

B. Children from 4 to 11 years old

1. Schooling

School attendance is compulsory for all children aged between 4 (before 1 September of the current year) and 16.

There are some 160 public elementary schools in the Grand Duchy, spread throughout all the 105 municipalities in the country, and about a dozen private schools. There is no charge for pupils attending public schools, and textbooks as well as transport are provided free of charge.

1.1. Public national elementary school

The school year begins on 15 September and ends on 15 July.

Organisation in cycles

Elementary education is organised in four learning cycles.

- Cycle 1 corresponds to pre-school education; it is for children aged 4 and 5 (or, optionally, from the age of 3 years). Cycles 2 to 4 correspond to elementary (primary) education.
- Cycle 2 is for children aged between 6 and 7.
- Cycle 3 is for children aged between 8 and 9.
- Cycle 4 is for children aged between 10 and 11.

Learning

Learning is based on skills, i.e., on the capacity of the child to use acquired knowledge in order to achieve a result.

In principle, each cycle has a duration of two years. In exceptional cases, pupils may cover one cycle in one year or take three years to acquire the skills bases.

In Cycle 1, language learning focuses on the development of oral skills in Luxembourgish (the main language of communication), the introduction of spoken French, and placing value on the language spoken at home.

In Cycles 2 to 4, pupils learn to read and write in German. German is the teaching language

for all subjects (except French). The exposure to Luxembourgish which begins at crèche prepares children for learning German, since the two languages are very closely related.

Familiarisation with French continues in Cycle 2, but only for oral skills. Learning written French starts in Cycle 3.

Assessment

At the end of each term, an intermediate report (*bilan intermédiaire*), explained and commented at an individual meeting with the teacher, informs the parents of their child's progress in relation to the desired outcomes. At the end of each learning cycle, the educational team draws up an end-of-cycle report (*bilan de fin de cycle*): this certifies that the pupil has acquired the skills necessary for moving on to the next cycle.

The orientation procedure

At the meetings during Cycle 4, the parents and the teacher discuss their views on the route the pupil should take after having completed elementary education (to general secondary education, classical secondary education, European education etc). At the end of the cycle, they make a joint decision (*décision d'orientation commune*). This is based on the parents' opinion, the results of the *Épreuves communes* (tests at national level) taken by all pupils in the Grand Duchy, the pupil's academic results, and the results of the tests carried out by the school psychologist (these are optional).

In the event of disagreement, an orientation commission (*commission d'orientation*) meets in order to make a decision.

1.2. International public schools

European education in approved European schools

Four public schools offer a European curriculum from the primary classes upwards (French-, English- and German-language sections). They are open to all pupils, and there is no charge for enrolment. Pupils may then continue into secondary education leading to the European Baccalaureate.

UK-style education

One secondary school offers classes taught in English following the Cambridge Primary curriculum while also introducing pupils to the national languages (Luxembourgish and either French or German).

1.3. Private schools

There are a number of private schools that apply either the same curriculum as the Grand Duchy's public schools or another curriculum, while being subsidised by the government.

In addition to these schools, there are pre-school and primary classes at the two European Schools in the Grand Duchy; they are primarily intended for the children of staff at the European Institutions, who are not required to pay fees.

1.4. Support for foreign pupils

Children newly arrived in the Grand Duchy and/or pupils who are not mastering Luxembourgish or German when they start elementary school in the Grand Duchy are entitled to a certain number of hours of language support classes (*cours d'accueil*),

For Portuguese-speaking children, there are a number of programmes aimed at placing value on their mother tongue and easing their integration in the class.

Teachers are encouraged to organise language discovery activities directed at all the pupils in their class.

To facilitate communication, parents, teachers and the school authorities have the possibility of calling on the services of the ministry's intercultural mediators (*médiateurs interculturels*).

1.5. Support in elementary education for pupils with special needs

Special measures are set up to help children experiencing difficulty in keeping up with the normal pace of class work.

Locally, teachers specialising in dealing with pupils with special needs provide support for class teachers and educational teams in implementing adapted teaching.

At the regional level, each of the 15 directorates for elementary education has a support team for pupils with special needs that advises teachers. The teams are also able to offer specialised external intervention. In each of these directorates, an inclusion commission - at the request of either the parents or the teacher or a representative of the day-care centre (with the parents' consent) - defines what action should be applied to the pupils who need assistance.

If the solutions at the local and regional levels are not sufficient, it is possible to apply to one of the competence centres (*centres de compétences en psychopédagogie spécialisée*). These centres operate at the national level.

It is the National Inclusion Commission (*Commission nationale d'inclusion - CNI*) which proposes, on the basis of a dossier and a specialised diagnosis, that one or more of these centres should be responsible for a child or a young person. This cannot take place without the parents' agreement.

The competence centres

- *Centre pour le développement des apprentissages Grande-Duchesse Maria Teresa - CDA* (learning development)
- *Centre pour le développement intellectuel - CDI* (intellectual development)
- *Centre pour le développement moteur - CDM* (motor development)
- *Centre pour le développement socio-émotionnel - CDSE* (socio-emotional development)
- *Centre pour le développement des compétences relatives à la vue - CDV* (development of vision-related skills)
- *Centre pour enfants et jeunes à haut potentiel - CEJHP* (children and young people with high potential)
- *Centre de logopédie - CL* (language and speech therapy)
- *Centre pour enfants et jeunes présentant un trouble du spectre de l'autisme - CTSA* (children and young people with autism spectrum disorder)
- *Agence pour la transition vers une vie autonome - ATVA* (transition to independent living)

2. Outside teaching hours

Outside classroom hours and during school holidays, children may be looked after either by a parental assistant or by a collective education and childcare structure, generally located near the school, and sometimes even in the same building.

The CSA scheme (see page 11) reduces the cost borne by the parents.

The teachers and staff of education and childcare structures are encouraged to cooperate in projects and shared activities (extracurricular supervision plans).



C H A P T E R C

STUDENTS FROM 12 YEARS UPWARDS

C. Students from 12 years upwards

1. Schooling

Secondary education is for young people from 12 years upwards. It is dispensed by more than 50 institutions: public institutions (mainly secondary schools), private institutions applying the ministry's official curricula, private institutions applying a different curriculum, and European schools.

The range of courses and diplomas on offer is very wide. Pupils and their families identify the institution that best suits them by consulting various publications and the www.mengschoul.lu portal.

1.1. Public national secondary education

While applying the ministry's official curriculum, each secondary school may, as part of its autonomy, introduce an educational approach, classes or specific measures tailored to its pupils' needs and expectations.

Classical secondary education

Classical secondary education (*ESC - Enseignement secondaire classique*) is general schooling spread over a period of seven years. It aims to prepare pupils for higher and university studies; on successful completion of their studies, they are awarded the corresponding secondary school leaving diploma (*diplôme de fin d'études secondaires classiques*).

German is the vehicle language for the first three years. During the following four years, all subjects (except German and English) are taught in French.

Starting in the second year of classical secondary education, pupils may choose English or Latin (or Chinese in one secondary school). From the third year onwards, all pupils are also taught English. At the end of the fourth year, pupils may choose one of the eight existing subject areas (sections) (A - modern languages; B - mathematics – IT; C - natural science - mathematics; D - economics - mathematics; E - art; F - music; G - human and social sciences; I - IT – communication).

At the end of each term (or semester), the transcript (*bulletin de notes*) indicates the marks obtained in the various subjects taught, any remedial measures, absences, and comments

on behaviour. At the end of the school year, the transcript indicates the decision on promotion (whether the student is to move on to the next class up, or not). During the transition phases, it also includes the opinion regarding guidance (*avis d'orientation*).

General secondary education

General secondary education (*ESG - Enseignement secondaire général*) covers 7 years leading up to the corresponding secondary school leaving diploma (*diplôme de fin d'études secondaires générales*). This diploma grants the same rights as the classical secondary school leaving diploma: the holder can either start a professional career or enrol in higher education (university or non-university studies).

During the first three years (guidance route), the vehicle language is German, except for mathematics, which is taught in French. Thereafter the vehicle language usually remains German, except for certain subjects which are taught in French.

Parallel to the guidance route, the pre-vocational route (*voie de préparation*) in general secondary education is for those pupils who, by the end of their primary education, have not acquired the required level of competence (*socles de compétences* - skills base). They are taught in modules, which allows them to progress at their own pace. They are prepared for joining a more demanding class or for vocational training. This pre-vocational route may be followed in either German or French.

At the end of the third year of general education, pupils can continue their path by choosing either vocational training or one of the five streams of general secondary education (administrative and commercial stream; health and social professions; general technology; art stream; hotel and tourist industry).

Assessment in general secondary education follows the same principles as classical secondary education.

Vocational training

Initial vocational training gives young people a general education, including both theory and practice. It begins after the third year of secondary education. Some 125 training courses are available, directed at obtaining one of three qualifications (from the least to the most demanding):

- *Certificat de capacité professionnelle* (CCP; Certificate of professional capacity), with a duration of three years;

- *Diplôme d'aptitude professionnelle* (DAP; degree of professional ability), also with a duration of three years;
- *Diplôme de technicien* (DT; technician's diploma), with a duration of four years.

Vocational training may be carried out :

- under the full-time scheme (*régime à plein temps*): at a secondary school, with periods of work experience totalling at least 12 weeks;
- under the concurrent scheme (*régime concomitant*): partly in a company and partly at a secondary school;
- under a mixed scheme (*régime mixte*): full-time at a secondary school for one or more years and the rest of the training under the concurrent scheme.

Most training courses are taught in German, although some are taught in French or English (special language classes - *classes à régime linguistique spécifique*).

Teaching is carried out in modules (and not by subject). Each module is designed to develop a number of skills and focuses on real-life professional situations.

Assessment is made on a semi-annual basis with transcripts, an intermediate review during training, a final review, and one or two integrated project(s) placing the pupils in a real or simulated professional situation.

1.2. Public international secondary education

European education

Four public schools offer a European syllabus at the secondary level (French-, English- and German-language sections) leading to the European Baccalaureate. These schools are open to all pupils, and there is no enrolment fee.

International education

Three public secondary schools prepare pupils for the International Baccalaureate (IB) in either English or French. This is a classic baccalaureate, offered by 2,500 secondary schools in 140 countries worldwide.

UK-style education

One secondary school offers teaching leading to the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) at about the age of 16, Advanced Subsidiary (AS) levels, and

Advanced (A) levels at about the age of 18. Teaching leading to the A-level qualification is offered in more than 125 countries worldwide. The qualification attests that the pupil has completed his/her secondary education.

German-Luxembourgish education

One secondary school in Perl combines elements of the German and Luxembourgish school systems, and leads to a qualification under the German system as well as to the Luxembourgish secondary school leaving diploma. German is the main vehicle language.

1.3. Private secondary education

Five private secondary schools follow the ministry's official curricula.

One private school prepares pupils for the International Baccalaureate (IB) in English, and another prepares pupils for the International Baccalaureate (IB) in French.

Another private school prepares pupils for IGCSEs and A-levels.

Three institutions follow France's official curriculum.

In addition to these schools, there are also secondary-school classes at the two European schools in the Grand Duchy, primarily intended for children of staff of the European Institutions.

1.4. Schooling for foreign pupils

The Reception Unit for newly-arrived pupils (*Cellule d'accueil scolaire pour élèves nouveaux arrivants - CASNA*) provides young people between 12 and 24 years of age with information on Luxembourg's school system and guides them towards suitable classes (integration classes (*classes d'insertion*) with extra lessons in either German or French, classes taught in French, reception classes for pupils with no knowledge of either German or French, etc).

As in elementary education, the ministry's intercultural mediators are available to help with communication.

1.5. Support in secondary education for pupils with special needs

For those children who find it difficult to keep up with the normal pace of teaching, there are assistance schemes at both the local and national levels, following on from the scheme in operation in elementary education.

At the request of either the parents or the school's director, the school's inclusion commission (*commission d'inclusion*) defines the assistance to be given and measures offered to a pupil with special needs and monitors the process. If these measures are insufficient, the commission proposes a personalised training plan (*plan de formation individualisé*), submitted to the parents for their approval. The plan is implemented by the support team for pupils with special needs (*équipe de soutien des élèves à besoins spécifiques - ESEB*).

The inclusion commission also advises the school's principal on implementing the reasonable accommodations that may be made for certain pupils (extra time in examinations, use of human assistance or technological aids, etc).

At the national level, it functions in the same way as the scheme applied for pupils in elementary schools.

1.6. Guidance

Each secondary school defines its orientation approach in its school development plan, and the approach is implemented by the orientation unit (*cellule d'orientation*). The aim of the approach is to help each young person make appropriate choices that correspond to his/her profile and provide the best chance of success.

The Maison de l'orientation (guidance centre)

This centre brings together in one place in Luxembourg most of the government's services in charge of guidance.

2. Outside teaching hours

Within the school, the socio-educational service (*service socio-éducatif*) is the main player in the extracurricular offer. It includes cultural, social and sporting activities as well as learning activities.

3. Higher education

The higher technician's qualification (*brevet de technicien supérieur - BTS*) is awarded at the end of a short course of higher education (four to six semesters) starting after the high school-leaving diploma. The aim of the course is to provide students with a higher level of vocational training in their specialisation.

The University of Luxembourg (www.uni.lu), created in 2003, has already earned an international reputation for its multilingualism (German, English and French), its internationality (students of 125 different nationalities), and its research programmes (including computer sciences, biomedicine, European law, and educational sciences).

Two private specialist higher education institutions, accredited by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, offer higher education programmes: Lunex (sport and physiotherapy) and the Luxembourg School of Business (LSB) (business and management). The Sacred Heart University Luxembourg (business and management) is authorised to organise courses in the Grand Duchy.

Even if they are not resident in the Grand Duchy, students enrolled for an eligible cycle of higher studies may apply for financial aid for higher studies from the government. The assistance comprises a basic grant plus possibly a mobility grant, a grant based on social criteria, a family grant, and a State-backed loan, and is paid to the student each semester.





C H A P T E R D

ADULTS

D. Adults

Recognition of diplomas

The recognition of foreign certificates and diplomas is subject to certain conditions.

Validation of prior experiential learning

The validation of prior experiential learning (*validation des acquis de l'expérience* - VAE) makes it possible to gain recognition for the skills acquired throughout one's life and obtain corresponding certificates and diplomas.

Support for continuing training

Salaried workers, the self-employed and people in the liberal professions may request individual paid leave for training (*congé individuel de formation*). This paid leave may total 80 days in the course of a person's career; it is paid for by the government.

They may also request language leave (*congé linguistique*) in order to learn Luxembourgish or improve their level. This paid leave may be granted for a total of 200 hours in the course of a person's career. 50% of the cost is paid by the government.

For people in a precarious situation or who have signed an integration and reception contract (*contrat d'accueil et d'intégration*), the cost of enrolling for a general-interest course is reduced to ten euros.

Private-sector businesses established in the Grand Duchy can obtain government assistance for funding training, amounting to 15% - 35% of the annual amount invested.

Back-to-education option

The back-to-education programme (*2e voie de qualification*) enables adults to obtain a recognised formal qualification. There is no charge for the options offered by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the secondary schools and the National School for Adults (*École nationale pour adultes* - ENAD).

The master craftsman's diploma (*Brevet de maîtrise*)

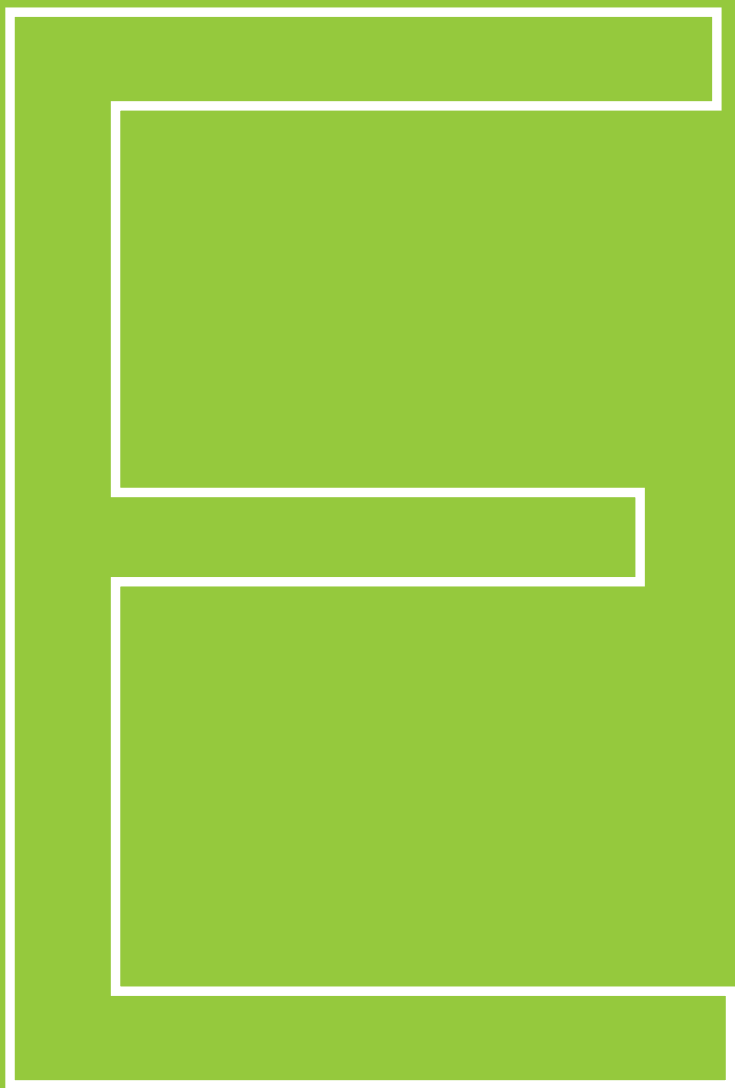
This qualification entitles its holder to set up a business in the craft trades as a self-employed person and train apprentices. Courses leading up to this qualification are organised by the Chamber of Skilled Trades and Crafts (*Chambre des métiers*). They are open to people

who hold certain diplomas and have at least one year professional experience in the particular craft.

General and civic training for adults

The ministry organises general and civic training courses in secondary schools and through the municipalities and various approved not-for-profit associations in the following areas: basic education course ; general interest classes ; courses related to integration and nationality.





C H A P T E R E
APPENDICES



E. Appendices

INFORMATION WEBSITES

Ministry of Education, Children and Youth
www.men.lu

Ministry of Higher Education and Research
www.mesr.public.lu

National Education Systems, Luxembourg, Eurydice
<https://bit.ly/2GvBtO>

Lifelong learning portal
www.lifelong-learning.lu

PUBLICATIONS



The Luxembourg
Education System,
2020



National report on education
in the Grand Duchy,
2018



ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE
TO LUXEMBOURG? YOU WISH TO
PREPARE IN THE BEST WAY POS-
SIBLE YOUR CHILDREN'S ARRIVAL
AND THEIR INTEGRATION INTO
THE SCHOOL SYSTEM?

For any information or appointment, please contact the CASNA
(Cellule d'accueil pour élèves nouveaux arrivants;
reception unit for newly-arrived pupils) of the
Luxembourg Ministry of Education, Children and Youth.

Telephone : (+352) 247-85207

E-mail : casna@men.lu

You can also visit the following website :





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