

Civic space in the EU: Mapping of national approaches to civic space monitoring, participation and protection

Luxembourg

February 2025

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1. MONITORING AND REPORTING ON CIVIC SPACE

1.1. Monitoring initiative from the side of the State

Has there been any initiative from the side of the State (government/parliament) to observe/monitor the restrictions/challenges/threats for civic space actors in your country in the last three years?

There has been no specific initiative from the side of the state in the past years.

1.2. Other monitoring initiatives

Has there been any other actor/body/mechanism that has observed/monitored civic space restrictions/challenges/threats in your country in the last three years?

There is no specific body solely dedicated to monitoring the civic space environment.¹ Luxembourg's closest entity to this function is the Consultative Commission on Human Rights (*Commission Consultative des Droits de l'Homme – CCDH*). The Consultative Commission operates independently (attached to the Government), providing opinions, conducting studies, issuing position statements, and making recommendations on human rights matters in the country. It advises the Government on strengthening human rights protection and promotion (Art. 1(2)).² It also takes proactive steps to support human rights in Luxembourg, suggesting actions to the Government and facilitating cooperation between national human rights institutions and international organizations (Art. 3(1-4)).³

The lack of a specific body monitoring the civic space and voicing its challenges and concerns is palpable in the country, as the Consultative Commission notes broader concerns, particularly regarding transparency of the legislative process and consultation of the government with civil society organisations, taking into account their opinions.⁴

¹ Luxembourg, Consultative Commission on Human Rights (*Commission Consultative des Droits de l'Homme – CCDH*) (2024), Annual report 2022 (*Rapport d'activités 2023*).

² Luxembourg, Act of 21 November 2008 creating a Consultative Commission on Human Rights in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (*Loi du 21 novembre 2008 portant création d'une Commission consultative des Droits de l'Homme au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*), 10 December 2008.

³ Luxembourg, Act of 21 November 2008 creating a Consultative Commission on Human Rights in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (*Loi du 21 novembre 2008 portant création d'une Commission consultative des Droits de l'Homme au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*), 10 December 2008.

⁴ Luxembourg, Consultative Commission on Human Rights (*Commission Consultative des Droits de l'Homme – CCDH*) (2023), Annual report 2022 (*Rapport d'activités 2022*), p.23.

2. PARTICIPATION

2.1. Rules on participation

Are there any binding rules in place in your country for the participation/consultation of civil society organisations for developing/implementing/monitoring laws and policies?

In Luxembourg, there is no general rule in place regarding consultations of civil society organisations for providing input to draft laws and policies.

In the case of legislative and policy proposals that originate from the Government, the current legal framework provides for both mandatory and discretionary consultations in certain areas.⁵ The majority of these relate to the consultation of professional organisations, such as professional chambers, or take place in the framework of Government consultative bodies created by law that might include civil society organisations. The direct consultation of civil society organisations such as non-governmental organisations is not specifically foreseen.⁶

In addition, mandatory participation of civil society organisations in policy making also occurs through interministerial hybrid cooperation platforms, such as the Interministerial Committee for the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (*Comité interministériel pour la promotion des droits des personnes en situation de handicap*). (see below)

However, in all these contexts, specific rules regarding the process for the consultations are lacking, notably regarding timelines or the obligation to provide feedback.

Regarding legislative proposals that originate from the Chamber of Deputies (*Chambre des Députés*), the current legal framework only provides for the mandatory consultation of the Council of State (*Conseil d'État*). Notwithstanding, the five professional chambers are systematically consulted in their respective field of responsibility, while other stakeholders may be asked to contribute to the process on a case-by-case basis.⁷

⁵ European Commission (2024), [2024 Rule of Law Report - Country Chapter on the rule of law situation in Luxembourg](#), SWD(2024) 816 final, Brussels, 24 July 2024, p. 19.

⁶ Luxembourg, Luxembourg Government (*Gouvernement luxembourgeois*) (2024), Input from Luxembourg for the 2024 Rule of Law Report - Annex II, 2024. To access the document, see the European Commission's webpage on https://commission.europa.eu/publications/2024-rule-law-report-input-member-states-and-enlargement-countries_en.

⁷ European Commission (2024), [2024 Rule of Law Report - Country Chapter on the rule of law situation in Luxembourg](#), SWD(2024) 816 final, Brussels, 24 July 2024, p. 19.

Against this backdrop, the revised Luxembourgish Constitution, which entered into force on 1 July 2023, provides for a citizens' right to put forward legislative initiatives.⁸

This new form of direct democracy⁹ translates into an obligation of the Chamber of Deputies (*Chambre des Députés*) to decide in public session on reasoned proposals for the purposes of legislating that are presented by 125 citizens and supported by at least 12 500 citizens having the right to vote.¹⁰

In accordance with the Luxembourg Government (*Gouvernement luxembourgeois*), this new right to put forward legislative initiatives enables citizens and civil society to submit ideas for legislation in a more precise and binding manner, when compared to the existing system of petitions.^{11 12}

The Luxembourgish Constitution provides that the exercise of this new right of legislative initiative is regulated by law.¹³ In this context, the Act of 29 June 2023 on the reasoned proposals for the purpose of legislating (*Loi du 29 juin 2023 relative aux propositions motivées aux fins de légiférer*) came into force on 3 July 2023.¹⁴

The reasoned proposals for the purpose of legislating are submitted to the Chamber of Deputies either electronically or on paper.¹⁵ Those declared admissible (i.e. effectively presented by 125 citizens) are published on the Chamber of Deputies' website for purposes

⁸ Luxembourg, Constitution of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (*Constitution du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*), 19 January 2023, Article 79.

⁹ Luxembourg, Luxembourg Government (*Gouvernement luxembourgeois*) (2022), 2022 Rule of Law Report - input from Luxembourg (*Rapport 2022 sur la situation de l'état de droit : contribution du Luxembourg*), January 2022, p. 25.

¹⁰ Luxembourg, Constitution of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (*Constitution du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*), 19 January 2023, Article 79.

¹¹ Luxembourg, Luxembourg Government (*Gouvernement luxembourgeois*) (2023), 2023 Rule of Law Report - input from Luxembourg (*Rapport 2023 sur la situation de l'état de droit : contribution du Luxembourg*), January 2023, p. 16.

¹² Luxembourg, Luxembourg Government (*Gouvernement luxembourgeois*) (2022), 2022 Rule of Law Report - input from Luxembourg (*Rapport 2022 sur la situation de l'état de droit : contribution du Luxembourg*), January 2022, p. 25.

¹³ Luxembourg, Constitution of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (*Constitution du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg*), 19 January 2023, Article 79.

¹⁴ Luxembourg, Act of 29 June 2023 on the reasoned proposals for the purpose of legislating (*Loi du 29 juin 2023 relative aux propositions motivées aux fins de légiférer*), 29 June 2023.

¹⁵ Luxembourg, Act of 29 June 2023 on the reasoned proposals for the purpose of legislating (*Loi du 29 juin 2023 relative aux propositions motivées aux fins de légiférer*), 29 June 2023, Art. 3(1).

of gathering the necessary supporting signatures.¹⁶ As with reasoned proposals, the supporting signatures may be submitted to the Chamber of Deputies either electronically or on paper.¹⁷ A reasoned proposal that meets the requirements of being presented by 125 citizens and supported by at least 12 500 citizens having the right will necessarily be discussed in a public session of the Chamber of Deputies.¹⁸

According to the Chamber of Deputies, the right to put forward legislative initiatives is yet to be used in practice.¹⁹

2.2.Consultative/participatory bodies

Are there any consultative/participatory bodies in your country that ensure the participation of civil society in developing/implementing/monitoring laws and policies?

The civil society participates actively in different areas of the national human rights system, both at policy and operational level.

In certain instances, civil society actors are formally involved in the activities of Government consultative bodies as well as hybrid cooperation platforms, such as interministerial committees that include public authorities, national human rights institutions and civil society. (see above) These play an important role in defining, implementing, and assessing policy at sectoral level. Examples of such interministerial committees include the Interministerial Human Rights Committee (*Comité interministériel des droits de l'Homme*)²⁰ or the Interministerial Committee for the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (*Comité interministériel pour la promotion des droits des personnes en situation de handicap*)²¹.

¹⁶ Luxembourg, Act of 29 June 2023 on the reasoned proposals for the purpose of legislating (*Loi du 29 juin 2023 relative aux propositions motivées aux fins de légiférer*), 29 June 2023, Art. 5.

¹⁷ Luxembourg, Act of 29 June 2023 on the reasoned proposals for the purpose of legislating (*Loi du 29 juin 2023 relative aux propositions motivées aux fins de légiférer*), 29 June 2023, Art. 6(2).

¹⁸ Luxembourg, Act of 29 June 2023 on the reasoned proposals for the purpose of legislating (*Loi du 29 juin 2023 relative aux propositions motivées aux fins de légiférer*), 29 June 2023, Art. 7(3).

¹⁹ Luxembourg, Chamber of Deputies (*Chambre des Députés*) (2025), RPLs [reasoned proposals for the purpose of legislating] (*Les PML [propositions motivées aux fins de légiférer]*), 2025.

²⁰ Luxembourg, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Defence, Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade (*Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes, de la Défense, de la Coopération et du Commerce extérieur*) (2024), 2023 Activity Report (*Rapport d'activités 2023*), 2024, p. 60.

²¹ Luxembourg, Order of the Government in Council of 8 October 2021 establishing the Interministerial Committee for the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (*Arrêté du Gouvernement en conseil du 8 octobre 2021 portant institution du comité interministériel pour la promotion des droits des personnes en situation de handicap*), 24 June 2022, Art. 3 (2).

2.3. Awareness raising and capacity building on participation

Does your Member State fund or carry out meaningful awareness raising and/or capacity building to support participation in your country?

Since 2023, the Ministry of Justice has launched an annual call for funding to support civil society organisations and human rights defenders. This initiative aims to enhance projects that promote human rights and provide training in the field of human rights.^{22 23}

To facilitate this funding, a new budget article was introduced in the Act of 23 December 2022²⁴, concerning the State revenue and expenditure budget for the financial year 2023. This budget allocation enables the Ministry of Justice to finance projects developed and implemented by organisations working in the field of human rights in Luxembourg. The budget line has been renewed for 2024.

The first call for projects in 2024, titled "Promoting Human Rights," was launched from June 17 to July 31, 2024, resulting in the selection of two projects. Later in 2024, another call for projects was launched, focusing on training in the promotion and protection of human rights, with a preference for the "train-the-trainer" format to maximise the multiplier effect.²⁵ Three projects were selected focussing on trainings in the area of human rights.²⁶

While the trainings do not focus specifically on participation or civic space/protection, rather on awareness raising and/or capacity building on human rights among CSOs, a previous project selected under the 2023 call for projects was dedicated to the protection of human rights in Luxembourg.²⁷ Its activities included a roundtable that focussed, among

²² Luxembourg, Ministry of Justice (*Ministère de la Justice*), Call for projects 2024 "Human rights training" (*Appel à projets 2024 « Formation aux droits humains »*), 31 October 2024.

²³ Luxembourg, Ministry of Justice (*Ministère de la Justice*), Annual report 2023 (*Rapport d'activité 2023*), p. 8.

²⁴ Luxembourg, Act of 23 December 2022 on multi-annual financial programming for the period 2022-2026 (*Loi du 23 décembre 2022 relative à la programmation financière pluriannuelle pour la période 2022-2026*), p. 102.

²⁵ Luxembourg, Ministry of Justice (*Ministère de la Justice*), Call for projects 2024 "Human rights training" (*Appel à projets 2024 « Formation aux droits humains »*), 31 October 2024.

²⁶ Luxembourg, Ministry of Justice (*Ministère de la Justice*), Call for projects 2024 - Human rights training - Selected projects (*Appel à projets 2024 - Formation aux droits humains - Projets sélectionnés*), 12 December 2024.

²⁷ Luxembourg, Ministry of Justice (*Ministère de la Justice*) (2024), Call for projects 2023 - Promoting human rights - Selected projects – PROJECT 4 (*Appel à projets 2023 - Promouvoir les droits humains - Projets sélectionnés – PROJECT 4*), 17 April 2024.

others, on the role of civil society organisations in promoting human rights in public, democratic and political life in Luxembourg.²⁸

The overall budget for projects in the 2024-2025 period is up to €50,000, with each selected project eligible to receive up to €10,000. In exceptional cases, funding may exceed this ceiling.²⁹

²⁸ Luxembourg, Passerell and University of Luxembourg, Faculty of Law, Economics and Finance (2025), Summary of the Round Table “Defending and promoting human rights in Luxembourg: what role for associations?” ([*Compte-rendu de la table ronde « Défendre et promouvoir les droits humains au Luxembourg : quel rôle pour les associations ? »*](#)), February 2025, pp. 4-5.

²⁹ Luxembourg, Ministry of Justice (*Ministère de la Justice*), Call for projects 2024 "Human rights training" ([*Appel à projets 2024 « Formation aux droits humains »*](#)), 31 October 2024.

3. ENABLING ENVIRONMENT AND PROTECTION

3.1. Civil society strategy

Does your country have a general civil society strategy / civil society development strategy in place?

Currently, Luxembourg does not have a general civil society strategy.

3.2. Protecting an enabling environment

Is there a dedicated policy/framework (or support measures) in place in your country to enhance and protect an enabling environment for civil society to work on fundamental rights?

There has been no initiative from the side of the state.

3.3. Law on recognition and protection of defenders

Is there a dedicated law (and/or guidelines) in your country dealing specifically with the recognition and/or protection of human rights defenders?

There is no general law as regards the protection of human right defenders.

The Act of 16 May 2023 transposing Directive (EU) 2019/1937 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2019 on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law came into force on 21 May 2023.³⁰ It extends the material scope of the protection afforded to whistleblowers under Directive (EU) 2019/1937 by encompassing breaches of all directly applicable provisions of national law.^{31 32}

³⁰ Luxembourg, Act of 16 May 2023 transposing Directive (EU) 2019/1937 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2019 on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law ([Loi du 16 mai 2023 portant transposition de la directive \(UE\) 2019/1937 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 octobre 2019 sur la protection des personnes qui signalent des violations du droit de l'Union](#)), 17 May 2023.

³¹ Luxembourg, Chamber of Deputies (*Chambre des Députés*) (2023), Bill No 7945 transposing Directive (EU) 2019/1937 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2019 on the protection of persons who report breaches of Union law, Report of the Committee on Justice ([Projet de Loi No 7945 portant transposition de la directive \(UE\) 2019/1937 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 octobre 2019 sur la protection des personnes qui signalent des violations du droit de l'Union, Rapport de la Commission de la Justice](#)), 26 April 2023, p. 2.

³² Luxembourg, Act of 16 May 2023 transposing Directive (EU) 2019/1937 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2019 on the protection of persons who report

3.4.Support and funding for protection of defenders

Is there any dedicated support/funding by the State for the protection of (individual) human rights defenders in your country?

Please refer to question 2.3.

breaches of Union law ([*Loi du 16 mai 2023 portant transposition de la directive \(UE\) 2019/1937 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 octobre 2019 sur la protection des personnes qui signalent des violations du droit de l'Union*](#)), 17 May 2023, Art. 3(1).

4. PROMISING PRACTICE (OPTIONAL)

Please highlight one specific practice that you consider a promising practice on civic space in your country in the area of civic space - including monitoring, participation, enabling environment, and protection.

In July 2024, Caritas Luxembourg faced a crisis following the alleged embezzlement of € 61million within the organisation. This led to reputational damages for the charity and, indirectly, for non-governmental organisations in general.

Following this event, civil society organisations joined forces in October 2024 under the new Voêo alliance³³ to reiterate their fundamental role in society as actors promoting a constructive dialogue on the current societal model, as well as ecological, social and cultural challenges.³⁴

To that effect, the representatives of the Voêo alliance met with the Prime Minister in January 2025 to address the importance of voices from civil society in strengthening democracy. The Prime Minister confirmed his intention to continue this dialogue with Voêo representatives and to review the various issues at hand in a few months' time.³⁵

³³ Luxembourg, Cercle de Coopération des ONGD du Luxembourg (2025), Voêo meets the Prime Minister: "civil society organisations are fully respected partners of democracy" ([*Voêo rencontre le Premier ministre: « les organisations de la société civile sont des partenaires entièrement respectés de la démocratie »*](#)), 16 January 2025.

³⁴ Luxembourg, INFOGreen.lu (2025), Voêo, representing civil society, met with Prime Minister Frieden ([*Voêo, représentant la société civile, a rencontré le Premier ministre Frieden*](#)), 16 January 2025.

³⁵ Luxembourg, INFOGreen.lu (2025), Voêo, representing civil society, met with Prime Minister Frieden ([*Voêo, représentant la société civile, a rencontré le Premier ministre Frieden*](#)), 16 January 2025.