



Civil society monitoring report on the quality
of the national strategic framework
for Roma equality, inclusion, and participation
in Luxembourg

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADEM	Public Employment Service (<i>Agence pour le développement de l'emploi</i>)
CEFIS	Intercultural and Social Study and Training Centre (<i>Centre d'Etude et de Formation Interculturelles et Sociales</i>)
CET	Centre for Equal Treatment
CoE	Council of Europe
CSL	Chamber of Employees
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
FEAD	Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived
FRANET	Multidisciplinary research network of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRCP	National Roma Contact Point
NRIS	National Roma Integration Strategy
NRSF	National Roma Strategic Framework
OLAI	Luxembourg Reception and Integration Agency
PAN Integration	National Action Plan for Integration
RCM	Roma Civil Monitor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As noted in the [2020 Roma Civil Monitor report](#), following the 'EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020' guidelines issued by EC in 2011, Luxembourg opted for an integrated set of policy measures within broader social inclusion policies for implementing its equivalent of a 'National Roma Integration Strategy' (NRIS).¹

In the course of the first EU Framework 2011-2020, it proved profoundly difficult for the RCM to obtain any information beyond the bare fact that periodic progress reports concerning the implementation of the NRIS from the Luxembourg authorities to the EC are not publicly available. Neither were there any other publicly available monitoring reports or evaluations of the NRIS in Luxembourg between 2011 and 2020.

When asked what the reach and impact of the mainstream policies on the Roma community and individuals was, or if any community members had benefited from the mainstream policies and funding, the answer from the NRCP office was:

*"Tak[ing] in[to] consideration that Luxembourg does not run a census on ethnic grounds, we have no knowledge of any possible persons of Roma ethnicity in Luxembourg [or] their living conditions."*²

It has proven impossible for RCM researchers to access any information concerning the Luxembourg government's response to the European Commission's call for Member States to submit national strategies for the 'EU Roma Strategic Framework on Equality, Inclusion and Participation' by September 2021. Government representatives refused the researcher's request for an interview. So far, all that can be ascertained from information publicly available is that, at the time of writing, Luxembourg has yet to comply with the European Commission's call.

According to the government, more than 44% of Luxembourg's 537,000 inhabitants were foreigners, i.e., persons without Luxembourgish citizenship, and nationals of some 170 countries live in Luxembourg. According to the Ministry of Family, Integration and the Greater Region, the government's bi-annual 'National Action Plan for Integration' (PAN Integration) "provides a general, strategic and sustainable framework for the implementation of the integration policy". The 2022 integration NAP is based on two areas of action: (i) the reception and social support of applicants for international protection, and (ii) the integration of all non-Luxembourgers residing in the territory. These two areas are complemented by three cross-cutting areas:

- access to information and interaction,
- the quality of the measurements, as well as
- national and international cooperation and coordination.

¹ Roma Civil Monitor, *Civil society monitoring report on implementation of the national Roma integration strategy in Luxembourg*, European Commission, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers 2020. Available at: <https://cps.ceu.edu/sites/cps.ceu.edu/files/attachment/basicpage/3034/rcm-civil-society-monitoring-report-3-luxembourg-2019-eprint-fin.pdf>

² Roma Civil Monitor, *Civil society monitoring report on implementation of the national Roma integration strategy in Luxembourg: Assessing the progress in four key policy areas of the strategy*, European Commission, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers 2019. Available at: <https://cps.ceu.edu/sites/cps.ceu.edu/files/attachment/basicpage/3034/rcm-civil-society-monitoring-report-2-luxembourg-2018-eprint-fin.pdf>

And in the PAN Integration, the government asserts that the fight against discrimination, the promotion of diversity, and equal opportunities are integral parts of all areas.³

Taking the above into consideration, it makes little sense to develop a separate *fiche* for a Roma inclusion policy. Over the past ten years of the EU Framework, no demands have emerged from Roma in Luxembourg, and no new information has surfaced concerning the demographic or socioeconomic profile of what remains an imagined community. It makes little sense to devise a strategy for an estimated 300 Roma, a numerically insignificant group, in a country whose residents are drawn from about 170 countries.

The standard academic recommendation of funding research to search out, identify and profile Yeniche and Roma communities on the grounds that there is a need to shine a light on communities that have been rendered 'invisible' presumes that members of such communities would actively wish to be placed under well-intended scrutiny. It is reasonable to assume that in such a multicultural setting if Roma had specific needs or demands that were unmet and merited a distinct policy approach, they would have made their voices heard at some stage over the past couple of decades. Based on the failures of the first Framework, there is also good reason to doubt that such research would make any practical difference to improving the lives of Roma in Luxembourg.

At this stage, the recommendation is that Luxembourg takes the 'Maltese option' – that due to the lack of any relevant data or official information and the insignificant number of Roma estimated to be living in the country, Luxembourg – like Malta – be exempted from the European Commission's Communications and Council Recommendations related to Roma equality, inclusion, and participation.

³ Luxembourg Government, Ministry of Family, Integration and the Greater Region, *National Integration Action Plan (PAN) 2022*. Available at: <https://mfamigr.gouvernement.lu/fr/le-ministere/attributions/integration/panintegration.html>

INTRODUCTION

Despite having submitted an integrated set of policy measures within broader social inclusion policies in place of an actual NRIS in 2011, the Luxembourg government created no publicly available reports on the progress of any measures or the impact on Roma of those broader social inclusion policies.

For the new 2020 EU Roma Strategic Framework, it appears that Luxembourg has submitted nothing in response to the EC's call to submit national Roma strategic frameworks (NRSF) by September 2021. The question is whether it makes sense in a country where over 40% of the population comes from somewhere else to have a separate targeted policy for an estimated 300 people whose ethnicity is assumed to be Roma, but who have not declared themselves as such and about whom there is no disaggregated data or information on which to base an action plan.

UNCERD, in its last review of its country report, praised Luxembourg as a truly multinational country that welcomes a large number of foreigners and described it as an impressive country, "not least [regarding] its openness towards foreigners". The government delegation stated that the landlocked country of 537,000 inhabitants had opened itself to Europe and the world: "More than 44% of Luxembourg's inhabitants were foreigners, that was, persons without Luxembourgish citizenship. There were more than 378,000 jobs in Luxembourg at the moment, 170,000 of which were held by cross-border workers who came to Luxembourg on a daily basis. Nationals of some 170 countries lived in Luxembourg".

Multiculturalism and multilingualism were experienced in Luxembourg on a daily basis, and "[d]emonstrations of racism were marginal and rare, but it was nonetheless a phenomenon to be fought against forcefully. Luxembourgish citizens and foreigners had a strong desire to live together". The delegation stated that people from various backgrounds were prominent in social and political life and that integration was an ongoing process. Schools faced linguistic challenges with children from many different backgrounds, but with time such problems would disappear, and people would become integrated.⁴

The following text outlines the principles underpinning the PAN Integration and how Luxembourg manages diversity and promotes equality:

"The constitutional principle of equality requires that all persons in the same situation be treated equally. Luxembourg, a multicultural society Luxembourg has a long experience in terms of immigration and the integration of foreigners because Luxembourg society is a multicultural society and today there are more than 150 different nationalities."

In practical policy terms, that means:

"The Luxembourg Reception and Integration Office (OLAI) intends to put in place an integration policy adapted to current realities where integration is considered as a reciprocal process providing for the full participation of the foreigner and the host society. The objective is to conduct a successful integration policy that respects the needs and socio-cultural origins of foreigners. The OLAI implements the instruments of a coherent integration policy, including in particular the national action plan

⁴ UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination considers report of Luxembourg.14 February 2014, Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2014/02/committee-elimination-racial-discrimination-considers-report-luxembourg>

for integration and the fight against discrimination and the reception and integration contract."

And specifically for Roma:

"In Luxembourg, there are no official figures for people of Roma origin. No foreign national [or] EU citizen [...] has officially declared himself [sic] to be part of this group. Furthermore, it is not political practice to establish specific policies for a particular ethnic group based on a specific lifestyle or ethnicity. Indeed, such an approach is preventive against xenophobia and antigypsyism. However, the public authorities take into account the particular needs of certain people and their living situation on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with Protocol No. 4 to the European Convention on Human Rights and the case law of the ECHR."⁵

This text makes it clear that Luxembourg's integration/inclusion policies and biannual action plans are based on republican principles and equality before the law and are fully cognizant of the impact of racism and xenophobia and the need to combat discrimination. It also makes it clear that in this 'actually-existing model' of multiculturalism, there will be no Roma-specific inclusion strategy for an estimated 300 individuals. It is, therefore, time to adjust to this reality, and the European Commission would be well-advised to exempt Luxembourg from this EU Roma framework, as it has Malta.

⁵ Government of Luxembourg, *Plan d'action national pluriannuel d'intégration 2018*. Available at: <https://mfamigr.gouvernement.lu/dam-assets/leminist%C3%A8re/attributions/int%C3%A9gration/pan-2018/PAN-integration-2018- FR.pdf>

1. PARTICIPATION

As the Member State has not developed any NRSF, there was no consultation, no participation and no strategy submitted, nor an equivalent document outlining an integrated set of policy measures within broader social inclusion policies.

2. RELEVANCE

There was nothing of relevance to report on as the government claims that there is no Roma population in Luxembourg, and there was no information forthcoming from the government concerning any proposed strategy or integrated set of policy measures that might yet be submitted to the European Commission.

3. EXPECTED EFFECTIVENESS

There is nothing of note to be expected in terms of effectiveness, as there is neither a strategy nor any integrated set of policy measures nor any intent on the part of the government to deviate from its stance that it will not produce ethnically disaggregated data, which precludes any monitoring or measuring the impact of inclusion policies on discrete sections of the population.

4. ALIGNMENT WITH THE EU ROMA STRATEGY

There is no separate Roma strategy or integrated set of policy measures forthcoming as yet against which to assess its alignment with the EU Roma strategic framework.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Luxembourg is perhaps the most diverse and multicultural state in the European Union. It is neither practical nor particularly useful to demand that a state which has a strong commitment to combat racism and discrimination and already has complex integration policies in place to accommodate over 150 nationalities should devise a separate policy stream for an estimated 300 residents. According to the available evidence, these residents have neither declared their ethnicity nor voiced any demands for targeted inclusion policies. Furthermore, they have not organised in any collective manner in civil society that might suggest they constitute a community seeking public recognition.

The **recommendation** would be that Luxembourg is exempted from the 'EU Strategic Framework for Roma equality, inclusion and participation' on similar grounds to Malta – that there is no Roma community of significance that would merit a separate inclusion policy approach. Furthermore, in such a diverse and multicultural state, the existing PAN Integration, which fights against discrimination and promotes diversity and equal opportunities as integral parts of all areas of the action plan, can accommodate the 300 Roma residents alongside 150 other nationalities.

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