



Common Ground

Country Report: Luxembourg

The Significance of Citizen Participation in Politics and Society

By Raphaël Kies, Lisa Verhasselt and Emilien Paulis

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1. Introduction

In Luxembourg, there is no single definition of citizen participation. Instead, various initiatives fall under this label. Civil society organizations offer programs that teach participation, promote civic gaming, and organize trainings and workshops. Additionally, there are national and local initiatives such as the national parliamentary e-petitions and referendums as well as participative processes promoted by several cities at the local level. While we recognize the value of existing initiatives, this report concentrates on citizen participation processes that seek to impact decision-making at local and national levels. This report is divided into three parts. Firstly, we review the legal framework and the most common forms of citizen participation. Secondly, we analyze how political elites understand and perceive citizen participation. Lastly, we examine how citizen participation is perceived by civil society and the population.

Our evaluation is based on a mixed-method methodology. This includes desk research, interviews and informal exchanges with different actors, and original quantitative data collected from the voting advice application, “Smartwielen”. “Smartwielen” was developed for the legislative elections held in October 2023 by the Luxembourgish Platform of Participatory Democracy (pldp.lu) and the Zentrum fir Politesch Bildung (zpb.lu)

2. Legal Framework and Most Common Forms of Citizen Participation in Luxembourg

This section provides an overview of six categories of citizen participation. At the national level, we have the constitutional participative processes, the ministerial consultations, and the national citizens’ assemblies. At the local level, there are three forms: the participative processes based on communal law, the participative processes based on ministerial action plans, and the participative processes initiated by municipalities.

2.1 Constitutional participative processes

The constitution outlines three participative¹ procedures. The first is based on Article 29, concerning the parliamentary e-petition right. The second, Article 80, allows referendums to be initiated by the Parliament. The third, Article 79, provides for the legislative initiative right under the condition that it is submitted by a minimum of 125 voters and supported by at least 25.000 signatures. As the legislative initiative right (Art. 79) has only been introduced in the new Constitution, adopted in July 2023, it has not yet been used. National referendums (Art. 80) are rarely used. To date, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg has experienced just five referendums. Interestingly, two out of five took place on the same day; namely, September 28, 1919. Voters were asked whether to keep their monarchy or to change into a republic and whether there should be an economic union with either France or Belgium. The majority voted in favor of their monarchy and for economic union with France. On June 6, 1937, the government held a referendum on the law for the defense of political and social order. This law was known as the order law, but it was called the muzzle law or “Maulkuerf” by its opponents. On July 10, 2005, a popular consultation was held to decide on a Constitution for the European Union. On June 7, 2015, the three-party coalition government organized a consultative referendum as part of the national constitution’s revision. The referendum had three ques-

¹ The words “participative” and “participatory” are used interchangeably in this report to express decision- and opinion-making processes involving lay citizens.

tions: whether to lower the voting age to 16 for all elections, whether to extend active and optional voting rights to foreigners for national elections under certain restrictive conditions, and whether to introduce term limits for ministerial mandates. However, the Luxembourg voters rejected all three proposals submitted to the referendum by a large majority.² A final binding referendum was supposed to decide whether to adopt the new constitution. However, it did not take place, and the new Constitution was eventually adopted by the Parliament in July 2023. Parliamentary e-petitions (Art. 29) are probably the most successful participative tool in Luxembourg³ as it has been proved that they have impacted political decisions⁴. Since the Chamber of Deputies introduced electronic petitions in April 2013, more than 2000 e-petitions have been submitted. Not a week goes by without traditional and social media referring to them. Typically, they do this to inform the public of the filing of new petitions or to present and debate petitions that have received many signatures. A survey carried out in 2018 also reveals that, on average, 64% of Luxembourg citizens say they have signed at least one e-petition – on the Chamber of Deputies’ website.⁵

2.2 Ministerial consultations

Ministries have often organized consultations when preparing a draft bill, seeking feedback from civil society and/or citizens through surveys and workshops. For instance, the Ministry of Interior held a consultation called “Mateneed fir eng modern Gemeng” during the last legislative period to reform communal law. This consultation included 5,655 online participants and 50 citizens in an in-person discussion, resulting in two public reports.⁶ Additionally, the Ministry of Transport conducted an online survey in 2017 that asked 22.000 residents, including 11.000 cross-border commuters, about their demands for the RGTR network.⁷ The Ministry of Economy also launched an online questionnaire (from December 2, 2022, to January 9, 2023) to collect opinions from the population about three possible future scenarios and the corresponding strategic vision for the Luxembourg economy in 2050.⁸ Alongside these ministerial consultations, there are legal procedures that require a ‘public inquiry’ for consultations. Since 2021, the government has developed a website, enquetes.public.lu, that gathers all public consultations held at the national and local levels. However, the level of participation in these consultations is low and not deliberative.

2.3 National citizens’ assemblies

In the last three years, there have been, for the first time, two national citizens’ assemblies initiated by the government. The first is the Biergerkomitee (BK2050). From January 2021 to January 2022, 30 citizens came together and deliberated on recommendations on how the functional territory of Luxembourg can become carbon neutral by 2050. The Biergerkomitee (BK2050) constituted the citizens’ section of Luxembourg in Transition (LIT), an expert consultation aimed at developing scenarios in terms of land use and urban planning, architecture, economics, and ecology. The second is the Klima-Biergerrot (KBR). From January to September 2022, 100 randomly selected citizens reviewed the National Climate and Energy Plan (PNEC). The KBR discussed Luxembourg’s current commitments to combating climate change and provided recommendations regarding additional measures.

2.4 Participative processes based on communal law

The communal law provides two ways for citizens to participate in the decision-making process: a consultative referendum (Art 35), and a popular consultation initiated by the municipal council or the college of mayor and aldermen (Art 36).⁹ However, these processes

² Dumont, P. and R. Kies, 2016, “Luxembourg: Political Developments and Data in 2015”. European Journal of Political Research Political Data Yearbook, 56 (1), 175–182.

³ Kies, R., 2016, Analyse de l’utilisation des (e-)pétitions à la Chambre des Députés”, Rapport Civilex, Chaire de recherche en étude parlementaire, Université du Luxembourg.

⁴ Kies, R., & Seidental, S., 2021, “Quand les e-pétitions influencent-elles la décision politique ? Une analyse du système de pétitions électroniques de la Chambre des députés du Luxembourg”, Participations, 3(28), 177–202.

⁵ Kies, R. (2019). E-pétitions à la Chambre des Députés. Un succès déstabilisant. In C. Frieseisen, R. Moes, M. Polfer, ... R. Wagner, 100 ans de suffrage universel au Luxembourg. Silvana Editoriale S.p.A

⁶ Information about the process can be found here. url: <https://www.gemengereform.lu/>

⁷ The PM declared at the parliamentary public session of 21 March 2023 that of those 300 recommendations that were submitted, 200 could be retained in the organization of the RGTR network.

⁸ See: https://gouvernement.lu/fr/actualites/toutes_actualites/communiqués/2022/12-decembre/02-luxembourg-strategie.html

⁹ Loi communale du 13 décembre 1988.

are rarely used, except for consultative referendums when two or more municipalities wish to merge. Since 2004, there have been 14 mergers of municipalities.¹⁰ These referendums are typically followed by one or more information meetings with the population. Recently, the Ministry of Interior introduced a draft bill that aimed to reinforce the existing participative instruments and add a new one.¹¹ The first reform concerns the municipal referendum, which becomes binding when initiated by the municipal council. For referendums initiated by voters, the consultative nature is maintained, as per the current provisions. The second reform is the existing “popular consultation”, which is proposed to be changed to a “citizen consultation”, a term more in harmony with the status of citizens and the notion of citizenship. Furthermore, the organizational arrangements are specified without affecting the flexibility with which this instrument is endowed. Finally, the municipal council must include the opinion resulting from the citizen consultation on the agenda within three months of the decision to organize the citizen consultation. The third reform, and the only real novelty of the new communal law, is the introduction of the “local citizens’ initiative”, inspired by the European citizens’ initiative. The citizens’ initiative aims to lead the municipal council to deliberate and make a reasoned decision regarding the request to which the initiative is the subject. To ensure the relevance and participatory integrity of the approach, the municipal citizens’ initiative takes place in several stages: the development of the idea by the organizers, an admissibility check, a collection of signatures within a limited period, and, finally, an “audience” with the municipal council.

Additionally, basic participation, which usually takes the form of question-and-answer sessions, is included in the information procedure for PAG (general spatial planning). Several municipalities also have neighborhood committees, which are founded and organized by citizens. These committees sometimes benefit from in-kind contributions and online visibility from the municipalities. However, the role and influence of the neighborhood committee are generally low and heavily dependent on the motivation and involvement of its members. One reason for this is that they have limited power because their role is not legally enshrined in the communal law.

2.5 Participative processes based on ministerial action plans

Local participation may be less permanent but more effective through Ministerial action plans, which include the local involvement of citizens. The “Pakt vum Zesummeliewen” – which began in 2021 and replaced the “plan d’intégration communale” – is a good example of this. Cities participating in the project, the Union of Luxembourg Towns and Municipalities (SYVICOL), and the Ministry of Family, Integration, and the Greater Region commit to working closely together towards a multi-year and dynamic process that focuses on communication, access to information, and the participation of all people who live or work in the municipality. So far the pact has been signed by 31 municipalities. In parallel, the Ministry of Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development has implemented the “Climate Pact 2.0” program. The program plans to bring together citizens, clubs, schools, and businesses once a year for a day of discussion to discuss projects already carried out at the municipal level, and to reflect on the actions to be developed for the future. Several municipalities and regions have started to work concretely on the organization of “Assises Pacte Climat”. These are discussion meetings organized by the Centre for Ecological Learning Luxembourg (CELL) during the weekends. To date, 25 such meetings have been organized.

¹⁰ See: https://gouvernement.lu/fr/dossiers/gouv_mint%2Bfr%2Bdossiers%2B2021%2BFusions-de-communes.html

¹¹ Projet de loi portant modification : 1^o de la loi communale modifiée du 13 décembre 1988 ; 2^o de la loi modifiée du 19 juillet 2004 concernant l’aménagement communal et le développement urbain.

2.6 Participative processes initiated by municipalities

Municipalities implement various forms of participatory processes, which include those initiated by the municipalities themselves. However, there is no systematic analysis to give an overview of the nature and diffusion of these forms of participatory processes. Nonetheless, two cases stand out. Firstly, the Nord-Stadt merger plan involved a public consultation where citizens were invited to express their opinions on the merger of their five municipalities. The process involved a citizens' council, a citizens' forum, and an online dialogue, and the consultation resulted in a report in December 2020. Secondly, the city of Dudelange – the fourth city of Luxembourg – aspires to be the most advanced in the country in terms of citizens' participation. The city started its engagement with the Charter for Citizen Participation in Municipal Life in 2004 and has since made several attempts to involve its citizens. Some of these attempts include the consultation for the creation of a new district (i. e., Neischmelz), the parliament for young adults (Jugendgemengrot), and the parliament for children (kannergemengrot). Both parliaments had, however, limited success in participation and have been interrupted during the covid crisis.

In December 2020, the city of Dudelange signed a convention with the University of Luxembourg to follow its participatory initiatives, which led to the creation of the Luxembourgish Platform of Participatory Democracy (PLDP.lu). One of the objectives of this convention is to support and follow three permanent, innovative participative processes that the city recently introduced. These processes include the citizens' panel, the Biergerrot, and the participatory budget. The citizens' panel is a volunteer panel of resident citizens who are invited to respond twice a year to a questionnaire about ongoing projects. Currently, there are around 400 members on the panel. The Biergerrot aims to allow a selection of citizens (around 15) representing the diversity of the population of Dudelange to interact with municipal officials on any subject that interests them. The objective is to strengthen dialogue between residents and the municipality. To date, there have been four Biergerrots (the first occurred in October 2019). Dudelange is the first municipality in Luxembourg to have introduced the participatory budget. People were invited to submit, discuss, and vote for ideas for a maximum amount of 100.000 euros. The first participatory budget occurred in 2022, and the next one is planned for 2024.¹² It is noteworthy that Dudelange is the only municipality, to our knowledge, to have hired a person specifically dedicated to citizens' participation. Since then, Roeser, another municipality from the south, also led by a Socialist mayor, introduced a participatory budget following the example of Dudelange.

¹² <https://pldp.lu/project/participatory-budget-for-dudelange/>

3. Political Perspective on Citizen Participation

The coalition agreement of the past government (2018–2023) did not make any concrete commitments regarding citizen participation, except for indicating that “Citizen participation will be encouraged to enable the participation of all components of our society in the national project and to strengthen the fight against the democratic deficit. It will also involve civil society and research stakeholders in developing responses to the societal issues that arise.”¹³

To evaluate the perception and intention of the national political arena regarding deliberative citizen participation, we relied on two sources. The first is the responses of candidates to the last national elections (October 2023) in Smartwielen. The second is the parliamentary

¹³ Gouvernement du Luxembourg, *Accord de coalition 2018–2023*, url: <https://gouvernement.lu/fr/publications/accord-coalition/2018-2023.html>

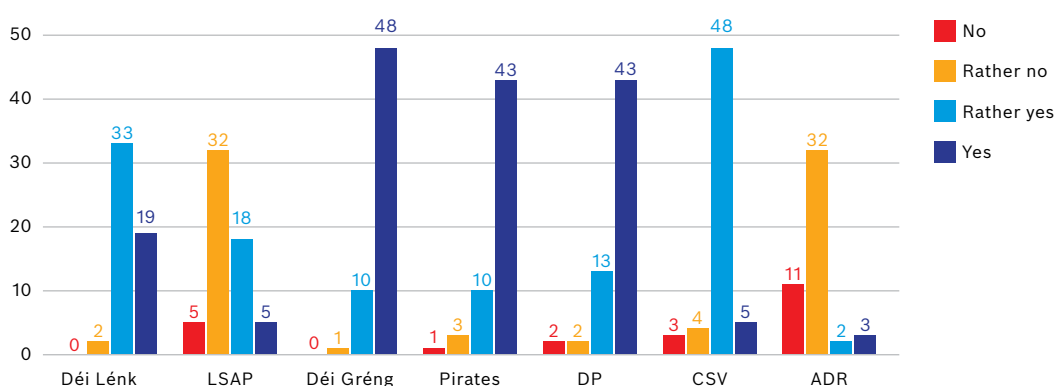
debate of March 2023 – called “heure d’actualité” – that was requested by the Green MP, François Benoy, on the evolution of participatory democracy in Luxembourg.

3.1 Position of candidates based on Smartwielen

The question raised in Smartwielen was the following: “Should the recourse to randomly selected citizens’ forums (Biergerforen) be encouraged?”. The question was accompanied by an info box explaining what citizens’ forums are.¹⁴ We analyzed the answers of the candidates from the parties that have at least one seat in Parliament.¹⁵

Figure 1: Support of Parties for Citizens’ Assemblies

Should the recourse to randomly selected citizens’ forums (Biergerforen) be encouraged?



The figure highlights that the Luxembourgish political community broadly supports citizens’ forums, which is not to say that all parties are in favor. More precisely, we observed different levels of support for citizens’ assemblies. Three parties, the Green Party, the Pirate Party, and the Liberal Party, are strongly in favor of the idea. Two parties, the Christian Social Party (CSV) and the Left Party (déi Lénk), are rather in favor. The Socialist Party (LSAP) is rather against it, while the Alternative Democratic Party (ADR) is either rather or strongly against it. Put differently, those in favor are the DP, the CSV, The Green Party, the Left, and the Pirates. On the other hand, the LSAP and ADR are against citizens’ assemblies. An additional and interesting finding is that we observe that in all parties except the LSAP, the members are either generally in favor or not in favor of citizens’ assemblies. The distribution of candidates in the Socialist Party (LSAP) shows disagreement: 23 MPs in the party are rather or completely in favor, while 37 are rather or completely against.

Table 1 shows how many seats each of these parties held in the previous (i. e., 2018) government (when the question was posed) and in the current government (i. e., 2023). What this table shows is that the parties not in favor of citizens’ assemblies have no majority in Government, not in 2018 or 2023. This could be interpreted that the future for citizens’ participation is bright in Luxembourg, although it remains to be seen if the new government will have the courage to strengthen Luxembourg’ democratic process.

¹⁴ The infobox provided the following information: The Citizens’ Forum is an innovative democratic tool that aims to involve a group of people selected by lot in political decision-making. In Luxembourg, this procedure was most recently used to draw up the new version of the integrated national energy and climate plan (PNEC). For the revision of the PNEC, the Klima-Biergerrot was established, made up of 60 full members and 40 substitute members selected at random.

¹⁵ Déi Lénk (46 candidates), LSAP (60 candidates), Déi Gréng (59 candidates), pirates (56 candidates), DP (60 candidates), CSV (60 candidates), ADR (48 candidates).

Table 1: Parties' Seats in Government and Support for Citizens' Assemblies

Party	2018	2023	Support
Left (Déi Lénk)	2	2	In favor
Socialist Party (LSAP)	10	11	Not in favor
Green Party (Déi Gréng)	9	4	In favor
Pirate Party (Pirates)	2	3	In favor
Democratic Party (DP)	12	14	In favor
Christian Social Party (CSV)	21	21	In favor
Alternative Democratic Party (ADR)	4	5	Not in favor
Total	60	60	

3.2 Position of political parties based on parliamentary debates

During parliamentary debates on the evolution of participatory democracy in Luxembourg, we closely examined the political parties' positions regarding support for citizen participation. Our analysis of their argumentation provided a detailed justification of each party's stance. The objective of this debate was threefold: i) to discuss the participatory experiences developed and initiated on the local and national levels in recent years in Luxembourg, ii) to consider how these practices can be improved, and iii) to discuss ways to further strengthen models of participatory democracy in Luxembourg for more systematic citizen participation in the future. All parties in Parliament were invited to take a position on the issues.

All parties, except the ADR, support the continuation of citizens' assemblies as a complement to representative institutions. The Green party advocates that they contribute to combat the democratic deficit, by including foreigners and working commuters who are not allowed to vote in national elections. The former Luxembourgish Prime Minister, Xavier Bettel (DP) believes that involving citizens in political decision-making outside of elections is essential for building trust in the Government. He argues that citizens who are not consulted feel underrepresented and lose confidence in the Government. The ADR, however, rejects citizens' assemblies as a legitimate participative process because people who spontaneously participate in such assemblies would not be representative of the general population. Put differently, they would exclude people who do not share the opinion supported by most media and political parties. Their second argument is that experts could manipulate citizens' opinions.

Based upon their general view of how such processes should work and their observation of the two recent consultations (the KBR and the BK) the MPs expressed several suggestions to improve and institutionalize the citizens assemblies in the future.

Many parties insisted that citizens' assemblies should be inclusive to reflect the diversity of the population. According to the representative of the left party, the participants selected for the KBR and the BK were not sufficiently representative. The liberal representative acknowledges that it is not easy to get people involved particularly for people who are less integrated,

such as foreigners. It requires time, as foreigners must first integrate, adapt, and understand how the country operates. Inclusivity also implies, according to the CSV, that the language is understandable, avoiding technocratic terms and excessive information. For the Pirate Party inclusion requires actively sampling a diverse range of participants. Lastly, the Socialist Party insists on the importance of political education for the younger generation (she praises the work of the ZPB) and the need for political participation and citizen consultations in languages other than Luxembourgish by promoting translation and multilingual interactions.

Most parties also agree that citizens' assemblies should be a regular occurrence in Luxembourgish politics, with citizen assemblies organized on a variety of topics such as tax reform, education, and institutional reform. And that citizen participation, in general, and citizens' forums, specifically, should be implemented and supervised by a neutral instance. Organizers should be transparent and honest with how the proposals will be treated. In that respect, the Left Party observed that the proposals generated by a citizens' assembly are not binding for decision-makers. And believes that citizen participation should be expanded to allow for genuine co-determination.

The Christian Social Party (CSV) emphasizes the importance of well-informed citizens throughout the process since the issues discussed can be complex. In addition, participation should be organized and carried out based on clear rules, and factual and balanced information provided by a diverse range of experts.

Lastly, institutionalizing citizens' assemblies has also been addressed. For the Green party, the reference institution should be the Parliament, as is the case in the Belgian German-speaking Community Parliament.¹⁶ The CSV suggests that the Parliament of the German-speaking Community in Belgium and the City of Dudelange could serve as examples. He also praises the French National Commission of Public Debate (CNDP) for organizing public debates on projects with significant environmental impacts, highlighting its independent nature and neutrality. Déi Lenk insists that consultative processes should be structurally integrated into the decision-making process through a clear legal basis. This includes the need to establish a committee that can manage and organize this form of citizen dialogue, with the necessary budget and staff. External communication of the output of citizen forums must also be done through this body to avoid future situations where ministries present the conclusions of the citizens to the press.

¹⁶ In 2019, a permanent Citizens' Council was established in Ostbelgien (German for Eastern Belgium, the German-speaking community of the country) to constitute the third fundamental democratic institution together with the Parliament and the Executive.

4. Society's Perspective on Citizens' Participation

Globally, civil society is known to promote and support citizen assemblies. This is no different in Luxembourg. Several Luxembourgish civil society organizations¹⁷ recently formed an informal group to exchange experiences, which will be reviewed by the PLDP.

We assess citizens' perception of citizens' assemblies through the responses of the population to Smartwielen. In total, we have more than 26.000 respondents who also responded to the optional sociodemographic and political questions. The Luxembourgish population received the same question as the political candidates and parties, namely: "Should the recourse to randomly selected citizens' forums (Biergerforen) be encouraged?".

¹⁷ These are: Center for ecological learning Luxembourg, Association de soutien des travailleurs immigrés, Centre d'étude et de formation interculturelles et sociales, Association Luxembourgeoise pour le Dialogue Interculturel, Unity foundation, Ministry of Family, Zentrum fir politesch Bildung.

29% of the respondents had no idea or preferred not to answer. There can be several reasons why citizens have no idea or are hesitant to answer such a question. The most likely reason is a lack of familiarity and/or knowledge. Many citizens may not be familiar with the concept of citizens' assemblies or deliberative democracy. If they have never encountered the term or the idea, they may not have a clear understanding of what it entails and may hesitate to express a preference. Similarly, even if citizens have heard of citizens' assemblies, they may not have access to detailed information about how they work, their benefits, and potential drawbacks. Without sufficient information, it can be challenging to form an opinion. Other reasons might include apathy or disinterest (no – strong – interest in political processes, accordingly question has little to no relevance) and cognitive overload (citizens might have felt overwhelmed by the sheer volume of topics, and not have had the mental capacity to consider every question thoroughly). On a positive note, more than 70% of respondents answered the question and took a position, reflecting a significant level of interest and knowledge concerning citizen assemblies. 41% rather or fully supported citizens' forums, while 29% rather or fully rejected them. If we take out the non-respondents, this implies that 58,4% were in favor and 41.6% against the usage of citizens' assemblies.

Figure 2: support of Smartwielen users for Citizens' assemblies

“Yes” or “Rather yes” to question: Should the recourse to randomly selected citizens' forums (Biergerforen) be encouraged?

Age						n: 17.977
18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64 and ov	
56.2%	61.4%	59.5%	55.1%	58.6%	57.8%	

Level of education								n: 17.812
Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Post-secondary	Short-cycle	Bachelor	Master	Doctoral	
51.43%	56.81%	57.12%	56.77%	57.24%	61.25%	60.62%	56.02%	

Interest in politics					n: 17.990
1 – not at all	2	3	4	5 – very	
43.98%	54.34%	54.75%	61.40%	61.39%	

Left-right position							n: 15.296
1 – left	2	3	4	5	6	7 – right	
70.81%	70.34%	60.50%	55.24%	50.66%	51.06%	51.83%	

Political party preference						n: 9.568
lenk	lsap	greng	pirate	dp	csv	adr
75.92%	56.89%	69.01%	67.37%	51.52%	47.85%	54.89%

source: PLDP-smartwielen

After analyzing the factors that may influence support for citizens' assemblies, we have concluded that age is not significant. The 45–54 age category shows the lowest support for citizen forums, with only 55.1% in favor. On the other hand, the 25–34 age category exhibits the highest support, with 61.5% of individuals in favor of citizens' forums. However, education levels seem to have an impact. We have observed greater variation in support among individuals with different levels of education, supporting the hypothesis that “the more educated you are, the more likely you are to support citizens' assemblies”.

Support for citizens' assemblies is highest among those who have completed a bachelor's and/or master's degree (around 61%), while it is lowest among those who have only completed primary school (around 51%). It is worth noting, however, that Ph.D. holders tend to be less supportive than master's degree holders, with 'only' 56% in favor of citizens' forums.

Political attitudes also play a significant role in determining support for citizens' assemblies. Those who are more interested in politics are more likely to support citizens' assemblies: with a difference of almost 20% between those who are “not at all” interested (44%) and those who are “rather” or “very” interested (61%). Similarly, there is a clear correlation between political orientation and support for citizens' forums. Those on the far left of the political spectrum are 71% in favor of citizens' assemblies, while those on the far right are only 52%. This is consistent with the preferences of political parties, with left-wing parties such as Déi Lénk and Déi Gréng tending to be more supportive of citizens' assemblies than right-wing parties such as DP, CSV, and ADR. However, among the left-side supporters, those who support the Socialist Party are less in favor of citizens' assemblies, with only 57% showing support. This might be attributed to the fact that a prominent member of the party has been highly critical of KBR.

5. Conclusion

Luxembourg is currently at a critical stage in the development of citizens' assemblies, and there is a limited window of opportunity for their advancement. Following the 2015 referendum, which had a negative outcome on the three constitutional questions, politicians and civil society have become hesitant to extend the usage of referendums. Therefore, they may prioritize citizens' assemblies as a “softer” but “deeper” way to consult with citizens.

In the last few years, several ministries have organized citizens' consultations and promoted them through various national and local action plans. Recently, the government conducted two national deliberative citizens' consultations, namely the Biergekomitee Lëtzebuerg (BK2050) initiated by the Ministry of Energy and Spatial Planning, and the Klima-Biergerrot (KBR), initiated by the Ministry of State. These initiatives have received support from civil

society and numerous political parties, and there is a willingness to institutionalize them. Moreover, a significant portion of the population is now familiar with and supports these processes. That is, the future for citizens' participation looks bright.

Nevertheless, as is the case almost everywhere, there are several possible hindrances to the development of citizens' participation. In Luxembourg, the development of citizens' participation might potentially face obstacles stemming from its small population size, and language diversity. The country's political stability and economic prosperity may contribute to a sense of complacency, diminishing the perceived urgency for active civic engagement. Furthermore, the complexity of the system, with numerous participation procedures and opportunities at various levels, may be confusing and ultimately create barriers for citizens to navigate and understand the political landscape effectively. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts to promote civic education, enhance communication channels, and create inclusive opportunities for diverse forms of citizens' participation. But most importantly, these challenges are not insurmountable. By addressing them, citizens' participation can flourish in Luxembourg. It, however, remains to be seen if the new government will have the courage to seize this historic opportunity to strengthen Luxembourg's democratic process. This will ensure that Luxembourg lives up to its full potential.

6. Authors

Raphaël Kies is senior researcher at the University of Luxembourg. He holds his PhD from the European University Institute. He is interested in media studies, democratic innovations, political system in Luxembourg. He is the founder of the Luxembourgish Platform of Participatory Democracy (PLDP.lu) and has contributed to implement and review several democratic innovations in Luxembourg and abroad. Among them, the *European Citizens Consultation* (in 2007 and 2009), the voting advice applications *Smartwielen.lu* (since 2009) and the first national participatory budget in the city of Dudelange. In the field of the media, he is member of the Board of Directors of Luxembourg public radio (Radio 100.7), of the Commission for the support of the written press, of newly created Center of Digital Ethics (University of Luxembourg) and was member of the Council of Europe Committee for Experts on Media Environment and Reform (MSI-REF) (2020–2021).

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