

National System of Childhood education and care in Luxembourg

Laws, structures, traditions, social policy

Childhood education and care services in Luxembourg are regulated by national Acts and Grand Ducal Regulations.

The „**Act of 8 September 1998** regulating the relations between the State and organizations working in the social, family and therapeutic fields“ (called "law ASFT") is the first law subjecting the offer of certain social services to ministerial approval. It applies to childhood education and care services that offer hosting or daily / nightly accommodation of more than three people simultaneously.

The „**Grand Ducal Regulation of 20 December 2001** implementing Articles 1 and 2 of the Act of 8 September 1998 regulating relations between the State and organizations working in the social, family and therapeutic fields with regards to the ministerial authorization to be granted to managers of childhood education and care excluding accommodation services“ brings clarification to the Act of 8 September 1998 by defining different types of childhood education and care structures and sets standards for the staff, the infrastructures and the control procedures:

1. The nursery is a structure that aims at hosting and at providing educational support to children aged less than four years respectively for children not yet attending school.
2. The day centre for children is a structure that aims at receiving without accommodating and at providing educational support to children attending early education or primary school in professional facilities outside hours of classes and during the school holidays.
3. The school catering is a structure that aims at hosting, catering and supervising school-age children during lunch time.

4. The homework assistance structure is a non-school service that aims at receiving children attending primary school outside of school hours for the purpose of providing them with recreational activities and homework assistance.

5. The “garderie” is a daycare service that aims at spontaneously hosting children younger than 8 years for less than 16 hours per week and per child.

The „**Grand Ducal Regulation of 20 July 2005** on the accreditation of managers of maison relais for children“ introduces a new structure of childhood education and care, namely the “maison relais” whose core business is to host children during their time off school. It also establishes the obligation of close cooperation with schools and families. The activity of “maison relais” for children must include the following services:

- Opening up the service for at least 200 days and 500 hours per calendar year;
- Catering including lunch and snacks;
- Supervision and socio-educational activities;
- Homework assistance.

Depending on the manager's decision the activity of “maison relais” for children may also include the following services:

- The socio-educational support;
- Care for sick users or in the infrastructure of the service or at the user's home;
- Activities of encounter and leisure of socio-educational, informative or cultural character for users and their families;
- Parent training sessions;
- Initiatives to meet in socio-educational, intergenerational, social and transcultural activities within local communities hosting the service or its units.



The “**Grand Ducal Regulation of 13 February 2009** amending Grand-Ducal Regulation of 20 July 2005 on the accreditation of managers of maison relais extended the auxiliary services of the activity of the “maison relais” to individual and / or collective psycho-social leisure activities, to introduction to music and sports, and to the animation of recreational activities.

Examples of interprofessional work in Childhood education and care in Luxembourg

Institutions, concepts, practice areas

Interprofessional work in childhood education and care services is not regulated by law. In general, the laws only define the types of professionals considered as qualified to work in a childhood education and care service (social worker, pedagogue, psychologist, etc.) or they list possible optional activities where interprofessional work is wanted. Thus, interprofessional work is part of the daily business even though it is not formally regulated.

The „**Grand Ducal Regulation of 20 July 2005** on the accreditation of managers of maison relais“ sets close cooperation with schools and families as an obligation. However, apart from the offer of homework assistance it does not define the standards of this close cooperation. So being, we can observe a tendency to bring school and maison relais geographically closer to each other to promote the exchange between the staff of both structures. In some towns the maison relais is even implanted in the school’s building. Nevertheless, it is up to the professionals around the child to decide to what extent they want to work interprofessionally in an informal network of different types of professionals. The hierarchical positions, the different professional identities and the legislation on data protection and information sharing for sure don’t contribute to the development of rationalized interprofessional practices.

Despite this, some examples of rationalized interprofessional work can be found at local levels. They often start with the idea of implementing an existing service to make it more suitable for the children, e.g. the catering. Very motivated people who carry the idea then start to network and to search for other professional partners sharing the same motivation in order to work together on achieving the expected result.

Outline of INPRO-material created by ‘Fondation Caritas Luxembourg’

INPRO further training module Health and Nutrition

Knowledge about health and nutrition was traditionally acquired in a non formal way within the families. Today, children spend many hours away from home and this kind of knowledge has to come largely from other people and inspiring occasions. Moreover, the WHO states childhood obesity as one of the most serious public health challenges of the 21st century. WHO Europe estimated that by 2010 nearly 40% of school-age children (15 mio.) would be overweighted and that more than 25% of these would be obese. Healthy eating habits are strongly associated with family affluence. Therefore, not all families are able to be a good model. As a result, the transmission of knowledge about food, good eating habits and physical activity has become very important in childhood education and care. As children are far away from food production, it is important to bring it back into the focus of children by having a local kitchen and insight into the cook’s work (fresh food), by visiting farms and local food producers, by cooking and baking activities, by a school garden, by multiple possibilities to be physically active inside and outside the facility. The physical experience of food is basic for the development of taste, which in return has its influence on eating habits. Food recommendations need to be turned into recipes. Eating has to do with pleasure. Yet, good food requires a good eating situation, among other facilitation of socializing and table culture to make children really benefit. The experience of physical activity helps children to develop risk assessment

and a sense of their own potential, which is essential for the development of self-esteem. Children learn at the same time about the laws of nature; physical activity preparing the understanding of mathematics and natural sciences. Many factors need to be taken into account. Many actors can help: children and families (diversity of cooking arts), educators and teachers (how can the outside facilities promote physical activity without risks?), physicians and nutrition experts (recommendations becoming quite a puzzle with the growing number of children with special needs), cooks (turn recommendations into varied and child oriented meals) and architects (why are kitchens far away from the children, if ever there is one? why are eating facilities big and noisy?), farmers, craftsmen, local officials and policy-makers, specialized associations, sport clubs, researchers, national and international institutions. All these actors represent a potential network of professionals promoting health and nutrition. How to start networking and work interprofessionally? This is what the INPRO Module “Health and Nutrition” is about.

Transfer of INPRO into practice in Luxembourg

How can INPRO affect the Childhood education and care in Luxembourg?

How can INPRO-material be used in Childhood education and care in Luxembourg?

Currently, a bill supposed to extend the **Act of 4 July 2008** on youth to the field of early childhood and childhood is being examined. It is supposed to be published in 2013. The introduction of maison relais in 2005 and the service-check¹ introduced in 2009 have greatly expanded the supply of childhood education and care services. Thus, the number of seats available has increased from 7,712 in 2004 to 32,342 in 2010. Faced with this development in terms of quantity of supply, the bill aims now at the development of the quality of education and care. The introduction of a system of educational quality assurance is planned as well as a reorganization and adaptation to new political and sociological contexts of childhood education and care.

¹ The service-check is a national system intending at encouraging parents to use childcare services by making them cheaper. Basically, parents pay only a certain percentage of the childcare service’s hourly price while the difference is financed by public money (75% by the State and 25% by local administrations).



As an example, it is being planned that municipalities will have to elaborate a municipal plan for childhood and youth in order to continue to receive public financial contributions. These municipal plans will define the youth and childhood policy of the different municipalities and require them to list their services and how they work together in the interest of the children and the teenagers.

Moreover, a new Grand Ducal Regulation supposed to replace the Grand Ducal Regulation of 20 December 2001 is also being examined. It should introduce into the pedagogical team new professions related to health, music, sports and arts. In addition to that, a further training requirement of at least 16 hours per year should be established.

The municipal plan for childhood and youth, the diversity of the professional teams around the child and the further training requirement are elements that show a clear evolution towards a need for formalized interprofessional work within and between the teams. In this context INPRO represents a big chance and can help support the socio-political changes taking place in Luxembourg. More specifically, INPRO will address the new needs of municipalities, organisations working in childhood education and care and professionals working around the child by offering trainings based on the developed INPRO materials. Beyond that, the introduction of INPRO into the curriculum of certain vocational trainings (e.g. social worker, bachelor in social and educational sciences) would represent an important step.