# National Fiche – Luxembourg

## COVID-19 cases

As of 8 September 2020, Luxembourg registered a total of 124 COVID-19[[1]](#footnote-1) related deaths out of a population of 626,000 people[[2]](#footnote-2). Data on deaths and cases of COVID-19 were not disaggregated by disability status and no official data on deaths and cases in care homes has been published. However, on 28 April 2020, the Minister of Family Affairs announced in a press conference that 90 positive cases of COVID-19 have been registered in care homes in Luxembourg and 29 residents died of COVID-19 out of 5,765 residents in retirement and care homes[[3]](#footnote-3).

According to statistics from the Ministry of Health, 65.9% of deaths occurred among people above 79 years, 25.2% of deaths were among age group 70-79 years and 6.5% within 60-69 age group[[4]](#footnote-4).

## Emergency, lockdown, and confinement

Luxembourg declared a state of emergency from 17 March to 24 June 2020[[5]](#footnote-5).

The Government implemented restrictions on movement even though a lockdown has not been pronounced. However, people aged over 65 and “vulnerable” people were “strongly recommended to stay at home and only go out when strictly necessary”[[6]](#footnote-6). Among people for who exception to the restriction of movement is mentioned are assistants and carers for older persons, minors, persons with disabilities and vulnerable people. Public facilities were closed and only essential activities were maintained including public services, public transport, hospital activities and the healthcare sector among others[[7]](#footnote-7).

## Involvement of organisations of persons with disabilities

Disabled People’s Organisations have not been involved in national policy nor consulted by the government.

Info-handicap - the National disability Information and Meeting Centre raised concerns about difficulties experienced by persons with disabilities including the absence of translation into Braille of face masks instruction and the difficulty of social distancing for people who need contact to be guided[[8]](#footnote-8).

## Communications and announcement

Communication was not made accessible for persons with disabilities[[9]](#footnote-9). Indeed, the Centre for Equal treatment received complaints regarding accessibility of COVID-19 related information and lack of sign language, or easy-to-read formats[[10]](#footnote-10).

However, changes have been noticed through the pandemic since the Luxembourgish government made available two email addresses to answer questions from deaf and hard of hearing persons and for persons with difficulties in oral expression. The government also partnered with the Luxembourgish Ligue for Mental Health for the launch of a website dedicated to preserving mental health in times of COVID-19. Through a FAQ section, the website provides advice on how to safeguard mental health in this challenging period including advice on how to explain the pandemic to persons with intellectual disability.

Besides the government, Info-handicap included on its website a list of information and contact details for persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic[[11]](#footnote-11).

## Institutions and closed settings

In a press conference, the Minister of Family Affairs acknowledged concerns about the health crisis and the feeling of loneliness and isolation experienced by the older persons due to stay at home measures. The Minister added that a plan should be implemented to allow older persons to see their family to preserve their mental health while protecting them from infection. As such, visits were planned ahead and took place in separate rooms where possible and were limited to a small number of persons. Visitors must not present any symptoms of COVID-19 nor been in contact with someone who has been infected. They had to respect hygiene measures, wear a mask and observe a distance of two metres. The Minister also stressed the importance for therapists to resume activities in care homes to avoid health issues for residents especially those suffering from mobility and cognitive difficulties[[12]](#footnote-12).

Additionally, the government issued recommendations on the access to health and personal care professionals in accommodation structure for older persons and persons with disabilities[[13]](#footnote-13).

## Health care

On 31 March 2020, the National Ethics Commission released a position paper recalling that the decision to admit or not a patient in intensive care units should be based on principles such as dignity, equality and equity. Any discrimination based on criteria such as age, sex, disability or origin is prohibited.

The Commission added that decisions should be taken on a case by case basis, taking into account the medical situation of the patient. Decision criteria are thus objective and based on science with the evaluation of the general state of health and prognosis of survival at short and long term[[14]](#footnote-14).

## Social Protection

The Luxembourgish government implemented a leave for family reasons to offer the possibility for one parent to take leave to take care of a child with disabilities who is up to 18 years old[[15]](#footnote-15).

Leave for family support was also available for persons taking care of adult with disabilities whose Day care center was closed[[16]](#footnote-16).

1. Data.public.lu, The Luxembourgish data platform, Coronavirus, Daily situation update, 8 September 2020, available in French at: <https://download.data.public.lu/resources/covid-19-rapports-journaliers/20200908-170916/coronavirus-rapport-journalier-08092020.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Government’s website, available at: <https://luxembourg.public.lu/fr/societe-et-culture/population/demographie.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. RTL, Minister of Family Affairs press conference on the implementation of confinement measures in care homes, 28 April 2020, available at: <https://today.rtl.lu/news/luxembourg/a/1509124.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ministry of Health, Age distribution of COVID-19 deaths, 1st September 2020, available at: <https://msan.gouvernement.lu/en/graphiques-evolution.html#sg> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Site Coronavirus (Covid-19), Le gouvernement du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, available at : <https://police.public.lu/fr/actualites/2020/juin/w26/25-covid19-fin-etat-de-crise.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Government Council, New measures taken in response to the Coronavirus, 15 March 2020. Available at: <https://coronavirus.gouvernement.lu/en/communications-officielles.gouvernement%2Ben%2Bactualites%2Btoutes_actualites%2Bcommuniques%2B2020%2B03-mars%2B15-nouvelles-mesures-coronavirus.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Règlement grand-ducal du 18 mars 2020 portant introduction d’une série de mesures dans le cadre de la lutte contre le Covid-19. Available in French at : <http://www.legilux.lu/eli/etat/leg/rgd/2020/03/18/a165/jo> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. FRA bulletin III, country report - Luxembourg, June 2020, p.19. Available at: <https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/lu_report_on_coronavirus_pandemic_june_2020.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Information from Conseil National des personnes handicapées, Info-Handicap, 08 September 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Equinet’s response to COVID-19, Luxembourg, available at: <https://equineteurope.org/covid-19-response/#data> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Info-Handicap’s website available at: <https://info-handicap.lu/category/news-francais/> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. RTL, Minister of Family Affairs press conference on the implementation of confinement measures in care homes, 28 April 2020, available at: <https://today.rtl.lu/news/luxembourg/a/1509124.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. FRA Bulletin III, Coronavirus pandemic in the EU – Fundamental rights implications: with a focus on older people, 1 May – 31 May 2020, p.36. Available at: <https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2020-coronavirus-pandemic-eu-bulletin-june_en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. National Ethics Commission, Position paper on the Essential ethical benchmarks in patient orientation

    in a context of limited available therapeutic resources due to the COVID pandemic crisis-19, 31 March 2020. Available at: <https://cne.public.lu/dam-assets/fr/publications/avis/Prise-de-position-COVID-19.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Government’s website, New certificate for leave for family reasons from 30 March 2020, available in French at: <https://gouvernement.lu/fr/actualites/toutes_actualites/communiques/2020/03-mars/30-formulaire-cprf.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. FRA bulletin III, country report - Luxembourg, June 2020, p.19. Available at: <https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/lu_report_on_coronavirus_pandemic_june_2020.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)