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IMPRESSUM

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You can find at any time all documents
and our resolutions, which the ADR has
already presented at the
Chamber of Deputies, on our website



Photo: P. Conrardy

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You have been lied to and betrayed

Prior to the last parliamentary elections, in their 2018 electoral campaigns, the PCS (CSV), DP, LSAP and the Greens promised you a referendum on the new Constitution. It's all there in black and white (our translation):

CSV PCS (CSV): "Before the first constitutional vote, the text of the new Constitution will be discussed with the citizens of Luxembourg and explained to them at regional round tables [...] This text will then be put to the citizens in a referendum that will replace the second constitutional vote in the Parliament. If the result is positive, the country will receive a new Constitution under the next legislature".

DP DP: "The four largest parties in Luxembourg Parliament support this text and have declared themselves in favour of a referendum under the next legislature. Given that the Constitution forms the true legal foundations of our country, the referendum must be accompanied by the fullest and most objective information possible, with the greatest possible public participation beforehand".

LSAP LSAP: "Instead of a second reading, the new constitutional text should then be put forward to all citizens entitled to vote after a broad public discussion, with a view as to hold a referendum vote, so that it might come into effect by the end of 2020 at the latest".

déi gréng Déi Gréng (the Greens): "This is why it is important to complete the reform of our Constitution quickly and put it to the people for a vote in a referendum".

Promise made, promise broken

Telling the public, as these four parties are now doing, that this would only be a "one-off" reform rather than a "comprehensive" one as was envisaged at the time is just delusional! **The authors of the new Constitution themselves say that it is a "substantial" reform.**

So, to want to differentiate now between "comprehensive" and "substantial" reform in order to avoid holding a referendum is a great sham! Luxembourg will have an almost entirely new Constitution. **Many articles will be added and fundamental aspects of our society will be amended.** This includes, for example, our relationship with the European Union, the role of the Grand Duke and family rights, amongst other things. Opposing a referendum will allow the four parties to make decisions alone, among themselves, on the most important text of our State. Their attitude is undemocratic, obscure and dishonest. Since the result of the 2015 referendum, these four parties have feared the popular vote. They prefer to govern by excluding the people.

Their attitude is undemocratic, obscure and dishonest.

The ADR does not agree with these practices. On the 19th of February, 2021, the ADR presented a bill to the Chamber of Deputies calling for a referendum. On the 20th of May, 2021, it submitted a new bill to the Chamber of Deputies, demanding that citizens be objectively informed about the new Constitution. Both bills were rejected by the three parties in the government coalition and by the PCS (CSV).

Now, these four parties and the chairman of the Constitutional Commission of the Chamber of Deputies are arguing that the people could call for a referendum themselves. In order for this to happen, 25,000 signatures would have to be collected. However, this is not what the four parties promised! They clearly want to make this procedure as difficult as possible, starting by splitting the new text into four separate parts. In doing so, they intend to force citizens – if they want a referendum – to go through the 25,000-signature procedure four times. What impertinence! It would be so easy for the government coalition and the PCS (CSV) to organise a single referendum on all four parts of the new Constitution!

The ADR had also promised a referendum in its election manifesto for the 2018 parliamentary elections. It clearly wants to keep its word. For the ADR, the referendum must take place!



How four parties are blocking a referendum

Prior to the 2018 elections, the PCS (CSV) and the government coalition claimed that the constitutional reform would be only minor. In truth, this is a very large-scale revision! **Co-reporter Simone Beissel of the Democratic Party (DP) herself admits that this is a "substantial and fundamental revision".**

The government coalition and the PCS (CSV) are determined to block the referendum. As such:

- they refuse to initiate the promised referendum themselves.

In order to prevent the people from voting on the new constitutional text:

- they ask citizens to petition for a referendum, with 25,000 signatures required per chapter;
- they refuse to allow these signatures to be provided online or via a form;
- they demand that 25,000 citizens sign their local petition four times, on four different occasions.

The same parties had promised that the new Constitution would be adopted by referendum. Now, they do not even want to hear about it. They even dare to suggest that people could call for a referendum themselves, which is a very cumbersome process that requires the collection of many signatures. **In order to make this as difficult as possible, they refuse to change pertinent legislation and will not allow**

any signatures to be collected via electronic means or in forms. Such procedures already exist in the Chamber of Deputies, where petitions can be signed electronically. A petition is publicly debated if it can gather 4,500 signatures. However, to request a referendum, 25,000 signatures are required and to sign, people must physically go to the town hall.

Another trick decided upon after the elections is the subdivision of the new constitutional text into four chapters. Normally, such a constitutional revision would be presented as a single text, which would then be put to vote. This trick of the PCS (CSV) and the parties of the government coalition amounts to forcing people to initiate the referendum procedure no less than four times. Rather than collecting the required 25,000 signatures just once, it will be necessary to do this four times - a real hassle!

The chairman of the parliamentary committee for the constitutional revision is himself among those who nonchalantly suggest that the people themselves should ask for the referendum that his party promised them, **knowing full well that the quibbles introduced by the PCS (CSV) and the coalition parties will make this almost impossible.**

It was particularly ironic when the DP co-reporter wished "good luck" on the radio to anyone who might try to initiate the referendum process. She, too, is perfectly aware that this is practically an impossible mission.

This is the haughty and dismissive way in which the Christian Social Party and the parties in the governing coalition treat voters. They do not deserve to be called a democracy! Will voters accept being treated this way?



Photomontage: P. Conrardy/Shutterstock



Do not let this happen to you!

Our country is facing a historic decision. Four parties – the PCS (CSV), the DP, the LSAP and the Greens – have negotiated an almost complete reform of our Constitution amongst themselves. This took place almost exclusively behind closed doors and many organisations – even those directly concerned – were not even consulted. **Today, almost no one in the country knows what the new Constitution will look like.**

Their intention is to get the new four-part Constitution through the Chamber as quickly as possible, by a two-thirds majority, rather than through a popular referendum, as originally promised. Indeed, rather than keeping this promise, they became arrogant and began telling citizens

There are plans
to reshape Luxembourgish
society.

that if they wanted a referendum, they would have to initiate the process themselves by collecting 25,000 signatures – for each of the four parties. Of course, the ADR insists that the promised referendum take place! **Our party is convinced that the legitimacy of a Constitution depends on the broad consent of the nation, documented in a referendum, rather than merely hinging on a consensus between a few political parties.** For the ADR, the real "constituent" is the nation, not the parliament.

The current constitutional revision goes far beyond a simple "adaptation to social changes" or "modernisation" of the current Constitution. It contains plans to completely reorganise the Luxembourgish society, with concepts and

ideas that barely appear in any other foreign constitutional text. Foreigners' right to vote also reappears. For the new Constitution, "progressive" ideas from many disparate sources were brought together, often lacking the necessary internal coherence.

The ADR is not opposed to ad hoc constitutional changes. The party has even made a few proposals of its own, for example, to enhance the value of the Luxembourgish language, to reform the status of animals or to enable the Constitutional Court to take control of government decisions in times of crisis. The ADR has also called for changes in the procedure for forming a committee of enquiry in the Chamber of Deputies. The party therefore welcomes reforms that meet its demands. In addition, the ADR actively welcomes other innovations, such as strengthening the rights of Parliament, for example.

However, in addition to some ad hoc improvements, the constitutional amendments proposed contain a significant number of problems and weaknesses. Alas, the new Constitution is also a reform of missed opportunities. The ADR regrets that a number of real institutional improvements have been neglected. For example, we could have put forward a reform of the electoral system or proposed a system through which citizens could be referred directly to the Constitutional Court. Likewise, reforms might have included the administrative and functional separation of the Public Prosecutor's Office from all functions of the judiciary, or a wider direct democracy through referendums.

The ADR therefore calls for a wide-ranging debate on the planned reforms and a referendum on the new Constitution. Four political parties should not be allowed to change the fundamental law of our nation on the sly, without a referendum. Indeed, this goes against their own electoral promises!

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Politicisation of the Constitution

The new Constitution aims not only to amend the rights of citizens and the country's institutions, but also, by means of "objectives of constitutional value", to impose guidelines on policy in the long term. For the ADR, this is not the purpose of a Constitution, which is rather to provide a legal basis for a State, setting the rules on how it should function, guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law and the separation of powers and defining and ensuring the fundamental rights of citizens. A Constitution is therefore there to give a country long-term order and stability, not to facilitate short-term political considerations or the interests of certain parties.

The introduction of political objectives into the new Constitution breaches the process of free democratic opinion-forming, as it aims to restrict parties' freedom of action in the long term. What would happen if a party that did not agree with the political objectives of the State as laid down in the Constitution won a democratic election? Should the newly elected government then pursue a policy against the will of the voters, given that the Constitution dictates certain objectives? **The current government coalition and the PCS (CSV) are trying to establish their policy in the long term, thus limiting the possibility of democratic change.**

Adding political objectives to the Constitution likewise means that all civil servants, when taking their oath of office, will also have to respect the political objectives set out in the new Constitution. **This is not only an attack on the neutrality of the civil service, but also an attack on the freedom of conscience of civil servants and their personal and political freedoms.**

It is particularly worrying to see how "State objectives" are justified. To achieve

A Constitution is there to give a country long-term order and stability.

them, other constitutional principles may be restricted: "The consequences of these objectives are explained by their use by the legislator to justify non-excessive derogations from constitutional principles. Objectives of constitutional value can therefore extend the powers of the legislator by limiting the application of certain constitutional principles".

Thus, in the name of new State objectives, e.g. the fight against climate change or the right to adequate housing, the constitutional rights of citizens may be restricted.

In this context, it is unclear how the term "non-excessive" will be interpreted. Can citizens be dispossessed of their property on the grounds that it should be used for other purposes? Will it be "excessive" to take away someone's "under-occupied accommodation"? (Some parties want to introduce this concept in order to be able to set a ceiling on the amount of space available for housing purposes per person) The new Constitution merely stipulates: "This objective requires the legislator to take the necessary initiatives to enable everyone to have decent housing".

In the future, in the fight against climate change, all coercive measures, with reference to the new political objective of "climate neutrality", may be justified and applied. Will there be restrictions on domestic and livestock animals on the grounds that they produce too much carbon dioxide or methane? What other limitations, for example in terms of freedom of movement, could be imposed upon us? Will we still be able to travel by plane or car to other countries in the future, for holidays or for other reasons?

For the ADR, it is clear that political objectives have no place in the Constitution!



The "Gëlle Fra" – symbol of our independence.

Photo: Shutterstock

Foreigners' right to vote on the sly

In the **2015 referendum**, around **80% of Luxembourgers voted against the foreigners being granted the right to vote**. If foreigners were granted the right to vote, there would no longer be a parliament of the Luxembourgish nation. Rather, there would be a parliament for a multicultural society without a national identity, in which Luxembourg's specificity would quickly lose importance. Today, **the ADR is the only party that still respects the result of the 2015 referendum and therefore, the Luxembourgish nation**.

Time and time again, other parties have tried to circumvent the 2015 result. The PCS (CSV) is working hard to lower the level of the language test required to obtain the Luxembourgish nationality. At a roundtable for the European election campaign, the DP even went as far as to ask "affected citizens" to oppose the referendum result.

The constitutional reform opens up the possibility of introducing foreigners' right to vote, despite the fact that this goes against the will of the Luxembourgish people. A new Article 9a has been introduced into the planned text, thus making it possible to grant foreigners the right to vote: "[...] (2) Without prejudice to Article 52, the law may confer the exercise of political rights to non-Luxembourgish citizens".

Paragraph (2) thus clearly stipulates that the exercise of political rights may be granted to foreigners by law. The commentary on this article states: "In order to remove any legal uncertainty, it is specified in paragraph 2 that the principle according to which the right to vote may be extended by law to non-Luxembourgish citizens does not apply to legislative elections".

It is therefore stressed that Article 9a should not be applicable to parliamentary elections. However, this clarification is not placed in the legally binding text of the Constitution – only in the commentary. This is a significant difference,

as the commentary is non-binding and only a source of interpretation. Why do not the four parties (DP, déi Gréng (the Greens), LSAP and PCS (CSV)) want to write into the new Constitution that only Luxembourgers have the right to vote in the legislative elections? The ADR demands that the text of the Constitution itself respects the 2015 referendum. The sentence could be formulated as follows: "Without prejudice to Article 52 and with the exception of legislative elections, the law may confer the exercise of political rights on non-Luxembourgish citizens".

No European country has opened national elections to foreigners – and for good reason! In order to be able to make political decisions in the interest of a country and a society, one has to belong fully to that country and that society. Integration therefore plays a very important role. This is a precondition for political rights. **In Luxembourg, where foreigners now make up approximately 50% of the population, such a model of political multiculturalism would undermine our national sovereignty, prevent integration and thus weaken the solidarity and loyalty of citizens.** It would expose the country and society to fundamental and irreversible changes. Even if the number of foreign citizens were to increase only slightly, Luxembourgish voters would already be in the minority. Our nationality itself is increasingly relativised: great efforts are being made to make the Luxembourgish nationality completely independent of the Luxembourgish language.

The European Union Treaties, on the other hand, stipulate that the sovereign functions of the State continue to be reserved for national citizens. **However, if foreigners were to be granted the right to vote, this would automatically mean that all civil service positions would eventually have to be open to all.**

For the ADR, the right to vote in parliamentary elections must remain linked to the Luxembourgish nationality, as has always been the case: "Sovereign power resides in the Nation".

It would lead to irreversible societal changes.



In the referendum on the 7th of June, 2015, Luxembourg voted on several issues related to a change in the Constitution. The introduction of voting rights for foreigners was rejected by a large majority.

Photo: ADR Archives

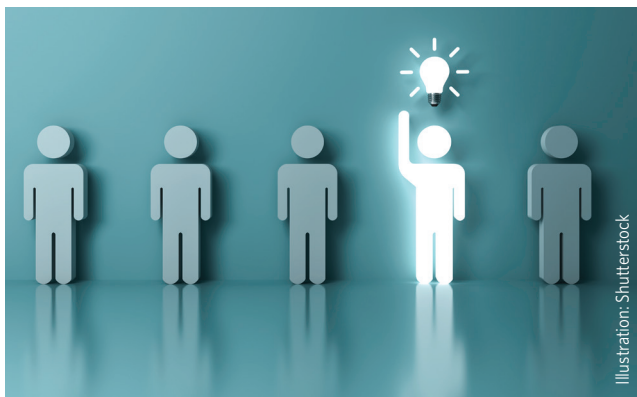


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How can our Constitution be changed?



Article 114 of the current Constitution stipulates that an amendment to the Constitution requires two votes in the Chamber, at least three months apart, whereby the second vote may be replaced by a referendum. Such a referendum may be requested by at least 16 MPs or 25,000 voters:

"Any revision of the Constitution must be adopted under the same terms by the Chamber of Deputies in two successive votes, with an interval of at least three months between them. No revision shall be adopted unless it receives at least two-thirds of the votes of the members of the Chamber, with proxy votes not being accepted. The text adopted on first reading by the Chamber of Deputies is submitted to a referendum, which replaces the second vote of the Chamber, if, within two months of the first vote, a request is made either by more than a quarter of the members of the Chamber or by twenty-five thousand electors registered on the electoral rolls for the legislative elections. The revision is only adopted if it receives a majority of the validly cast votes. The law shall govern the way in which the referendum is organised".

Procedure for requesting a referendum

According to the Referendum Act of the 4th of February, 2005 – Articles 4 to 19 – the process for requesting a referendum is as follows:

Five Luxembourgers entitled to vote must submit a written request to the Prime Minister no later than 14 days after the first vote. The Prime Minister will then have three days to decide on the formal validity of the request. Subsequently, 25,000 eligible Luxembourgers will have to support this request for a referendum. Signatures are registered at town halls and the Prime Minister will announce the deadline. **If 25,000 voters demand a referendum, it must take place. It is decisive and replaces the second vote in the Chamber of Deputies.**

But beware: No referendum can take place three months before or after national and European elections! If necessary, the deadline will be extended by six months.

Law of the 4th of February, 2005 on national referendums, Art. 20:

"If the request to hold a referendum has been made by more than one quarter of the members of the Chamber of Deputies or, under the conditions provided for in Chapter 2 of this Act, by twenty-five thousand voters, the Government must hold a referendum within six months. In the event of parliamentary or European elections being held within this period, it shall be extended by six months".

The ADR introduced a bill on the 19th of February, 2021, **such that the 25,000 people would no longer have to physically go to the town hall to request a referendum but rather, could do so electronically.** Indeed, this is already possible for petitions within the Chamber of Deputies. **The government immediately and firmly rejected this idea.** The truth is that it does not want a referendum. Therefore, its aim is to make the referendum procedure as inconvenient as possible for the population.

The PCS (CSV) could make its own decision on a referendum!

If each party kept its election promise, a referendum could easily be decided upon within the Chamber of Deputies. In fact, the Constitution stipulates that just 16 MPs ("more than a quarter of the members of the Chamber") need to make a request.

The PCS (CSV) already has 21 MPs of its own, which would allow it to easily keep its electoral promise – if it wanted to!

Other parties could also join forces to reach the minimum number of 16 MPs. The ADR would of course be willing to support such an initiative. The Democratic Party (DP), for example, has 12 seats in the Chamber. As such, with the support of the ADR, it could fulfil its election promise and initiate a referendum.

Our Constitution on an international level

Dating back to 1848, the Luxembourg Constitution is the fifth oldest codified Constitution in the world – after the United States of America (1776), the Kingdom of Norway (1810), the Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815) and the Kingdom of Belgium (1831) – and thus the fourth oldest codified European constitution. In addition, four countries have an even older – but not formally codified – Constitution. Of course, occasional changes to these Constitutions have been made over time. Comprehensive reforms are much less frequent.



Photo: Sylvie Mischel



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A reform against the monarchy

For our country, constitutional monarchy is a proven and effective form of government. It is valued by the vast majority of the population. **Traditionally, the image of the Grand Duke is that of a sovereign who represents the country neutrally, who places himself above the political fray and also above the various powers of the State.**

However, largely and deliberately inspired by the French republic, the new Constitution introduces a number of elements that will transform our traditions in many ways when it comes to the monarchy. For example, when

The Grand Duke's freedom of action will be systematically restricted.

taking the oath, the reference to the Grand Duke, "I swear loyalty to the Grand Duke", to which we have been accustomed for so long, will disappear. Court rulings will no longer be pronounced in the name of the Grand Duke, but rather only executed in his name. The idea is that in the future, the Grand Duke will be seen primarily as part of the executive branch.

The Grand Duke's freedom of action vis-à-vis the government will be systematically restricted in the new Constitution. A procedure that will make it possible to remove him from office at the government's command will be put in place, which would, in practice, prevent him, as head of state, from having an independent opinion and acting in the interests of the country and in accordance with his conscience. The proposed text stipulates: "If the Grand Duke does not fulfil his constitutional powers, the Chamber of Deputies, at the government's request and after hearing the opinion of the Council of State, decides by

a qualified majority that there are grounds for considering that the Grand Duke has abdicated".

It is not clear how such a statement will be interpreted in practice. **There is a risk that this procedure will simply mean that should the government deem a Grand Duke "unsuitable", for example for political reasons, it will be able to demand his removal.** The ADR would have liked many more limitations to have been placed on the rules in this context, for example, setting out certain irresolvable circumstances (such as an inability to work for health reasons), which would prevent the Grand Duke's rule.

In addition, the Grand Duke will lose the right to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies on his own initiative and to hold new elections within a period of three months.

This right allows the head of state, in a politically complicated situation, to give citizens the opportunity to elect a new parliament – and thus possibly allow the formation of another government. Although this power to dissolve the Chamber is formally a right of the head of state, it is in fact a democratic guarantee for the people. The Grand Duke can only return power to the people by dissolving Parliament. This is perfectly legitimate and such provisions also exist in other constitutions where the head of state can dissolve the parliament, for instance in France. The new texts envisage that the Grand Duke will only be able to dissolve the Chamber under very limited conditions, which unnecessarily restricts the possibility of new elections.

In the new Constitution, the Grand Duke will no longer be the commander of the army. He will only bear this title – again "under the responsibility of the government". Such a humiliating provision does not exist in any other monarchy. It is customary for the monarch to also be the commander of the army. Even in republics, the head of state is commonly the commander of the army.

For the ADR, such reforms are unnecessary. The party believes that there is no reason to change the rights of the Grand Duke.



A premeditated abolition of our sovereignty

State sovereignty is an incredibly valuable asset. It has enabled our country to maintain its freedom, strengthen its identity and develop its economy, without compromising meaningful international cooperation.

The current Constitution stipulates that the exercise of State functions may temporarily be entrusted – on the basis of treaties – to international organisations. The most important word here is "temporarily" – for a certain period of time but not permanently. In the proposed reform, the word "temporarily" will be deleted. In the future, **this will allow our sovereign rights to be permanently transferred to international institutions, including the EU.** What is more, no procedure for eventually recovering these rights has been set forth. The new Constitution thus clearly bears the signature of European federalism. It is designed to facilitate the birth of a European federal state and to make us lose our sovereignty little by little.

Renouncing national sovereignty also means that the Grand Duke would apply European legislation through regulation, in order to "facilitate" the implementation of this legislation in Luxembourg. The nature of the legal acts concerned is not specified in the text. **Once again, Luxembourg is clearly being made subordinate to the EU and there is a real risk of the Chamber of Deputies being ousted when European acts are transposed into our national law.**

The new Constitution bears the signature of European federalism.

There is absolutely no reason to change our Constitution in this way. Quite to the contrary, no other European country is going down this road. The EU is deep in crisis – and not just since Brexit. Its future is uncertain. An intelligent and forward-looking policy would exercise a certain degree of caution when it comes to developments in Europe, rather than definitively surrendering our sovereign rights to the EU.

For a small country, economic openness is of course necessary. However, a certain degree of European cooperation or even economic integration could be envisaged without having to support the excessive, bureaucratic federalism of the EU.

The new Constitution also intends to abolish our right to have a national currency ("the right to coin money"). Such a move is unusual on an international level and is not even in line with the current monetary union, under which banknotes are issued by the European Central Bank but



Our sovereignty has allowed us to maintain our freedom, strengthen our identity and develop our economy.

coins are issued on a national level – the amount being set by the ECB. A State's right to have its own currency is by no means a "detail" that should be discarded. While the Euro has many advantages, it also comes with many problems and internal tensions. Once again, it would have been appropriate to exercise a certain degree of caution. We do not know how the European currency will develop in the future. The Greek crisis has not yet been forgotten, North-South tensions in the euro area are increasing and common debts, contrary to the Treaties, are creating new imbalances.

It remains clear to the ADR that "We want to remain what we are": a small sovereign state in a Europe of Nations. The Constitution should perpetuate our sovereignty, not abolish it!

The weakened family

Under the current Constitution, family units are still well protected. It stipulates: "The State guarantees the natural rights of the human individual and the family". This sentence will be replaced in the new Constitution by a much weaker provision: "The State shall ensure [...] respect for family life". Family rights in relation to the State are thus reduced considerably. But that's not all! The new Constitution also stipulates: "The State shall ensure that the right to found a family is respected (...)" and further: "It is understood that this new, broader wording covers all definitions of the term 'family'". As such, the term "family" will be interpreted in a completely arbitrary way, which implies that anyone – even an individual living alone – will be able to start a family and thus have the right to a child – a huge step backwards for society! Nobody has the right to a child because a child is not a commodity! Of course, this observation does not apply to fathers and mothers who, through the vagaries of life, find themselves in a single-parent situation. **The protective function of the State towards the family and the child will thus be perverted: the State will now have a duty to restrict the rights and dignity of the child.** Luxembourg has thus gone much further than any other European country.

The new Constitution will mean that in future, everyone will have the right to acquire a child. GPA (surrogate motherhood/"Leihmutterschaft") will thus be covertly introduced as a fundamental right in the Constitution, even though the same political parties that want to introduce the new Constitution firmly assert the contrary. This is pure hypocrisy! Already today, thousands of women, mainly in Eastern Europe and in developing countries, are forced to give birth to children for individuals or couples who have enough money and are then forced to separate from these children. **It is an abhorrent form of female exploitation and human trafficking.** Even ART (assisted reproductive technology) with a third-party donor will become a de facto right for all. Again, it is the children who are destined to suffer: their biological father will be deliberately excluded from their lives. The new laws on parentage reveal the true intentions of the government and the PCS (CSV).

The new Constitution will allow all these practices and thus violate our country's international obligations – in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

To make matters worse, the State wants to take over the rights of parents in the education of children. Indeed, the new Constitution stipulates: "The State shall ensure that every child receives the protection, measures and care necessary for his or her well-being and development". This is not about the rights of parents. In other constitutions, education is the exclusive right of parents. For instance, Article 6(2) of the German Constitution stipulates: "Custody and education of children is the natural right of parents



Photo: Shutterstock

Luxembourg has thus gone much further than any other European country.

and, above all, their duty". In 1949, parents' rights were very consciously incorporated into the German Constitution as a protection against a totalitarian state, which – like the Hitler dictatorship or the GDR – tried to take over education. The ADR believes that parents must retain the right to educate their children!

The ADR would also have liked to see the right to life – a fundamental right par excellence – explicitly written into the Constitution. The right to life is one of the "natural rights of the human person", which shall unfortunately also disappear from the new Constitution.

Did you know

that the Luxembourg Constitution has granted stability to the people and State of Luxembourg since 1848? That's to say, for

173 years!

Over time, our Constitution has:

- served two dynasties and nine Grand Dukes;
- seen 37 governments with 22 prime ministers;
- survived two world wars;
- guided approximately 62 parties (including current parliamentary and non-parliamentary parties).

And now, it's going to be replaced without even asking your opinion!



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Pure propaganda in place of an information campaign

Many of us still remember the 2015 referendum. During that time, all political parties (except the ADR and part of the PCS (CSV)) were in favour of granting foreigners the right to vote, as was all the press and so-called "civil society". Calls for a "yes" vote from well-known and lesser-known personalities, artists and intellectuals (often self-proclaimed) were published. The archdiocese showed his support for the "yes" vote. The

Instead of the promised referendum, the new Constitution would be adopted by two votes in the Chamber of Deputies.

ADR was presented as a populist and nationalist party because of its "no" position, with the "Nee 2015" action even being prevented from speaking at various discussion evenings. The ASTI (!) was tasked with "objectively" informing people of the ins and outs of the initiative. And when the impressive referendum result was announced, a well-known LSAP politician was remarkably stubborn in declaring that the country's "elite" had finally voted "yes". The 80% who voted "no" knew that they were not part of the socialist elite.

But anyone who thought that a propaganda campaign as one-sided as the 2015 referendum could not - and should not - happen again in our country and that politics had learned its lesson, was sadly mistaken. **The four parties PCS (CSV), DP, LSAP and the Greens want to pass the new Constitution in Parliament - contrary to their**

promise, without a referendum. They had not even come up with an information campaign to present to the population.

The ADR therefore took the initiative and presented a bill to the Chamber, which demanded:

"the organisation, from autumn 2021 onwards, of a broad information campaign in the country, in which all the proposed amendments to the current Constitution will be presented;

that this information campaign should include:

- a series of information and discussion evenings,
- public debates on specific constitutional articles, to which all interested organisations will be invited and in which they can present their proposals and positions in their own right,
- debates on Chamber TV, where opposing views are discussed and in which people with different views are invited to participate".

This campaign should be organised in such a way that the proposed changes are presented in a neutral and objective way, whereby each change may be debated, in order to allow people to form their own opinions on the new Constitution, based on reliable sources of information.

This bill was rejected on the 14th of July by the coalition government parties and the PCS (CSV). Clearly, they are not fans of open debate and freedom of opinion. These four parties, alongside the Pirates, then submitted an opposing bill, which provides for a purely one-sided propaganda campaign. On this occasion, the DP spokeswoman haughtily informed the Chamber that: "People need to know exactly what we think is right for them and for the whole country".

The proposed revision will therefore not be discussed or examined. Rather, citizens will simply be told "what is good for them".

So what exactly is in store for us?

The four parties, assisted by the Pirates, have decided the following:

a (!) press conference will be planned, as well as an (!) information meeting for the "general public" (which you will have to register for), some propaganda films and advertising campaigns in the press and on social networks. There will also be some "debates" on Chamber TV.

In short, we are almost back to where we were in 2015, except that this time, there will not even be a referendum - so that nothing can thwart the plans of the four parties involved and they can impose their will on the people without interruption.



Photo: P. Conrardy

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