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EFNIL: Presentation paper: Language and Migration

The Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg has a population of 634.700 inhabitants by January 2021. 335.300 people with the Luxembourgish nationality, and 299.400 with a foreign nationality. 244.200 inhabitants living in Luxembourg are from an EU-member state. (Statec, 2022) More than 170 nationalities live in Luxembourg. (10 Facts Sheet about the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, 2022) Clearly, it shows that Luxembourg is a real melting pot for languages, but also for identities, cultures, nationalities, and religions. In this presentation, I want to take a closer look at the language situation of Luxembourg and if there has been changes in the past few years with more and more foreign people living and working in the Grand-Duchy. The situation of foreign people migrating to Luxembourg are affecting many domains in the country.

The evolution of the school population reflects the demographic evolution of Luxembourg and is characterized not only by a constant increase, but also by a growing proportion of pupils of foreign origin. Since 2016, the Luxembourgish government has reacted to the migration by opening international schools and to give in the demand for schools with English speaking curricula. There has been a survey which result was that there is a high demand for English speaking schools. (English Schooling, 2022) In 2015-2016, 45.7% of pupils enrolled in the Luxembourgish primary school were non-Luxembourgish and 63.5% indicated a language other than Luxembourgish as their mother tongue. In 2016-2017, the situation in the secondary school was similar: more than 52% of pupils indicated a language other than Luxembourgish as their mother tongue and 68,7% of pupils attending secondary school were foreign. (Schola Europea, 2022) The school language situation is quite a special one in Luxembourg. First, let me mention that Luxembourg has three official languages; Lëtzebuergesch (Luxembourgish), Français (French) and Deutsch (German), which are legally defined since 1984. (Memorial, 2022) The children are alphabetised in German, will learn French from the 2nd year in primary school and English in secondary school.

But not only in school, also at work and in the everyday life of Luxembourg the language situation has shown an impact from migrants. Already in 2018, I have shown at the EFNIL conference in Amsterdam that Luxembourg is an unofficial 5 languages country, Luxembourgish, French, German, English, and Portuguese. Where can we see a change in the linguistic landscape in Luxembourg influenced by migration? Which other languages can be

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found in Luxembourg besides the official ones and the ones already seen in 2018 at the conference? Has there been a change?

References:

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