



Electoral Program

Communal Elections, 11 June, 2023

Differdange, the city of social and ecological justice

Differdange, the city for children

Differdange, the city where everybody lives a good life together

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de transparence !**

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déli Lénk
DÉIFFERDENG

In recent years, progress in Differdange has stagnated. The city has faced numerous crises, and we are still a long way from resolution. However, the response to these challenges has been mediocre. The lack of courage to take decisive action, the prevailing fear of making mistakes, and a tendency to prioritize saving over investing have hindered progress. During this time, significant investments have not been made. In the housing sector, all efforts have focused on the "Gravity" project while the municipal building has not been renovated or expanded, leaving municipal services scattered. Differdange is grappling with heavy traffic due to years of inactivity in this area. The price of water has been increased for all consumers, regardless of their usage patterns, with no citizen input.

As the Left, we have voiced opposition whenever necessary. However, we have not limited ourselves to criticism. Instead, we have proposed viable alternatives to these challenges. We continue to do so through this newspaper and invite all citizens to contribute their ideas. To this end, we have launched a participatory platform online, www.decidiff.lu. Come check it out and share your ideas for a better Differdange!

Déi Lénk Déifferdeng is a team of individuals representing diverse backgrounds and experiences who, for various reasons, are each motivated to get involved politically to make a positive change. These individuals are united by one goal: working together for a more equitable, healthy, free, and fair society. In Differdange, Déi Lénk advocates for left-wing politics and engages in all areas and at all levels to:

- Achieve a more equitable society by reducing social, economic, cultural, and gender inequalities.
- Promote an economy based on modes of production and consumption that support individual well-being and the health of the environment, not driven by capitalist ideals.
- Ensure broad democratic participation and fight against all forms of subjugation.

These goals also guide our local politics. The municipality can take initiative by pursuing more ecological projects, thereby improving the quality of life, protecting the environment and biodiversity for the benefit of all, and taking concrete action against climate change.

The municipality can also influence certain portions of various taxes and fees, allowing for a more equitable distribution of wealth. Through its budget, the municipality can prioritize social and educational policies, cultural offerings, and enhance societal participation for all children and adults.

The municipality can play a decisive role in combating housing shortages, especially in providing affordable housing for low-income individuals, and therefore has the responsibility to do so.

It is precisely at the local level, more than anywhere else, that political participation and transparency in decision-making are possible.

Yes, municipalities can - and should - contribute to shaping and advancing eco-socialist counterweights in a capitalist society! For this, there must be advocates who have this vision and are willing to work towards it.

In this electoral program for Differdange, we develop, in the three first chapters, a left-wing societal critique and an alternative political practice. In a fourth chapter, we present a comprehensive vision for Differdange that can guide the revitalization of the municipality in all social, commercial, urban, and educational aspects: "Kannerstad Déifferdeng - Differdange, the City for Children."

Table of contents

GLOSSARY	<u>6</u>	hat gelö
A) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	<u>7</u>	hat gelö
1) Improved transportation	<u>7</u>	hat gelö
2) Sustainable energy policy	<u>8</u>	hat gelö
3) Environmental Protection	<u>9</u>	hat gelö
4) Development of public space and inclusive and sustainable urbanization	<u>11</u>	hat gelö
B) Democracy in the commune	<u>12</u>	hat gelö
1) Participating in decision-making.....	<u>12</u>	hat gelö
2) Transparence in local government.....	<u>13</u>	hat gelö
3) Equal opportunity in the commune	<u>15</u>	hat gelö
4) Strengthen social inclusion and coexistence.....	<u>15</u>	hat gelö
5) Stop the privatization of municipal services	<u>16</u>	hat gelö
C) Social Policy in the Commune	<u>17</u>	hat gelö
2) Affordable housing for all.....	<u>18</u>	hat gelö
3) A social education policy	<u>20</u>	hat gelö
4) Student life in Differdange, an opportunity for the city.....	<u>22</u>	hat gelö
5) Participation of all in the community : from young children to seniors.....	<u>23</u>	hat gelö
6) Policies to combat poverty and social exclusion in the communes	<u>24</u>	hat gelö
7) Top working conditions	<u>25</u>	hat gelö
8) Participative cultural policy	<u>26</u>	hat gelö
9) More security through a better functioning social support structure	<u>27</u>	hat gelö
D) « KANNERSTAD DEIFFERDENG » - a global vision to revitalize the city.....	<u>28</u>	hat gelö
1) Attitude and approach.....	<u>29</u>	hat gelö
2) Kannerbüro (Children’s Office).....	<u>29</u>	hat gelö
3) Housing	<u>29</u>	hat gelö
4) Transit	<u>29</u>	hat gelö
5) Intergenerational.....	<u>30</u>	hat gelö
7) Development supported by contact with natural spaces.....	<u>31</u>	hat gelö
8) Open spaces	<u>31</u>	hat gelö
9) Tourism	<u>32</u>	hat gelö
10) Gastronomy.....	<u>32</u>	hat gelö
11) Commerce	<u>32</u>	hat gelö
12) Culture	<u>32</u>	hat gelö
13) Culture and Integration.....	<u>33</u>	hat gelö

14) Design4all.....	<u>33</u>	hat gelö
15) Playgrounds.....	<u>33</u>	hat gelö
16) Childcare	<u>34</u>	hat gelö
17) Parental assistants, BabyPlus, and early childhood daycare centers.....	<u>34</u>	hat gelö
18) Promotion and expansion of existing successful initiatives	<u>34</u>	hat gelö
19) Confidence and responsibility.....	<u>35</u>	hat gelö

GLOSSARY

Carsharing : Carsharing refers to the organized use of shared cars. We advocate for a publicly funded and operated carsharing network (similar to TICE or VëLOK) that provides residents with access to a car on-demand, thereby reducing the number of vehicles per household without sacrificing mobility.

Centre d'Initiative et de Gestion Local (CIGL) : The main goal of this non-profit organization, supported by the municipality, is to make unemployed citizens employable for the labor market. Employees are not hired on a permanent basis but only for a limited duration. They assist elderly individuals with small-scale tasks.

ICC Impôt commercial : The commercial tax is levied on a portion of a company's profits. The rate of 3% is multiplied by a rate set by the municipalities themselves. For example, the city of Luxembourg practices fiscal dumping to attract businesses by setting a rate as low as 225%. Generally, there is a downward trend in commercial tax. Additionally, municipal councils are faced with fiscal secrecy, which prevents them from knowing the actual tax payments made by businesses located within their territory.

LGBTIAQ+ : "L" represents "Lesbians," "G" represents "Gays," "B" represents "Bisexuals," "T" represents "Trans," "Q" represents "Queer," "I" represents "Intersex," "A" represents "Asexuals" or "Aromantics," and the "+" includes the numerous other terms referring to genders and sexualities.**PAG** : The "plan d'aménagement général" (general development plan) of the municipality determines the use of land surfaces, including for housing, the establishment of business zones, green areas, or the creation of traffic routes. The PAG is therefore the primary instrument for municipal development.

Public-private-partnership (PPP) : A public-private partnership is a partial privatization of municipal services and is seen as an instrument of neoliberalism. For instance, the transfer of the collective antenna to ELTRONA by the CSV/Greens municipal council before 2005 resulted in price increases for subscribers and losses of revenue and control for the municipality. However, the municipality remains responsible if the business proves to be unprofitable for the private economy.**Smart-grid** : An "intelligent" electricity distribution network, also known as a smart grid, utilizes computer and telecommunications technologies with the aim of optimizing the transport of energy from production points to distribution points. These networks are designed to facilitate the connection between supply and demand among producers, particularly those of renewable energy sources (EnR), and electricity consumers.

A) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The devastation of the natural environment (for example, from landscape fragmentation, biodiversity loss, and climate disasters) presents a monumental challenge to humanity. It requires a more substantial and environmentally conscious policy that is based on sustainable criteria.

However, effective measures aimed at establishing sustainable urban and rural development, which aim to temper boundless profit growth, persistently face opposition from a coalition that prioritizes the interests of a coalition including large landowners, real estate speculators, banks, multinational corporations, as well as their political and administrative allies, who bear joint responsibility for the existing problems.

For Déi Lénk, sustainable municipal development entails an interaction between public influence, citizen participation, and the establishment of general conditions through political decisions. This approach allows for the prioritization of essential ecological aspects and challenges the barriers presented by the current system, with the aim of breaking them down.

1) Improved transportation

Through smarter transportation policy, municipalities can create significant positive impact. The introduction of free public transportation has created an important condition for the democratization of mobility. Going further, déi Lénk aims to implement the following objectives :

1. Develop a sustainable mobility plan that integrates all forms of transportation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve quality of life and safety, decrease inequalities through increased access, promote public health, and improve mobility. This plan will encompass all forms of public transportation and include improvements for public transit, carpooling, active transportation, signage, travel patterns, and parking;;
2. Expand and improve public transportation service, including night buses and on-demand bus service;
3. Keep public transportation under municipal control. No outsourcing of public services to private providers, and bring outsourced services, such as the Diffbus (currently operated by a private company) back under the municipal control.;
4. Protect employees through public recruitment under a public employment statute.;
5. Transform Differdange train station into a multimodal mobility hub, bringing together various sustainable mobility options (TICE, DiffBus, RGTR, etc.) that are currently scattered throughout the city center of Differdange.;
6. Extend the tram lines to Differdange (terminus of the currently planned extension in Belvaux).;

7. Promote better coordination between bus lines and trains, establish targeted "shuttle" services ;
8. Develop a systematic network of secure bicycle lanes covering the entire municipality; construct intermunicipal cycling highways to connect our municipality to the national cycling routes PC6 and PC8. ;
9. Provide secure pedestrian pathways (including safe separation from cyclists). ;
10. Create a "bike-bus" and "pedibus" service (cycling or walking) to cover the home ↔ school/nursery/childcare center routes for our youngest residents; the service would include paid escorts.;
11. Expand the network of free bicycles (Vël'OK). ;
12. Develop the local bicycle culture by connecting and expanding the existing offerings (bike lessons in primary schools, Vëlosschoul, Vëlosbutték, etc.);
13. Provide bike racks and shelters at train and bus stops, as well as in neighborhoods, for bicycle parking and storage.;
14. Implement local traffic calming concepts and maximum speed limits for reasons of safety, environmental protection, energy conservation, and, above all, public health.;
15. Systematically create car-free city centers with free collector parking lots at the entrances of the town. Expand existing parking facilities (e.g., parking on Hospital Street, parking on the hospital site in Niederkorn near Longwy Street) or transform "informal" parking areas (e.g., across from the former "Beckléck") into multi-level parking structures. Connect these collector parking lots with regular shuttle services to the existing bus networks (Diffbus, TICE, RGTR), and if necessary, establish safe pathways (pedestrian and cycling) to facilitate access to city centers through sustainable mobility options.;
16. Establish a unified and public car-sharing system for all municipalities in the country. Create designated parking spaces for these shared cars in neighborhoods and villages.;
17. Promote and potentially implement a carpooling system..

2) Sustainable energy policy

The sustainable energy policy of municipalities should be guided by democratic, social, and environmental criteria. Already today, alternative energy technologies have the potential to meet the electricity consumption of a city and reduce the influence of large power plants. We should not wait for big corporations to be ready to innovate but take action at the local level.:

1. Conduct an assessment of the potential for non-fossil fuel energy production in the fields of photovoltaics, wind energy, and possibly hydropower. ;
2. Install photovoltaic panels on all municipally-owned buildings where feasible. ;
3. Launch a program for public-controlled alternative energy production and encourage decentralized individual and cooperative initiatives for alternative energy production. Promote public district heating infrastructure in new neighborhoods and gradually expand them to older neighborhoods.;

4. Connect municipalities to centralized public-controlled "smart grids," while respecting the new constitutional law of control of personal information, as proposed by déi Lénk and accepted in the first vote at the Chamber.;
5. Provide regular guidance to citizens and businesses on energy and environmental protection, with a focus on effective insulation measures. Engage the expertise of the "Klimaagence" to establish a successive energy renovation plan for older residential and commercial buildings in the municipality. Initiate contact with property owners and tenants, provide subsidies based on income, and offer guidance throughout the renovation process. ;
6. Engage communes in the search for a public entity capable of providing pre-financing for renovation works and granting non-repayable assistance and credits, based on available income and taking into account saved energy costs. ;
7. As energy is a fundamental right, actively combat growing energy poverty by: identifying and documenting individuals facing difficulties in paying their energy and water bills; targeting those who could benefit from existing solidarity measures and energy-saving assistance for insulation and the purchase of new household appliances; and providing proactive assistance;;
8. Initiate extensive information campaigns through available municipal publications and special publications addressed to all households in multiple languages and in accessible language; increase and adapt subsidies at the municipal level in light of the significant rise in energy prices. ;
9. Reject nuclear power as a source of electricity ;
10. Establish minimum energy efficiency criteria in the municipal construction regulations (energy-saving measures and promotion of renewable energies).;
11. Maintain energy production and supply (gas and electricity), particularly energy networks, under public ownership and democratic control, including involvement of the users.;
12. Adapt municipal regulations to set price caps on energy services for basic needs, where price formation falls under the responsibility of the municipalities (e.g., Sudenergie).;
13. Require energy supply exclusively from renewable sources for new construction within the municipality.;
14. Set clear annual targets for energy consumption and CO2 emissions reductions. The City of Differdange must become a serious player in reducing CO2 emissions and achieving the goals of the Climate Pact and the European "net zero cities" project (refer to the details below).).

3) Environmental Protection

Since March 2023, Differdange has been participating in a new European project with the aim of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 (net zero cities). This is ambitious considering that Luxembourg aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. As the only participating municipality

in the country, the responsibility is significant. However, without political courage, this project will fail. For déi Lénk, this means: :

1. Apply the polluter-pays principle in cases of ecological damage; establish a dedicated contact point within the municipal administration to report observed ecological damages. ;
2. Work to continuously improve air and soil quality in order to preserve the health and quality of life of the residents of the municipality; ;
3. Protect, maintain, and develop existing local recreational areas.;
4. Green urban centers and public squares with native plants of high ecological value; provide households with advice on landscaping their green spaces; make seeds and seedlings available ;
5. Reverse the trend of gravel gardens in the construction regulations ;
6. Restore natural features to watercourses and continuously monitor water quality ;
7. Abandon the use of pesticides in public facilities;
8. Implement a ban on the use of pesticides and other pollutants within the communal territory and take appropriate measures in case of violations, in collaboration with the competent authorities;
9. Implement effective measures against light pollution ;
10. Reforest the forest owned by the commune according to sustainable criteria; develop a strategy in cooperation with private landowners;
11. Launch information and awareness campaigns about the natural landscapes of the communes;
12. Implement a graduated water tax based on consumption; a basic quantity should be provided free of charge ;
13. Invest in the water distribution network to prevent leaks;
14. Develop a plan of action for the installation of rainwater harvesting tanks in municipal buildings;
15. Provide financial support for the construction of private rainwater harvesting reservoirs and technical means to save drinking water ;
16. Mandate the provision of space for rainwater collection basins in dual water pipe systems and green roofs. These elements should be regulated through the PAG (General Urban Plan) and/or building regulations;
17. Develop public spaces for communal living in neighborhoods/localities, preferably car-free, with playgrounds, small parks, and community gardens ;
18. Promote community gardening projects, allotment gardens, and urban farming of fruits and vegetables with active participation from citizens and specialized organizations;
19. Support packaging-free or reusable packaging consumption within the municipality (e.g., through initiatives like the "Eco-Box");

Promote and organize mutual aid services or solidarity economy initiatives that preserve resources (Repair Cafés, Second Handshops, lending of appliances), making them accessible to everyone (the concept of "third spaces")

4) Development of public space and inclusive and sustainable urbanization

Inclusive and sustainable urbanization, along with the corresponding enhancement of public space, are fundamental prerequisites for sustainable urban development. The municipality must fully assume responsibility and authority for urban planning and restrict the influence of private property owners and commercial developers. This means: :

1. The vision of "Kannerstad Déifferdeng" - Differdange, a City for Children (details in the fourth part of this program), must serve as a guiding principle in planning.;
2. Public space should not be privatized ;
3. A medium- and long-term development plan must be established with the participation of the population.;
4. Social and environmental impact assessments must be conducted for all significant decisions and projects within the framework of this development planning. ;
5. The municipality must take all necessary measures to ensure mobility and accessibility for all individuals, including those with specific needs, to all publicly accessible places (also in accordance with the Law of January 7, 2022, regarding accessibility for all to publicly accessible places, public roads, and collective residential buildings). ;
6. Housing construction projects should not contribute to further dispersing future constructions within the commune ;
7. Whenever possible, the municipality should create its own commercial premises and offer them at reduced rents to (local) businesses. This can also be implemented through "pop-up stores," which are then made available to newly established businesses through short-term rentals;
8. Local solidarity businesses must be created, inspired by the models of "Eis Epicerie" in Soleuvre and the Transition House "Mesa" in Esch-sur-Alzette, by first identifying the most important local needs with the local population (bakery, butcher, cheese shop, bookstore...);
9. The weekly market must be revitalized by organizing it again every Saturday and arranging regular activities, including those for children, to make the market more attractive and friendly.;
10. The municipality should, in the short term, develop the currently vacant spaces (commercial) it owns (Lommelshaff, Maison Moderne, etc.). ;
11. The municipality should promote and support businesses that want to create children's areas, meeting points, or any other innovative ideas that aim to encourage interactions among customers;
12. Agricultural land owned by the municipalities should not be leased to the agri-food industry but reserved for local family farms or cooperatives.;
13. The development planning should be done within a regional cross-border framework.;

14. The sister city partnerships should be revitalized and developed, emphasizing solidarity cooperation. Specifically, pilot projects funded by European Union programs should be launched, and specific subsidies should support the activities of our local associations targeting our sister cities.;
15. Initiatives aimed at supporting North-South or South-South projects should be encouraged. The initiatives supported under the "Déifferdeng, eng Stad hëlleft" program should be better promoted at the municipal level (conferences, exhibitions, etc.);
16. Efforts must be made to preserve architectural and urban heritage and achieve a harmonious integration of the old and the new.;
17. The Differdange Castle, classified as a historic monument, must continue to serve a public purpose. The annex of Miami University is well-established there, and this location should be analyzed if the university wants to expand. In the long term, the city should purchase the castle and assert its right of preemption;
18. Our industrial cultural heritage must be preserved, and the witnesses of our steel industry past should be conserved (Groussgasmaschin, Fond-de-Gras, 1535° Creative Hub...);
19. The entrance to the Thillenbiérg mine is in poor condition and is an undervalued heritage site. This pleasant should be improved through renovation. ;
20. Projects recalling the atrocities of the Nazi regime and the history of collaboration and resistance must be developed. The initiative to install commemorative stones from the "Stolpersteine" project at sites of Jewish persecution in our municipality must be continued and should continue to remind us of crimes against humanity – against the growing fascist, racist, and xenophobic tendencies.;
21. Flood-prone areas should be avoided for future urban development projects, and regulatory provisions should be reviewed in light of climate change.;
22. Access to nature must be guaranteed for all new urban development projects (parks, greening of streets and squares, public transportation to nearby forests).

B) Democracy in the commune

1) Participating in decision-making

Participating in social decisions for all citizens living in the municipality is the fundamental condition for the proper functioning of a community. For déi Lénk, it is about giving concrete form to this democratic participation and implementing it at all levels within the municipality. Therefore, déi Lénk is committed to:

1. Citizen participation in the development of a municipal budget through a participatory citizen budget (providing a budget for the implementation of a citizen-led project).

2. Providing information and ongoing exchange with the population during the development of significant projects.
3. Establishing processes of citizen participation for all important projects and decisions.
4. Further strengthening the positive image of the municipal administration towards citizens: all correspondence will receive an acknowledgement of receipt or a response to questions and criticisms within 2 weeks, including the contact person's name and address and the date of the final response. If no response is received within the announced timeframe, the citizen would be entitled to a free entry to a cultural event or the swimming pool.
5. Involving citizens in conceptual planning by introducing community forums on important social aspects and future issues ("social assemblies," "cultural assemblies," youth forums, etc.), followed by a detailed report sent to all affected households.
6. Inclusion of children and youth in the democratic process, equipping them with concrete skills, analyzing their demands and ideas, and integrating them into municipal planning, for example, through a "Kannerbüro" (children's office) and a "Jugendbüro" (youth office). These meeting, information, and support platforms for children and youth may not necessarily replicate the "municipal council" model but explore the best forms of involvement with young people (being part of the youth advisory committee, being supported in project implementation, having exchanges of views with municipal councillors, etc.).
7. Annual information and consultation meetings in all localities regarding planned infrastructure works for the coming year, followed by a detailed report sent to all affected households.
8. Introduction of citizen committees in all localities based on the principle of random selection and with fixed competencies.
9. Provision of a dedicated space in each locality allowing everyone to gather, exchange, and express their views on political affairs.

2) Transparency in local government

Decisions made by the municipal council, executive board, and municipal administration should be transparent and democratic, both at the institutional level and in communications with citizens. This requires:

1. Establishing a "code of conduct" for the municipal council that obliges elected officials, among other things, to declare their financial interests (similar to the Chamber of Deputies) to avoid potential conflicts of interest in the future.
2. Involving all members of the municipal council from start to finish in the process of implementing significant projects.
3. Making the municipal council meeting reports (executive summary or full report) available to the public as soon as possible, with at minimum a translation into French.

4. Directly broadcasting the video recording of the full municipal council meeting (via the internet), with simultaneous translation into French.
5. Offering fully-accessible websites (accessible to the blind and visually impaired, with sufficient language options)
6. Ensuring meaningful involvement (mandatory, regulated by a minimum quorum) of interested citizens and organizations in the work of communal advisory committees. Recruitment should occur shortly after elections through public calls and active recruitment of local organizations. Introduction (and/or training) on the committee's topic should also be provided. If political parties participate, all parties on the municipal council should be represented.
7. Providing public accessibility to reports from advisory committees, with the exception of the treatment of personal matters.
8. Considering and implementing the opinions or recommendations of the committees regarding upcoming municipality projects to the fullest extent possible by the executive board. If it is not possible, the executive board must justify it to the municipal council and the committee.
9. Mandatory request and consideration of opinions or recommendations from higher authorities (e.g., the Land Planning Commission, Environmental Administration) for various municipality projects (e.g., construction projects, modifications to zoning plans) by the executive board. If it is not possible, the executive board must justify it to the municipal council.
10. Establishing public advisory bodies that go beyond party boundaries and prevent any form of favoritism (e.g., in recruitment policies).
11. Requiring the executive board and administration to keep the municipal council, the public, and affected citizens informed.
12. Developing a municipal charter of civic rights that governs the relationship between the municipal administration and citizens regarding the consultation of municipal affairs, information flow, complaints, etc.
13. Institutionalized rights of recourse and proposal for both individuals and associations/groups of citizens.
14. Improving administrative work by organizing forums with staff to discuss the tasks and objectives of different departments and their relations with citizens.
15. Establishing citizen offices in all major municipalities, with opening hours tailored to citizens' needs.
16. Responding promptly to any inquiries addressed to the municipal council by citizens or local associations.

3) Equal opportunity in the commune

Democracy is impossible without equality of opportunities. The struggle for equal rights for all also plays a decisive role at the municipal level. déi Lénk is committed to:

1. Updating the municipal plan for gender equality to cover all aspects of the administration of the municipality, going beyond internal administrative matters.
2. Striving for gender parity in municipal commissions to ensure equal representation and decision-making power.
3. Developing a gender-responsive municipal budget through gender budgeting, including action plans to address any existing gender discrimination and regular evaluations of these plans.
4. Taking into account deserving women from Luxembourg and around the world when naming streets and squares, aiming to gradually balance the unequal presence of women in public spaces.
5. Providing training on gender equality for all municipal staff, especially those working in childcare facilities and external communication.
6. Respecting the rights and concerns of LGBTIAQ+ individuals within the municipality.
7. Enhancing the visibility and support for the participatory committee for people with specific needs, ensuring transparency by presenting an annual report to the municipal council and citizens.
8. Strengthening the Equality Service's role in analyzing and addressing discrimination against people with reduced mobility or older adults, with concrete actions supported by political leaders and all municipal services.
9. Improving public facilities, access points, sidewalks, and crossings to make them more accessible for people with reduced mobility.
10. Installing well-lit parking spaces reserved for women near entrances and exits of major parking areas (e.g., Sports Park, Funicular, Arbed Niederkorn).
11. Complying with the legal requirement to maintain a percentage of employees with disabilities within the municipal administration.

4) Strengthen social inclusion and coexistence

Actively reducing all barriers that prevent non-Luxembourgish citizens from fully participating in all spheres of society (social, cultural, education, volunteering, politics) represents a major democratic challenge for our municipality. Their participation in social and political life is essential, and existing discrimination must be abolished. To achieve this, déi Lénk wishes to:

1. Expand the multilingual information and communication policy of the municipality regarding the services it offers (e.g., in Portuguese, Farsi, Arabic, Italian, Serbo-Croatian...).
2. Strengthen collaboration between the municipal administration and representatives of foreign organizations, including within the municipal integration commission.
3. Encourage the participation of foreign citizens in advisory committees (via a minimum quota) and making them inclusive accordingly (regarding the common language).
4. Systematically provide translation during public information meetings.
5. Create a "Citizenship Forum" to analyze the needs of citizens and establish action plans accordingly.
6. Support organizations in the development of intercultural projects or in the promotion of community socio-cultural work.
7. Join the "Pakt Vum Zesumme Liewen" initiated by the Ministry of Family and Integration together with SYVICOL (Union of all municipalities in Luxembourg).
8. Develop a "Municipal Plan for Social Inclusion and Coexistence."
9. Support and promote neighborhood celebrations and initiatives.
10. Take specific measures for refugees (language and literacy courses, participation in associative life).
11. Renovate the reception and accommodation structures for international protection seekers (rue de l'Hôpital and Noppeney Center) as soon as possible.
12. Establish a regional or intermunicipal support infrastructure for people who have fled their countries and the associated support organizations.
13. Organize roundtable discussions on social inclusion and coexistence at the municipal or regional level.
14. Conduct preventive actions against racism and all forms of xenophobia.
15. Make interculturality visible in public spaces.
16. Create more housing suitable for people with disabilities.

5) Stop the privatization of municipal services

Public authorities are the guarantors of equal and democratic participation in social life through the "public service." Democratic participation is possible only when services are not organized on a lucrative basis but instead based on needs. That is why déi Lénk opposes the privatization of public services, whether done openly or in a more subtle way, which entails the suppression of democratic influence and control. On the contrary, municipal services should be expanded, managed transparently, and with the participation of users. This means:

1. Not entrusting public services to private companies and reintegrating previously outsourced services into the public service.

2. Remunicipalizing privatized public services, especially in the areas of energy, waste management, and public transportation (including Aquasud swimming pool, Diffbus, and recycling park management).
3. Promoting free and open-source software for equipping the information technology of municipal services and breaking free from dependence on large technological companies that build monopolies. Thus, the development of such software will be strongly supported, and skills and autonomy in this sector will be strengthened in Luxembourg and its municipalities.
4. Municipal investments should not be financed through public-private partnerships (PPPs), which, in most cases, amount to partial privatization (e.g., Aquasud). Instead, they should be carried out directly by public authorities.
5. Rejecting the principle of cost recovery for public services. It is evident that end-users bear all the costs. However, users fundamentally differ in their ability to participate. Cost recovery means exclusion from services, while free access means openness to services, as is the case with free public transport. Municipal tax policies should take inspiration from this, at least by implementing tiered rates that consider the efficient use of resources. Universal social rights should not be permanently replaced by selective social policies ("poorhouse policies").
6. Public services should also be subject to critique. Establish institutionalized user forums for public services that contribute to their improvement through proposals and critiques.
7. Preserving and developing municipal real estate assets.
8. Rehabilitation costs should be borne by the former industrial operator in line with the polluter-pays principle. Transferring land to the municipality should generally be done free of charge.

C) Social Policy in the Commune

Communes must take responsibility for the role they play in social development, which cannot be reduced to a charitable and paternalistic policy. They cannot shift this responsibility onto social organizations, state intervention alone, or the goodwill of private actors. In order to guarantee coherent and more equitable social development, communes must equip themselves with effective tools: social development services, community connection events, town hall events, and systematic coordination of all actors in the social sector. Municipalities must ensure broad democratic participation, especially of the individuals and institutions concerned. The roles of municipalities in social development policy should be explicitly enshrined in the municipal law.

1) A social and equitable fiscal policy in municipalities

Municipalities and their citizens are the first to face the effects of social crises. Although they cannot bear the responsibility alone for managing the difficulties arising from the evolution of society, there are concrete starting points to, on the one hand, mitigate social

problems in a preventive and proactive manner, and on the other hand, exert pressure on higher political levels. Through their fiscal and taxation policy, the municipality can work toward achieving important milestones and combat social segregation:

1. Municipal revenues come less and less from the communal business tax (ICC), which is levied on the profits of businesses established within the municipality's territory. However, it is the municipalities that set the ICC rate, and therefore, they can influence their own revenues through this rate. However, municipalities have been tending to apply very low ICC rates for years to attract businesses – including the City of Differdange. Furthermore, the specific contribution of each company remains hidden from the municipal council, so that this historically significant portion of municipal revenues is dominated by the spirit of neoliberal competition and is constantly decreasing. Therefore, we want to ensure, through a change in the law, a general reevaluation of profit taxes and transparency in their collection. In the meantime, we will strive to ensure that as many municipalities as possible agree on a harmonized increase in tax rates, including the City of Differdange.
2. Adjust municipal taxes and fees for basic vital needs (water, wastewater, waste, electricity, gas) according to social and ecological criteria.
3. Create an alternative financing model to ensure municipal revenues without increasing the overall burden on citizens.
4. Apply ecological, ethical, and social criteria to municipal procurement.

2) Affordable housing for all

The housing shortage in Luxembourg is tragic. Affordable housing is sorely lacking. The solution lies not only in addressing the issue of poverty but on a wider basis implementing an active social policy that focuses on affordable housing for all. Municipalities have concrete opportunities for development that they should seize to actively support housing construction. For the City of Differdange, déi Lénk proposes that:

1. The municipality commits to expanding its inventory of municipal housing to at least 10% (approximately 1,200 units) of the total housing stock by 2030 and renting them as affordable housing (as planned for the "Gravity" project).
2. The municipality fully utilizes the new Housing Pact 2.0 and creates affordable rental housing on its own land. Municipalities are reimbursed up to 75% of the costs by the state. If the municipality does not have the necessary resources to carry out these projects on its own, it can also entrust them to a public real estate developer.

3. Private housing projects are prohibited to be built on land owned by the municipality. Affordable rental housing, remaining in the hands of the municipality, as well as cooperative housing, should be the forms of housing ownership reserved for this publicly owned.
4. Public rental housing owned by the municipality should particularly benefit social groups that have limited access to the housing market due to financial barriers (e.g., single-parent families, large families, people with disabilities, beneficiaries of REVIS, recognized refugees, etc.). Rent should be graduated, based on tenants' available income.
5. Pilot projects should also be implemented within the municipality to meet the needs of socially-excluded individuals (e.g., "housing first" projects for the homeless).
6. In the near future, emergency municipal housing should be created in each municipality. Currently, Differdange has very few emergency housing units which are continuously occupied, even as demand continues to increase.
7. The municipality should allocate a fixed portion of its annual budget for the creation of municipal public housing (new construction, acquisition with rehabilitation or renovation).
8. The rent commission should be strengthened and actively promoted by the municipal administration so that it can fulfill its role as a local conciliation body in case of conflicts in rental relationships.
9. Alternative housing projects (intergenerational housing, co-living, housing cooperatives, etc.), for which there are now numerous initiatives, should be specifically encouraged by municipalities.
10. Unused land should be activated. To combat land speculation on potentially buildable large plots that remain unused for a long time, municipalities should impose higher taxes on them.
11. Vacant homes should be utilized. First and foremost, vacant homes must be identified. Vacant homes that have been unoccupied for more than a year without justification should be subject to a tax imposed by municipalities on the owners, with the tax doubling each year. If, despite all efforts, a temporary expropriation procedure is considered to allow occupancy by a tenant, the occupied housing will be returned to its owner at a later date.
12. Alternatively, vacant homes could be made usable through the national Social Housing Agency (AIS) or a local equivalent (e.g., AIS Kordall). In general, actors in social rental management, such as AIS, who are active in the municipal area

or wish to become so, should receive maximum support from the municipal administration.

13. The municipality should introduce its label to certify the quality of furnished rooms. The label simultaneously guarantees that the landlord offers housing in accordance with legal provisions. Additionally, the municipality can provide a public list of such housing and/or act as an intermediary if necessary.
14. Activities organized by Airbnb and similar platforms should be regulated and registered.

3) A social education policy

The education system should be based on the developmental needs of the human being. Currently, the Luxembourgish education system accentuates social differences, especially among children from immigrant backgrounds. In recent years, the allocation of teaching positions has been taken away from municipalities, and the Ministry of National Education has pursued an austerity policy by standardizing the average number of students per class. As a result, in some municipalities, the number of students per class has been increasing year after year. The basic condition for maintaining the quality of public schools is therefore the revision of this regulation towards reducing the average number of students per class from 16 to 14. Municipalities remain responsible for school buildings, daycares, and many other areas, and they can take concrete initiatives in this field and influence public education policy. Differdange is a pioneering city in its schools, thanks to grassroots initiatives taken by motivated teachers who want to offer children unique learning and development opportunities, such as "Naturschoul," "Technikschoul," and "Kreativschoul." It would be desirable to create more public spaces where creativity and non-formal learning can flourish.

It is critical that children experience democracy and solidarity during their time spent in school and "maison relais" (daycare centers), but also outside of these formal institutions.

"Education" should be understood here as a comprehensive concept, from early childhood care to lifelong continuing education. Therefore, it is necessary to:

1. Become a leader among municipalities in raising awareness about children's rights in accordance with the 1994 UN Convention.
2. Improve communication between parents, teaching staff, and daycare personnel to better coordinate students' daily routines.
3. Introduce or systematically develop free and inclusive full-time schools, childcare facilities tailored to children's needs, preschool offerings, and daycares with corresponding socio-educational staff.
4. Decentralize the construction of new school spaces following the principle of "neighborhood schools," with a preference for small schools (1-2 complete cycles of 9 years; 150-300 students). Schools should not exceed 3 complete cycles (450 students).
5. Consider the totality of the educational structure when constructing new facilities, ensuring that schools, including daycare centers, are not spread across different sites but collocated.
6. Prioritize investments in quality school spaces.
7. Build at least one additional "forest school" (Bëschcrèche). Potential sites to be examined include "Carré Thillebiërg" and "Beckléck."
8. Sufficiently equip all school entities with appropriate computer equipment to enable all students to use textbooks and educational websites from the National Education system to acquire the skills outlined in the curriculum.
9. Consistently support socio-culturally disadvantaged children.
10. Provide a comprehensive offering of free homework assistance and parental guidance.
11. Ensure that every child can participate in at least two summer residential camps during their primary education years.
12. Promote inclusion in all schools so that they become schools that meet the needs of all children.
13. Equip schools with laboratories, kitchens, and workshops that meet modern pedagogical requirements and enable practical learning.
14. Support innovative educational projects, maintain continuity of teaching teams during the establishment of the school organization, and ensure that all educational projects are evaluated.
15. Make "specialized" schools (nature schools, technical schools, etc.) accessible to all children living in the municipality and surrounding areas.
16. Reintroduce nature into schoolyards and children's living spaces; urban spaces should no longer be barriers to connecting with nature.
17. Develop joint decision-making policies for teaching staff, parents, and children.
18. Create a "House of Languages" that functions as a dedicated space for language learning and a place for different generations and cultures to come together. Equip

this center with auxiliary services (e.g., childcare, kitchen, language café) to make language learning and exchanges as effective and enjoyable as possible.

19. Offer literacy courses for youth and adults.
20. Support training and continuing education opportunities for adults (Second Chance School).
21. Organize continuous education programs to raise awareness among teachers and educators about immigrant issues and equal opportunities. Equip them with anti-racist tools for working with children.
22. Propose and encourage state-recognized continuous training programs in adult education, taking into account the participants' linguistic situation.
23. Allocate teaching positions obtained through quotas more evenly among different schools in the municipality, considering sociocultural and pedagogical criteria, so that resources are used where they are most needed.
24. Create the necessary conditions in terms of facilities and staff to ensure access to daycare centers for all children enrolled in schools and eliminate waiting lists.
25. Ensure that school canteens remain under municipal control, particularly to facilitate the use of local produce and ensure the variety and quality of meals.
26. Improve access to music, arts, and sports activities within Differdange's associations for children attending daycare centers. This can be achieved by adjusting opening hours, providing accompanying staff, and enhancing collaboration with interested institutions, associations, artists, and athletes.
27. Promote the importance of play for all stakeholders involved with children, including parents, teachers, and educational staff. Ensure that children's play is respected in all municipal decisions. Redefine roadways, where possible, as living and play spaces. Create play areas in schools and after-school centers.
28. Design school courtyards in a more natural and ecological way, considering the playful needs of children at all ages. Reintroduce green spaces and varied, leveled grounds.

4) Student life in Differdange, an opportunity for the city.

The presence of universities (Miami and Lunex), as well as the proximity to the University of Luxembourg, presents great potential for life in our municipality. We must adapt our offerings to the specific needs of students.

1. Our municipality should provide student associations with access to spaces where students can autonomously manage a café, restaurant, rehearsal room for music or theater groups, meeting points for selling second-hand items, or recycling and repair workshops. Additionally, facilities such as a Copy-Shop or laundry services should be

established through collaboration and potential co-funding with the municipalities of Sanem and Esch.

2. We aim to develop affordable student housing options that are tailored to the needs of housing communities and individuals with specific requirements. These new construction projects will follow models of multi- and intergenerational homes.
3. Drawing from experiences in Scandinavian countries and Austria, we want to offer students the opportunity to accompany seniors from CIPA for a few hours per week, with the possibility of subsidized housing in return. Intergenerational housing should also be promoted, and the necessary legal framework should be established.
4. Students who are parents should have access to daycare services for their children.
5. A targeted guide with a map indicating the locations of bus stations, Vël'OK (bike-sharing), government offices, post offices, pharmacies, cultural and sports centers, green spaces, and shops should be created specifically for students, providing all relevant information.

5) Participation of all in the community : from young children to seniors

While children and young people are the future of our society, older adults represent the experience in our society. In all areas and situations of people's lives—from young children to the elderly—municipalities can and should take appropriate measures to meet the specific needs of each group and enable everyone to participate in the community:

1. Develop a municipal plan for children with concrete objectives, timelines, corresponding financial resources, and regular public evaluations. Children should have the opportunity to express their needs and participate in the development of these plans. Trained professionals are necessary to identify and address the needs of children.
2. Involve young people in all projects that affect them, such as schools, public space management, and afterschool care centers. They can participate in areas that directly concern them. Various forms of participation are possible. Adequate resources and skills should always be provided to ensure effective functioning ("Kannerbüro," "Children's Council," "Youth Council," self-managed youth groups, etc.).
3. Expand the offerings by the commune for children during school vacations.
4. Build playgrounds suitable for children in all neighborhoods with community involvement.
5. Create car-free streets, squares, and neighborhoods wherever possible, alternatively by temporarily restricting access to these streets or reducing traffic speeds (Kannerspillstrooss/shared space).

6. Develop a municipal youth plan with concrete objectives, timelines, corresponding financial resources, and regular public evaluations.
7. Establish municipal facilities for young people (youth centers, meeting places for young people) that allow for autonomy and participation, including in the planning process.
8. Expand leisure opportunities for young people.
9. Provide financial or logistical support to initiatives by young people who are not members of an association.
10. Promote exchange programs with young people from other cultures, for example, within the framework of the sister cities program.
11. Regularly organize youth forums to allow them to express their proposals and needs in the context of a public conversation.
12. Encourage targeted work with young people and introduce support measures for socially disadvantaged youth.
13. Expand the "streetwork" service, which aims to provide preventive social work for at-risk young people in the commune.
14. Develop a municipal youth employment policy.
15. Create more supported housing options for young people to support those who cannot live with their families.
16. Promote intergenerational projects in all areas of communal life.
17. Organize senior forums to establish an analysis of communal needs with active participation from elderly citizens and representative organizations.
18. Establish decentralized communal day centers with corresponding leisure activity offerings.
19. Implement measures to enable as independent a life as possible at home (assisted living, telecare, meals on wheels, household assistance, transportation assistance, etc.).
Provide opportunities for continuous education for seniors and ensure their participation in public life.

6) Policies to combat poverty and social exclusion in the communes

For déi Lénk, the aim is to combat old and new forms of poverty and exclusion through coherent concepts and measures, by:

1. Establishing continuous communal social reporting with planning objectives, timelines, and regular evaluation of implemented measures.
2. Implementing a local employment policy that goes beyond traditional job creation schemes (CIGL) that provide very few permanent jobs. Instead, it extends support (financial assistance, public contracts, provision of workforce and training, expertise, etc.) to the social and solidarity economy in cooperative and non-profit forms, such as

market gardening and sales, solidarity grocery stores, artisanal services, and other services.

3. Creating collective infrastructures for medical and paramedical offices in public buildings, as well as maintaining a basic medical service (polyclinic) in the Niederkorn hospital.
4. Promoting initiatives for prevention and assistance to individuals with addictions.
5. Establishing reception centers for the homeless (night shelters, day centers) with qualified staff and individual follow-up, aiming for equal participation in social life.
6. Ensuring that social services do not merely manage the individuals under their care as "clients," but also empower them to assert their rights as tenants, employees, and social insurance beneficiaries.
7. Facilitating collective participation of individuals in shaping social policies that affect them, with follow-up on the formulated demands.

7) Top working conditions

The commune has an important role to play in the local employment policy and in the fight against rising unemployment and precarious work contracts. déi Lénk opposes any degradation of working conditions for municipal staff and therefore advocates for the following measures:

1. Create and maintain qualified, safe, sustainable, and inclusive jobs in the commune by expanding public service offerings.
2. Establish user committees that can be consulted in the design of municipal services, such as transportation, energy networks, or social services; involve them, to the extent possible, in defining internal work procedures.
3. Reject the state's offer of cheap labor under precarious conditions and create positions based on collective agreements or statutory conditions. Civil service positions should continue to be filled by civil servants.
4. Take a pioneering role in reducing working hours.
5. Avoid subcontracting municipal staff to private companies.
6. Offer continuous training to individuals hired under the conditions of REVIS or unemployment benefits, in their respective fields of work, and provide them with the prospect of permanent employment.
7. Hire more individuals with specific needs and make the necessary adaptations for these job positions in terms of infrastructure, as well as raising awareness and providing training to the relevant team members

8) Participative cultural policy

A progressive cultural policy aims to encourage creativity, teach knowledge of and respect for other cultures, and create and strengthen awareness of one's own history. Instead of simply consuming arts and culture, it prioritizes active participation by initiating and promoting participatory cultural projects for citizens and inclusive projects. Participation and inclusion should be fundamental criteria for financial support for cultural projects and institutions.

This means:

1. Actively supporting local artists by involving them in the community in the medium term (artist residencies, commissions, organizing festivals, etc.).
2. Further support local cultural associations, including more favorable regulations and pricing for venue rentals. Currently, each association has free access to the same venue once a year, which is often insufficient. For example, the Differdange Municipal Harmony should be able to use the "Aalt Stadhaus" multiple times a year, and the Niederkorn Fanfare should have several opportunities to use the Niederkorn sports hall.
3. Planning the renovation of the Music Hall in the center of Differdange for its 150th anniversary in 2026.
4. Implementing socially acceptable pricing for cultural events.
5. Promoting both "high" and "alternative" culture equally.
6. Encouraging non-commercial initiatives.
7. Making the "Kulturpass," which aims to simplify access to cultural events, universally accessible and actively promoting it.
8. Granting significant price reductions for those with the "disability card" and student card during cultural events organized by the municipality.
9. Involving the population in planning to ensure that the cultural offerings correspond to and reflect the cultural diversity of the communities.
10. Expanding cultural offerings in schools and encouraging the creativity of children and young people by taking their ideas and needs into account. Establishing quantitative and qualitative criteria for these offerings, supporting projects such as the "Kreativschoul," and expanding the offerings in daycare centers.
11. Further developing a cultural program for children. The "Poppepännchen" in Lasauvage is an existing initiative that should be expanded and supported. It should be combined with a targeted program for families and children, which could become a cultural trademark for Differdange.
12. Organizing and promoting cultural events through youth centers.
13. Developing a cultural development plan and regularly organizing cultural conferences involving citizens to define the priorities of municipal cultural policy together.

14. Encouraging the creation of cultural third spaces, or “tiers lieux”, which are spaces that foster and accommodate a variety of initiatives, contributing to a collective dynamic of anchoring culture in the community. Throughout Europe, museums, industrial sites, and cultural centers are being reimagined and transformed into cultural third spaces.
15. Continuing the development of the creative hub 1535° and creating more urban and social exchanges between the site and the Fousbann district, as well as towards the center of Differdange.
16. Expanding the cultural offerings in schools and promoting the creativity of children and young people by incorporating their ideas and needs. The construction of functional and creative rooms on the new Nelson Mandela Square (Aalt Stadhaus) will provide an appropriate infrastructure.
17. The Abbey of Neumünster Cultural Center and the Rotondes are two national cultural institutions that have programs dedicated to children, such as storytelling festivals, children's shows, educational offerings, and special events like "Molt ons eens" and "Picnic électrique." Strategic partnerships can be considered with these institutions. The "Aalt Stadhaus" can schedule their productions, highlighting Luxembourgish productions and mobilizing the region and the regional and national cultural community.
18. Ensure that culture has a place in the streets and squares of our neighborhoods, taking culture out of specialized spaces whenever possible, involving citizens in cultural projects. Install urban play areas to promote spontaneous encounters (human-sized chessboard, pétanque, etc.).
19. Fun, creative, and friendly activities during the summer for residents who stay in the municipality.

9) More security through a better functioning social support structure

We must respond to the legitimate right to the security of citizens. However, "security" should never be accompanied by a restriction of citizens' rights. For déi Lénk, "security" is primarily the result of a functioning social fabric and a sufficient basis for individual fulfillment. It includes the following aspects:

1. Security competencies should remain in the hands of municipalities and not be entrusted to private security companies.
2. Develop preventive projects in accordance with local security plans elaborated with the police, prosecution services, and social services, moving towards "community policing," a decentralized police force close to the citizens.

3. No public space video surveillance: cameras do not prevent crimes; they simply shift critical areas.
4. Establish a local council for prevention and conflict management involving the participation of citizens and local businesses.
5. Targeted promotion of school projects that convey fundamental values such as cooperation, solidarity, democracy, non-violence, and respect.
6. Strengthen and develop conflict resolution and cooperation skills among children and young people, as well as provide anti-aggression training, enhance students' self-esteem, and create a positive social climate in schools. Offer self-defense courses for girls and women of all ages.
7. Adequate public lighting: deliberately ensure that corridors, entrances, exits, building access points, playgrounds, parking areas, and underground parking entrances are visibly secure.
8. Revitalize public spaces: preventing mono-structures, such as using certain areas of the neighborhood solely for residential or work purposes, can contribute to security.
9. Create support structures for individuals struggling with addiction. Develop a sense of coexistence through mutual respect through presence on the streets, information, and mediation. Establish supported housing for homeless individuals ("housing first") to help them break free from the negative spiral of marginalization and, if necessary, substance abuse.

D) « KANNERSTAD DEIFFERDENG » - a global vision to revitalize the city

Many children live in Differdange, and the municipality has a lot to offer to the children who reside here and those who visit. However, this is not a coherent, coordinated, or sufficiently valued proposal. "Differdange - the City for Children" is a new vision for Differdange, a vision of a city with and for everyone, which does not forget its own population. All the parties that have formed the majorities in the past two decades have long been obsessed with the idea of modernizing the city of Differdange at turbo speed, primarily to make it attractive for wealthier individuals. To others, strengthening local commerce can only be achieved by attracting young families from the middle and upper classes. That's why the Green-Red-Black-Blue parties are not building enough affordable rental housing in Differdange! On the contrary, making the municipality more attractive without implementing a consistent housing policy leads to a significant increase in housing prices.

In contrast, déi Lénk's vision for Differdange, "Differdange - the City for Children," shows another path, a path that will allow the entire current population, regardless of their social status, to participate in the municipality's transformation and contribute to a new boost for local commerce, but above all, to better well-being for all.

Differdange will become more attractive to visitors and new residents, but at the same time, Differdange will not push out any current residents due to unaffordable housing prices.

1) Attitude and approach

The first step is to change our attitude and approach (parents, politicians, educational staff, urban planners, playground designers, merchants, restaurateurs...), or expand it if it already aligns with children's self-determination. The way we plan space, design streets, parks, squares, schools - the rules, prohibitions, etc. - all of these elements reflect the role we assign to children in daily life. It is crucial that we do not see children as objects, as future productive human resources, or as passive consumers, but rather as active actors and subjects, as full-fledged individuals who should be involved in both small and large decisions that affect them. We must not leave them alone and absolve ourselves of responsibility as adults. An authentic relationship based on equal listening is essential.

2) Kannerbüro (Children's Office)

The "Kannerbüro" (Children's Office) is an essential tool and structure for moving towards the vision of the "Kannerstad" (City for Children), following the successful model already implemented in Wiltz for several years. The educational staff builds a relationship with children and supports them in realizing their ideas and projects. This office provides children with a space to shape and establishes a framework and support system for them to engage with various aspects of community life (politics, schools, associations, etc.). The Kannerbüro will also serve as the best platform to support and reform the children's council in a way that it doesn't replicate the adult world but responds to the needs and interests of children.

3) Housing

Our goal is to construct or acquire 500 affordable rental housing units within 6 years, prioritizing families who have been residing in Differdange for several years. These housing units will provide affordable and secure living spaces for their children. By improving living and learning conditions, we can create a better future for our children. Through reduced rental costs for parents, we aim to promote more local and high-quality consumption, benefiting small local businesses.

4) Transit

A shift towards public transportation, cycling, and walking will allow children to navigate their community safely and without stress. As part of the "Sëchere Schoulwee" initiative, pathways leading to schools will be further improved, as well as paths that enable children to enjoy cycling. For instance, the intersection of the Belvaux road near the post office in Oberkorn requires either the presence of municipal agents or traffic lights to ensure the safety of this crucial passage to reach Bock. The initiative of any school committee or parent association for a "Pédibus" (walking school bus) will be strongly supported by the municipality. The community must take its essential responsibilities in this matter, even if it entails costs. Different models can be considered and implemented. Through awareness campaigns, parents will be encouraged to refrain from driving their children to school, as traffic around schools poses significant risks.

5) Intergenerational

Children today lack adults with time to dedicate to them, and they are curious to learn how to create things with their own hands. Older people still possess this knowledge to a large extent, and many, although not all, have more available time than the "working" generation. They would be happy to strengthen their social connections and pass on their knowledge. déi Lénk wants to reexamine the segregation of generations and reintroduce daily contact between children and seniors. For example, many children in daycare centers cannot participate in classes, training, or activities offered by clubs or music schools due to lack of transportation. Many elderly people have dedicated their lives to a sport, music, or other hobbies. They may still be involved in a club and would be pleased to sponsor a child's transportation between the daycare center and their activity.

6) Education

Differdange is a pioneering city in its schools, thanks to grassroots initiatives led by motivated teachers who provide children with unique learning and development opportunities, such as the "Naturschoul" (nature school) and the "Technikschoul" (technology school). This offering has been complemented by a "Vëlosschoul" (bicycle school) and a "Konschtschoul" (art school). déi Lénk proposes the establishment of a "Kachschoul" (cooking school) as well because fewer and fewer children have the opportunity to experience and learn how to cook. Additionally, in our current era, it is particularly important to provide means for media education that focuses on developing critical thinking in relation to media and promoting responsible use of concrete tools (radio, video, social networks, newspapers), taking advantage of the presence of several media outlets in Differdange.

Together with the educational staff, we will revise and enhance the "Kanner entdecken hir Gemeng" (Children Discover Their Municipality) guide, and complement it with an interactive educational website. A comic book will be created to tell the story of Differdange. The Science Center should be included in a comprehensive concept, supported, and taken into account for the benefit of children's science education.

7) Development supported by contact with natural spaces

déi Lénk recognizes that the best playground for children is nature, whether it be wild green spaces or well-designed parks. Studies and practices in Asian countries have shown that spending time under trees contributes to a better balance for human beings. Therefore, preserving, expanding, and evenly distributing green spaces within the city is also vital for children's development.

Our children are overwhelmed with a plethora of offerings: regulated thematic playgrounds and structured schedules on one hand, and few natural spaces and flexible time slots for free play on the other. We must once again allow our children to grow in serenity and experience spontaneity, so they can become balanced and responsible adults.

In addition to regulated playgrounds, children need natural spaces where they can move freely and develop an awareness of nature according to the seasons. Urban gardening spaces should be animated and supervised to become true community gardens, integrated into the school schedule and available leisure activities (including both daycare and non-daycare settings). The establishment of an animal park or a farm with domestic animals could provide an additional meeting space for both young and old. For inspiration, please refer to www.naturgarten.org.

To this end, Déi Lénk envisions the creation of a new park in Woiwer, among other initiatives.

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8) Open spaces

The development of a plan mapping public places designed and adapted for children and young people would help create additional open spaces.

9) Tourism

The Fond-de-Gras area is unique and represents a great attraction for children. It should be connected with new projects like the Science Center, which we support and which should provide activities for both adults and children from the age of 3, following many good examples abroad (Salzburg, Munich, Dublin...). The old train station could be transformed into a railway museum for children, showcasing model trains from different eras. From there, a small train will depart, traveling along the tracks that lead to Thillebierg and eventually to Mine Grouwen, where regular visits will take place. Mini-Differdange, a playful replica of the city and Luxembourg in miniature, will be installed in Differdange.

10) Gastronomy

Cafes and restaurants will be encouraged and advised to adapt their infrastructure and menu to accommodate families with children of all ages. This includes providing stroller parking, accessible changing tables for both parents, diverse children's menus, play areas, and offering a set of crafts and drawing activities specific to Differdange. The establishment of a "family cafe-restaurant," which may resemble more of an indoor playground than a traditional cafe-restaurant, will create a unique attraction in Luxembourg.

11) Commerce

The "Déifferdeng Kannerstad" vision represents a unique opportunity for businesses. Specialized shops could establish themselves, and it is through offering something unique that local commerce will have a chance to survive in the face of competition from Auchan. A store for babies and children has already set up shop, and its advantageous location will surely provide support for its success.

12) Culture

The "Aalt Stadhaus" is designated as a "Regional Cultural Center," but events that attract an audience from the greater region are rare, and the center often has empty halls. In contrast, the library has successfully organized monthly readings for children. It will be necessary to further develop a children's program, similar to what is offered in the North and Central parts of the country: theater workshops, performances, concerts for children, drawing and music days for families with children, and more. Initiatives like the "Poppespënnchen" in Lasauvage, which is already present, should be strengthened and supported. Together with targeted programming for families and children, the Aalt Stadhaus has the potential to become a cultural "brand" for Differdange.

13) Culture and Integration

Culture is not limited to large events and art displayed in galleries. It should also serve as the universal language that nurtures relationships among residents and fosters the identity of Differdange. Our parades for events like Kermesse, Saint Nicholas, or National Day have hardly changed. Instead of involving children and the wider population in a different way, we limit ourselves to a parade of associations and active members of society. Déi Lénk will identify one parade per year with the aim of mobilizing all residents of the municipality, of all ages, around a common theme. Additionally, festivals will be updated to no longer target specific population groups, but to welcome all nationalities and age groups. Several examples of implementing this approach include reviving "Liichtmëssdag" (Candlemas) by passing on knowledge about this tradition, initiating collaborations between daycare centers and municipal harmonies to once again involve children in the "Hämmelsmarch," and more.

14) Design4all

Ensuring that the municipality and its buildings are designed in a way that allows everyone, including infants in strollers, children, elderly individuals, and people with disabilities, to move easily and independently will be a priority. For instance, systematically lowering the sidewalks will benefit not only a parent with a stroller but also a child who has just learned to ride a bike or a person in a wheelchair.

15) Playgrounds

All playgrounds, which often appear more attractive to observers than to the children playing, should be reviewed by play educators and adapted in terms of layout and arrangement. In the future, no playground will be selected from a catalog or proposed by individuals who are not qualified in this field. Indoor and outdoor movement and play spaces will be established, such as climbing parks and "alternative" indoor playgrounds. Especially for young children, there will be more options for playgrounds in the future, for example in Lasauvage, and in each locality, there will be at least one playground for all ages. An adapted "construction and building" playground (Bauspielplatz) will be created with supervision, where children can truly build with wood, stones, and more.

Drinking water fountains and sunscreen dispensers will also be installed in our parks (Gerlache Park and Chiers Park) to ensure that children who sometimes spend the entire day there in summer drink enough water and are protected. The range of entertainment and provision of games in our parks during vacation periods, especially in summer, will be expanded, and coordinate these with Streetwork initiatives.

16) Childcare

There is still much to be done in Differdange to improve the quality of child care. There is plenty of space for many children, but it is not enough. What is mostly lacking is sufficient personnel with good working conditions to ensure their stability and prevent constant turnover. Children need an educational approach that focuses on quality and stable relationships with qualified staff. We support the pedagogical concept of "Weltatelier" that promotes children's autonomy and freedom of choice, but we disagree with the lack of training provided to the staff implementing it. The groundwork has not been prepared. The staff will be able to do a better job if they feel supported and aligned with the fundamentals of their work. It will also be necessary to diversify the range of childcare options, including a place where parents can come with their children to reduce isolation, connect with other children and parents, and have access to a professional.

17) Parental assistants, BabyPlus, and early childhood daycare centers

Childminders should be included in a municipal strategy for child care, with access to collective facilities and activities such as the Technischoul, Naturschoul, and indoor playgrounds. A public daycare center managed by the municipality should be opened in each locality, with spaces reserved for children of municipal staff.

The "BabyPlus" project, in cooperation with "Initiativ Liewensufank," should be continued. The initial contact process, starting with a letter, should be reviewed. Appointment scheduling should be made more flexible. An online registration system should be implemented, and the letter should be reformulated to be less suggestive.

18) Promotion and expansion of existing successful initiatives

The Technischoul and Naturschoul should be open to everyone, not just school classes and groups from daycare centers. Visitors and children who do not attend Differdange schools (for example, those from EIDE) should be able to benefit from visits or open enrollment courses, supervised by additional staff. The "Conseil Communal des Enfants" (Children's Municipal Council) should include a broader range of age categories and children who are not enrolled

in Differdange schools. Place of residence should be taken into account, rather than school attendance.

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19) Confidence and responsibility.

Children are the adults of tomorrow. They have the right to express their opinions and are ready to assume responsibilities. Differdange can only be a child-friendly municipality if we entrust children with responsibilities. Therefore, we support the direct participation of young people in decision-making processes and attach great importance to transmitting our social structure and democracy in the education of our youngest citizens.

- The newly organized "Children's Commission" and "Youth Commission" will develop proposals for participation, together with children and young people, which will be submitted to the municipal council to be integrated into its decisions.
- An explanatory brochure in language adapted to children should describe the functioning of democratic institutions in the municipality, as well as opportunities for participation. This document should be developed with the support of children, school staff, daycare centers, and municipal services.
- We need more public daycare centers.
- Innovative educational projects need to be developed, and existing projects should benefit from continuity of pedagogical teams.
- Establish a "Kachschool" (cooking school) because fewer and fewer children have the opportunity to experience and learn how to cook.
- Together with the educational staff, we will revise the "Kanner entdecken hir Gemeng" (Children Discover Their Municipality) guide and supplement it with an interactive educational website. A comic book will be created to explain the history of Differdange.

- The Science Center itself remains an important offering for Differdange, but it must ensure a conflict-of-interest-free governance and ensure that no company or private individual primarily profits from taxpayer money. Once this governance and funding aspect is resolved, the Science Center should be included in a comprehensive concept and considered for the benefit of children's science education.
- Local sports, music, and leisure associations should be involved in educational projects and guarantee the work of the younger generation.
- In the long term, a "City for Children" department should be created, comprising personnel from the education and communication sectors, specializing in cross-functional and participatory work with all other municipal services, schools, Minettpark, and associations to coordinate and conceptualize the municipality's development with and for children in cooperation with all stakeholders.