

NATIONAL REPORT



COUNTRY:
Grand-Duché de Luxembourg

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1. SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL SPORT SYSTEM/ARCHITECTURE ¹

“Around 500 Luxembourgish athletes have participated in the Olympic Games since the 1900 edition in Paris. The Luxembourg Institute for High Performance in Sports offers services and optimal resources adapted to high performance athletes since 2019, with a view to developing high performance sport and preparing athletes for competitions in the best possible conditions. This support highlights Luxembourg’s desire to provide elite sports figures with the best conditions.” (...)

(...) “The institute offers services to athletes preparing for the Olympic Games or with realistic prospects of qualifying for the Olympic Games, to all other high-level sportspeople who are part of the high-level squad or of the promotional squad of the Luxembourg Olympic and Sports Committee (COSL squads), who are in the Army’s High-Level Sports Section (SSEA) or who benefit from any of the COSL’s other support measures. National teams of team sports can also benefit from certain services offered by the LIHPS.” (...)

(...) “By coordinating specialist services for high performance athletes, the institute puts into practice the essential principles of the integrated concept for sports in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. This concept was designed by the COSL in 2014 with a view to ensuring the future and development of Luxembourgish sport at all levels: sports at school, competitive sports, elite sports, the training of coaches, sports medicine, etc.” (...)

(...) “Luxembourg’s Olympic Medical Centre (CMOL – Centre médical olympique luxembourgeois) was created in 2008-2009. It provides the COSL’s athletes with medical support and passes on its know-how to sports federations. There is also a structure for implementing the medical and sports projects of athletes and federations.” (...)

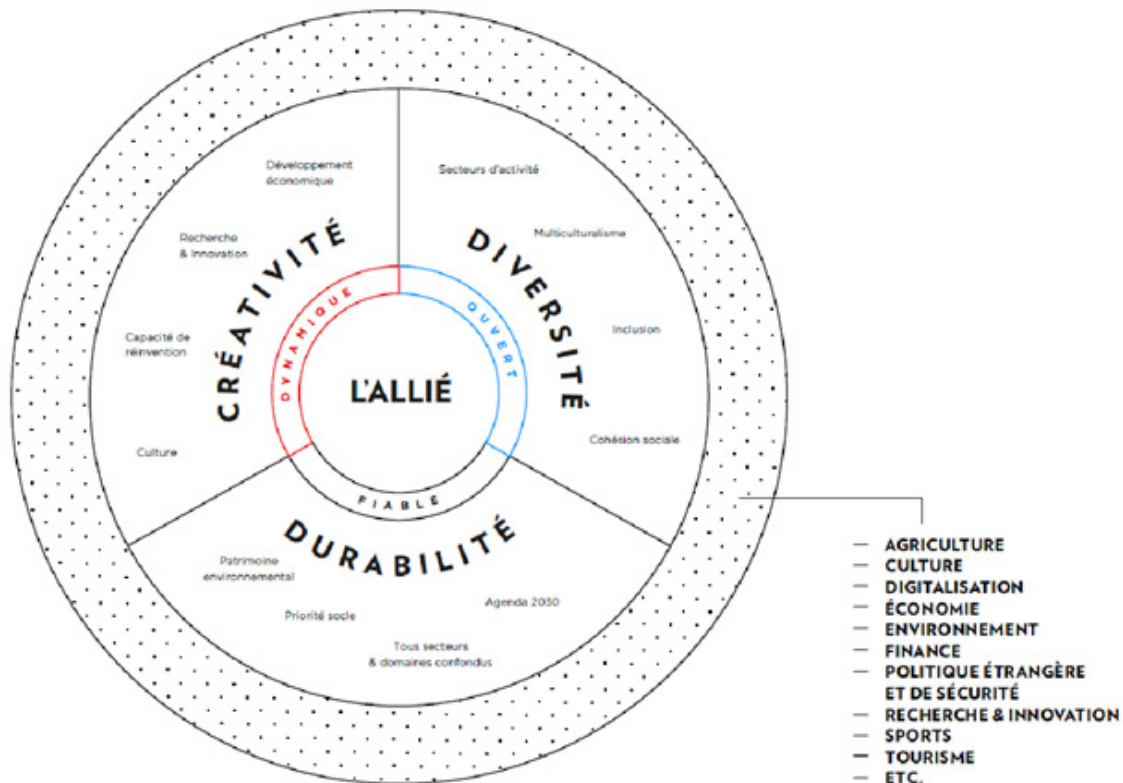
(...) “In 2014, the COSL designed the integrated concept for sports in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, which promotes the development of Luxembourgish sports at all levels while remaining in touch with international competition.” (...)

2. TO WHAT EXTENT IS THERE A SPORT DIPLOMACY STRATEGY?

Luxemburg is developing a global strategy called “Stratégie et base de plan d’action 2021-2025” dedicated to the promotion of the image and brand of Luxembourg. The slogan is “Let’s make it happen” and the document appears to be a “call to action”. The mission is clarified in the following way “Inspiring, connecting all players and promoting Luxembourg abroad, in order to bring Luxembourg to the world and the world to Luxembourg.”

Sport is considered to be a tool (a sector) to facilitate the implementation of the three pillars of this strategy.

¹Information in this point was gathered from <https://luxembourg.public.lu/en/living/sports/institut-high-performance-sports-luxembourg.html> - Accessed on June 12, 2022.



The WTA Luxembourg Tennis Tournament and the Tour du Luxembourg are considered to be perfect tools for branding Luxembourg abroad.

In the general context of the “Luxembourg – Let’s make it happen” strategy, specific “Nation Branding through Sports”² is suggested. “In order to differentiate the country and to enhance its attractiveness towards talents, tourists, trading, investors and companies, the image carried abroad by sport people has to become consistent through the coherence of messages, in particular through an authentic, credible and convincing communication, based on its strengths, namely liability, dynamism and openness.”

3. WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT OF SPORT DIPLOMACY GOVERNANCE AND WHO ARE THE MAIN ACTORS?

The Comité Olympique et Sportif Luxembourgeois (COSL), the Ministry in charge of Sport and other public entities have close coordination. However, this cannot be considered a specific model of governance and coordination among sport diplomacy actors at work.

²<https://sports.public.lu/fr/sport-compétition/partenaire-lux.html> - Accessed on June 12, 2022.

As there is no specific sport diplomacy approach, political / governmental players aim to develop the global branding of “Luxemburg – Let’s make it happen”. While supporting elite athletes in their career, they also use them as informal ambassadors of the country (Charles Greeten,³ Bob Jungels⁴). They also make agreements with foreign athletes who accept to promote the image of Luxemburg.

Official diplomats do not engage in specific sport diplomacy actions. However, the Luxemburg ambassadors develop the “Luxemburg” image in the countries where national athletes compete in major / mega sporting events.

As the general strategy called “Stratégie et base de plan d’action 2021-2025” dedicated to promoting the image and brand of Luxemburg applies at all levels of society, city authorities and local institutions/politicians will use the potential of sporting events to support the “Luxemburg – Let’s make it happen” moto.

It is interesting to note that the Comité Olympique et Sportif Luxembourgeois is involved in several projects. For example, it plays a coordinating role in very specific initiatives such as agreements between Luxembourg and the Chinese People’s Republic with regard to table tennis. The COSL also uses the opportunity of the Games of the Small States, and European Olympic Committee General Assemblies to develop bilateral cooperation with other European countries (Iceland, Andorra, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Belgium, etc.). Quite often, these cooperation agreements are then followed by agreements with or support from the governments of the countries concerned.

The WTA Luxembourg Open (Tennis)⁵ and the Tour du Luxembourg (Cycling)⁶ are regarded as common initiatives of national (and international) sport governing bodies and public authorities (Ministries and local authorities).

The Luxembourg Institute for High Performance in Sports (Mission: developing high performance sports in Luxembourg)⁷ welcomes Luxemburg and foreign high-level athletes in the best conditions for their preparation. As such, the Institute acts as an “ambassador” of Luxemburg’s sporting excellence.

While public authorities support elite athletes in their career, they expect them to act as informal ambassadors of the country.⁸ As already mentioned, agreements with foreign athletes who accept to promote the image of Luxemburg are used to support the general strategy.

4. SPORT DIPLOMACY’S FUTURE

From a national perspective, a specific sport diplomacy strategy is still to be built in the future. This will happen in the coming years when the granularity of the global branding of “Luxemburg – Let’s make it happen” has been developed sector by sector.

A major advantage of EU sport diplomacy would be the promotion of European integrated teams in some competitions.

³<http://teamletzebuerg.lu/athlete/grethen-charles/> - Accessed on July 19, 2022

⁴<https://firstcycling.com/rider.php?r=6413> - Accessed on July 19, 2022

⁵<https://www.wtatennis.com/tournament/300/luxembourg> - Accessed on June 13, 2022

⁶<https://skodatour.lu/> - Accessed on June 13, 2022

⁷<https://luxembourg.public.lu/en/living/sports/institut-high-performance-sports-luxembourg.html> - Accessed on July 15, 2022

⁸<https://luxembourg.public.lu/en/living/sports/top5-cyclistes-luxembourgeois.html> - Accessed on July 15, 2022

On the other hand, the COSL considers that it is the duty of athletes to be “diplomats in tracksuits”. They consider that the Young Ambassadors Programme at EYOF⁹ is a priority.

There is no information in Luxembourg about sport diplomacy activities abroad or good practices or links that Luxembourg wants to/is undertaking.

However, the choice has been made to present Luxembourg as a potential host for foreign delegations that will participate in the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris, as well as for tourists coming to the Olympic Games.

5. INTERVIEWS

- Laurent Deville, Coordinateur général, Ministère des Sports, Gouvernement du Grand Duché de Luxembourg.
- Beryl Koltz, Responsable de la promotion de l’image de marque, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Gouvernement du Grand Duché de Luxembourg.
- Ralph Lentz, Secrétaire général du Comité Olympique et Sportif Luxembourgeois.
- Prof. Dr. Mathieu Winand, LUNEX University, Differdange.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Strategie et bases de plan d’action 2021-2025, Promotion de l’image de marque du GD de Luxembourg, https://gouvernement.lu/fr/publications.gouv_mae%2Bfr%2Bpublications%2Bdocument-de-referance%2Bstrategie-bases-plan-action.html
- Le Luxembourg, profil d’un pays. Nation branding.lu - Comité de coordination interministériel Nation Branding, <https://luxembourg.public.lu/dam-assets/toolbox/documents/Luxembourg-profil-d-un-pays.pdf>

⁹https://www.eurolympic.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/EYOA_Brochure_web_light.pdf - Accessed on July 19, 2022

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