

Wilton Crescent's Bulletin

by the
Embassy of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in London

February 2015



The Ambassador's Message

The intense diplomatic activity which characterises London brings us many visitors from all over the world as well as from Luxembourg. Minister of Justice Félix Braz attended the Global Law Summit which took place at the end of February and brought together over 80 ministers. The Summit was very graciously rounded off with a reception at Buckingham Palace hosted by Her Majesty the Queen and another reception at Downing Street. More ministerial visits from Luxembourg will follow in the next weeks in order to prepare for Luxembourg's upcoming Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

One of the topics generating a great deal of interest is the Capital Markets Union project which the European Commission is currently working on. Several conferences featuring distinguished speakers are taking place and the subject attracts a high level of attention. The aim is to facilitate access to alternative financing for SME on the capital markets across Europe. It is an ambitious project designed to improve access to credit and stimulate growth and employment. It will be one of the key priorities of the EU for the years to come.

Patrick Engelberg



Grand-Ducal Court



11 February – HRH the Grand Duke received the Prime Minister of Slovenia, Miro Cerar, in audience during the latter's working visit to Luxembourg where he also held talks with Prime Minister Xavier Bettel. [Read more...](#)

11 February – TTRRH Crown Prince Guillaume and Crown Princess Stéphanie visited the Arcelor-Mittal factory in Differdange. Construction beams produced by Arcelor-Mittal have been used in the building of New York's Freedom Tower and the Shanghai World Financial Center. [Read more...](#)



12 February – TTRRH the Hereditary Grand Ducal couple, accompanied by Francine Cloesener, Secretary of State for Defence, and Romain Schneider, Minister of Sport and Minister of Cooperation and Humanitarian Action, attended a ceremony commemorating the 70th anniversary of the town of Vianden's liberation. [Read more...](#)

NEWS FROM THE GOVERNMENT

gouvernement.lu
Le portail de l'actualité gouvernementale



9 February – Félix Braz, Minister of Justice, met his Spanish counterpart, Rafael Catalá, in Madrid for bilateral talks as part of Luxembourg's preparations to assume the presidency of the Council of the European Union as of July. They discussed various issues such as the reform of data protection legislation and the possible accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights. [Read more...](#)

11 February – Jean Asselborn, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, paid a working visit to the European Parliament in Strasbourg where he met Guy Verhofstadt, the chairman of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, and Elmar Brok, the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. The visit took place as part of the lead-up to Luxembourg's EU presidency. [Read more...](#)



Wilton Crescent's Bulletin



13 February – Prime Minister [Xavier Bettel](#) and Minister [Jean Asselborn](#) met Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian Authority, during his [visit to Luxembourg](#). Minister Asselborn and President Abbas discussed the conditions necessary for the reopening of peace talks between Israel and Palestine as well as the two-state solution, which Luxembourg strongly supports. Minister Asselborn announced that the General Delegation of Palestine to Luxembourg would be given a higher status with the head of the Delegation receiving the status of Ambassador to Luxembourg. The President was also received in audience by HRH the Grand Duke. [Read more...](#)

13 February – Minister [Jean Asselborn](#) gave a joint press conference in Luxembourg with the Vice-President of the European Commission, Kristalina Georgieva, during her working visit. They spoke about the relocation of the Commission's offices currently in Kirchberg and the consolidation of Commission services in Luxembourg. [Read more...](#)



15-20 February – Prime Minister [Xavier Bettel](#) visited the West Coast of the United States of America with the aim of promoting Luxembourg as a centre for business. In Seattle he met representatives from both Amazon, whose European headquarters are located in Luxembourg, and Starbucks. While in San Francisco, the Prime Minister visited the NASA Ames Research Center where a possible future collaboration with Luxembourg research companies was discussed. Cooperation in the field of research and development was also the main focus of his visit to the Singularity University. [Read more...](#)

23-24 February – The Minister of Justice, [Félix Braz](#), attended the [Global Law Summit](#) which took place in London, marking the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta. The Summit brought together a range of parties, including other Ministers of Justice, Attorneys General and legal practitioners.

25 February – Minister [Jean Asselborn](#) visited Egypt where he met his counterpart, Sameh Shoukry, as well as the President, Mr Abdel Fattah al-Sissi, and the Prime Minister, Mr Ibrahim Mahlab. Discussions focused on bilateral relations, increased cooperation in the financial and aviation sectors, and political developments in Egypt. Minister Asselborn shared his concerns regarding the respect of human rights, and emphasised the need for freedom of speech and the right to a fair trial. [Read more...](#)



26 February – The President of the Swiss Confederation, [Simonetta Sommaruga](#), paid a working visit to Luxembourg where she met Prime Minister [Xavier Bettel](#) in order to examine bilateral relations and speak about current international issues. Discussions continued over a working lunch which was also attended by the Deputy Prime Minister [Etienne Schneider](#), Foreign Minister [Jean Asselborn](#), [Félix Braz](#), Minister of Justice, and [Pierre Gramegna](#), Minister of Finance. President Sommaruga was also received in audience by HRH the Grand Duke. [Read more...](#)

26 February – [Carole Dieschbourg](#), Minister of the Environment, and [Camille Gira](#), Secretary of State for Sustainable Development, announced the designation of newly protected zones “Natura 2000” and the expansion of such areas already in existence. The “Natura 2000” network aims to protect wild flora and fauna across Europe. [Read more...](#)

ECONOMIC NEWS



☐ Luxembourg was ranked first for investment freedom in the [Index of Economic Freedom](#) published by the US Heritage Foundation in conjunction with the Wall Street Journal. The Index rates countries in ten categories as well as giving each country an overall score. Luxembourg ranked 21st on the index's global rating and tenth within Europe. [Read more...](#)

☐ [Etienne Schneider](#), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy and Foreign Trade, participated in a seminar promoting Luxembourg's advantages as an entry point to European markets during his working visit to Turkey on 12 February 2015. The seminar targeted companies in the field of information and communication technology, with Minister Schneider explaining the various ways in which Luxembourg facilitates the establishment and growth of start-

ups. The Minister also outlined the government's strategy *Digital Luxembourg* which aims to make the country a centre of excellence in the "high tech" sector. [Read more...](#)

- According to recent figures released by Creditreform Luxembourg, approximately 11000 new businesses were registered in the country last year, compared to 8500 registrations in 2012. [Read more...](#)
- The EU Commissioner for Trade, Cecilia Malmström, paid a [working visit](#) to Luxembourg on 26 February 2015. She met with several Luxembourg Ministers, including [Minister Jean Asselborn](#), and [Deputy Prime Minister Etienne Schneider](#), in addition to [Prime Minister Xavier Bettel](#). A range of issues were on the agenda, such as the EU-USA Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) currently under negotiation as well as the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). [Read more...](#)

THE WORLD OF FINANCE

- 3 February – The [Association of the Luxembourg Fund Industry \(ALFI\)](#) published a press release which highlights the expansion experienced by the sector in 2014 with assets under management totalling € 3,095bn at the end of the year. The industry's plans for future growth entail the targeting of new markets such as Brazil and China. [Read more...](#)



- 12 February – The Minister of Finance, [Pierre Gramegna](#), met his Swiss counterpart, [Mrs Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf](#), during the latter's working visit to Luxembourg. They discussed a range of topics, including the automatic exchange of tax-related information, the Eurozone debt crisis, and issues concerning the regulation of financial markets. [Read more...](#)

■ According to a recent blog post by Post Telecom's Micaël Weber, Luxembourg has become an important centre in the Fintech sector, with more than 150 Fintech companies operating in the country. He notes that the government has also chosen to further develop the country's expertise in this sector as part of a wider strategy called "Digital Luxembourg." [Read more...](#)

Save the Date ...

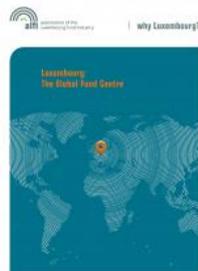


**LONDON COCKTAIL
AND CONFERENCE**
Luxembourg :
The Global Fund Centre

**Guildhall
20th & 21st April 2015**



The University of Luxembourg has launched its online database [LERIS](#) which brings together more than 6500 sources of Luxembourgish judicial doctrine. [Read more...](#)



To access the Association of the Luxembourg's Fund Industry's brochure "Luxembourg: The Global Fund Centre," [click here](#).



Film Fund Luxembourg has a newly designed website which is fully accessible on tablets and smartphones. [Click here](#) to access the site.

CULTURAL LUXEMBOURG

- ✓ The European Union Youth Wind Orchestra, under the direction of Jan Cober, is now calling for applications for its 2015 session. The orchestra is due to perform in both Luxembourg and the Netherlands from 8-16 November 2015. [Read more...](#)
- ✓ Angelique Kidjo's album *Eve* was awarded "Best World Music Album" at the 2015 Grammy Awards. The album includes the song "Awalole" which was arranged by Luxembourgish musician [Gast Waltzing](#) and performed by the Philharmonic Orchestra of Luxembourg. [Read more...](#)
- ✓ Mr Tom Leick-Burns will succeed Mr Frank Feitler as director of Luxembourg's Grand Théâtre and Théâtre des Capucins following the 2014-2015 season. [Read more...](#)

Wilton Crescent's Bulletin

- ✓ The Irish photographer, Paul Gaffney, has started his ten-week residency at the [Centre National de l'Audiovisuel \(CNA\)](#). Paul Gaffney, currently studying for a Masters in photography at the University of Ulster in Belfast, will be exhibiting his work at Display1 in early 2016. [Read more...](#)
- ✓ The [National Library of Luxembourg](#), in conjunction with the Dutch think tank Kennisland and the Institute for Information Law, has launched a redeveloped version of Europeana's Public Domain Calculator available on www.outofcopyright.eu. This tool enables people to clarify the copyright status of different works, such as films and literary texts. The redeveloped calculator currently covers Luxembourg, France, the Netherlands and Germany, with plans to expand coverage to include the other 26 European countries. [Read more...](#)



- ✓ The 5th Luxembourg City Film Festival began on 26 February and ends on 8 March. It features a variety of films, including several Luxembourg productions/co-productions such as *Extraordinary Tales*, *A Quoi Bon*, and *Secrets of War*. [Read more...](#)

- ✓ A recording of a performance by Luxembourgish pianist [Francesco Tristano Schlimé](#) was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on Saturday, 14 February 2015, during the *CD Review: Building a Library* programme. To hear the programme, please [click here](#).

OTHER NEWS

- According to ECA International, Luxembourg ranks fourth in a survey of 450 cities measuring the quality of life for European expats. The survey took a range of factors such as climate and health care into account. [Read more...](#)

DID YOU KNOW THAT ...



in the 7th century the Archbishop of Utrecht, Saint Willibrord, who was originally from Northumberland, founded a Benedictine abbey in the town of [Echternach](#). After his death in 739, Saint Willibrord was buried in the basilica's crypt which then became a site of pilgrimage. The basilica was re-built and extended at various stages during the subsequent centuries until 1794 when it was overtaken by French troops. For several decades the abbey was used for non-religious purposes such as a military drill yard until the 1860s when the citizens of [Echternach](#) managed to raise funds for the basilica's restoration. The basilica was once again significantly damaged towards the end of the

Second World War when retreating German troops blew up the abbey on 26 December 1944. The Abbey was reconstructed after the war and consecrated in 1953. Nowadays [Echternach](#) is also famous for its annual dancing procession which takes place every Whit Tuesday and which forms part of [UNESCO's Cultural heritage](#). [Read more...](#)

Save the Date ...



A film about the National Gallery's Rembrandt exhibition will be shown at the CinéStarlight in Dudelange on 27 March 2015 at 7pm. [Read more...](#)

Good to know ...



The National Museum of Resistance in [Esch-sur-Alzette](#) examines the country's experiences from 1940 until 1945, with a particular focus on the various forms of resistance displayed by Luxembourgers while their country was under Nazi occupation. [Read more...](#)



GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ambassade au Royaume-Uni

[Unsubscribe](#) to the Wilton Crescent's Bulletin

27 Wilton Crescent
London SW1X 8SD

(+44) 20 7235 6961

(+44) 20 7235 9734

Copyright © 2014

[Embassy of Luxembourg](#)

All Rights Reserved

Layout : Jean Claude Kugener

Text: Yara Willox

Copyright Pictures: Cour grand-ducale, MAEE, SIP/Luc Deflorenne, MJUST, MECO, Exhibition on Screen, Nic Boor, ALFI, Film Fund Luxembourg, Uni.lu, Ripple/Vahe Hovhannisyan, SIP/Zineb Ruppert, Luxembourg City Film Festival, Visit Luxembourg, Musée National de la Résistance

Wilton Crescent's Bulletin