

Wilton Crescent's Bulletin

by the
Embassy of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in London

Issue 8

The Ambassador's Message



A number of news stories have reached us this month concerning Luxembourg's thriving ICT industry which is constantly growing and finding new ways of being applied. Luxembourg features in the top 10 performing countries for ICT in a global ranking published by the World Economic Forum. This is undoubtedly an excellent result and is one of the many

factors which explain the continuous expansion of the e-commerce and service industry in our country.

Following the recent humanitarian disasters in Vanuatu and Nepal, Luxembourg deployed its state-of-the-art satellite communication system "emergency.lu" in order to help restore much-needed communication links which are crucial in coordinating relief efforts.

And last but not least, we recently learned that Belgium and Luxembourg agreed to abolish roaming costs for mobile phone users. This is certainly excellent news for all users.

Patrick Engelberg



Grand-Ducal Court



14 April – TTRRH the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess, together with HRH Grand Duke Jean, attended a ceremony commemorating the 70th anniversary of HRH Grand Duchess Charlotte's return

from exile in 1945. HRH Grand Duchess Charlotte had left Luxembourg on 10 May 1940 following the German invasion and spent Her exile in France, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Canada and the USA. [Read more...](#)

22 April – TTRRH Crown Prince Guillaume and Crown Princess Stéphanie, accompanied by Marc Hansen, Secretary of State for National Education, attended the 8th edition of Innovation Camp which aims to promote entrepreneurship, teamwork and innovation amongst students. [Read more...](#)

28 April – HRH the Grand Duchess, in Her capacity as UNESCO goodwill ambassador, attended the 70th anniversary celebrations of UNESCO in Paris where She was joined by Mr Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General. [Read more...](#)

NEWS FROM THE GOVERNMENT



2 April – It was announced that Luxembourg will have a new National Centre of Excellence in Research dedicated to Parkinson's disease, thanks to funding from the National Research Funds. [Read more...](#)

12-13 April – Félix Braz, Minister of Justice, attended the 13th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Doha. In his speech, the Minister stressed the importance of protecting human rights and respecting fundamental freedoms under the rule of law. He also asked that gender equality be guaranteed with regard to the prevention of crime and access to justice and suggested that the Doha declaration tackle the issue of abolishing the death penalty. [Read more...](#)

17 April – Jean Asselborn, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, held talks with his Lithuanian counterpart, Linas Linkevicius, during the latter's visit to Luxembourg. They spoke about bilateral relations, parliamentary and governmental cooperation between BENELUX and the Baltic states and examined international issues such as the fight against global terrorism. [Read more...](#)



20 April – The British Foreign Secretary, Philip Hammond, held bilateral talks with Minister Jean Asselborn in Luxembourg. Their discussions focused on the good bilateral relations that exist between the two countries, both on a political level and on an economic one. Luxembourg's EU presidency featured on the agenda as did the current political situation in the UK in the context of the upcoming British parliamentary elections. They

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also exchanged views on the UK's role within the EU. [Read more...](#)

20 April – Prime Minister [Xavier Bettel](#) received the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pavlo Klimkin, for talks on current European and international issues, including the situation in Ukraine itself. [Read more...](#)

22 April – Minister [Jean Asselborn](#) visited Romania for bilateral meetings with President Klaus Iohannis, Prime Minister Victor Ponta, his counterpart Bogdan Aurescu and the President of the Romanian Chamber of Deputies, Valeriu Zgonea. Bilateral political, economic and cultural relations were at the centre of discussions, with 2015 marking the 105th anniversary since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Other topics on the agenda included the issue of Romania's adherence to the Schengen Area, with Minister Jean Asselborn reiterating his government's support for Romania in this matter, as well as the current situation in Ukraine. [Read more...](#)



23 April – Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Cuba's Foreign Minister, visited Luxembourg where he met his counterpart [Jean Asselborn](#) and Prime Minister [Xavier Bettel](#). During the meeting with Minister Jean Asselborn, discussions looked at EU-Cuba relations, in particular current negotiations to find a bilateral agreement on political dialogue and cooperation. The Foreign Ministers also talked about other topics of mutual interest, including the political and economic situation in Venezuela, before discussing the recent thaw in US-Cuba relations. Minister Parrilla was also received in audience by TTRRH the [Grand Duke](#) and [Grand Duchess](#). [Read more...](#)

23 April – Prime Minister [Xavier Bettel](#) met Günther Oettinger, EU Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, as part of the preparations for Luxembourg's EU presidency which will start in July 2015. They spoke about the importance of having a European digital strategy and discussed topics such as the necessary infrastructure for ultra-high speed and wireless internet as well as data protection. [Read more...](#) To find out more about the Luxembourg government's own digital strategy "Digital Lëtzebuerg," [click here](#).



24 April – The Deputy Secretary General of the OECD, William Danvers, joined [Marc Hansen](#), Secretary of State for Higher Education and Research, to present the OECD's report [Review of Innovation Policy: Luxembourg 2015](#). The report recognises the progresses made by Luxembourg in innovation, whose government increased spending on research and development by 238% between 2007 and 2014. [Read more...](#)

27 April – Prime Minister [Xavier Bettel](#) and Minister of Finance, [Pierre Gramegna](#), received the Vice-president of the European Commission, Jyrki Katainen, for talks on the new European Fund for Strategic Investments, the reduction of investment barriers and investment policy within the EU. Jyrki Katainen was also received in audience by HRH the [Grand Duke](#). [Read more...](#)

28 April – Foreign Minister [Jean Asselborn](#) met the Deputy Prime Minister of Macedonia, Fatmir Besimi, during his visit to Luxembourg. Minister Asselborn stressed the importance of Macedonia's integration into the EU in order to guarantee regional peace and stability and encouraged the Macedonian government to pursue the reform process which it has already begun. [Read more...](#)

29 April – Prime Minister [Xavier Bettel](#) attended the Benelux summit in Brussels where the Benelux Action Plan for Employment and Growth was adopted. [Read more...](#)

ECONOMIC NEWS



□ HRH Crown Prince [Guillaume](#), accompanied by HRH Crown Princess [Stéphanie](#), led a trade mission to Morocco and Tunisia at the end of April. They were joined by [Etienne Schneider](#), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy. Whilst in Morocco, the Luxembourg delegation met government leaders, including Prime Minister Abdelilah Benkiran. Luxembourg plans to support Morocco's efforts to increase trade links with the EU, Morocco's primary trading partner, during its upcoming EU presidency. In Tunis the Luxembourg delegation held meetings with government officials in order

to evaluate possible economic cooperation between the two countries, especially within the fields of ICT and green technology. [Read more on the trade mission to Morocco...](#) [Read more on the trade mission to Tunisia...](#)

- ❑ The World Economic Forum's Global Information Technology Report has ranked Luxembourg 9th out of 143 countries on an index which examines how countries use information and communication technologies to achieve both social and economic results. [Read more...](#)
- ❑ Luxembourg has been ranked first in the most recent UNCTAD B2C (business to consumer) e-commerce index, which rated 130 countries according to their e-commerce abilities. Factors considered by the index included internet use and postal delivery services. [Read more...](#)

THE WORLD OF FINANCE

- 13-15 April – [Pierre Gramegna](#), Minister of Finance, led a trade mission to Canada where he and a 40-strong delegation visited both Toronto and Montreal. The Minister welcomed the visit, stating that "Luxembourg is ideally placed to support Canadian businesses as they plan their entry into the EU market." Minister Gramegna met financial authorities in both cities and attended seminars, organised by Luxembourg for Finance, which promoted the country as an international financial centre as well as highlighting its attraction as a base for FinTech companies. [Read more...](#)
- 16-18 April – [Minister Pierre Gramegna](#) attended meetings at the IMF and World Bank in Washington which focused on the recovery of the world's economy and the fight against poverty. Furthermore, he took part in a meeting on the financing of measures to tackle climate change. During Luxembourg's presidency of the EU, a conference on climate change (COP21) will take place in Paris with the aim of reaching an international agreement to prevent global warming from rising beyond 2°C. Minister Gramegna also participated in an IMF seminar on Islamic Finance. [Read more...](#)



- 20-21 April – [Minister Pierre Gramegna](#) visited London where he participated in the opening of a conference organised by the [Association of the Luxembourg Fund Industry](#). He also gave roundtable interviews at both the [Financial Times](#) and the [Wall Street Journal](#). [Read more...](#)
- 29 April – The People's Bank of China and [Luxembourg's Central Bank](#) announced that Luxembourg will be granted a 50 billion (yuan) RMB RQFII quota. The decision was welcomed by Minister Gramegna who stated that it illustrated "China's recognition of the Luxembourg financial centre as one of Europe's main hubs for international renminbi business." [Read more...](#)

Save the Date ... The next edition of the GR Business Days event, organised by the [Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce](#), will take place on 17-18 June in Luxembourg. [Read more...](#)



To access Luxembourg for Business' brochure "Luxembourg: Your European eBusiness Platform," [click here](#).

BUSINESS MEETS RESEARCH
LUXINNOVATION
7
place on 21-22 May, please [click here](#).

For further information on the Luxinnovation Forum "Business meets Research," which is due to take



The government has published a new brochure on Luxembourg and the EU, ahead of the country's EU presidency. [Read more...](#)

CULTURAL LUXEMBOURG

- ✓ The [Philharmonie](#) has released its programme for the upcoming 2015/2016 season which includes performances by the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra and pianist Lang Lang. [Maggie Nagel](#), Minister of Culture, attended the launch on 24 April where she welcomed the new conductor of the philharmonic orchestra, Gustavo Gimeno. 2015 marks the Philharmonie's 10th anniversary. [Read more...](#)



- ✓ A Luxembourg co-production, “*Le tout nouveau testament*” (*The Brand New Testament*), will be shown at next month’s Cannes Film Festival as part of the [Directors’ Fortnight](#). [Read more...](#)



- ✓ Luxembourg’s National Centre of Literature has launched a newly updated website. To visit the website, please [click here](#).
- ✓ British novelist, Ruth Dugdall, launched her most recent novel entitled *Humber Boy B* in Luxembourg at the end of April. Ruth Dugdall, who recently moved to the country, has set her upcoming book, *Nowhere Girl*, which is due to be published later this year, in Luxembourg. [Read more...](#)

- ✓ [Mutiny On The Bounty](#), a math rock group from Luxembourg, will be touring the UK in early May. [Read more...](#)
- ✓ Luxembourg artist, [Nathalie Majerus](#), exhibited her work at London’s Brick Lane Gallery in April. [Read more...](#)

OTHER NEWS

- In response to the category 5 cyclone PAM which devastated Vanuatu, three satellite telecommunication systems from the “emergency.lu” project were dispatched to the Pacific nation with the aim of helping the Vanuatu government to re-establish lines of communication between the capital Port Vila and the islands in the south and north of the archipelago. In addition, two volunteers from Luxembourg’s civil protection unit also travelled to Vanuatu where they worked with the technical team from the International Humanitarian Partnership. [Read more...](#) The “emergency.lu” project was also deployed to Nepal following the devastating earthquake of 25 April 2015. [Read more...](#)
- Luxembourg won the table soccer world cup in which 34 countries competed. [Read more...](#)

DID YOU KNOW THAT ...



the [City of Luxembourg](#) was one of the most fortified cities in Europe and became known as the “Gibraltar of the North” after its defences were strengthened and added to under successive rulers over the centuries. The city eventually boasted 24 forts and casemates which extended for 23 km. This underground network of tunnels was first constructed in 1644 under Spanish rule and later both the French and the Austrians continued the expansion of these tunnels, some of which reached a depth of 40 metres. After the 1867 Treaty of London in which Luxembourg’s neutrality was confirmed, most of the fortifications were destroyed but 17 kilometres of the underground tunnels were left untouched. The casemates can be visited by the public nowadays and were recognised by UNESCO as a [world heritage site](#) in 1994. [Read more...](#)

Save the Date ...



Luxembourg pianist [Francesco Tristano](#) will be performing at Queen Elizabeth Hall with fellow pianist Alice Sara Ott on Thursday 11 June 2015. [Read more...](#)

Good to know ...



The famous French author, Victor Hugo, spent part of his exile in 1871 living in the town of [Vianden](#). Members of the public can visit the Victor Hugo House and Literary Museum which displays various items that belonged to Victor Hugo. [Read more...](#)



GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
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