



Beyond business creation

Louise Braibant, Journalist
Julian Pierrot, Photographer

Conversation with
Stéphanie Damgé

As the House of Entrepreneurship approaches its 10th anniversary, Director of Entrepreneurship looks back on a decade of changing missions and entrepreneurial needs.

Ten years after the House of Entrepreneurship was created, Luxembourg has more diverse founders and a broader support ecosystem. But for **Stéphanie Damgé**, the real challenge begins after launch: turning an idea into a viable business.

10.5%

of immigrants in Luxembourg were engaged in early-stage entrepreneurship in 2025, compared with 7.5% of Luxembourg-born residents.

59,2%

said it was easy to start a business in Luxembourg, down from 61% in 2024.

51.8%

of respondents saw good opportunities to start a business in Luxembourg in 2025, up from 47.7% in 2024.

52%

of early-stage entrepreneurs reported difficulties accessing finance in 2025, up from 33% in 2024.

42.1%

of respondents who saw good business opportunities said fear of failure would prevent them from starting a business in 2025, broadly unchanged from 41.4% in 2024 and below the 46% European average.

48%

of early-stage entrepreneurs reported difficulties hiring skilled workers in 2025, up from 36% in 2024.

“Creating a company and developing a viable business are two different things.”

How has the House of Entrepreneurship changed over the past ten years?

The initial ambition was to create a one-stop shop, simplify the entrepreneurial journey and bring expertise together under one roof. At first, we focused mainly on business creation and access to information. Over the years, new missions were added as entrepreneurs' needs became more complex, particularly around digitalisation, technology and financing. We now support entrepreneurs from pre-creation through development, digitalisation, financing, business transfers and, if necessary, closure, while connecting them with the right expertise across the wider ecosystem.

Who is the Luxembourg entrepreneur today?

We see more international profiles, including more immigrants and refugees starting businesses, as well as more women and young people. Women now account for around 44% of the business creations we see. There is no typical entrepreneur. Many people launch a business after gaining professional experience and increasingly do so while keeping their salaried job. This gives them financial security while they see how the project develops. This kind of part-time entrepreneurship is something we see more often today.

Have entrepreneurs' motivations changed over the past ten years?

Yes, clearly. Alongside the desire for autonomy and to be your own boss, we increasingly see a search for meaning and impact, more freedom in how work is organised and the desire to develop one's own project. Environmental considerations play a greater role too. But people must also be aware that entrepreneurship



Ten years of support

Since its launch, the House of Entrepreneurship has handled more than 350,000 requests in total. It has provided project-level support to 23,129 people or projects, including 7,115 in business creation, with around 1,200 people now supported in this area each year. Workshops and webinars have attracted 22,563 participants, while its sites have recorded 33,166 visits. Today, the House is mainly present in Kirchberg, with appointments also available in Mondorf-les-Bains.

involves uncertainty, risk and a greater need to adapt.

Has entrepreneurship become more accessible?

Yes. The greater diversity of profiles we see today is one sign of that. There are more support schemes, information is easier to access and the entrepreneurial ecosystem is easier to navigate. But more accessible does not mean easier, and it does not mean you can start from nothing. Administrative creation and developing a viable company are two different things. Receiving your business permit is only the beginning. Then the real work starts.

Financing has become a much bigger concern for entrepreneurs. What has changed?

Access to finance has always been complex, but there is more uncertainty now. Requirements in terms of guarantees and equity can be difficult to meet, and regulatory requirements have increased. But preparation also matters. Entrepreneurs need to arrive with a solid project and understand what a bank will expect from them. People also often focus on the initial investment while underestimating the cash flow they will need afterwards. That is also where we have a role to play.

What are the mistakes you see most often?

Beyond financing, pricing and market validation are recurring issues. Entrepreneurs need to understand their market, know how they differentiate themselves, set the right price and ask whether there is really demand-- and how they will find customers. Another common mistake is trying to do everything alone. You need to talk about your project, connect with others and seek the right expertise.

Is there a taboo around failure and financial difficulties among entrepreneurs in Luxembourg?

Failure is still difficult to talk about. Luxembourg is a small country, everyone is connected, and there can be this question: "What will my neighbour think if I fail?" We also see companies in difficulty that come to us too late. The same applies to remuneration. Some entrepreneurs find it difficult to admit that they are not paying themselves a salary. It is still a delicate subject, and there is a gap between the image of entrepreneurial success and the economic reality.

What are the House of Entrepreneurship's main priorities for the future?

We want to remain the national point of reference for entrepreneurship and keep adapting our services as entrepreneurs' needs evolve. AI and cybersecurity are major areas, as is business transfer, with a generation of entrepreneurs approaching retirement and a need to prepare both those handing over businesses and their successors. We have also recently created a financing unit to help entrepreneurs prepare for funding and identify available schemes and state aid. Administrative simplification will remain a major priority.

We also want to play a more proactive role in identifying the problems entrepreneurs face on the ground and submitting recommendations to decision-makers to help create a more favourable environment for entrepreneurship. ●