PRACTICAL GUIDE

INTERNATIONALISATION

Developing business beyond Luxembourg's borders









www.odl.lu

Introduction

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Developing your activity internationally means activating tools that could lead to important development for the business overall. In a place of limited size like Luxembourg, going international can be more than an opportunity, rather a necessity. But how best to set up business in an unknown market? What is the best strategy (p. 12)? Is it possible to sell the same product or should it be adapted to the local market? Where to start (p. 10)? What to avoid? What opportunities are not to be missed (p. 14)? What about regulatory constraints (p. 16)? Does a Luxembourg-based SME have a chance against established large international corporations?

The Chamber of Commerce and its partners are here to support companies questioning the possibility of opening up to foreign markets: they provide an economic and cultural panorama of potential target countries, offer support by organising trade missions (p. 13), provide guidance in brainstorming and planning, administrative procedures, and financing (p. 18), and put them in contact with potential partners, in Luxembourg or in the target country, in order to build their network (p. 8 and p. 20).

This guide presents pathways that will allow entrepreneurs to explore the terrain that will prove to be fertile and even life-saving in these times of crisis. Going international deserves reflection and preparation, but also intuition and connection. Happy reading!

Disclaimer

This document is destined to be an informative overview for professionals concerning the opportunities offered by internationalisation. It is not intended to be exhaustive and does not replace the necessary consultation of specialists and applicable legal provisions on the subject.

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Facts & Figures

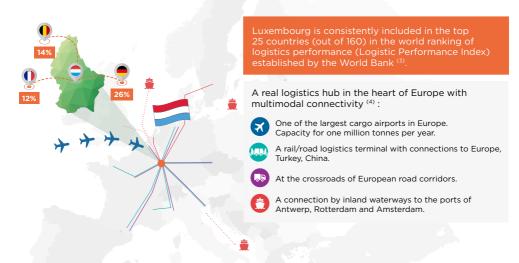


Luxembourg, due to its size and geographical position in the heart of Europe, is particularly open to international trade. Luxembourg's economy is in 3rd place for the most open economy in the world, according to the Open Markets Index of the International Chamber of Commerce ⁽¹⁾.

Luxembourg exports 61% of its production, including more than 50% to neighbouring countries, and is actively developing trade relations with Asia and the Middle East. The most exported products are financial services, steel products, and tires (2).



In 2019, nine economic missions (including two official) were organised by the Chamber of Commerce. Nearly 300 companies took part and/or exhibited at various trade shows as part of a Luxembourg delegation.



In 2019, Luxembourg companies exported EUR 132.6 billion (EUR 20 billion in goods and EUR 112.6 billion in services), and imported EUR 109.7 billion (EUR 22 billion in goods and EUR 87.8 billion in services).



Enterprise Europe Network (5):

This network, set up by the European Commission, has 600 organisations in 60 countries that offer help to SMEs wanting to develop internationally, in particular through contact with potential future partners. In 2019, some 1,500 people attended EEN conferences in Luxembourg.

- (1) https://iccwbo.org/
- (2) https://www.statec.lu
- (3) https://www.banquemondiale.org/
- (4) https://logistics.public.lu/
- (5) https://een.ec.europa.eu/

Testimonials Success Stories



AktOne

Flight numner: GM88

Seat

number: 8A

Date 05/08

Time 07.30



AktOne is active in the field of renewable energies (solar photovoltaic) and waste recovery.

'In a partnership relationship, establishing a relationship of trust is essential. The chemistry must work between the people concerned, and this requires understanding the culture of the partner.' Karim Aknine, Director

Opportunities:

- While starting up its activity in Luxembourg, AktOne responded to the Chamber of Commerce's invitation to take part in missions in China and Dubai, which enabled it to establish contacts, to understand the culture of these markets, and to establish mutual trust.
- The pandemic led them to temporarily reduce geographic scope and to focus on the Greater Region and Benelux. Contacts were established through a week of virtual meetings organised by the Chamber of Commerce.
- The differentiating factor was the bias in favour of CSR, which was especially strong: systematic elimination of any plastic material in products, launch of an eco range of products...
- Innovating while remaining competitive also contributed to their success.

The challenge:

 The current pandemic situation requires replacing real contact with virtual contact but trust is established less easily in these conditions.
 This is especially true for some countries, whose culture does not accommodate a purely digital relationship.

Tips:

- · Choose the target market carefully.
- Meet entrepreneurs already established in this market.
- Rely on the Chamber of Commerce and their network, who can organise meetings with contacts on site.

HAVE A NICE TRIP!

05

Grosbusch

At the local grocery store and more: top-quality fruit and vegetables in the Greater Region and beyond.

'We have excellent products and local brands. We have to spread the word!' Goy Grosbusch, Managing Director

Opportunities:

- Since 1995, Grosbusch has been serving the Greater Region.
- Since 2016, the company has been exporting produce by air cargo to the Middle East, targeting shopping centres and the HORECA sector.

Challenges:

- Short shelf life for fresh produce: every step of the supply chain must be monitored as timing and temperature are crucial to ensure and maintain the quality of the merchandise. Tracking these factors must be planned in advance.
- Logistics: international logistics are complex and have several stages as well as carriers.
 The process also includes air cargo costs, customs clearance fees, etc., which should be anticipated to prevent unpleasant surprises.

Tips:

- Use help from existing organisations (Chambers of Commerce, embassies, associations, ...) in Luxembourg and in target markets
- Collect as much information as possible about the market and culture of the target countries.
- Obtain certifications in the relevant field in order to acquire and demonstrate adequate skills and build trust with contacts and partners.

Oasis-Shadrin Group

Several activities - Development and marketing of food and products for animals - Sale of software and media services.

'In Luxembourg, we have had a lot of help with our internationalisation process, been guided and redirected.' Olivier Schimpf, CEO

Opportunities:

- Sled dog breeder and musher, Olivier Schimpf, founder of the group, launched food production for dogs with high meat content in 1995. With a strong international network, thanks to his activities as a breeder (he has won many competitions), the products were quickly very successful all over the world.
- Two international subsidiaries (in the Czech Republic and Russia) were established thanks to fortunate opportunities, as well as the perseverance of Olivier Schimpf.
- Today, the company distributes its products in 25 countries both within and outside Europe.

Challenges:

- The main challenge is not commercial but administrative and cultural, which changes from country to country.
- Find partners who share a similar vision, values, state of mind, and mutual respect.

Tip:

Ask yourself seriously: 'Do I have the will to go the distance with this?' It's not about giving up a quarter of the way through. Even if there are failures or difficulties, tenacity is paramount.

4i (Quatrei)

In the niche market for mobile technology solutions for traceability, 4i serves customers throughout Europe, mainly in the logistics, industrial, and healthcare industries.

'Innovation and expertise are essential differentiating factors for getting established in major international markets.' Francois Dolisy, Managing Director

Opportunities:

- Differentiate yourself: be one step ahead in terms of innovation and always improving to be the best on the market.
- Have a customer-centric approach to guarantee the quality of long-term solutions.
- Organising demonstrations is essential in niche sectors to make yourself known and promote word-of-mouth marketing.
- Set up subsidiaries to expand outside of the EU: 4i has an office in Dubai.

Challenges:

- In large markets (such as Germany) competition is strong and constant reassessments are essential (price adjustments, more knowledge and expertise...).
- · Customs formalities.
- New restrictions on entering the British market following Brexit.
- The sectoral regulations of the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) only allow operating within the EU.

Tips:

- Know your strengths, weaknesses, and 'unique selling point'.
- Conduct market analysis and identify what to sell outside your home market depending on demand and cultural barriers.
- Large markets are more difficult to conquer: expertise is essential to distinguish oneself.

SolarCleano

SolarCleano is active in the automated cleaning of solar panels. They are now present in 35 countries, and expanding into Latin America and Southeast Asia.

'The adventure of going international is definitely worth experiencing: go for it!' Romain Gourmet, International Business Development Executive

Opportunities:

- With innovation and expansion in its DNA, internationalisation has been part of SolarCleano's strategy from the start. Developing on a global level has required establishing relationships built on trust with key partners and distributors.
- Choosing to ship disassembled products, which are then assembled on arrival by partners, to escape the high taxes of importing finished products into certain countries.
- The Made in Luxembourg bias that allows you to stand out thanks to the quality brand.

Challenges:

- Logistics: choice of transport by plane or by boat, customs and trade agreements.
- Depending on the country, establishing trust can be a lengthy process and give rise to long-winded negotiations before reaching an agreement.
- Understanding the cultures of certain countries, which will sometimes favour price over quality, is essential for expansion.

Tins:

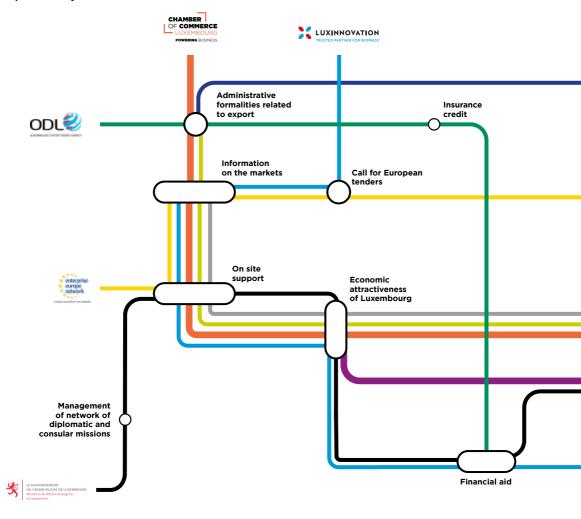
- Plan, study and carefully choose a target market before launching.
- Understand the culture of the country and how to do business there.

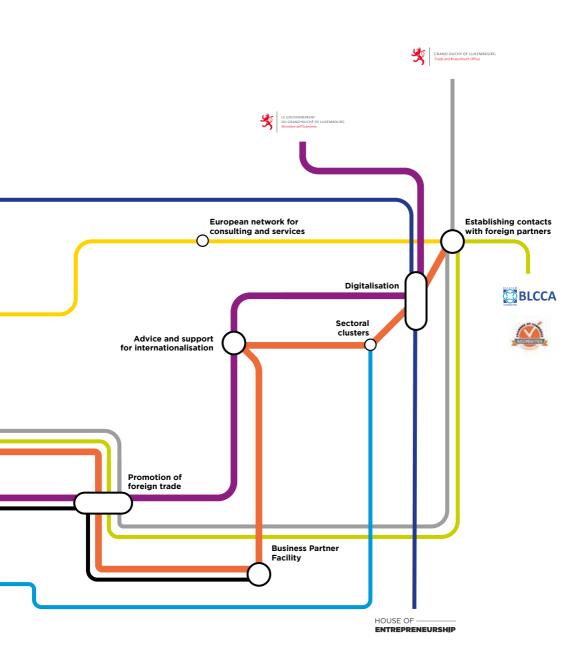
The stakeholders

LUXEMBOURG
TRADE & INVEST

Together, the stakeholders below support the international growth of Luxembourg companies, attract the most relevant and positive investors to Luxembourg for the country's industrial ecosystem, and seek to encourage entrepreneurship and digitalisation. (see Who can help me?, page 22)

On this map, the stakeholders involved are represented by the lines, and the services provided are represented by the stations.





Steps involved in developing an international presence

To have luck on your side, it is better to prepare your project thoroughly. These steps may vary depending on the entry strategy adopted. WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES? ✓ To increase market share, turnover, reach other target groups, diversify risks, partnerships with other suppliers, R&D partners, etc. Set up performance indicators and monitor them to measure the achievement of objectives Assess sources of opportunity **IDENTIFY THE** PRODUCT(S)/SERVICE(S) **TO EXPORT** ✓ Make an inventory of all product(s)/service(s) Analyse and identify which ones have potential for internationalisation Analyse production **CONDUCT AN AUDIT ON THE STRENGTHS** methods and current AND WEAKNESSES OF THE COMPANY distribution as well as their ✓ Analyse the size and structure of the company ability to withstand an internationalisation strategy resources (financial, human, international skills, ✓ Identify your strengths/competitive advantages (brand image, patents, etc.) Evaluate IT capacity (invoicing between

countries, e-commerce...)

IDENTIFY AND ANALYSE TARGET MARKETS

✓ Identify the target market(s) (see Tools and Contacts, pages 13 and 20)

CHAMBER

- ✓ Analyse the political and economic stability of the market(s)
- ✓ Analyse the infrastructures in place
- ✓ Identify entry barriers
- Analyse the competition and its positioning
- Learn about the cultural and social fabric, the legal system
- ✓ Identify targets and assess their potential

OF COMMERCE POWERING BUSINESS **CONTACT INTERNATIONAL** AFFAIRS OF THE LUXEMBOURG



- ✓ Inform the Chamber of Commerce about your project and needs
- Develop a network in the target market(s)
- ✓ Receive personalised support
- Participate in related events
- ✓ Take advantage of connecting with potential partners and/or customers in the target market(s)

CHOOSE A MARKET **ENTRY STRATEGY**

(see Strategies, page 12) ✓ Assess your aversion to risk

✓ Identify possible existing sources of opportunity (contacts in your network,

subcontractors, etc.)

ESTABLISH A

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEG

- Assess the need to adapt or standardise product(s)/service(s) based on market analysis (think local!)
- ✓ Determine your pricing strategy

DEVELOP A BUSINESS PLAN BASED ON A STRATEGY AND THE SPECIFICITIES OF THE TARGET MARKET

- ✓ Tax and customs regulations (see Regulations, page 16)
- ✓ Marketing and communication (in the country's business language)
- Logistics, supply chain
- Human resources (local recruitment or relocation)
- Estimated budget (see Financing, page 18)

Strategies for internationalisation

What is the best method for setting up in a foreign market?

The strategy will depend on the level of control desired and the investment the company is prepared to make. In a partnership, the challenge will be to identify the right partner and find the right balance between control and trust.

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	i	(+)	\triangle
Controlled imple	Internet or marketplace sales (see E-commerce Guide, October 2020)	No physical establishment. Can be a first step in a strategy to set up an establishment/ 100% of the profits	Risk of the unknown, lack of representative(s) on site, distant market, need for credit insurance to limit the risks of non-
Business Representative	Sells on their own account and represents the company abroad	Good knowledge of the local market. Low-cost solution. Paid on a commission basis on the turnover generated	payment Choose a trusted partner. Recruit carefully
Subsidiary Branch	Branch: extension of the parent company with no legal status of its own. Subsidiary: independent of the parent company/sales and/or production subsidiary. 100% of costs and risks	Allows tight control. 100% of profits	100% of costs and risks
Subcontracted e	Export through local independent companies	Independent company with a good knowledge of the local market	Choose a trusted partner
Joint establishm Licence Agreement	ent (contract) Leasing the use of one's trademark to another company, in return for licencing fees	Low price and low risk	Little control/Risk of loss of expertise
Franchise	Agreement between an exporter and a local importer (franchisee), who distributes products for a fee	Possible to adapt the product for the local market. Reduced financial risk	Ensuring quality control
Portage	Agreement between two companies. The carrier (established in the country) markets the products of the company carried in its distribution network, on a percentage basis	Access to foreign markets with reduced costs and limited risks	Strictly regulated
Joint venture	Joint venture (majority - 50/50 - minority)	Local partner/Sharing of costs and risks. Better transmission of expertise	Lower profits. Dividend distribution

Tools

Tools available to businesses

Set up by the Chamber of Commerce and its partners.



Network

(see Contacts, page 20)
Network of Luxembourg Trade Offices abroad
www.tradeandinvest.lu



Database to find a partner for producing, distributing, co-developing and supplying products, ideas and services

een.ec.europa.eu/partners/

an International Affairs advisor

https://bit.ly/3pgqlKC

Opportunities and challenges of internationalisation

In an increasingly globalised economy, it is better to take advantage of the benefits of globalisation than to suffer it. Putting the opportunities and risks into perspective can contribute to planning.



OPPORTUNITIES



Creating leverage and looking for new growth drivers



Increase in turnover and economies of scale



Simplifying access to new territories thanks to e-commerce and electronic communications



Diversification of targets, positioning in niche markets, responding to requests for new clientele



Access to new potential: new technologies, new partners, suppliers and subcontractors (sometimes more cost effective)



Acceleration of the innovation process (necessarily adapting to new constraints and new competitors)



Improvement of reputation



Regulations more favourable in the target countries



Independence in terms of the national market, its economic fluctuations









Choice of destination country/countries. Political and economic stability of the target country + Customs formalities, taxes, multi-currency transactions



Socio-cultural and linguistic barriers. Setting up adequate customer services



Adapting the product and the strategy to the target market, compliance



Loss of control and dependence on foreign partners (depending on strategy chosen) (see Strategies, page 12)



Adapting IT systems for international exchanges. International logistics management



Dealing with competitors



Complexity of the foreign environment: regulations, right to export, protection of intellectual property rights



Choice of timing for product launch (immature market, market already saturated)



Returns on investment sometimes delayed

Regulations for exporting from Luxembourg

(see disclaimer on page 3)

BASIC LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Be established in Luxembourg
- ✓ Have a VAT number
- ✓ Have an RCS number (Trade and Companies Register)
- ✓ Have an EORI number (Economic Operator Registration and Identification)



TO CHECK BEFORE **EXPORTING WITHIN THE EU:**

Intrastat declarations

- ✓ Declare to STATEC movement
 ✓ Check the VAT rules of goods between Member
- ✓ Report shipments of goods from Luxembourg (exemption if < EUR 150 000)

Applying VAT

- (exported goods and services)
- ✓ Declare the VAT to the AED (*)

Summary Statements of Goods and Services

✓ Submit summary statements (goods or services) to the AED

Focus Service

- Comply with staff mobility procedures
- ✓ Single market ≠ single taxation learn about tax reaimes

(*) AED: Registration Duties, Estates and VAT Authority



TRADE WITH COUNTRIES OUTSIDE THE EU

The European Commission is negotiating trade agreements in order to facilitate exchanges with third countries (Canada, Japan, Singapore, Turkey, Vietnam, Monaco, Saint Marin, Andorra, Switzerland, United Kingdom, etc.)



TO CHECK BEFORE EXPORTING GOODS OUTSIDE THE EU

- ✓ Are there any export restrictions
 - o for your target country?
 - o for your product?
 - visit the European Commission's "Access2Markets" platform



TO CHECK BEFORE EXPORTING SERVICES OUTSIDE THE EU

- ✓ Is the service authorised to enter the export market?
- ✓ Are there any restrictions on exporting the service
 - o to the target country?
 - o for the service?



Conditions for the export of goods from the EU and for your export market

- ✓ Does the EU have a trade agreement with the country of destination?
 - If YES: the rates can be reduced/ eliminated
 - If NO: consult the WTO or Access2Markets
- ✓ Does the Chamber of Commerce have certificates of origin?
- Have you checked local taxes and other fees?
- Have you checked the sanitary, safety and technical conditions?
- Have you checked the rules in terms of packaging and labelling?Have you checked the protection of
- intellectual property?
- Do you need a specific licence to export goods?

Preparation for sale and transportation

- Does the contract include transport and insurance?
- ✓ Is the buyer responsible for import?
- The exporter/seller is responsible for customs formalities for exporting from the EU

Union transit / common transit: www.guichet.public.lu

Preparing the documents for customs clearance for export from Luxembourg

- Export declaration for electronics
- Transport documents, list of packaged products, and certificates
- Documentation for the product
- Presentation of the products at customs
- Keep all documents for inspections after customs clearance at export
- ✓ After export: declare the exports (via eDouane Import/Export)

Conditions for the export of services from the EU and for your export market

- ✓ Does the EU have a trade agreement with the country of destination?
 - If YES: It can reduce/eliminate export barriers and barriers to direct foreign investment
 - If NO: consult the standard rules on the WTO website (www.wto.org) and check local taxes and additional duties

Specific requirements according to how you export To provide services across borders, check;

✓ licencing requirements (it is possible that an EU auditor will not be allowed to audit the accounts of a foreign company)

To establish a presence in a foreign market, check:

- ✓ the type of legal entities authorised
- ✓ local presence requirements

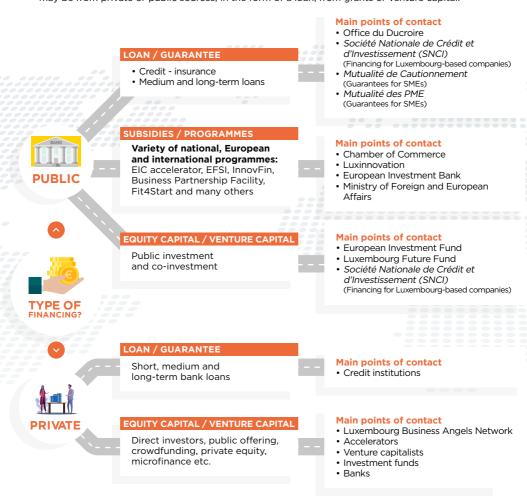
If one of your employees accompanies the service, check:

- ✓ recognition of diplomas
- ✓ work permits
- ✓ nationality requirements

For any questions and further information, contact international@cc.lu

Financing internationalisation

Embarking on international development implies many steps (see Steps, page 10) and careful preparation. The export strategy also involves establishing a budget and the search for financing, which may be from private or public sources, in the form of a loan, from grants or venture capital.



DEFINITIONS

Subsidy: A non-refundable sum of money given to fund certain projects.

Loan: a sum of money that should be repaid with interest.

Guarantor: a third party that provides a financial guarantee for a project to the investor.

Equity: capital invested in exchange for shares in the company.

Venture capital: capital invested in a project with a significant element of risk, typically a new or expanding business.

What type of international entrepreneur are you?

QUIZ

Question 4:

of opportunity

international is a no-go

As illustrated by the testimonials (see Success stories, page 5), in the process of taking one's business international, much will depend on the personality of the entrepreneur behind the project. It is therefore better to know how one functions and will respond to the many challenges that will arise.

Guestion 1: A. In a context of great uncertainty, you base your decisions on the losses you are prepared to accept B. Your choices are guided by maximum expected returns
Question 2: A. You are constantly looking for the market(s) where the interest in your products/services is the strongest B. You prefer to set up in neighbouring countries
Question 3: A. You trust your intuition B. You like to plan and control risks before you take the plunge

A. You consider the unforeseen as a source

B. The lack of sufficient resources for going

If you have more A answers: You are an entrepreneur with a predominantly effectual logic¹

You are rather intuitive, you know how to seize opportunities for internationalisation, how to imagine new achievable goals. You are comfortable in situations of uncertainty with a low level of predictability, you know how to adapt to the

You launch yourself into the battle using the means and resources you have at your disposal rather than trying to predict the uncertain.

If you have more B answers: You are an entrepreneur with a predominantly causal logic

You are more into analysis and reflection, you need to plan and break down the steps of internationalisation before making your decision. You are more comfortable with a sequential and progressive commitment to internationalisation. You move forward by taking measured risks. And don't start without a thorough knowledge of the markets, cultural differences and legal requirements of the target countries.

This quiz is based on the article, 'Helping Decision-Makers to Cross the Frontier: Contribution of the Effectuation

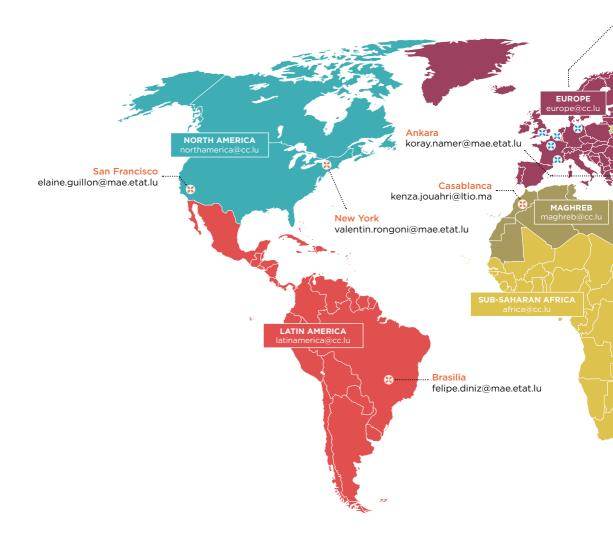
Theory on the Link Between Barriers, Opportunities and Internationalization Decision', by Antonin Ricard & Bénédicte
Aldebert (2018), originally published in the 'International Management' journal.

In the effectual approach, the notion of a final goal disappears in favour of a series of goals presented as intermediate stages established according to the means available at a given moment.

Contacts

The Trade & Invest network is at the disposal of Luxembourg companies for international development projects, in particular through tailor-made support in exploring new markets as well as the provision of business information and networking to find new partners.

In addition to Luxembourg's international network, International Affairs of the Chamber of Commerce maintain close ties with Belgian export agencies and thus have an expert for each region of the world to ensure optimal support in all target markets.



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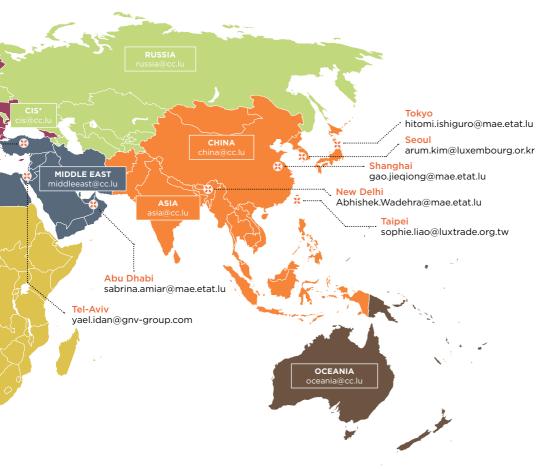
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Paris / Marseille

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

International markets

- Trade Offices coordinated by the Ministry of the Economy
- Trade Offices coordinated by the Chamber of Commerce



*Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

Who can help me?



Under the Luxembourg Trade & Invest banner, the Chamber of Commerce, Luxinnovation and the Ministry of the Economy steer the economic development of Luxembourg as an innovative and international business destination of choice for investors, facilitating foreign expansion, growth, and export initiatives for local companies. The Trade & Invest network is committed to facilitating the establishment and development of activities in the countries in which they operate.



The International Affairs Department of the Chamber of Commerce advises and supports Luxembourg companies in their international development: official missions, a Luxembourg pavilion at international fairs, guided tours, international matchmaking events, putting Luxembourg companies in touch with foreign companies.

www.cc.lu/gointernational



Luxinnovation offers a wide range of services to companies and public research organisations in order to foster innovation. The agency also ensures that Luxembourg continues to attract international investment, companies, and skills perfectly adapted to the country.

www.luxinnovation.lu



The Ministry of the Economy is responsible for the country's economic policy. It makes strategic choices and implements the instruments necessary for the dynamic and sustainable development of the national economy.

www.meco.gouvernement.lu



The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs provides assistance to all nationals, carries out bilateral relations, and promotes Luxembourg, its culture, its institutions and its economy. www.maee.lu



The Enterprise Europe Network is the largest European network dedicated to the internationalisation and innovation of SMEs. Experts in more than 67 countries provide businesses with information, advice on European law, and development aid. www.een.lu



The House of Entrepreneurship ensures the legalisation of documents, the issuing of certificates of origin, Luxtrust digital certificates and ATA *carnets de passage* for customs transit for temporary exports.

www.houseofentrepreneurship.lu



The ODL offers financial assistance for exports, risk insurance and partial reimbursement of costs related to promotion, training or participation in trade fairs. www.odl.lu





The BLCCA (Belgian-Luxembourg Chambers of Commerce Abroad) is a network of biand trilateral Chambers of Commerce present throughout the world with the objective of helping explore new markets and bringing together potential partners.

www.cc.lu/bilateral www.belgianchambers.be

CONQUER NEW MARKETS ABROAD



Exploring and conquering new territories is a challenge for any company. Our International Affairs team helps you track down and target high-potential markets.

Tel: (+352) 42 3939-310 • international@cc.lu







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