



## BRIDGING THE ACTIVITY GAP IN THE CITY OF SPORT

OLYMPIC CAPITAL LAUSANNE IS WORLD-FAMOUS FOR ELITE SPORTS AND SPORT FOR ALL. LIKE ALL CITIES, IT HAS A HIDDEN STORY, WITH MANY RESIDENTS NOT PHYSICALLY ACTIVE. FOR MANY YEARS, THE CITY HAS STRIVED TO MAKE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE, WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS AS PART OF THE LEGACY OF THE WINTER YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES LAUSANNE 2020. THIS COMMITMENT HAS WON LAUSANNE THE RIGHT TO BE NAMED THE WORLD'S SEVENTH GLOBAL ACTIVE CITY

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**‘THE GLOBAL ACTIVE CITY PROGRAMME IS CRUCIAL IN OUR VISION TO INCREASE ACCESS TO SPORT FOR ALL, AND PROVIDE EVERYONE WITH THE EDUCATIONAL AND HEALTH VALUES OF SPORT’**  
**CHRISTOPHE DUBI, OLYMPIC GAMES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**Right**  
 Lausanne is one of the first cities in the world to use mobile playgrounds. L’Akabane is moved around to locations where there are no places for children to play, such as the central shopping district

**S**ometimes when the bar is set high, it discourages some people from trying to jump at all. Lausanne is one of the sportiest cities in the world, home to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and around 60 international sports bodies. It is host to dozens of international sports events a year, including the biggest Winter Youth Olympic Games (YOG) to date. However, in the midst of global conferences and ground-breaking decisions, there are many local people untouched by the benefits of living in the home of international sport.

A 2017 survey revealed that 33 per cent of residents in the Lausanne region of Vaud were not physically active enough to benefit their health – failing to do WHO-recommended levels of 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity a week. There were significant differences by gender, age, origin and socio-economic status.

The report by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (FSO) found that 51 per cent of men and 31 per cent of women in Vaud were overweight – older people and people with lower education levels were more likely to be affected. Mental health problems and burnout at work were higher than in other parts of the country, and one in four people suffered from significant health issues such as chronic back pain, stomach pain or insomnia. Fourteen per cent suffered from hypertension, diabetes or high cholesterol, with these conditions more likely to affect people living in urban areas, with lower education levels.

All these illnesses can be improved and even cured with regular exercise, and the authorities in Lausanne have been quick to act. As one of the founding members of the Global Active City model, they helped to develop its nine-point programme, including the recommendation to build a cross-sector alliance of partners with a vested interest in the health of the city.



A network of public, voluntary and private sector partners is collaborating in working groups to implement a physical activity strategy that will make sure everyone in the city has the opportunity to be active easily in day-to-day life. The strategy encompasses building world-class sports facilities as well as outdoor facilities in all neighbourhoods, such as playgrounds and skateparks. The city is working with health partners and field social workers to help people most at risk from sedentary behaviour, highlight existing ways to be active, and promote active travel.

Meanwhile, Lausanne and Vaud are becoming one of the world’s main health hubs and a major pool of expertise in cancer research. The city’s health providers have joined forces as Unisanté, and are supporting the journey towards an active city.

With the Global Active City label and the YOG, Lausanne is becoming known for well-being and physical activity, and would be happy to share its experiences with other cities. ➤

200

The city has over 200 sports clubs and associations\*

350k

There are more than 350,000 square metres of green space in Lausanne\*

43%

of residents are foreign nationals, hailing from over 160 countries\*\*

85%

of 11-to-17-year-olds in Switzerland do less than one hour of physical activity a day\*\*\*

\* LAUSANNE LA SPORTIVE, TOUS EN MOUVEMENT, 2019  
 \*\* VILLE DE LAUSANNE, PORTRAIT STATISTIQUE, 2019  
 \*\*\* GLOBAL TRENDS IN INSUFFICIENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG ADOLESCENTS, 2019





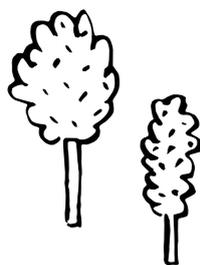
**Olympic Review met with Marie-Noëlle Domon-Aubort, lead project officer for Lausanne's physical activity strategy. Lausanne played a key role in developing the Global Active City model and was certified in the lead-up to Lausanne 2020, under the guidance of sustainable health association Evaleo.**

**Q. Why did Lausanne become involved in the Global Active City programme?**

**A.** As the Olympic Capital, it is our duty to be part of this project. We consider it a real advantage. Before joining the programme, the City of Lausanne did not consider health through physical activity as a top priority; it wasn't one of the city's tasks as it was, until recently, managed exclusively at the cantonal level. Joining the programme has brought to light many activities with a positive impact on health that already exist, and the possibilities offered to the local population. The energy around the project is very positive.

**Q. What are your priorities?**

**A.** We know that in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, people move less than in the German-speaking part. Then we know there are groups like women, and people with lower incomes, who move less than average. Physical inactivity or too little activity particularly affects the most vulnerable populations. These audiences are especially difficult to reach and mobilise for



**Opposite page**

Olympian sailor Anne-Sophie Thilo leading a group of children during the *Sports-Passion* activities in Lausanne

their health. Historically, more money has been spent on sports for men than for women. For example, investment has been made in football fields, and football players are 90 per cent men. Women do more individual sports, away from clubs. It was not strategic, it was systemic.

The City of Lausanne aims to enhance the practice of physical activity and focus on excluded groups, like foreign communities, women, and people with reduced mobility and chronic diseases.

**Q. How are you improving opportunities to do physical activity?**

**A.** We have built strong partnerships between the city and other key players in the fields of health, sports and research. In consultation with this alliance, we have developed a far-reaching physical activity strategy to ensure that everyone in the city is able to be physically active.

In 2020, we will launch *Lausanne la sportive – tous en mouvement* to achieve the goals of this strategy. Opportunities to walk, run and practise simple outdoor activities are sufficient. Infrastructure to





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swim or skate was, however, not in line with the increase of the population.

A new Olympic-sized swimming pool will open this summer and three rinks have been inaugurated in Malley. Urban planners have been working with physicians and public health specialists from Unisanté to make sure physical activity is taken into account in urban planning and architecture in new neighbourhoods.

**Q. How can people already be active in Lausanne?**

**A.** The city hosts over a dozen mass participation sports events each year.

The biggest is the Lausanne 20km run. Last year, around 30,000 people took part over two days, with about one-third of participants aged from five to 16. The offer of physical activity and sport for all is abundant and varied but it is not always visible. That’s why we are setting up an online platform that will bring together everything already available, with the long-term objective to offer activities suited to each person’s fitness.

**Q. What are your biggest local challenges?**

**A.** One of our biggest goals is to turn going to work on foot or by bicycle into the principal means of transportation. Lausanne is not that big. To encourage the population to adopt walking or cycling as a daily habit, the city is working on improving the attractiveness of public spaces.

Another objective is to involve the hard-to-reach parts of the population for whom health is not the biggest preoccupation. Solutions must be found to encourage people to walk out of their neighbourhoods, run, cycle and keep their bodies moving. ■

*For more information about the Global Active City programme, visit [activewellbeing.org](http://activewellbeing.org)*

**PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES**



**Vaudoise Aréna**

The transformation of the old skating rink into a brand-new skating arena was accelerated to host the Winter YOG Lausanne 2020. The city and other public partners built a new 9,700-seat skating rink, a training rink and an outdoor rink for the public. There is also a new sports centre for fencing and table tennis.

An Olympic-sized swimming pool will open later this year, and will be the fifth publicly-owned indoor pool in Lausanne.



**Access to sports**

Since the 1960s, Lausanne has offered nine-to-16-year-olds the chance to try a sport for free on Wednesday afternoons. With 4,000 available places, *Sports-Passion* offers 44 sports while, in Olympic Week, children aged eight to 15 are encouraged to try more than 30 sports offered by clubs and associations. The Republic of Sports has improved the social inclusion of migrants, connecting them with clubs and training them as YOG volunteers.



**Parcours santé**

A working group made up from the administrative bodies responsible for roads and mobility, town planning, parks and estates, health, schools and sports in the city will focus on how health can be integrated into urban development. A trail (*the Grand tour de Lausanne*) of 20 kilometres is being highlighted around the city, so people can walk easily and discover their local environment.



**Je me bouge**

Various organisations work together on health campaigns such as *Je me bouge pour ma santé* and *Ça marche !* to encourage people to do physical activity. In *Pas à Pas*, people who have not done physical activity for some time, because of lifestyle factors or perhaps illness, are offered a free consultation from a physical activity expert. Social services employees are being educated on the importance of physical activity.