

# From the Year of Olympism, from School to University Label to the Generation 2024 Olympic Label: an Example within the University of Franche-Comté

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## Abstract

Following the “Year of Sports from School to University” and supporting the Paris 2024 bid, the Ministry of National Education declared, in its August 2016 circular, the 2016-2017 School and University year the “Year of Olympism from School to University”. The same year, an inter-ministerial program of 24 measures was unveiled on 22 March 2017 at the Council of Ministers. The aim was to ensure, six months before the designation of the 2024 host city, full State support for Paris’ bid for the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The first measure concerned the creation of a “Generation 2024” label for Schools and Universities. The University of Franche-Comté was one of the first accredited universities in France.

## Keywords

Label, generation 2024, university establishment, school establishment, Olympism, University of Franche-Comté.

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## Introduction

Following a tripartite agreement between the IOC and the two competing candidate cities, Paris and Los Angeles, the members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) decided to award the organization of the XXXIII Olympiad to Paris and the following one in Los Angeles at the 131st session in Lima, Peru. Paris was back on the winning side after the failure of the 1992, 2008 and 2012 bids. The host city contract was signed on 13 September 2017 between the IOC, the City of Paris and the French National Olympic and Sports Committee (Journal Officiel de la République Française, 2019).

This historic decision was directly linked to the then-new Olympic Agenda 2020 (International Olympic Committee, 2019) developed and adopted by the IOC in 2014. It was then a matter of presenting a unique Olympic project for the candidate cities and in particular those for the organization of the 2024 Olympic Games:

...that would meet their long-term social, economic, environmental and sporting development plans. The 2020 Olympic Agenda brings a radically new philosophy and approach to the selection process for Olympic Games host cities. The focus is now on sustainability, the legacy of the Games and cost reduction (International Olympic Committee, 2019).

Priority was also given to strengthening the fundamental principles of Olympism and to spreading the Olympic values through educational and training programs.

In this spirit, Paris 2024 is targeting these future Games to a “young generation - the 2024 Generation - [which] will be offered innovative programs integrated into school curricula at the national level and using the Games as levers to stimulate entrepreneurship, sports and civic and humanitarian opportunities” (Application form Phase 1 Paris 2024, 2019).

Within the French educational system and as part of the “Year of Olympism, from School to University”, the Ministry of National Education and Youth launched the “Generation 2024” labeling process in January 2018 (Ministry of National Education and Youth, 2019).

Clearly, the prospect of the future Olympic Games in Paris 2024 is a real opportunity to create a dynamic within Primary, Junior

and High Schools, as well as in Universities. The “Generation 2024” label represents a real educational, sporting and cultural challenge based on didactic and pedagogical measures on the one hand and on structuring projects through clubs, support for top-level athletes and participation in Olympic and Paralympic events on the other hand.

These are the aspects I wish to address in this work. However, is the awarding of the “Generation 2024” label to Schools and Universities by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and its various national variations such as the CNOSF, the Organizing Committee for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, just an acceptable political showcase for the actions to be taken by a host city? Is this label a guarantee of quality in promoting Olympic values?

First looking back at the genesis of the “Generation 2024” label, this study will mainly concern the work carried out at the University of Franche-Comté, which was one of the first universities to be labeled “Generation 2024” by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and the Ministry of Sports.

## **Genesis of the “Generation 2024” Label**

Following the “Year of Sports from School to University”, the Ministry of National Education in its August 2016 circular declared, in support of the Paris 2024 bid, the

2016-2017 School and University year as the “Year of Olympism from School to University”. The objective was to “link the practice of sports to an educational, cultural or civic ambition around Olympism and its values” (Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research, 2016). This Olympic year held five major events (Monnin, 2017):

- National School Sports Day (JNSS) on the theme “The School commits itself for Paris 2024”, on 14 September 2016 (1st edition: 2010).
- International University Sports Day proclaimed by UNESCO on 20 September 2016 (1st edition: 2016).
- National University Sports Day (JNSU) “Campus Sports Day”, October 6, 2016 (1st edition: 2010).
- The “Olympic and Paralympic Week”, from 21 to 29 January 2017 (1st edition: 2017).
- “Olympic Day”, 23 June 2017 (1st edition: 1948).

For the Ministry, “[...] sports and the School are based on the same values: a taste for effort, perseverance, a desire to progress, respect for others, oneself and rules, etc.” Paris’ candidacy was also a means of promoting existing educational actions through multiple mechanisms such as the student’s civic path (Ministry of National Education and Youth, 2016). This joint work offered an Olympic education program with an opportunity for students and athletes:

*“...[To understand] the fundamental principles of Olympic philosophy[defined in the Olympic Charter];[To] present Olympism and the idea of the Olympic Games;[To] promote and spread the ethical and educational values of the Olympic Movement;[To] explain Olympism and the universal ideal through the meaning of ‘Kalokagathia’;[To] train in a harmonious way the body and mind in accordance with Olympic philosophy; [And to] forge the personality of each individual according to Coubertin, thus laying the foundations for international understanding”*

(Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research, 2016).

In this respect, as Konstantinos Georgiadis suggested, an Olympic education project has three main points: the first is to understand the Olympic principles of the Olympic Charter; the second is to understand the historical and pedagogical foundations of the Olympic ideal; and the third is to better understand our society and our current lifestyles (Georgiadis, 2007).

To highlight all the actions carried out during this School year, the Ministry of National Education and Higher Education and Research awarded the “Year of Olympism, from School to University” label to 98 projects (Revue EP&S, 2017) aimed, for example, at:

- ... Being based on a strong partnership between a School or Higher Education institution, a School or University sports actor (School or University sports federations, University sports associations) and/or a sports movement actor (CROS, CDOS, sports federation, league, committee or club).
- Linking the practice of sports to an educational, cultural or civic ambition around Olympism and its values on the model of, for example, the “Olympic Classes”, an educational action proposed by the CNOSF [...] (Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research, 2016).

## **Inter-Ministerial Program: “Sports at the Service of Society”**

A few months before the IOC’s announcement to designate the host city for the 2024 Games, the Minister of Cities, Youth and Sports and the Secretary of State for Sports presented an inter-ministerial program on State support and the Olympic legacy for Paris’ bid for the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games to the Council of Ministers on 22 March 2017. 20 million Euros would be allocated to a sports development plan. The minutes of the Council of Ministers clearly stated that:

*“...Heritage is a major element of the Paris 2024 bid, which aims to fully meet the expectations of the French by offering a sustainable project at the service of society. This is why the State is now implementing an inter-ministerial support program as part of a heritage dynamic led by the Paris 2024 public interest group (GIP)”*

(minutes of the Council of Ministers, 2017).

A document entitled “Sports at the service of society” (Paris, candidate city for the 2024 Olympic Games and Ministry of Cities, Youth and Sports, 2018) listed the 24 measures of this inter-ministerial program developed through six themes (youth/education/culture; health/handicap; social integration/employment; gender equality; sports and territories; environmental excellence).

In the youth/education/culture theme, the first of the five measures concerns the creation of a “Generation 2024” label for Schools and Universities. The aim was “to develop the practice of sports among young people through the implementation of concrete and multiplying actions on a national scale” (Paris, candidate city for the 2024 Olympic Games and Ministry of Cities, Youth and Sports, 2018, p. 4.). Three main events were scheduled during the School year:

- National School Sports Day.
- The Olympic and Paralympic Week.
- The Olympic Day

In addition to the criteria for obtaining the label (participation in the Olympic and Paralympic Week, etc.), the objectives are clearly stated through the following five indicators:

- Labeling at least 20% of establishments by 2024

- Promoting the opening, outside School hours, of 16,000 School sports facilities by 2024.
- Involving all 63,000 French Primary, Junior and High Schools in the Olympic Week.
- Writing and spreading a guide of good practices: “How to welcome a top-level athlete into your establishment”.
- Organizing the signing of a charter to promote sports and P.E. as a tool for gender equality with the relevant ministries and School and University sports federations.

On the 8th National School Sports Day (JNSS), which was held on Wednesday, September 27 of the 2017-2018 School year, the Minister of National Education visited the Jules Ladoumègue Sports Complex in Paris and, a few days after Paris had been designated to organize the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, made seven commitments, including:

*“...a call for projects “Labeling generation 2024” [which] would be launched in partnership with the Ministry of Sports for Schools and educational establishments for implementation from the start of the 2018 academic year with a target of around 100 labels in the first year.”*

(Ministry of National Education and Youth, 2017).

The specifications of the “Generation 2024” label included four objectives (Ministry of National Education and Youth, Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Ministry of Sports, 2018):

- “Developing structuring projects with local sports clubs; Participating in Olympic and Paralympic promotional events; Adapting the career paths of top athletes; Opening up the sports facilities of the establishments”

As well as four Guiding Principles:

- ...Encouraging voluntary action by Schools and institutions to develop sports practice.
- Promoting the autonomy of Schools/institutions, access to new methods of pedagogical partnership.
- Encouraging educational continuity all through the various stages of a student’s life in partnership with local authorities and the local sports world.
- Using the expertise of the School sports association or EPLE (USEP, UNSS, UGSEL) as an important support point.

Without waiting for the new School year to begin, 269 Schools and educational establishments (128 Primary Schools, 67 Junior Schools, 70 High Schools and 4 agricultural education establishments) prefiguring the “Generation 2024” label were awarded. By the start of the 2018 academic year, a total of 985 Schools and institutions (411 Primary Schools, 378 Junior Schools and 196 High Schools) and 29 higher education institutions (24 Universities and 5 Grandes Écoles) were accredited.

### **“Generation 2024” Label of the University of Franche-Comté**

On 20 September 2018, on the International University Sports Day (JISU), the Ministers of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and Sports officially announced the launch of the Generation 2024 label for higher education institutions.

Towards the organization of the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris (JOP 2024), this label aims to encourage the development of regular sporting activities for students, particularly scholarship holders and those with disabilities, as well as student involvement in the “Paris 2024” movement (Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, 2018).

In parallel with this announcement, university presidents received two official letters from the Ministries concerned, specifying the expectations and objectives of this label. The first clarified the framework by taking up all the societal challenges of hosting the Olympic Games in France: “Our ambition, as you know, is to set a true sports culture in our country. Who better than the younger generation to carry these messages?” (Letter from the Ministers of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and Sports, 2018). The second was technical, indicating the entire procedure and timetable for submitting an application (Letter from Mrs. Brigitte Plateau, 2018). It was recalled that this application was annual and that each mailing had to be made before 1 December of each year to be examined first by a technical council at the academic level (referents “Generation 2024” of the Rectorate and the Regional Directorate of Youth and Sports and Social Cohesion) then by a National Labeling Committee in January. Results were to be announced before or during the Olympic and Paralympic Week (OW), usually taking place in February. The

label would be granted for a period of three years. This label for higher education institutions has several objectives:

- ...Developing links between the School and its sports association environment.
- Participating in rallying events around the Paris 2024 Games.
- Opening the sports facilities of the establishments.
- Encouraging regular practices among students.
- Ensuring that students with disabilities are taken into account.
- Renovating, generalizing and modernizing the organization of study conditions for top-level sportsmen and women.

To obtain the “Generation 2024” label, four items must be completed (Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and Ministry of Sports, 2018):

- The development of links between the establishment and its sports association environment.
- The participation in Olympic and Paralympic research and promotional events.
- The accompaniment or reception of high-level athletes (including young people with disabilities).
- The provision of existing sports facilities within the university campus to local sports associations and companies.

### **The University of Franche-Comté Labeled “Generation 2024”**

On February 4, 2019, for the launch of the Olympic and Paralympic Week (SOP), the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and the Ministry of Sports awarded the University of Franche-Comté (University of Franche-Comté, 2018a) the “Generation 2024” label. It is one of the first 24 universities to be accredited. Awarded for three years, this label is a great recognition for the University of Franche-Comté, which has been pursuing a committed policy of promoting sports and Olympic values for more than ten years.

This label highlights the many assets and actions having been carried out within the University:



- The university has been standing out from other French universities by obtaining the first label intended for higher education institutions.
- The university has been ensuring good national and international visibility in the field of Olympism through exchanges with foreign universities (teacher-researcher/student).
- The university has been building loyalty among its supporters such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Olympic Studies Centre (CEO) based in Lausanne, Switzerland, the French National Olympic and Sports Committee (CNOSF)... for all the actions carried out and/or to come- Encouraging regular practices among students.
- The university has had a strong ambition to innovate by building on the three highlights of Olympic and Paralympic promotional events (International University Sports Day, the Olympic and Paralympic Week and Olympic Day).
- The university has become the reference on Olympism (research, publication...) in France.
- The University has been highlighted by all its actions and know-how for students (scholarship holders, people with disabilities, etc.) and all staff by organizing ambitious events (50th anniversary of the Grenoble 2018 Olympic Games at the Palais des Sports in Besançon; Culture, sports and education day, etc.).
- The University has been organizing an offer of sporting, cultural and artistic activities for all students and staff, drawing on and promoting the many existing bridges between the University of Franche-Comté and local, national and/or international sports clubs.

## **Conclusion**

985 Schools (411 Primary Schools, 378 Junior Schools and 196 High Schools) and 29 higher education institutions (24 Universities and 5 Grandes Écoles) were awarded the “Generation 2024” label at the end of the 2018/2019 School and University year. For the University of Franche-Comté, this label was the recognition of a policy committed to promoting sports and Olympic values for more than ten years. This dynamic was also reflected in the appointment, which was a first in France, of a Deputy Vice-President for Olympism - Generation 2024 (University of Franche-Comté, 2018b).

Two recent actions testify precisely to the projects and actions carried out through the organization of the 2024 Olympic Games in France. The University of Franche-Comté, under the patronage of the Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, first honored its top athletes during the Olympic and Paralympic Week 2019 with video portraits highlighting the theme of mixed sports practices and gender equality (University of Franche-Comté, 2019).

Finally, last April, the 2nd edition of Culture, Sports and Education was held, sponsored by Jean-Marc Mormeck, inter-ministerial delegate for equal opportunities for French Overseas France and six-time world champion in light heavy boxing (My commune.info, 2018). This day brought together about ten High Schools of the Besançon Academy (about 600 sophomore and junior High School students) and about fifty students from the Adapted Physical Activity and Health program.

This day, supported by the Paris 2024 Olympic Games Organizing Committee, is fully fulfilling the objectives set by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, by combining themes such as raising awareness on the values of Olympism, discovering Olympic and Paralympic disciplines, changing the way one looks at disability through the discovery of Paralympic sports and promoting our top athletes.

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