



Press Release

Lucerne, 8 September 2022

Final Report Winter Universiade 2021

The 30th Winter Universiade, scheduled to take place in Central Switzerland and the Grisons, was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The planned event has nevertheless had a positive impact on the entire region and on Swiss sport in general. After the cancellation, it was determined that the costs for the event, which had a budget of just under CHF 42 million, amounted to just under CHF 26 million.

The 30th Winter Universiade, which was scheduled to take place in Central Switzerland and the Grisons, had to be cancelled at the end of November 2021 just under two weeks before the opening ceremony was to be held. This was made necessary due to the extremely dynamic development of the COVID-19 pandemic following the emergence of the Omicron variant, as well as the travel restrictions that were put in place in response to this. The cancellation had far-reaching consequences in terms of achieving the goals that were being pursued with the staging of the Winter Universiade in Central Switzerland and the Grisons. For example, the vision of being welcoming hosts to guests from all over the world and taking advantage of extensive global TV coverage to promote the region as a winter sports destination could not be realised. The cancellation of the FISU World Conference, among other things, also made it difficult to highlight the region as an education hub with a relatively young university landscape.

The region and Swiss sport have nevertheless benefited

“Despite my regrets that the event could not take place, and the fact that we were unable to achieve these important goals, the region, Swiss sport in general and future sporting events in Switzerland will nevertheless benefit over the long term from the planning and preparations for the Winter Universiade,” says the President of the Organising Committee, Guido Graf. Graf also pointed out how optimisations to the infrastructure in the run-up to the Winter Universiade (for example, slope optimisations and the installation of a new floodlight system in Stoos and the newly created cross-country skiing trail network in Realp) have helped improve training conditions for local and regional clubs and athletic associations and have also made it possible to hold athletic competitions in accordance with international standards. This is why, for example, the 2025 Winter Military World Games will be held in the Engelberg-Titlis region and the Andermatt/Realp/Goms region. The preparatory work for the Winter Universiade has also led to

Gold Partner



Host Federation



Event Owner



the further strengthening of expertise in organising multisport events. In addition, the work carried out has demonstrated that it is possible to plan an event of such magnitude in a decentralised manner in Switzerland without having to build new infrastructure. “As it turned out, the on-site expertise and local networks offered a major benefit in terms of decentralised organisation,” says Managing Director Urs Hunkeler.

Safeguarding legacy projects over the long term

The Winter Universiade has also been the catalyst for launching numerous initiatives, such as the innovative “Short Track – Swiss Ice Movement” development project. Thanks to the support provided by the Swiss Ice Skating association, Swiss Olympic, the canton of Zug, Swiss University Sports and other partners, a national centre of excellence for Short Track Speed Skating will now be established at OYM in Cham. Despite Switzerland’s long tradition of ice sports and a uniquely high density of skating rinks, Short Track is the only winter sport in which Swiss athletes have never competed at the Olympics. Preparations for the Winter Universiade have also led to the launch of the Speedy Cup Short Track racing series for young people in Central Switzerland, with plans for the series to be held throughout Switzerland this year. Unlike Short Track, there’s no doubt that Switzerland is a curling nation. Still, despite success at world championships and Olympic medals, many schools have problems when it comes to taking their pupils to curling rinks. During the run-up to the Winter Universiade, the Swiss Curling association therefore put together a “Learn to Curl” package for schools in Central Switzerland and the Grisons. Each package includes a set of stones and targets that make it possible to play the sport in a sports hall. The sets were borrowed from the cantonal sports authorities, which also organised training courses for teaching staff. Plans have been made for this project to be implemented throughout the entire country by 2024, just like the Speedy Cup. “These are just two of many important legacy projects that were made possible by the Winter Universiade,” says Mike Kurt, President of Swiss University Sports and member of the Swiss Olympic Executive Board. As Kurt also points out, “the legacy and the added value created for society, the economy and sport need to be a top priority when organising major events like this.” The Swiss University Sports Foundation has set up a special Legacy 2021 Fund in order to safeguard the Winter Universiade legacy and ensure that the initiated projects can continue over the long term. Swiss Olympic has already promised to provide financial support and Kurt is hoping that other Winter Universiade partners will contribute as well. Kurt believes that, especially with the Winter Universiade not taking place, it is all the more important to ensure that the most important development projects continue over the long term so that the Winter Universiade will have a positive impact for many years to come.

Gold Partner



Host Federation



Event Owner



Expenditure 38% below budget

The cancellation of the Winter Universiade 2021 a little less than two weeks before the official opening and just a few days before the first curling team arrived also had a major impact on event finances. All in all, expenditure ended up being 38% lower than budgeted, and the total costs amounted to just under CHF 26 million. These costs are being covered by the federal government, the trusteeship and other public and private donors. The federal government (CHF 10.7 million) and the trusteeship (CHF 9.9 million) are covering the majority of total expenditure.

Final project accounts Winter Universiade 2021

Income (in TCHF)

Source	Actual figure	Budget
Federal government	10 665	14 000
Cantons and the city of Lucerne (trusteeship)	9 903	13 405
Other public partners	1 364	1 970
Participants' fees	-	2 400
Sponsorships and donations	1 411	3 876
Miscellaneous income (incl. contributions by Swiss Olympic and Swiss University Sports)	2 528	6 158
Total	25 871	41 809

Expenditure (in TCHF)

Source	Actual figure	Budget
Venues	3 952	6 849
Sport and Venue Management, incl. timing	1 882	4 490
University and legacy projects	536	772
Guest Services (incl. accommodation, catering and transportation)	3 155	7 282
Volunteers incl. uniforms	1 748	2 689
Host City incl. ceremonies and supporting programme	894	1 578
TV production and technology	2 435	2 927
Marketing	2 554	3 424
Medical care and Doping Control	5	550
Finance, insurance, VAT and event fees	5 928	6 752
Head Office, workforce and departments	2 782	4 497
Total	25 871	41 809

¹ Including planned benefits in kind of TCHF 390.



The Winter Universiade in Central Switzerland and the Grisons

After the Olympic Games, the Winter Universiade is the largest multisport event in winter. The 30th edition of this unique event was scheduled to take place in Central Switzerland and the Grisons from 11 to 21 December 2021. The planned event was a joint project of Central Switzerland's six cantons – Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Obwalden, Nidwalden and Zug, as well as the city of Lucerne. The six cantons and the city of Lucerne also comprised the trusteeship and established the Winter Universiade Lucerne-Central Switzerland 2021 association, which was responsible for organising the event.

As a result of the dynamic development of the COVID-19 pandemic following the emergence of the Omicron variant, and the travel restrictions that were subsequently put in place, the Winter Universiade 2021 had to be cancelled at the end of November shortly before it was scheduled to begin. The programme would have consisted of ten sporting disciplines, with competitions being held at eight venues. Some 1,600 students between the ages of 17 and 25 from a total of 54 countries had registered to participate. The Universiade has been held every two years in winter and summer since 1959. The International University Sports Federation (FISU) awards each Universiade to the national university sports federation of the selected host country and the responsible organising committee. Swiss University Sports is a member of FISU and is responsible for choosing the Swiss athletes who participate in the Universiade.

Read the Final Report:

www.winteruniversiade2021.ch/media/documents/Medienmitteilungen/Final_Report_WEB.pdf

Photo material can be found at: <https://mediazone.winteruniversiade2021.ch/media-releases>

Media contact

Daniela Barmettler

Winter Universiade 2021

info@winteruniversiade2021.ch

Phone: +41 41 318 37 22

Gold Partner



Host Federation



Event Owner





Die Organisatoren der Winteruniversiade 2021 können auf starke Partner zählen.

Gold Partner



Silber Partner



Bronze Partner



Medical Partner



Supporting Partner



Foundation Partner



Hochschul Partner



Sport Partner



Öffentliche Partner



Media Partner



Gold Partner



Host Federation



Event Owner

