

## *The Conclusions from the Forum on European Tourism*



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**T**he importance and vitality of European tourism in economic and social terms were forcefully reasserted for the 350 people who participated in the Forum on European Tourism held in Brussels on 8 December 1995.

While congratulating Mr Christos Papoutsis, the Member of the European Commission responsible for Tourism, for promoting this opportunity to debate the results of the public consultation which was based on the Green Book on the role of the EU in questions of Tourism, the participants of the Forum clearly confirmed their **common concerns** in the light of the new importance of European Tourism:

- the chance to **stimulate cooperation** with and amongst operators, both public and private;
- the need to **intensify the coordination** of Community actions impacting on tourism and to increase systematically the effect of these measures;
- the usefulness of **concentrating the specific actions in favour of tourism** on targeted objectives.

As Commissioner Papoutsis pointed out, 'the objective of competitiveness in European tourism combining better satisfying the needs of tourists with a balanced and sustainable development strategy for tourism is henceforth a priority.'

In their speeches to the Forum, Mario d'Addio, Italian Secretary of State responsible for Tourism, and Enda Kenny, Minister of Tourism for Ireland — which will hold the Presidency of the Council in 1996 — both expressed their desire to make rapid progress in the area of tourism at the Community level. They also announced their intention to call a formal Council of Tourism Ministers during each of this year's two semesters.

In his introductory speech, Mr Papoutsis recalled that 'tourism is, and will continue to be, primarily the responsibility of the Member States and the regions. Nevertheless, those participating in the consultation unanimously called for greater attention on the part of the Community in this area, especially for its importance in terms of employment. This attention should decrease through improved internal coordination as well as through the implementation of new actions designed to complement national policies while taking into account the needs of the sector. The current legal framework, which does not take these needs sufficien-

tly into consideration, should therefore be adapted through the inclusion of a specific mention of tourism in the new treaty.'

This point of view was likewise underscored by Mr Moreland for the Economic and Social Committee and by Mr Cornelissen for the European Parliament. Mr Cornelissen furthermore reminded his listeners that, according to the latest estimate, 'one job out of eight is created from activities directly or indirectly connected to tourism and 1.7 million new posts could be generated by its activities between now and the year 2005.'

A large body of consensus developed in favour of redirecting the Community's contribution for improving the competitiveness of the tourism industry to incentive rather than regulatory measures, specifically through the collection and distribution of information, the launching of pilot projects, the exchange of good practice and the promotion of networks.

According to many speakers, ensuring quality tourism implies the 'appropriate utilisation of human resources and the adaptation of those educational and training and management systems which are still insufficient. This effort also depends on the effective use of new technologies as instruments of production, management and marketing for tourism products while avoiding that they should become new barriers to competitiveness for small and medium-sized enterprises.'

The need to integrate respect for the environment, both natural and cultural, as a factor of competitiveness in European tourism was highlighted, not only by many representatives of territorial groups but also by certain representatives of industry. Particular note should be taken of this aspect's importance to the tourist in choosing a destination.

Thanks to the active participation of representatives from the tourist industry, Community institutions, public and private bodies active in the sector at the regional, national and international level, the Forum's debate was both rich and vibrant. In his concluding remarks, Mr Heinrich von Moltke, Director General of DG XXIII committed himself to carrying out a detailed studying of the many suggestions and comments which were brought to the attention of the Commission in order to define future actions as quickly as possible and to respond to the expectations of the citizens.

**For further information:** EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DG XXIII/A3 — TOURISM  
Leonardo SFORZA — Jean-Claude EUDE  
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Fax: +32-2/295.13.77

## **CONCERTED ACTION No. 2: The Madrid Forum: An Analysis of the Support Measures for Creating and Assisting Young Enterprises**

The Concerted Actions are the new initiatives within the framework of the Integrated programme aimed at creating a dynamic of dialogue and partnership between all parties concerned with the development of enterprises at the national, local and Community levels. Action no. 1 is designed to simplify the legal, administrative and fiscal conditions in which enterprises have to operate. Action no. 2 is intended to examine the different services to assist SMEs in the more sensitive stages of their development — namely those of creation, growth and transfer — by ensuring the dissemination of 'best practices'. Action no. 3 is concerned with encouraging a greater use of the existing services of assistance to enterprises.

The first forum took place in Madrid on 16 and 17 November 1995; it was organised under the umbrella of Concerted Action no. 2 by IPMI (Instituto de la Pequeña y Mediana Empresa Industrial) under the Spanish Presidency, and by Directorate General XXIII.

This Forum aimed at developing an analysis of the support measures for creating and assisting young SMEs in European countries in order to disseminate information and stimulate a debate on the success factors of the selected 'best practices' as well as on a possible transposition of the latter.

A **Directory** of the best practices existing in the Members States was prepared by ANCE (Agence Nationale pour la Création d'Entreprise, France) in cooperation with DG XXIII. In the near future, this Directory will be published by the Commission in five languages (English, German, Spanish, Italian and French). In order to facilitate a genuine debate between the experts present at the Forum, a 'mixed programme' formula was adopted consisting of two plenary Sessions and three Workshops. Thus, the topics with a political dimension (general goals of economic policy, culture and entrepreneurial spirit) and the conclusions drawn from the Workshops were discussed during panels organised at the plenary sessions, while the three Workshops were dedicated to the specific analyses of the financial and fiscal support measures, assistance, training and advisory measures, and finally to the analysis of the infrastructures ('Enterprise Seedbeds', 'Science Parks', 'Entrepreneur Houses', etc). Concerted Action no. 2 will also lead to other initiatives, such as a Forum on the transfer of enterprises.

**For further information:** EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DG XXIII/B-2  
Dominique RISTORI and Erminia NOTARANGELO  
rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80)  
B-1049 BRUSSELS  
Tel: +32-2/295.25.92  
Fax: +32-2/296.29.04

## COMMUNITY INITIATIVE FOR SMEs: Adoption of Programmes for SMEs in Portugal, France and Germany

At its meeting of 15 June 1994 the European Commission decided to implement a Community initiative in favour of adapting SMEs to the Single Market<sup>1</sup>. With a budget of ECU 1 billion for the period 1994-1999 — of which 800 million for Objective 1 regions (less developed regions), the Community initiative for SMEs<sup>2</sup> forms a part of the other actions undertaken within the framework of the Integrated programme in favour of SMEs and the Craft Sector. On 10 January 1996 the Commission approved several new programmes under the Community Initiative for SMEs<sup>3</sup>.

**PORTUGAL:** The objective of this programme is to assist Portuguese SMEs to establish their competitiveness on the European market and to improve their economic know-how. The range of actions set up complete the measures contained in the Community support framework for Portugal. Among other things, the programme will provide:

- an incentive system for enterprises employing less than 50 people, with the priority being given to the use of local products and know-how as well as to the utilisation of unexploited local resources;
- training in new technologies for heads of SMEs as well as direct training in connection with approved projects;
- improved access for SMEs to financing and credit by creating a system for financing innovation, and by subsidising interest for enterprises in the construction sector;
- the creation of a technical information centre for SMEs and a permanent observatory for commercial SMEs.

**Requests for assistance can be directed to:** Direção Geral do Desenvolvimento Regional — R.S. Juliã n° 63, P-1100 LISBOA — Fax: +351-1-888.11.11.

**FRANCE: the three French programmes deal with:**

- **the zones eligible for Objectives 2 and 5b<sup>4</sup>:** this programme is structured around the following three components which reflect the priority given to the adoption of new procedures and the dissemination of know-how able to contribute to opening Europe up to SMEs:
  - creation of a guarantee fund for the development of enterprises, especially for innovative operations (inter-enterprise partnerships, technological innovation, search for European partners);
  - inter-enterprise partnerships for innovating and modernising SMEs, ie, encouraging collective projects and cooperative actions;
  - Europeanisation of SMEs: assistance for actions aimed at forming a partnership between European enterprises in different fields (access to public markets, exportation, technology, marketing, etc).

**Requests for assistance can be directed to:** Délégué @ l'Aménagement du Territoire et @ l'Action Régionale — 1, avenue Charles Floquet — F-75343 PARIS CEDEX 07 — Fax: +33-1-43.06.99.01.

- **Corsica:** the actions foreseen under this programme give priority support to innovative actions which benefit small craft sector enterprises in the following three areas:
  - improvement of production systems, respect for the environment, support for activities creating regional opportunities;

<sup>1</sup> Community initiatives are the measures proposed by the European Commission to resolve problems of special Community interest.

<sup>2</sup> Official Journal of the European Communities — C 180 of 1 July 1994

<sup>3</sup> For the programmes adopted in 1995, see EURO INFO 86/1995.

<sup>4</sup> Objective 2: reconversion of zones in industrial decline; Objective 5B: development and structural adjustment of rural zones.

- development of subcontracting exchanges, enterprise access to new communications systems;
- implementation of a participative loan fund for innovative SMEs.

**Requests for assistance can be directed to:** Secrétaire Général pour les Affaires régionales de la Région Corse — 9, Résidence du Parc Belvédère — F-20178 AJACCIO CEDEX — Fax: +33-95-21-32-70

- **Nord-Pas-de-Calais:** This programme is designed for SMEs in the three cities of the French Hainaut classified as Objective 1: Avesnes, Douai and Valenciennes. Assistance is targeted at enterprises in the environmental sector and at those in the service industry. Its three priorities are:
  - Assistance with non-material investment in SMEs, with the goal of helping enterprises to define better their strategies, to favour cooperation with research centres, and to strengthen management staff;
  - Support for collective actions, with the goal of increasing awareness activities in the areas of exportation, quality, and augmenting cooperation between principals and subcontractors;
  - Improvement in environmental technology: the measures provided for under this action should allow for access and connection of SMEs to the regional computer network 'Recherche Transfert Noropale' with a view to intensifying the exchanges between industry and research in an effort to up-date the technological expertise of enterprises.

**Requests for assistance can be directed to:** Secrétaire Général pour les Affaires Régionales de la Région Nord-Pas-de-Calais — Préfecture de Région — 2, rue Jacquemars Gielée — F-59039 LILLE CEDEX — Fax: +33-20-30-52-58.

**GERMANY:** the three German programmes adopted deal with:

- **Bavaria:** assistance is concentrated in the Bavarian regions which qualify for Objectives 2 and 5b: Upper Bavaria, Lower Bavaria, Upper Palatinate, Upper Franconia, Middle Franconia, and Swabia. The SME Programme will support actions in three major areas:
  - quality and innovation;
  - updating and application of environmentally-friendly techniques and production procedures;
  - search for new markets.

**Requests for assistance can be directed to:** Bavarian Ministry of Economy and Transport — Mr Werner EHELECHNER — Prinzregentenstraë 28 — D-80538 MÜNCHEN — Fax: +49.89.21.62.26.

- **Thuringia** the priority areas selected are:
  - total quality strategy: implementation of a complete quality management system and professional recycling;
  - training and recycling to allow the implementation of information and communication technologies;
  - environmental protection and rational use of energy;
  - access to new markets: make specialised information and databases available, assistance to SMEs and craftsmen.

**Requests for assistance can be directed to:** Ministry of Economy and Finance — Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Straë 1 — D-99096 ERFURT — Fax: +49.361.342.12.09.

- **Hessen:** strengthen the competitiveness of SMEs in regions designated 'Objective 2' (Kassel) and 'Objective 5' (Fulda, Werra-Meissner, Hersfeld-Rotenburg, Waldeck- Frankenberg, Schwalm-Eder and Vogelsberg). This programme aims mainly to improve production and organisational systems in the areas of subcontracting and tourism, and to support SME access to new markets.

**Requests for assistance can be directed to:** Hessische Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Verkehr und Landesentwicklung — Herr DEGEN — Postfach 3129 — D-65021 WIESBADEN — Fax: +49.611.915.22.25.

**For further information:** DG XXIII/A1 — General Enterprise Policy  
Anne-Marie FIQUET  
rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80)  
B-1049 BRUSSELS  
Fax: +32-2/295.97.84

## **REGIE: A Conference in Brussels on 25 and 26 March 1996**

Since the Regulation instituting the European Economic Interest Groups (EEIG)<sup>5</sup> entered into force in the Member States on 1 July 1989, some 700 such groups have been established throughout Europe. This number represents several thousand members, including individuals, enterprises, associations or public institutions which, while maintaining their independence with respect to the group, benefit from the free transnational cooperation the group affords them. In order to breathe new life into the first EEIGs to be set up, REGIE (European Network of EEIGs), whose purpose is to ensure the development of EEIGs and to help them form networks, has recently come of age: the Commission has decided to prepare a report on these first six years of existence of EEIGs. To this end, DG XXIII is currently organising an important conference which will take place on 25 and 26 March in Brussels. All interested persons are invited to attend.

This event will give many EEIGs the opportunity to communicate to the Commission their particular experience, how they were able to overcome the obstacles they were faced with, and the benefits this new form of cooperation brought them. Venturing into an EEIG is often quite challenging, as this implies working, sharing, and communicating in different languages and cultures, using new methods of operating and thinking. This is only possible when there exists a common motivation centred around a common goal, and where all members are personally invested in its success.

The conference is being prepared in collaboration with representatives of EEIGs, along with lawyers, consultants, fiscal experts and university staff specialising in the subject. In order to fully grasp the reality of the EEIGs, one must examine the practical aspects together with the more theoretical concerns related to the Regulation. One must therefore know how to take advantage of all the possibilities offered by the latter in order to establish a successful European cooperation project. This important event will serve to underscore the particularly attractive characteristics of an EEIG as compared to other forms of cooperation already in existence or planned for the future.

**For further information:** EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DG XXIII/A1 — REGIE  
Secretariat of Reinhard SCHULTE-BRAUCKS  
rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80) — B-1049 BRUSSELS  
Fax: + 32-2/295.97.84

**To Register** (upon availability of places):  
EUROPEAN CONGRESS CONSULTANTS & ORGANIZERS  
rue de l'Abbaye, 27A — B-1050 BRUSSELS  
Fax: + 32-2/640.66.97.

## **EURO-INFO CENTRES:**

### **Seminars on Payment Periods in Commercial Transactions**

The European Commission adopted on 30 November 1994 the major guidelines for a recommendation directed to the Member States concerning payment periods in commercial transactions<sup>6</sup>. This recommendation was formally adopted by the Commission on 12 May 1995<sup>7</sup>. Directed to Member States, this recommendation aims to combat delayed payments by establishing a sufficiently dissuasive legal framework to discourage dilatory debtors while maintaining reasonable payment periods in transactions where contractual relations between partners are not balanced (especially on public markets). An important cause of laxness in the area of payment periods comes from shortcomings in the field of management: lack of organisation, faulty information systems, under-development computer support, inadequate rapport between administrative needs and technical means, etc. In this context, the Commission has conducted a reflection study aimed at encouraging the development of integrated management software to control an enterprise's financial flow. The goal of this action is to inspire heads of enterprises to manage their financial flow better, and to encourage software providers to offer suitable products which combine compatibility, financial analysis and management control<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> EEC Regulation no. 2137/85 of the Council — Official Journal of the European Communities — L 199 of 31.07.1985.

<sup>6</sup> see EURO INFO 75/94 of December 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Official Journal of the EC I 127 and OJ C 144 of 10.06.1995

<sup>8</sup> see EURO INFO 83/1995 — A presentation of these reflections will take place during the Conference 'European Credit Management' organised on 13 and 14 March 1996 in Brussels by FECMA (Federation of European Credit Management Associations) — For information: CLUB EXPO — Tel: +32-2/675.00.48 — Fax: +32-2/675.85.14.

With the support of DG XXIII and in collaboration with the EURO-INFO CENTRES of several Member States, seminars will soon be organised (see below) around the subject of payment periods in commercial transactions. Facilitated by outstanding specialists in the field, these working days will provide heads of SMEs with the opportunity to find an answer to their concerns about management and to master the ever more rapidly changing technologies without undue suffering.

● **IRELAND: 28.02.1996**

*Organiser:* EURO INFO CENTRE — WATERFORD MEANS BUSINESS — George's St. — Waterford — Ireland — Tel.: +353-51.72639 — Fax: +353-51.76002

● **UNITED KINGDOM: 28.03.1996**

*Organiser:* EURO INFO CENTRE — Staffordshire European Business Centre — Business Innovation Centre Staffordshire Technology Park — Beaconside — ST18 QAR Stafford — Tel.: +44-1785-25928; Fax: +44-1785-253207

● **SWEDEN: 18.06.1996**

*Organiser:* EURO INFO CENTRE — NUTEK — Swedish National Board for Industrial and Technical Development — Liljholms vägen, 32 — S-11786 Stockholm — Tel.: +46-8-6819100 — Fax: +46-8-6453795

● **GERMANY: 23.04.1996**

*Organiser:* Chambre des Métiers — Georg Schulhoff Platz, 1 — D-40221 Düsseldorf — Tel.: +49-221-87.95.0 — Fax: +49-211-87.95.10.

**For further information:** LIC INTERNATIONAL — League International for Creditors

Römerstraße, 56 — D-51491 OVERATH

Tel: +49-2204-71189 — Fax: +49-2204-71608

## INTERPRISE:

### Encouraging Partnerships between Industries and/or Services in Europe

The INTERPRISE programme is designed to support local, regional and national actions aimed at stimulating direct contacts (ie personalised meetings) between heads enterprises with a view towards establishing cooperation agreements between small and medium-sized enterprises. The projects must include at least three regions from three European Union countries and may, in certain instances, also be extended to regions from non-member countries. A specific action — MED-INTERPRISE — has been set up within the framework of MED-INVEST for third countries from the Mediterranean basin.

The following INTERPRISE events will take place during the next few months:

#### INTERPRISE AMEUBLEMENT

*Meetings:* 28 and 29 March 1996 at UDINE (Italy)

*Countries involved:* France, Spain, Greece, Italy

*Sectors:* furniture

*Organisation:* Chambre régionale des Métiers Midi-Pyrénées — Mr. Bernard RETON — chemin Verdale, 59ter — F-31240 Saint-Jean (France) — Tel.: +33-62.22.94.22 — Fax: +33-62.22.94.30

#### WINNING ALLIANCE OF EUROPEAN SMEs

*Meetings:* 13 to 15 May 1996 at CARDIFF (United Kingdom)

*Countries involved:* Italy, France, United Kingdom

*Sectors:* petrochemical, information technologies, telecommunications, packaging.

*Organisation:* Welsh Development Agency (WDA) — Paul WRIGHT — Tel.: +44-1222-82-88-61 — Fax: +44-1222-22-32-43 et WDA Milan Office — Emy D'ALESSANDRO — Tel.: +39-2-85.15.52.96 — Fax: +39-2-85.15.53.66.

**For additional information on a specific INTERPRISE event,** please contact the organiser.

**For information on the INTERPRISE Programme:** European Commission — DG XXIII/B2 — Partenariat Sector — rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80) — B-1049 Brussels — Fax: +32- 2/295.17.40

### MED-INTERPRISE EGYPT: In Cairo, 14 to 16 May 1996

Under the auspices of the Euro-Mediterranean Economic Cooperation Programme MED- INVEST, Egypt will host a MED-INTERPRISE event in Cairo, 14 to 16 May 1996. The event aims to promote long term partnerships between enterprises from the European Union and from countries of the Mediterranean basin

<sup>9</sup> also see EURO INFO 86/1995

and the Arabian peninsula in the information technology and electronics sector. The profiles and cooperation requests of some 60 Egyptian enterprises will be distributed on diskette as of March 1996. These profiles and cooperation requests will also be available on the INTERNET along with requests for appointments with Egyptian companies. In connection to this MED-INTERPRISE EGYPT event, enterprises from the EU and the host region will be able to display their products in an exhibition established to that end. In addition, a day-long seminar will deal with the various aspects of information technology, and will include a presentation on the Community programme ESPRIT (information technology).

**For further information:** European — Egyptian Association for Economic Development  
Ms Anahid HARRISON  
PO BOX 385  
11511 ATTABA — CAIRO (Egypt)  
Tel: +202-341-3662 or 3664  
Fax: +202-341-3663

## **COOPME-INTERPRISE HUNGARY: In Budapest, 30 and 31 May 1996**

The first INTERPRISE event financed in the framework of the PHARE/COOPME<sup>10</sup> programme will take place in Budapest on 30 and 31 May 1996. By encouraging the signing of cooperation agreements between small and medium-sized enterprises from the European Union and from Central and Eastern Europe, this event aims to develop SMEs from the private sector in Hungary, and in the Czech and Slovak Republics. The event is targeting the 'metal works' sector which includes namely foundry, primary metal shaping, machine tools, manufacturing of structures in steel and angle bar. A catalogue will present the profiles and desired cooperation requests of specialised companies in Hungary and in the Czech and Slovak Republics in the fields of commerce, finance, technical, joint venture, and transfer of know-how. Based on the catalogue, a very active marketing campaign will be carried out in the different Member States of the European Union in order to attract a large number of enterprises to Budapest.

**For further information:** Hungarian Investment and Trade Development Agency ITD  
EURO-INFO CORRESPONDANCE CENTRE BUDAPEST  
Mr Andras HIRSCHLER  
Dorottya U. 4  
H-1051 BUDAPEST — Hungary  
Tel: +36-1-118.60.64  
Fax: +36-1-118.61.98

<sup>10</sup> PHARE: Community programme designed to assist the countries of Central and Eastern Europe during the process of economic transition and reinforcement of democracy up to the stage where they are able to take on the responsibilities inherent to joining the European Union.

### **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

- **EURO-INFO CENTRES: A Week Dedicated to the Information Society (6-10 May 1996):** The economic impact of the use of new technologies on the survival and future of enterprises has inspired several services of the European Commission to organise an information dissemination operation on the Information Society. the ISPO (Information Society Project Office — joint initiative of DG III and DG XIII) in collaboration with DG XXIII (EURO INFO CENTRES) will launch a series of events designed to provide information on the major developments, the consequences, opportunities and possible benefits of the new technologies. From 6 to 10 May 1996 some 20 EICs will participate to provide video-conferences, conferences, seminars and practical demonstrations accompanied by key speakers from the Commission. This week of events is being organised in conjunction with the Day of Europe (9 May) and will immediately precede the G7 Conference scheduled to take place in South Africa from 13 to 15 May 1996. The calendar of events will be distributed in a future edition of Euro Info and will be made available on the internet through the ISPO server.

**For further information:** EURO INFO CENTRE Network — Diane EYBEN — rue d'Arlon 80 — B-1040 Brussels — Tel: +32-2/287.15.70 — Fax: +32-2/230.05.20

- **TOURISM: Mr PAPOUTSIS will be in MILAN and BERLIN:** Over the next few months the Tourism Unit of DG XXIII will participate in two important international tourism fairs where the Unit will present the results of pilot projects and studies it has undertaken in an effort to assist tourism in the European Union.

'Culture and Tourism' is this year's theme for the 'Borsa Internazionale del Turismo' (BIT) to be held in Milan from 28 February to 3 March 1996. In conjunction with UNESCO and the current Italian Presidency, the Commission will highlight the importance of cultural heritage to tourism. Four workshops will be dedicated to this topic: management of cultural sites and tourist flow; cultural tourism: education and training; the cultural tourism product: promotion and distribution; the relations between tourism and culture in the Mediterranean.

Mr PAPOUTSIS, member of the European Commission responsible for tourism, will open the Milan fair together with the current president of the Council of 'Tourism' ministers, Mr d'ADDIO, the Secretary General of UNESCO, Mr MAYOR, and the Programme Director for 'Routes Culturelles' of the European Council, Mr WEBER. The major challenge to be met in the future will be that of ensuring closer cooperation between the principle actors in this sector and of providing greater coherence between the different actions.

Commissioner PAPOUTSIS will also be present at the opening of the largest worldwide tourism fair, the 'Internationale Tourismus-Börse' (BIT) which will take place in Berlin from 9 to 14 March 1996. The Tourism Unit of DG XXIII is organising a European Day at this event. In two workshops, experts from the tourism industry, representatives from non-governmental organisations, and representatives from the public sector and the academic world will discuss the added value to be found in a European partnership in the field of tourism. Two studies entitled, 'Yield Management in SMEs in the Tourism Industry' and 'Business and Congress Tourism in Europe' will be presented to interested parties.

**For further information:** DG XXIII/A3 — TOURISM — Matthias WILL — rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80) — B-1049 BRUSSELS -Tel: +32-2/295.73.87 — Fax: +32-2/296.13.77.

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