

BUSINESS MEMO

Newsletter of the Embassy of Belgium
www.diplobel.us



NR. 1/2010

Flemish Investment, Innovation and Trade Mission to California

Minister-President Kris Peeters and Vice- Minister-President Ingrid Lieten of the Flemish Government in Belgium led an investment, innovation and trade mission to California from February 14-19, 2010. The mission was organized by Flanders Investment and Trade (FIT), the Flemish trade and investment agency, in Los Angeles. The Ministers were accompanied by a delegation of knowledge centers, industry federations and individual companies from Flanders. Ambassador Jan Matthysen and the Consul-General in Los Angeles, Geert Criel, joined the mission as well.

The objectives of the mission were (a) the promotion of technological cooperation between knowledge centers in California and Flanders in the sectors of ICT, energy, transportation and biotechnology; (b) the discussion of a number of concrete investment opportunities for Californian companies in Flanders; and (c) strengthening of trade and environmental cooperation between Flanders and California.

The mission started in San Francisco with a visit to the prestigious Luc Tuymans Retrospective at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, followed by a dinner with a group of Flemish entrepreneurs in the Bay Area. Afterwards the mission took off at a fast and intense pace in Silicon Valley. Discussions took place at the Electric Power Research Institute, the Plug&Play Tech Center, the San Jose Biocenter, Intel, Better Place, and Complete Genomics. Contacts with representatives of companies and institutions, such as Cisco, Microsoft, and the Lawrence Berkeley National lab, were included in the schedule as well.

In Los Angeles meetings were held at Roll International, Paramount Pictures Digital Entertainment and Southern California Edison (including its Electric Vehicle Technical Center).

Last but not least, the representatives of the Flemish Government had talks with representatives of the City of Los Angeles and, on the final day of the mission, with Governor Schwarzenegger. Discussions with the Governor focused on the California project for high speed rail, and cooperation on environmental protection and climate change, among other things. Governor Schwarzenegger expressed the hope that the Flemish Government will be able to actively participate in the Third Global Climate Conference which he plans to organize in 2010.

The mission produced some very concrete results. FIT signed a cooperation agreement with Plug&Play to host companies from Flanders in their technology center and IMEC, a world leading research institute in nanoelectronics based in Leuven, finalized the terms of the cooperation between Intel and the five Flemish universities on the development of High Performance Computing research.

www.vlaanderen.be

Karel De Gucht Becomes EU Trade Commissioner

Former Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht has been given the Trade portfolio in the new European Commission. He succeeds Baroness Catherine Ashton, who was appointed as the new EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy.

As European Commissioner for Trade, De Gucht will be responsible for the EU's foreign trade policy and will be the spokesperson of the biggest trading partner in the world.

His portfolio includes negotiating and concluding EU trade agreements, cooperation with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other multilateral organizations, and monitoring compliance with existing trade policy.

Mr. De Gucht had a first meeting with U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk on March 26 in Brussels.

Contact Us!

Embassy of Belgium
(202) 625-5810
Washington@diplobel.org



Belgian Senate Delegation Discusses Economic Crisis

From January 25 to 28, members of the Belgian Senate Finance and Economics Committee (Fineco) were in Washington to discuss coordination of financial reform efforts with their American counterparts.

The delegation met with officials at the Treasury Department, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, the House Committee on Financial Services, the World Bank and the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

Their program in Washington began with a breakfast-roundtable hosted by Ambassador Jan Matthysen on "The Financial Crisis and Regulatory Response - Belgian and Transatlantic Perspectives." Participants included Fineco Chairman Wouter Beke, Senator Berni Collas, Deputy Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Jules Muis, former Director General (Audit) at the European Commission, Mr. Peter Kerstens, Financial Services Counselor with the EU Delegation to the US and Mr. Nicolas Véron, Senior fellow at the Brussels-based Bruegel Institute and a Visiting Fellow at the Peterson Institute in Washington.

Senator Collas, who was the rapporteur of the Special Parliamentary Committee in charge of reviewing the Financial and Banking Crisis, presented an overview of the way the crisis unfolded in Belgium, and of the steps undertaken to mitigate its impact and prevent a further downturn in the financial sector. Ambassador Matthysen reminded participants that financial regulatory issues are at the heart of the eighteen-month program of the Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian presidencies of the EU, and are also a specific focus of transatlantic cooperation.

Latest Economic Indicators

GDP	-3.0%	2009 final
Inflation	0.8%	2010-02
Unemployment	8.0%	2010-02
Euro-dollar	1.34	2010-06.04

National Bank of Belgium -06.04.2010



Belgium Showcases Green Economy During EU Open House

On May 8, European Union Embassies will open between 10 am and 4 pm for a day of family fun, food and culture. This year the EU is highlighting the theme *Green Europe: Good for the Economy and the Environment*. The EU wants to show that it is possible to tackle climate change, grow a clean energy economy of the future and become world leaders in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% by 2020.

The Belgian Embassy will use the Open House to highlight some facts about Belgian environmental policies as well. For example, while added value in industry increased by 30% since 1990, industrial greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 20% and industrial energy consumption by 7%. Over half of Belgium's energy production comes from nuclear energy, and the number of solar power installations quadrupled in 2009. Substantial investments are made in wind energy as well: the Thorntonbank Wind Farm is a large-scale offshore wind farm being built off the Belgian coast, which will have a total installed capacity of 300 MW sufficient to provide 600,000 people of electricity, or 5% of national electricity demand.

On a micro-level, Belgians are champions of recycling: 96% of all glass used in domestic households is recycled. And the federal government tries to encourage public transport, by offering free train service for its 70.000 commuting employees, and by subsidizing train commuting in the private sector (20% of cost).

Recently released data show that CO2 emissions in Belgium last year were down 17%. More than in any other country in Europe and well above the EU average of 11.2%.

www.europe-in-dc.com

International Rankings

The Logistics Performance Index (LPI) by the World Bank puts Belgium in the **global top 10 for logistical efficiency**. The LPI is based on the assessment of six criteria according to which a country is given a score from 1 to 5. With a score of 3.94 Belgium ranks 9th. In 2007, the year in which the World Bank launched this index, Belgium ranked 12th.

<http://info.worldbank.org/etools/tradesurvey/mode1b.asp#ranking>

According to a study by the American research institute The Conference Board, **work productivity in Belgium ranks third in the world**, up from fourth place a year earlier.

www.conference-board.org

Business News

Intel announced that it wanted to develop an advanced laboratory for research in the supercomputers of the future, together with the five Flemish universities and the Flemish research institute IMEC. Intel has its regional sales office for Northern Europe in Kontich near Antwerp. The company has been an important company of IMEC for 17 years. (www.intel.com)

The Belgian green electricity company **Enfinity** has chosen Atlanta as the home for its Americas headquarters. The company will lease 8,000-square-foot at the Concourse in the Perimeter area. At least 30 jobs will be created. Enfinity recently started construction work for the €100 million Stardale Solar Park in Ontario. The project will generate electricity for more than 10,000 households. (www.enfinity.be)

Johnson & Johnson will establish a new European distribution in La Louvière, Belgium. In a first phase, the €49 million center will create 110 new jobs. The Region of Wallonia invested €11 million in the center. The central location of the site and the excellent transport infrastructure were important factors in the decision, as was J&J's existing know how in another Belgian location. The La Louvière center will centralize existing activities of 15 J&J sites in Europe.

As the demand for increased quality of delivered products, safer operations, and a secured supply chain grow, regulatory requirements and guidelines for injectable drugs are continuously refined. Complying with the new standards and improving quality while reducing costs mean a real challenge for the coming years. With this in mind **Aseptic Technologies**, a subsidiary of GSK Biologicals based in Gembloux, Belgium has developed a new revolutionary technology for aseptic filling operations: the Crystal® closed vial and its associated filling line. Depending on the type, Crystal equipment can fill niche products with several thousand batches of vials at once.

Over the last 3 months, a contract for Crystal® equipment was concluded with Lonza in (Walkersville, MD) for the installation of a Laboratory Crystal® M1 Filling Station. Lonza, after performing in-depth analysis of its compatibility with cryopreserved cells, took the decision to offer the closed vial platform to cell therapy clients. Crystal® equipment was also installed in early April at Vivante GMP Solutions (Texas, USA) to fill various classes of injectable products, including high value products such as biological drugs. (www.aseptictech.com)

First BACC Event in Chicago

The first BACC event by the Belgian-American Chamber of Commerce (BACC) in the Midwest took place on March 25 in Arlington Heights, Ill. in the presence of Mary Roberts, Managing Director of the Office of Trade & Investment in the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. The event was organized by Olivier Smekens, President of BACC, Diane Van Hoof, leader of BACC Chicago and Matt Vansteenkiste, the driving force behind BACC Detroit.

Ms. Roberts read a letter by Governor Pat Quinn, reminding the audience that Belgium is Illinois 11th export destination. Representatives from Flanders Investment and Trade (Claude Stomp), the Wallonia Export Agency AWEX (Martine Leclercq), and the Wallonia Office for Foreign Investors OFI (Jean-Pierre Vasaune) also attended, as well as representatives of the newly established subsidiary of Schröder Lighting in Illinois.

Mr. Smekens explained the BACC Strategy ("making meaning") and the fact that the meeting was a first step toward the possible creation of a BACC Chapter covering the Chicago-Detroit metros. Patrick Herman, Minister-Counselor Economic Affairs at the Embassy of Belgium, thanked the organizers for their efforts in bringing BACC back to the cradle of Belgian industry in the US, and reminded everybody that Belgium was still attracting more American investment than China. At the same time, Mr. Herman added, Belgium remains a major investor in the US, as evidenced by Budweiser and Stella's recent happy wedding following the merger between Anheuser-Busch and Inbev.

www.belcham.org



Mary Roberts (right), Patrick Herman, and Elisabeth Kahn, President of the Gazette van Detroit, attend the first BACC event in Chicago.



Belgian-American Wim Leemans Wins Ernest Orlando Lawrence Award 2009

Belgian-American physicist Wim Leemans won the Ernest Orlando Lawrence Award 2009 given by the US Department of Energy in Washington DC. His groundbreaking work with laser plasma particle accelerators is extremely important, not only for the future of particle accelerators, but also for medical and other applications.

The Lawrence Awards are the highest distinction conferred by the US Department of Energy. Winners receive a gold medal and a monetary prize of USD 50,000. The Awards were created by President Eisenhower in 1959, in honour of Ernest Lawrence, Nobel laureate and inventor of the cyclotron, the precursor of today's particle accelerators.

Wim Leemans graduated as an electronic engineer from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, the Dutch-speaking Free University of Brussels (specialising in Applied Science), and also earned a Master's Degree in 1987 and a PhD in 1991 in electronics from the University of California in Los Angeles. In 1991 he joined the US Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. He then proceeded to set up the Lab's Accelerator and Fusion Research Division, which he still leads. He is a member of the Department of Natural Sciences at the University of California in Berkeley and assistant professor of Physics at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Earlier in his career, Mr. Leemans won the American Physical Society's Simon Ramo Award for outstanding doctoral thesis research work in plasma physics, as well as the 2005 US Particle Accelerator School Prize for Achievement in Accelerator Physics and Technology. He has been the president of the International Committee for Future Accelerators panel on Advanced and Novel Accelerators since 2000, and was co-winner of the 1996 Klaus Halbach Award for X-ray Instrumentation.

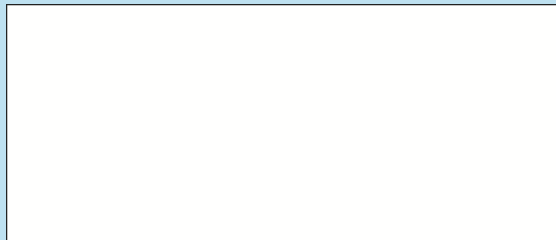
http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2009-12/dbnl-blw121609.php

Can't get enough of Business Memo? Earlier editions are available online, at www.diplobel.us.

The Embassy's website also lists other Investment Office publications, such as

- *Fact Sheets about various aspects of the Belgian economy**
- *Setting Up in Belgium: a pocket guide for the business executive.**
- *Corporate Directory: an overview of the Belgian corporate presence in the US**

Hard copies of all publications are available from Bart Deelen, Business Development Manager, at bart.deelen@diplobel.fed.be



To receive this publication by e-mail, please contact Bart Deelen at bart.deelen@diplobel.fed.be

First Class
Presorted
U.S. Postage
PAID
Wilmington, DE
Permit No. 1858

Embassy of Belgium
3330 Garfield Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008