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About Invest in Brussels

Invest in Brussels supports inward investment by providing free assistance and consultation services to overseas companies planning to set up and develop their business in Brussels.

Invest in Brussels experts operate within the Brussels Enterprise Agency (BEA), an organization supported by the Brussels Regional Government.

The BEA has its offices in the Tour & Taxis complex in the Port of Brussels Industrial zone.

www.investinbrussels.com



www.bea.irisnet.be

The Greening of Brussels

In the spirit of the times, *Invest in Brussels* operating within the Brussels Enterprise Agency is putting renewed emphasis on the promotion of its environmental industries, following the example of the government of the Brussels-Capital Region in setting down clear priorities for the future.

The Environment Business Unit of the Brussels Enterprise Agency (BEA), established in 2003, is now joined by a second initiative, the Eco-Construction Unit and an associated "EcoBuild Cluster". The work of BEA now spans the full range of environmental activities, from water via building and renewable energy

techniques to waste disposal.

As well as supporting local startups, the BEA promotes international development generally, offering the full services of the *Invest in Brussels* incubator to foreign investors. It also encourages the cross-fertilisation of know-how by promoting partnerships and technical transfer with the Region's university sectors.

Brussels is host to three universities – UCL, ULB and VUB – and four industrial engineering schools. Together they offer the services of nearly 125 research departments active in the environmental field.

[Read full story on pages 4-5](#)



Brussels in the top bunch...

Brussels ranks n° 5 overall in the 2009 European Cities Monitor. The city gets best results for languages spoken (2nd), availability of qualified staff, and good access to markets, consumers and customers.

[Read full story on page 2](#)

More companies come to Brussels

The appeal of Brussels as a strategic centre for business continues to grow. One of the new arrivals in the *Invest in Brussels* incubator is Capital Legal Solutions (CLS), a Washington-based company specialising in electronic discovery or disclosure.

[To learn what the company is and does, go to page 6-7](#)



© Patrick Bamps

Brussels in the top bunch...

Brussels is ranked n° 5 overall in the 2009 European Cities Monitor, with London retaining the top ranking as the best business city in Europe, ahead of Paris, Frankfurt and Barcelona. Brussels – which is followed by Madrid, Munich, Amsterdam, Berlin and Milan – gets best results for languages spoken (2nd), availability of qualified staff, and good access to markets, consumers and customers.

The European Cities Monitor is based on interviews with executives in charge of location for 500 of Europe’s largest companies. In addition to the overall ranking, candidate cities are also ranked against a number of criteria: transport links, telecommunications, access to markets, availability and quality of personnel, cost of office space and quality of life.

www.europeancitiesmonitor.eu

“I would recommend Brussels. It is clearly one of the cheapest best options, very central, with an extremely international mindset and a nice lifestyle.”

Pascal Lobry, HR Director, Spie Oil & Gas Services, Paris, posted on LinkedIn



Brussels dans le vent

Also coming to town is Windeo, the French specialist manufacturer and distributor of domestic wind turbines, which has chosen Brussels as the springboard for its expansion across Europe.

The establishment of its marketing HQ here will be followed in early-2010 by the creation of regional-level subsidiaries. “Even a small-size wind turbine is still a wind turbine,” says Loïc Pequignot, Windeo’s chief executive, “so we have to provide the appropriate level of engineering and service support. We are seeing a rapidly increasing level of interest here.”

www.windeo-planet.com

UNHCR opens office in Brussels

Headquartered in Geneva, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has opened an office in Brussels to liaise with the European Union and with the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

Announcing this development, the High Commissioner Ms. Navi Pillay, said: “This office will help EU countries in their efforts to

combat racism and discrimination, and to tackle human rights violations related to migration and poverty, as well as deficits in other economic and social rights, particularly for minorities such as the Roma,”

“A particular challenge in recent years”, Ms. Pillar added, “has been to ensure that counter-terrorism measures do not undermine human rights standards.”



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“Belgian Day” in New York

Tuesday November 17 was “Belgian Day” on the New York Stock Exchange. Presentations by 16 Belgian corporations – many of them Brussels-based like KBC and Delhaize – were accompanied by a workshop on investing in Belgium.

Presiding over the workshop, Belgian Finance Minister Didier Reynders made the point that “we are one of the 25 leading economies of the world”.

Minister Reynders stressed the fiscal advantages available to foreign investors in Belgium. These include the notional interest legislation, the exoneration of R&D personnel from withholding tax, the 80% reduction in royalty taxation, and the 2008 Income Tax Treaty between Belgium and the United States.

Belgium has strong historical ties with New York. Many people from what is now Belgium participated in the early settlement of Manhattan. Peter Minuit, who acted as purchasing agent for the West Indian Company when Manhattan Island was acquired from native Americans, was a French-speaking Belgian.

Invest in Brussels invests in China

The China Hi-Tech Fair is the largest and most influential science and technology trade show of the People’s Republic. Organised annually at the Convention and Exhibition Center in Shenzhen, this year the show was held November 16-21.

Invest in Brussels was present on the Belgian stand at this year’s show, held November 17-21. A keynote speaker at a forum on European business networks held during the Fair was Jacques Evrard, director of the Agency’s International Relations Department. “Brussels has established a favorable environment for Shenzhen companies looking to build a presence in Europe,” he said, “and we especially welcome Shenzhen companies in the information technology, biotechnology and services sectors.”

“Shenzhen is at the technology forefront of China, while Brussels is the ideal entry point into Europe,” Evrard concluded. *Invest in Brussels* has now established an office in Shenzhen to provide help to local companies planning to enter the European market.

Baudouin Snel, the China representative of the Agency, said a number of Shenzhen



companies had shown interest in setting up offices in Belgium. Official sources indicate that the Shenzhen Government will be opening a European office in Brussels in 2010.

ACB Factory: a creative centre for Brussels



Strategically located close to Brussels Midi rail terminal of the high-speed Eurostar and Thalys rail services, ACB Factory is the new home for audiovisual and other companies active in the creative and communications fields.

A public-private partnership with big ambitions, ACB Factory occupies a 14,000 m² (150,000 sq. ft.) building comprising private offices, an 180-seat conference hall, a photographic studio, and events and demonstration facilities with space of up to 4,000 m² (43,000 sq. ft.).

Nestling at the heart of the complex is The Egg, a promotional centre for the communications industry designed to bring together trade associations and entrepreneurs, and expected to attract thousands of visitors every year.

One of the first productions to emerge from ABC Factory is the full-length film *Mr. Nobody*, which was shown in competition at the 66th “La Mostra” Venice Film Festival.

www.acbfactory.be/Public

The Greening of Brussels



Patricia Foscolo

Renowned for its beautiful parks and, for those in the know, the secret world of its private gardens, Brussels is traditionally green. But, now, with the embodiment of environment-friendly standards in its public policies, the Brussels-Capital Region is committed to a very 'green' future.

The Environment Business Unit of the Brussels Enterprise Agency was launched in 2003. Today, it is seconded by a parallel unit, the Eco-Construction Unit, of which an 'EcoBuild Cluster' is a component (see opposite). Together, the two units span the full range of environmental activities, from water via building and renewable energy techniques to waste disposal. Financing by the Regional Government is complemented by grants from the European Commission's Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Patricia Foscolo, manager of the Environment Business Unit, describes the unit's remit: "Our job is to foster the growth of the environmental businesses and industries located in our Region. We do this by promoting startups and business development generally – we offer the full services of the 'Invest in Brussels' incubator to foreign investors – and by encouraging cross-fertilisation through partnerships and technical transfer from the university sector", underlines Patricia Foscolo.

Brussels is host to three universities – UCL, ULB and VUB – and four industrial engineering schools. Together they offer the services of nearly 125 research departments active in the environmental field.

The Environment Business Unit works closely with a community of over 80 local businesses active in the environmental field. "We first look for partners locally," says Ms. Foscolo, "but, if that's unsuccessful, we will extend our search worldwide if necessary. The regional government is committed to seeing this sector grow." The Region's urban development plan, PRAS, has scheduled specific sites for the establishment of SME industries: see www.pras.irisnet.be/.

We also actively support the efforts of our companies both here and abroad. For example, in co-operation with our German partners, we organised a two-day matchmaking event with foreign companies at the Entsorga-Enteco fair in Cologne in October. They represented four different environmental initiatives: Deep Green (soil decontamination), Qays (scientific translations), Greenskin (eco-cladding) and MCA Recycling (see box). This was an initiative of the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) of which we are members. EEN offers Brussels-based companies the possibility of developing technological and commercial partnerships, especially outside their normal field of activity."

A study of the environmental sector un-

"The most promising sectors looking ahead are renewable energy and carbon management. But there are opportunities enough for our companies in many other fields."

dertaken in 2006-2007 identified a total of 310 companies in the Brussels-Capital Region, of which 54% were exclusively active in the environmental field and 20% were general consultancies.

The most significant specialist market segments were, in descending order of importance, waste disposal, renewable energy, noise pollution, effluent gases, instrumentation and

waste water. A related study of 185 of these companies showed, for the period 2000-2004, growth rates of 16% in sales and 31% in employment.

For details and documentation, see the Environment Business Unit's website at www.brusselsgreentech.be.

MCA Recycling

FBiomim-Greenloop combines scientific research and consulting services in the carbon management field: its team brings together expertise in environmental management, biology and ecology, in alliance with the experience of individuals who have held senior positions in major international groups, including finance, marketing innovation and intellectual property management.

The company provides a full range of services from carbon footprinting and products to strategic analysis and implementation of action plans.

Greenloop also specialises in biomimicry – an emerging innovation tool emulating living organisms – to design sustainable products and processes.

Biomim-Greenloop

Focused on all aspects of total-security materials recycling and destruction, MCA fields a team of specialised and trained operators experienced in all the techniques of waste removal and recycling, including the elimination of hazardous waste. Software programs have been developed by the company to calculate the savings from effective waste removal.

MCA Recycling will take over the entire waste disposal needs of your site. Materials handled include paper and cardboard, plastics, wood, aluminium, glass, and electric and electronic equipment. Activities include selective sorting, secure destruction and total waste management.

The company also acts as a collector and transporter for the Brussels Institute for Environmental Management and for the public waste authorities of the other Regions of Belgium

Eco-Construction Building for a smarter future



Following the recognition by the Brussels-Capital regional government of the need to boost the fight against climate change, the Brussels Enterprise Agency (BEA) took the decision to host an Eco-construction Business Unit, working in parallel with its Environment Business Unit.



Philippe Taillard

“Brussels already has a substantial presence in the eco-construction business,” says Philippe Taillard, manager of the cluster. “We represent nearly 50 organisations, ranging from contractors, architectural and engineering bureaus to building materials and renewable energy systems manufacturers. All these organisations are active in the eco-construction field, either exclusively or as part of their work.

“Of course, there are a lot more businesses out there that could eventually qualify,” he admits. “It’s often difficult to draw a line between conventional building and eco-construction.”

In developing the EcoBuild Cluster the BEA’s aim, in addition to promoting a sector that has social priority, is to develop a high-potential business sector and to boost employment locally.

Organisations in the cluster are active in various eco-construction fields: strictly “ecological” buildings, “passive” buildings using

“We are keen to attract foreign investors they have the opportunity to draw on the cost-free services of the ‘Invest in Brussels’ incubator – accommodation, fiscal and legal advice, marketing and services support, and so on – for three months.”

conventional materials but designed to be carbon-free in operation, and recyclable building materials.

“There are more and more new ecologically-sound building materials coming onto the market all the time,” concludes Philippe Taillard.

European Commission plans energy efficiency targets for buildings

With the determination of the European Union to take the lead in the climate change debate, the Commission has announced its intention to propose mandatory energy efficiency targets in line with the target of a 20% reduction of energy consumption by 2020. If the proposal gets the green light from the Commissioners, it is likely to face opposition from EU national governments who fear the additional costs. But given the difficult economic climate and the challenges of security of supply and climate change, Member States may be forced to reduce their energy consumption.

EcoBuild Cluster member: A2M

An architectural bureau, founder-member of the ‘Passive Building Platform’, specialising in low-energy-consumption design and technologies with the focus on insulation,

the elimination of thermal bridges, air- and water-tightness, and the appropriate ventilation techniques. Designer of the first ‘passive’ building in the Brussels-Capital Region.

EcoBuild Cluster member: ARC & Style

A general contractor specialised in the application of ‘eco’ materials and techniques in building renovation projects, incorporating natural materials, thermal and

sound insulation, rainwater recovery and renewable energy systems. ARC & Style won the 2007 Energy Award from the Belgian Federation of Architects.

Navigating worldwide – from Brussels!



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Sun Communications is a South Korean startup with a mission – to develop an automated marine navigation system that, using Inmarsat satellite data, ensures safe and cost-effective point-to-point global maritime transport.

Suncom's "Autopilot" system draws on technology already proven in the company's 'ShipOffice' onboard system, which provides real-time data transmission and communications with other vessels and with the ship operator's land-based locations. 'ShipOffice' is already the system of choice for all South Korean shipping companies, as well as world leaders like the Sea-Land/Maersk container line.

The company's venture into 'Autopilot' systems came with a contract in September 2009 from South Korea's Samsung Heavy Industries, the second largest shipbuilder in the world. Ocean trials for new vessels put a premium on reliable planning and navigation

– not just route plotting, but also traffic estimations and weather forecasting.

But developing a system that will operate reliably right round the globe calls for a massive investment in software and time, at least three years to completion. So Suncom, with the help of the Brussels Enterprise Agency, plans to prepare a submission to the European Commission for funding under the FP7 research programme. The Agency acts as a free-of-charge Contact Point for the Commission's Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), so has all the expertise and know-how necessary.

Brussels as the heart of Europe

What were the reasons for coming to Belgium? "For a start, Brussels is at the centre of the Single Market," says Yoon Woo Hyun, Suncom's Sales and Service Director, who currently operates out of the Invest in Brussels incubator. "Not just in terms of the presence

here of the European Union's institutions," he continues, "but also because Belgium is at the heart of the EU's major markets. But," he adds, "there is another very important reason. MSC, the second largest global container carrier with nearly 400 ships, is a key client for our systems – and Antwerp is the company's European home port!"

Mr Yoon is very happy with the support he has been getting from *Invest in Brussels*. "I am most grateful for the help I have had from everybody – not just on the EU information, but also on financial and legal issues, and accounting. I joined the incubator end-July for three months. I would like to have made it longer..."

How did Suncom get to know about *Invest in Brussels* and its services? "Well, one of the Agency's marketing executives came to Korea," says Mr Yoon, "and we went to one of his presentations. That was it!"

www.suncommunication.co.kr

Capital Legal Solutions

The art of electronic discovery



Brussels now hosts nearly 100 international legal partnerships – most of them American and British – active in such widely disparate activities as public affairs, M&A and litigation. They swarm like bees around the EU honey-pot, with new arrivals every month.

With the complex issues generated by global trade issues and international regulation, these partnerships are making increasing use of what is known as electronic discovery or disclosure – trawling through enormous databases of evidence and legal resolutions to sift out vital information that is relevant to the lawyers' dossiers. Global sales of the electronic discovery business are expected to grow from \$4 billion today to \$22 billion by 2012.

Capital Legal Solutions (CLS) is a company established in Washington in 2002 specifically to meet the growing demand. CLS – with subsidiaries in New York, Houston, Paris, Ahmedabad and Tokyo – employs a team of international project managers, with data engineers and programmers in support developing the company's customised software.

Why Brussels

CLS Brussels representative Tom Brock, a resident of Belgium for the last two years, contacted *Invest in Brussels* in early-August to ask for support in planning the end-2009 launch of pan-European operations,

starting up offices in Paris and London as well as Brussels. *Invest in Brussels* offered CLS three months' cost-free hospitality and supporting services in the Agency's incubator.

Why did CLS chose Brussels as its European base? "For one thing, the EU's data protection laws limit access from the outside," says Brock. "But there's another reason: the lawyers are here to be close to the institutions, so we are here to be close to the lawyers."

And how has *Invest in Brussels* helped CLS? "They have been extremely helpful in getting us up to speed on things like company formation rules, banking regulations, fiscal issues and so on," Brock explains. "I think that, on our own, we would never have been able to get so far."

Tom Brock, who has previously lived and worked in Canada, the UK and France, has adjusted easily to life in Belgium. "The biggest adjustment has been kicking the 24/7 habit. It's a better balance here, a very agreeable way of life. When I'm on the road, I always look forward to coming back to Belgium!"

Yet, by his own admission, Tom Brock will be very busy. "By two years from now we expect to be employing 20 to 30 people here in Europe, at least half of them local hires." And the demand for electronic discovery just keeps on growing...

www.capitallegals.com

Communicaid moves into the marketplace

Global communications specialists Communicaid arrived in the *Invest in Brussels* incubator in April 2009. Three months later, they were ready to move into the Brussels marketplace. Today, they are operating with a full-time team of six in their 250 m2 offices in the European Quarter of the city, working for their first Brussels-based clients, the Administration Directorate of the European Commission and other institutions of the EU in Brussels.

The company's immediate task is to provide language training for EC officials. "we have the benefit of a vast local resource of language trainers to help us run our programmes," says

Stuart Fraser, Communicaid's chief executive, "and. We're providing training in all of the official languages of the European Union, plus some other non-European ones, so occasionally we have to look outside. But we're fully up and running – in fact we have run some 6,000 training sessions since September."

Communicaid is well placed to develop more business locally, particularly with the other Brussels-based institutions. The company is also providing local support for

some of its UK-based clients, including the Department for International Development.

"You have to know how to get things done here in Brussels. There are many more regulations in Belgium than in the UK," says Stuart Fraser, "particularly in the area of employment.

Here, *Invest in Brussels* has been tremendously helpful to us. Their service has really been very good. They're flexible, accommodating, pragmatic and they introduced us to all the right people."

www.communicaid.com

Brussels

on the convention map of the world



20 September 2009 saw the inauguration of central Brussels' mega-conference centre, The Square. Developed from the earlier Palais des Congrès complex, the centre combines a daring architectural facelift with a dizzying choice of facilities. The Square offers a total of 13,500 m (145,000 sq.ft.) floor space for meetings, conferences and shows.

There are three auditoria – capacities 1200, 500 and 300 persons – all fully equipped with translation booths. Other features are two conference rooms (150 and 100 seats), also equipped with translation booths as well

as voting systems, and a Grand Hall offering 4,000 m² (43,000 sq.ft.) of easily adaptable space for receptions, trade shows, dinners, exhibitions, fashion shows, etc.

In addition, The Square boasts ten conference rooms for meetings of up to 100 persons (adjustable to 20 rooms for 50 persons each), a ballroom, a brasserie, two reception rooms, eight foyers... and three kitchens.

Access to The Square is, appropriately, through a spectacular glass-walled cube in the Albertina Park, close to Brussels Central station and the Grand'Place.

Brussels is an increasingly popular

destination for both European and international events planners. "Despite the economic downturn, city-centre conference business has been holding up relatively well compared to competing destinations," comments Hervé Bosquet, managing director of the Brussels Convention Bureau. "Our corporate events business has been as hard hit as anywhere else. But, thanks to the institutional and association status of Brussels; as well as leisure tourism, October saw a 2% increase in the hotel occupancy rate over last year – and 2008 was the best year we've ever known! But hotel prices were, of course, lower."

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