

Philippe Busquin and the "francophonie" inaugurate EurActiv in French on 20 November

EurActiv launched an important new service for its French-speaking users. All the daily news stories and the navigation interfaces are translated into French. The following people will intervene at the inauguration:

- * European Commissioner Busquin (Research)
- * M. Lazar Comanescu, Ambassador of Romania to the EU
- * M. Ambassador José Luis Rocha, Director of the Liaison Office of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie to the EU

as well as representatives of the business world: Solvay (chemicals and pharmaceuticals) and McKinsey (company strategy consulting) ; and of course EurActiv: Christophe Leclercq, founder, and Willy de Backer, editor.

The CrossLingual™ project, of which this French (partial) translation is only one element, is funded by the European Commission's e-Content Programme. It demonstrates the feasibility and viability of multilingual policy portals using cost effective translation solutions. The project is developed by a consortium consisting of EurActiv.com, SYSTRAN S.A. and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ).

EurActiv's baseline is "facilitate efficiency and transparency of the Community of EU Actors", focusing on policy issues ahead of EU Commission proposals. Therefore it is logical that the portal should facilitate access to policy positions in the three working languages of the Commission: English, French and German. In 2002, EurActiv will also launch a similar German CrossLingual™ version. Furthermore, EurActiv's CrossLingual™ project is the first step in the preparation of a geographic expansion of this portal.

All navigation menus as well as main background information on EurActiv.com is now available in French. Titles and abstracts of EurActiv's daily news stories are translated. Depending on the support given by sponsors, the French translation will be developed further. A special service gives access to a rough translation of the full text by using Systran's automated translation engine.

EurActiv's team hopes that this new service will be a valuable addition to our ever-growing users' experience.