



ORGANISATION  
INTERNATIONALE DE  
LA FRANCOPHONIE

PRESS RELEASE

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## The francophonie reinforce their influence at the heart of European politics

### ***The International Francophonie Organisation (OIF) supports French and the « Languages and Culture » section of EurActiv***

EurActiv.com, the independent web portal devoted to European policies, has signed an agreement with the International Francophonie Organisation (OIF). From now on, the OIF will support EurActiv's "Languages and Culture" section, which can be found at: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/culture>.

EurActiv has been published in French since 2001 and has developed many partnerships with various organisations in French-speaking countries such as France, Belgium and Switzerland (think-tanks, NGOs etc). Thanks to this co-operation with EurActiv, the OIF aims to contribute inter alia to the promotion of French as a working language of the European Union. EurActiv also aims to improve multilingualism, thanks to the three versions of its central site (French, English and German) and with its franchise network in the central and eastern European countries, which together reach more than 300,000 readers.

EurActiv's Languages and Culture section deals with multilingualism in the EU and the European strategy for culture, which is to be defined in a Commission's Communication in 2007. Commissioner Ján Figel, in charge of Education, Culture and Multilingualism, declared: *"The European Union will also be reinforcing its promotion of multilingualism. Having inaugurated the Slovak version of EurActiv before I even joined the Commission, I understand and appreciate the idea of language partners. I am impressed with the co-operation between EurActiv and OIF and I congratulate EurActiv on the multilingualism exemplified by the website's different versions."*

On the occasion of the agreement signing, Stephane Lopez, responsible for EU-OIF relations, declared: *"The OIF has decided to financially support the French version of EurActiv. An invaluable tool for European-project professionals, Euractiv must also be available to French-speaking people. This co-operation between EurActiv and OIF falls perfectly within the scope of the project "French in the European Union", which, every year, provides French instruction for around 11,000 diplomats and civil servants in 17 member states."*

In addition, the OIF organized the 11<sup>th</sup> International Francophonie Summit on 28-29 September in Bucharest (Romania) on the theme of *Information Technologies in Education*. It is the first time that the summit took place in Europe outside of France, and it will allow the Francophonie to evaluate the strength of its message in Europe, and for Romania to further establish itself as a regional leader, to carry forward Francophonie values into central and eastern Europe. The summit, which was attended by many heads of state and government, will be covered by the international press and also [www.euractiv.ro](http://www.euractiv.ro).

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### ***Note to the editor:***

#### **1) The International Francophonie Organisation**

The OIF comprises 53 states and ten observers from the five continents, sharing a common language: French. The OIF leads a political action in favour of peace, democracy and human rights and encourages dialogue between its members in all fields. It supports the development and consolidation of its members' sectoral policies. It operates multilateral co-operation projects, organized according to four-year deadlines, in accordance with the great missions traced by the Francophonie Summit.

#### **2) EurActiv multilingual policy portal**

EurActiv.com is the independent portal on EU Affairs. With more than **334,000 unique visitors** (CIM certified figures, May 2006), the portal is an important working instrument for the majority of EU Actors (institutions, industry federations, NGO's, think tanks, the press and others) involved in defining or influencing EU policies.

The 11-language CrossLingual network is supported by Total, Visa Europe and Shell International.

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