

BLCCA Chamber Academy 2021 Programme

Monday, 6/12/2021

9:30 Opening by Mr Wouter Van Gulck, presentation of the BLCCA Action Plan

10:30 ABH – ACE - Mr Didier De Baere, Belgian Foreign Trade Agency

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency (BFTA) is a public institution founded under the cooperation agreement of 24 May 2002, agreed between the Federal Authority and the Regions. The BFTA is managed by a Board of Directors whose Honorary President is His Majesty the King. The Agency is at the disposal of the three Regional authorities that promote exports, and also collaborates with the Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs.

During this session, you will learn more about the different services of the BFTA, ranging from the economic missions over its Trade4U procurement portal to its exporters database, without forgetting the economic studies and foreign trade statistics.

12:00 AWEX – Mr Alphi Cartuyvels

AWEX, the official trade promotion agency for the Walloon region, doesn't need an introduction. The focus of the session will be on the key assets that the region presents to foreign companies that want to invest in Wallonia.

Tuesday, 7/12/2021

9:30 SOFINEX – Speaker to be confirmed

"Emerging Countries Fund" line. SOFINEX checks that the project contributes to the economic development of the recipient country and that it generates economic benefits for Wallonia. Whatever their size, all Walloon companies can benefit from this intervention.

10:30 FINEXPO – Mr Joeri Colson and Mrs Laura Muls

Finexpo is an interministerial advisory committee managed by the Directorate financial support to exports within the Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation and by the Administration for International and European Financial Affairs of the Federal Public Service Finance. The objective of Finexpo is to promote the Belgian companies' image and reputation abroad, as well as conciliate free trade with the necessity of keeping Belgian exporters' competitiveness while contributing to the economic and social development of the recipient country.

Finexpo's action focuses on financing conditions for credits granted for the supply of equipment and services, using two types of instruments: one commercial instrument and several concessional instruments. The choice of an instrument is determined by the nature of the project, the country one wishes to export to and the preference of the exporter/the bank concerned.

By becoming familiar with Finexpo's various instruments, chambers will be better able to accompany companies on their markets.

11:30 FIT – Mr John Verzeele

Flanders Investment & Trade, the official trade promotion agency for the Flemish region, doesn't need an introduction. The focus of the session will be on the key assets that the region presents to foreign companies that want to invest in Flanders. Be prepared to learn something new about a region you thought you knew.

Wednesday, 8/12/2021

9:30 AGORIA – Mr Peter Demuyne

The technology sector federation Agoria has more than 2000 technology companies from the manufacturing industry and the digital and telecom sectors among its members, 70% of which are SMEs. The organisation counts around 200 employees, based at offices in Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, Liège and Charleroi, and has its own technology centre, Sirris, which supports companies in introducing new technologies into their products, processes and business.

Discover how you can work together with Belgium's largest sector federation and get to know the Agoria Technology Clubs which support Belgian companies in their business development plans abroad.

11:30 BIO – Mr Ben Jhaes

ENABEL – Mrs Sabine Soetens

BIO invests in small and medium-sized enterprises, financial institutions, and infrastructure projects, contributing to socioeconomic growth in developing countries.

Enabel is the development cooperation agency of the Belgian federal government. As a public service provider, Enabel, by order of the Federal Government and more specifically the Federal Public Service Foreign

Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, supports developing countries in their fight against poverty. Thanks to its expertise in the field, Enabel also carries out missions on behalf of other national and international organisations working on sustainable human development.

The agency manages 150 projects in some 20 countries, in Belgium, Africa and the Middle East.

Thursday, 9/12/2021

9:30 Keynote presentation “THE PROFIT PARADOX”- Prof. Dr. Jan Eeckhout

*In his book *The Profit Paradox*, Prof. Dr. Jan Eeckhout describes how, over the past forty years, a handful of companies have reaped most of the rewards of technological advancements—acquiring rivals, securing huge profits, and creating brutally unequal outcomes for workers.(...)*

Drawing on his own ground breaking research and telling the stories of common workers throughout, Jan Eeckhout demonstrates how market power has suffocated the world of work, and how, without better mechanisms to ensure competition, it could lead to disastrous market corrections and political turmoil.

11:00 Reverse Thinking – Mr Erwin De Weerd (President EURACEN)

The essence of "Reverse Thinking" is the fact that as a (bilateral) Chamber of Commerce you don't have to go and look for projects for your members, but you count on some key people who can inform you of possible government contracts or private initiatives that can help your members to do business abroad. Erwin De Weerd applies this business model at Euracen as a completely new approach to business development and he would like to share his experiences with you.

12:00 SFPI - FPIM – Mr. Van Loo (tbc)

The Federal Holding and Investment Company was created on 1 November 2006 as a result of a merger between the Federal Participation Company and the Federal Investment Company. The federal government is the sole shareholder of the Federal Holding and Investment Company.

The Federal Holding and Investment Company (SFPI-FPIM) centrally manages the federal government's shareholdings, cooperates with the government on specific projects and pursues its own investment policy in the interests of the Belgian economy.

Friday, 10/12/2021

9:30 Training “Speaking in public” part 1 – Mr Dirk Evenepoel, 2theAudience

11:00 break

11:30 Training “Speaking in public” part 2

2TheAudience is an independent company specialized in providing training for companies, private individuals and public institutions. Its activity is primarily to transfer knowledge and experience in the field of human resources, commercial skills and presentation techniques.

2TheAudience is a Luxembourg institution authorized as an organization for continuing professional training.

Belgian Chambers of Commerce abroad

There are 32 accredited Belgian-Luxembourg Chambers of Commerce abroad. They help promote bilateral trade between Belgium, Luxembourg and the country in which they are established. The Chambers are made up of entrepreneurs who know what it is like to run a business abroad. They provide a sounding board and support and help entrepreneurs with practical matters to explore new markets abroad.

Services of Belgian Chambers abroad

The range of services provided by bilateral Chambers is very extensive and varies from Chamber to Chamber. To find out what services a specific Chamber offers, it is best to contact them directly.

The focus of Euracen (your Chamber of Commerce Europe-Central America, being in charge of the relationship with Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama) is on

- Matching Business Partner search
- Training courses and seminars
- Organisation of trade missions or hosting commercial delegations
- Participation in trade fairs and exhibitions

- Information on local business culture
- Translations

Conquer the world with the Chambers of Commerce

Our activities do not stop at national borders

Internationalisation is in the DNA of our entrepreneurs, just like sharing experiences with others and helping other companies tap new markets. And that's how you get a network of Belgian Chambers of Commerce that is active all over the world.

A strong Belgian bond

The Belgian Chambers of Commerce abroad (the bilateral Chambers) are independent organisations, each created on the initiative of local businesses with a strong Belgian link. The activities of these Chambers vary from country to country, depending on local needs. Their mission is always the same: to give Belgium and its regions the necessary visibility abroad and to develop economic relations between Belgium and the country in which they operate.

An added dimension

The bilateral chambers are an important and necessary complement to the official network of Belgian representatives abroad. They work closely together as to provide the additional dimension of a direct link with the private sector.

Reliable partners

BLCCA has drawn up an [accreditation programme](#) for the bilateral Chambers. In order to become a member of the Federation, Chambers must demonstrate that they full fill all the criteria of the accreditation programme. In this way, we ensure that bilateral Chambers are reliable partners for Belgian companies.