



HEADLINES

EU / HEALTH & SAFETY Bilbao 14/08/2001: Input for the 2002 H&S strategy

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (OSHA) launched a web site with EU documents of relevance to the future EU Strategy for which the European Commission will be producing a Communication at the beginning of 2002.

More info: <http://europe.osha.eu.int/systems/strategies/future/>

EU / FINANCE Luxemburg 23/08/2001: Overview on EIF's SMEs support

The European Investment Fund (EIF), injected a total of 697 million euro into Europe's SME sector during 2000, according to the EIF's annual report (603 million euro in loans that did not meet commercial lending criteria, and 94 million euro towards traditional start-up funding for small high-tech businesses). The EIF does not invest directly in small businesses, but rather channels its money to them via established venture capital funds and credit institutions in all EU countries.

More info (the annual report 2000 will be published online in a few weeks): <http://www.eif.org/publications/default.htm>

EU / EURO Brussels & Frankfurt 30/08/2001: Euro info

The European Central Bank (ECB) presented the exact (final) design of the new euro notes, as they will enter circulation as from 1 January 2002, and kicked off a large EU-wide information and publicity campaign prepare citizens of the 12 euro-zone countries for using the common currency's notes and coins. The European Commission has launched another web site focusing especially on the necessary euro preparations of SMEs.

More info: <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/euro/index.htm>

EU / TAX Brussels 29/08/2001: Tobin tax on the agenda again

The discussion over the Tobin tax has gained new impetus again following French prime minister Lionel Jospin announcement for a French initiative for a Tobin tax. It is the first time that a leader from a large industrial nation accepts the idea of a tax on cross-border capital movements as part of government policy. The Belgian presidency had already put the Tobin tax on the agenda of the meeting of economy and finance ministers (22 September), although the idea is unlikely to be welcomed by (many) other EU Member States. The Belgian Presidency will probably ask the European Commission to start assessing the feasibility of the Tobin tax.