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VPB quality mark



VPB, the Dutch private security association, member of CoESS, reports that 23 security companies have meanwhile achieved the VPB security quality mark. In the course of 2008, VPB plans to integrate the quality mark in its membership criteria and in its statutes. From then on, companies that wish to become (and remain) a member of VPB need to comply with the quality mark criteria.

- Source: VPB Checklist | November 2007
- For further information, please consult the VPB website: www.vpb.nl.

VPB CIT quality mark



The VPB General Assembly recently ratified the quality mark for the transport of cash and valuables (Keurmerk Geld-en Waardentransport). The procedure largely corresponds to the one of the general VPB quality mark. However, the new quality mark takes into consideration the specificities of the CIT segment.

- Source: VPB Checklist | November 2007

- For further information, please consult the VPB website: www.vpb.nl.
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APROSER - Private security facts and figures in Spain



On December 10, 2007 APROSER, the Spanish private security association, member of CoESS, published its report detailing facts and figures of the private security industry in Spain.

- Source: APROSER | December 10, 2007
 - To download the APROSER report, please consult the CoESS website: http://www.coess.eu/pdf/Private_Security_Statistics_Spain.pdf.
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MBVMSZ - Private Security Sectoral Collective Agreement in Hungary



On December 12, 2007 MBVMSZ, the Hungarian private security association, member of CoESS, together with the Hungarian social partners organised an important extraordinary social dialogue committee meeting, during which the employers' and employees' federations signed the Private Security Sectoral Collective Agreement. CoESS highly welcomes and applauds the adopted agreement as it is an important step for Hungary's private security industry, both from an employers' and a worker's perspective.

- For further information on the Hungarian member federations, please consult their website: <http://www.mbvmsz.hu>.
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Supply Chain Security (CEN BT/TF 199)



On December 12, 2007 CoESS participated in the first meeting of the new CEN Taskforce on security in the supply chain (BT/TF 199). CoESS has acquired observer status in this dossier. CoESS members will be updated shortly on the outcomes of this first meeting.

- For further information, please consult the CEN website: <http://www.cen.eu/CENORM/businessdomains/sectors/services/current+issues.asp>.
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Working Committee Social Dialogue: 'Working together for results: conference on the European Social Dialogue' (Lisbon)

On November 29-30, 2007 CoESS participated in a conference organised by the European Commission with the support of the Portuguese Presidency. The conference discussed the results of European Social Dialogue and the benefits they had brought European workers and companies. As part of the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the European Union, it was an opportunity to reflect on the role of Social Dialogue in European governance.

- For further information, please consult the European Commission website: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_dialogue/conf_lisbon_en.htm.
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Bosnia-Herzegovina begins accession talks with EU



On December 4, 2007 the EU initialled a pre-accession agreement with Bosnia-Herzegovina, after the country's rival ethnic leaders agreed on a set of reforms. The stabilization and association agreement is the first step towards eventual EU membership. Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn is satisfied that Bosnia has shown its commitment to implementing key constitutional reforms, however, the EU has stressed that the signing of the agreement would depend on further reforms and all sides working together.

- Source: European Commission | December 4, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the website of Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/rehn/index_en.htm.
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EU agrees on value-added tax reform

The European Union has agreed to reform rules on value-added taxes, ending a five-year stalemate between Member States on the issue. On December 4, 2007 EU finance Ministers met in Brussels and unanimously agreed to overhaul EU-wide rules on value-added taxes.

- Source: EUobserver | December 5, 2007
- For further information, please consult the EUobserver website: http://euobserver.com/9/25277?rss_rk=1.

Ministers postpone deals on working rules

On December 5, 2007 employment Ministers postponed reaching a deal on the working time and the temporary agency workers directive until next year. The Presidency had hoped that the United Kingdom would agree to strengthen the rights of temporary workers in exchange for keeping its opt-out on the working time directive which sets a 48-hour ceiling on average weekly working hours. An official said that the European Commission was now considering different options which could include withdrawal of the working time proposal and must now decide whether to pursue legal action against Member States breaking current EU rules on working time.

- Source: European Voice | December 5, 2007
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SecurityCommunity.eu

SecurityCommunity.eu is a new website for EU Security and Defence Policy stakeholders. It offers access to relevant information and videos of opinion leaders, while allowing users to share views on European Security and Defence policy (ESDP) subjects. A central aim is to improve information and communication between ESDP networks in Brussels and the 27 EU Member States.

- Source: Security Europe | December 6, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the Security Community website: <http://www.securitycommunity.eu>.
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EU work permit 'blue card' faces opposition

The European Commission's plan to attract non-EU workers has run into difficulties, as several Member States question whether Brussels' bureaucracy should play a role in the area. On November 6, 2007 interior and employment Ministers from the EU 27 failed to give complete backing to a set of ideas tailored to tackle one of Europe's major dilemmas - how to fulfil its economic need for guest workers, while alleviating the pressure of illegal migration. The biggest controversy centres around and EU work permit - dubbed the 'blue card' - allowing employment to non-Europeans in any country within the EU 27 bloc.

- Source: EUobserver | December 7, 2007
 - For further information on the 'blue cards', please consult the European Commission website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eures/main.jsp?&countryId=&accessing=0&content=1&restrictions=0&step=0&acro=free&lang=en>.
 - To view the full article, please refer to the EUobserver website: <http://euobserver.com/9/25292/?rk=1>.
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European Commission approves 10 programmes for pre-accession assistance to Croatia, Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

On December 7, 2007 the European Commission approved a package of 10 operational programmes totalling € 920 million for 2007-2009 to support candidate countries in regional development and human resources. This investment is being made available in the framework of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). The candidate countries are: Croatia, Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

- Source: European Commission | December 7, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the European Commission website: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1875&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>.
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EU awaits two crucial labour rulings

The European Union is awaiting two rulings from its highest court which are set to have profound implications for labour relations in the EU 27. The cases, to be decided on December 11 and 18, 2007, involve national employers seeking to use workers from another EU Member State in order to reduce labour costs. Broadly, they question whether internal market rules have a priority over other social concerns, such as labour rights, and as such, have become iconic cases for European trade unions.

- Source: EUobserver | December 11, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the EUobserver website: http://euobserver.com/9/25309?rss_rk=1.
 - The ruling of one of the court cases can already be followed here: <http://euobserver.com/9/25316/?rk=1>.
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Euro area and EU 27 employment up by 0.3%

The seasonally adjusted number of persons employed in the Euro area rose by 0.3% (407 000 persons) during the third quarter of 2007, according to provisional national accounts estimates published by Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities. During the same period, the number of persons employed in the EU 27 grew also by 0.3% (668 000 persons). In the second quarter of 2007, growth rates were +0.6% in the Euro area and +0.5% in the EU 27.

- Source: Eurostat Press Office | December 12, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the European Commission website: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=STAT/07/174&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>
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New user-friendly classification system for easier EU-wide access to public contracts

The European Commission has adopted a regulation that updates the EU-wide classification system for public procurement contracts known as the Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV). The new system will be more user-friendly and will take into account recent developments in technology, making it easier for businesses and SMEs to sell their products and services to public authorities across the EU.

- Source: European Commission | December 12, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the European Commission website: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/smn/smn48/docs/classification_en.pdf.
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Payment Services Directive: Commission encourages swift and coherent implementation at national level

The European Commission is to assist Member States in their implementation of the Payment Services Directive (PSD), which following its recent publication in the EU Official Journal has now to be written into national law as soon as possible, and by November 1, 2009 at the latest. In particular, the Commission will set up best practice workshops and an interactive Q&A website. The aim of the PSD is to ensure that electronic payments within the EU - in particular credit transfer, direct debit and card payments - become as easy, efficient and secure as domestic payments within a Member State, by providing the legal foundation to make the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) possible. The PSD will reinforce the rights and protection of all users of payment services (consumers, retailers, large and small companies and public authorities).

- Source: European Commission | December 12, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the European Commission website: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1914&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>.
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EU leaders signed up to new treaty



On December 13, 2007 EU leaders flew to Lisbon to sign up to the new treaty for the European Union. The new set of rules for the European Union, some six years in the making, was signed off at a monastery in the Portuguese capital, officially turning the document into the Treaty of Lisbon.

- Source: Presidency of the European Union | December 13, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the Presidency of the European Union website: http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Reunioes_Eventos/ChefesEstado/20071023Tratado.htm.
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EU tightens grip over aviation safety

European lawmakers have approved a compromise deal on handing over more powers to Europe's Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), including the possibility of imposing fines on unworthy aircraft manufacturers, in a bid to tighten variable air safety standards across the EU 27 bloc.

- Source: EurActiv | December 13, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the EurActiv website: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/transport/eu-tightens-grip-aviation-safety/article-169096?Ref=RSS>.
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New rules end confiscation of duty-free liquids bought at Singapore airport from transfer passengers

On December 13, 2007 the European Commission adopted a regulation allowing air passengers arriving from Singapore and transferring at an EU airport to take duty-free liquids on-board their connecting flights. When changing planes in the EU, these passengers will no longer be obliged to abandon liquids bought at Singapore airport and carried in their cabin baggage. This is the first application of a recent regulation that introduced the possibility of such exemptions for liquids bought in the airports of third countries.

- Source: European Commission | December 13, 2007
- For further information, please consult the European Commission website: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1923&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>.

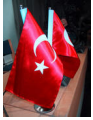
Slovenian Presidency to 'add value' to existing EU policies



The upcoming Slovenian Presidency of the EU will seek to boosting the effectiveness of current EU policies rather than proposing 'endless initiatives', stated the country's State Secretary for European Affairs, Janez Lenarčič, adding that ratifying the Lisbon Treaty, making progress on enlargement in the Western Balkans and improving the EU's climate and energy policies will be its main policy priorities.

- Source: EurActiv | December 17, 2007
 - A short transcript of the interview with the Slovenian State Secretary for European Affairs can be reviewed here: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/future-eu/interview-slovenia-focus-western-balkans-eu-helm/article-169109>.
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Turkey set for small step ahead in EU talks



EU Member States have agreed to take a small step ahead with Turkey's EU accession talks by opening two negotiating chapters, after France last week secured the creation of a 'reflection group' which it says will also discuss the bloc's future borders. Turkish officials will join EU counterparts on Wednesday, December 19, 2007 to formally kick off negotiations on two out of 35 areas where the country needs to apply Europe's law as part of its pre-accession process.

- Source: EUobserver | December 18, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the EUobserver website: <http://euobserver.com/9/25354/?rk=1>.
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Hungary first to ratify new EU Treaty



On Monday, December 17, 2007 Hungary became the first of the 27 EU Member States to ratify the bloc's new Treaty, making the move just days after the document was formally signed off by EU leaders. A parliamentary vote saw 325 votes in favour, 5 votes against and 14 abstentions for the new set of rules.

- Source: International Herald Tribune | December 18, 2007
 - For further information, please consult the International Herald Tribune website: http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/12/17/europe/EU-GEN-Hungary-EU-Treaty.php#end_main.
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For further information on these topics, please contact the General Secretariat:

- Phone: +32 2 462 07 73
- E-mail: apeg-bvbo@i-b-s.be or lvs@i-b-s.be

For general information on CoESS, please consult the CoESS website: <http://www.coess.eu>.



CoESS wishes you a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

*Een Plesierige Kerfees / I'd Mülad Saïd Oua Sana Saïda / Felices Pasquas Y felices
ano Nuevo / Shenoraavor Nor Dari yev Pari Gaghand / Eguberrí on / Vesele Vanoce /
Nedeleg laouen na bloavezh mat / Tchestita Koleda; Tchestito Rojdestvo Hristovo /
Kung His Hsin Nien bing Chu Shen Tan / Saint Dan Fai Lok / Nadelik looan na
looan blethen noweth / Sretan Bozic i Nova Godina / Prejeme Vam Vesele Vanoce a*



*stastny Novy Rok / Glædelig Jul / Vrolijk Kerstfeest
en een Gelukkig Nieuwjaar / Quvianagli
Anaiyyuniqpaligsi sulí Nakuuluni Ukiutqiuigsi
/ Merry Christmas / Haid joule ja head uut aastat
/ Cristmas-e-shoma mobarak bashad /
Maligayang Pasko / Maligayang Pasko at
Manigong Bagong Taon / Hyvaa joulua / Joyeux
Noël / Froehliche Weihnachten / Kala
Christouyenna / Mele Kalikimaka / Mo'adim
Lesimkha. Chena tova / Shub Naya Baras /
Kellemes Karacsonyí unnepeket / Gledileg Jól /
Selamat Hari Natal / Indah Saidan Wa Sanah
Jadidah / Nollaig Shona Dhuit / Buone Feste
Natalizie / Shinnen omedeto; kurisumasu
omedeto / Sung Tan Chuk Ha / Prieci'igus
Ziemsve'tkus un Laimi'gu Jauno Gadu / Linksmu
Kaledu / Merry Keshmish / God Jul / En frehlicher*

*Grischtdaag un en hallich Neí Yaahr / Wesolych Swiat Bozego Narodzenia / Felíz
Natal. Boas Festas / Sarbatorí Ferícite / Pozdrevlyayu s prazdnikom Rozhdestva s
Novim Godom / Hristos se rodi / Sretan Bozic or Vesele vianoce / La Maunia Le
Kilisimasí Ma Le Tausaga Fou / Nollaig chridheil huibh / Sretam Bozic. Vesela Nova
Godina / Vesele Vianoce. A stastlvy Novy Rok / Vesele Bozicne. Screno Novo Leto /
Felíz Navidad / God Jul and (Och) Ett Gott Nytt Ar / Sawadee Pee Mai / Noelíniz Ve
Yeni Yiliniz Kutlu Olsun / Z Rízdvom Khrystovym i Novym Rokom / Chuc Mung Giang
Sinh / Nadolig Llawen / Cestitamo Bozic*