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PRESS RELEASE

Credits to Individuals - Analysis of the data recorded by the Central Office for Credits to Individuals

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In the context of the efforts to control excessive debts, the Central Office for Credits to Individuals (COCI) was converted into a positive central office on 1 June 2003. Since that date, by recording virtually all consumer credit and mortgage loans effected by resident individuals for private purposes and any resulting default on payments, the Central Office has provided a more or less complete picture of lending to individuals.

This *Working Paper* offers an in-depth analysis of the data contained in this unique and virtually exhaustive database. On the basis of the data recorded by the Central Office under the positive and negative headings concerning contracts and persons, the study first sheds light on the structure of the Belgian market in credit to individuals and the characteristics of the various types of credit. As well as highlighting the specific features of each type of credit, the study also demonstrates that the risks of payment default vary according to certain credit contract characteristics.