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PRESS RELEASE

National Bank of Belgium reopens museum

The central bank, money and finance in the spotlight

Brussels 15 January 2018 – The economy and money, boring subjects? Not at the National Bank of Belgium's Museum, which is reopening its doors today in the magnificent renovated building of the former Union de Crédit de Bruxelles, in the heart of the capital. Exhibits and documents that you've never seen anywhere else before and a combination of interactive and audiovisual media make the visit to the new permanent exhibition an experience that is both fun and instructive. There, you will get to know the central bank's working environment as well as everything to do with money, from yesterday to today. The NBB's Museum is targeted at the general public and young people and students in particular.

Investing in the education and training of young people is the NBB's particular choice. Back in 1982, the National Bank of Belgium's Museum opened its doors to schools and visitors from all over Belgium and from abroad too. Along with the Bank of England's museum, the NBB Museum is among the oldest central bank museums of Europe. After a long period of renovation, it is now reopening its doors. Its collection is stored in an exceptional new environment. From this day on, the Museum is located in the building of the former Union de Crédit de Bruxelles on the rue Montagne aux Herbes Potagères, in the heart of the capital. Its coupolas, its striking yet sober Gothic style, its monumental staircases and its candelabras make this building designed in the mid-19th century by architect Nicolas Dekeyzer, an architectural treasure that has been restored to its finest under the stewardship of the NBB.

Key role in society

As Governor Jan Smets has said himself, the National Bank of Belgium seeks to be close to society: "We are fully conscient of the fact that the vast majority of our central bank activities, which are rapidly changing too, are far from being understood by everyone. The magnificent new Museum is the perfect illustration of the key role the NBB plays in society at large, and in the economy in particular. For this reason, I am very happy that we have managed to give this unique building, one of our country's genuine architectural heritages, back a useful function for society".

Visitors to the Museum, school groups and others, will be given the keys to understanding general economic, monetary and financial concepts and mechanisms as well as specific central bank activities.

The themes broached are pertinent. But to grasp their real importance, they are placed in a historic context. History is not an end in itself but something that can help the visitor to gain a better understanding of the role and functions of the central bank. Bringing together the contemporary and historic approaches clearly shows the influence that the central bank's activities exert on the general economy and on everybody's finances. The refurbished Museum focuses on interactivity and multimedia and invites visitors to go beyond the role of a mere spectator. What experience lies in store? As a visitor, you will gradually be put in the place of:

- the European expert, who knows everything about the Eurosystem, its composition and how it works;
- the State cashier, who makes sure there is sufficient money in circulation at all times;
- the alert citizen, who checks the authentic nature of his banknotes;
- the Governor, who strives to keep inflation close to, but less than, 2%;
- the banker, who has to comply with supervisory rules when managing his accounts;
- the student, who sifts through the economic and financial information that the NBB collects, analyses and publishes it;
- the lover of journeys through time, who sets off in search of money of the past and distant lands.

Further information:

- French, Dutch, German and English
- auto guides
- free entry
- free guided tours
- group reservations: www.nbbmuseum.be/en/booking
- Monday to Friday
- 9 to 5

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