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PRESS RELEASE

National Bank of Belgium builds a new cash centre

Brussels, 28 March 2018 - The National Bank has decided to build a new cash centre on the outskirts of the capital. This new "state of the art" infrastructure will largely automate the logistical process of placing euro banknotes in circulation.

A central bank cash centre is the location for the logistical process involved in placing banknotes and coins in circulation. Notes and coins are issued in response to the banks' requests for cash, and existing banknotes are regularly returned to the centre for quality checks and for the detection of counterfeits. Finally, a cash centre also houses a laboratory and expert support services.

Owing to the closure of the National Bank of Belgium's provincial/regional branches, these cash-handling activities will be fully concentrated in Brussels as of the end of this year. The National Bank's cash centre is currently still located in the main building in the centre of the capital. Within a few years that will change. For instance, it has just been decided to build a new infrastructure at a business park in Zellik (Asse) on the outskirts of the capital.

Advantages

In comparison with the current outdated infrastructure, the new building offers many advantages. In the new centre, much of the logistical process can be further automated so that the activity will be far less labour intensive and more efficient. Furthermore, choosing a location close to the motorway network will improve accessibility because shipments can avoid the congestion in central Brussels. Another factor in the choice of location was the availability of the land, the requirements relating to the site and the building, and the accessibility for staff using public transport.

Now that the location has been chosen, further studies can be carried out. Once the plans have been approved, the actual construction will go ahead. The aim is for the new cash centre to become operational by around 2024. Altogether, 120 National Bank employees will work there.

Once the cash centre has moved away from the main building, the general public will still be able to come to the National Bank in the centre of Brussels to exchange coins and banknotes or to obtain euros for old Belgian franc banknotes. The new cash centre will not serve the general public.