



FITCE.BE

# newsletter

Issue 5, June 2000

## Editorial

*Hundreds of Telecommunications engineers went to Shannon  
To hear about that single greatest innovation  
They did not find one but ten at least  
Surely the FITCE congress thus became a feast  
What would Claude Shannon do with all the information*

I hope you can forgive me this innocent limerick. It was simply impossible to resist the temptation. Going to a FITCE congress is not just about submerging oneself in our superfast developing professional field, it is just as much taking a bath in another culture and getting in touch with colleagues from all over Europe. Lots of excitement.

Did you know that FITCE-Belgium is a prominent member of FITCE Europe? Back in the early days the RTT was one of the European operators who took the initiative of founding FITCE which was registered in Belgium. This entails certain responsibilities. Read more on this below.

Regulation is a probably never ending story as society's requirements evolve in parallel with technology advances. Read more about the latest European trend in this newsletter.

Marc Lambert  
Managing Editor

## FITCE 2000 – Congress

### Registration

*New Dimensions, New Challenges  
Shannonside  
Limerick  
Ireland , August 23-26, 2000*

By end of May, 17 FITCE-Belgium members and 12 partners had registered for the congress in Limerick.

It is not too late to register.  
See you in Limerick.

### Papers

These are the four papers from Belgium that have been selected by the congress' technical committee :

#### **Bearer Independent Call Control opens up new technological solutions**

by Jan Van Geel, Belgacom  
**The Family on-line**

by Jan De Moerloose, Alcatel

**Use of packet switching for transport of real-time video**

by Jean-Marc Janssens, Belgacom

**Evolving the telephone network towards IP technology**

by Bart Van Doorselaer, Alcatel

## ***FITCE Europe***

### **Comité de Direction**

*Prague April 7, 2000*

### **New Nominations**

The 210<sup>th</sup> FITCE-Europe board was organised for the first time by our colleagues from the Czech Scientific Technical Association of Communications (CVTSS) and was hosted by Czech Telecom. Our president José Van Ooteghem attended the meeting and reports some topics of particular interest.

#### **Replacement of the FITCE Europe *Secretary General and Treasurer***

Traditionally, since the start of FITCE, these functions were always assigned to Belgacom staff. Now that the market is open to competitors, which was the reason for the founding of the FITCE.BE association, new representatives had to be appointed.

Geneviève BOLLE and Pierre HENIN who have done an excellent job over the last several years will end their mandates respectively as Secretary General and Treasurer, later this year.

FITCE Europe is a European Association with headquarters in Belgium, so according to Belgian legislation, at least one of these functions should be held by a Belgian.

It was my pleasure to propose to the board members two enthusiastic new officers, who both have attended the FITCE activities since a long time.

#### ***Secretary-General***

Mr. Bert MAES, Managing Director of ARMADA ICT Consulting.  
Doctor of Law (RUG), MBA (Phoenix, USA)

Bert has over 20-years experience in various top managerial functions within the BelgianTelecom-world.

#### ***Treasurer***

Mr. Georges DEVROEY, Engineer in electromechanical engineering (University of Leuven).

Georges worked in several departments of Belgacom since 1970 and retired in 1997. Nowadays, he engages in part-time consultancy work next to his being the FITCE.BE secretary.

Their candidacy was unanimously accepted by the board members and the Belgian association was thanked for ensuring the continuity of those important functions.

The hand-over will become effective after an official confirmation by the General Assembly at the Congress in Limerick.

### **Publications**

Results of a survey among the members, learned that the magazine FITCE FORUM doesn't meet their requirements. For some time there has been a problem finding enough articles and advertisements. This resulted in unacceptable publishing delays. An ad hoc working group made recommendations to the Board for replacing the magazine.

The Board decided to replace the current publication of the 4 issues of FITCE FORUM by :

- 3 high quality newsletters, containing the latest news regarding the activities of FITCE-Europe and the national associations,



FITCE.BE

# newsletter

Cont'd

Issue 5, June 2000

## Next Congress

- the proceedings of the yearly Congress, a book (or CD-ROM) will be distributed to all members (instead of publishing some papers in the magazine as is the case today).

This will become effective after the Limerick Congress.

The 40<sup>th</sup> congress will be organised in 2001 by the Spanish association. More information will be provided in Limerick.

## **Regulatory Issues**

### Co-Regulation

#### *A modern approach to regulation*

By Mr. Erkki LIIKANEN - Member of the European Commission responsible for Enterprise and the Information Society

At a meeting held on the 4th of May 2000 by the Association of the European Mechanical, Electrical, Electronic and Metalworking Industries (Orgalime) Council, Mr. Liikanen gave a speech on the subject: "Co-Regulation". Follows the essence of his speech. The full text of the speech can be found on our website <http://www.fitce.be>.

### New Approach

The European Council Resolution of 7 May 1985 provided a new legislative framework for the harmonisation of national regulations for industrial products. At that time, a radical change was envisaged to satisfy the urgent need to complete the internal market for industrial products, and to protect the public interest, while offering a flexible legislative environment to enterprises to promote economic efficiency and innovation.

And it is now, 15 years later, that the Lisbon European Council has confirmed the validity of this approach, stressing that nowadays "the speed of technological change may require new and more flexible regulatory approaches in the future".

The Lisbon Summit represented the beginning of a new era. Challenges of the new economy were explicitly addressed. Key commitments were made in a number of areas.

One important message from Lisbon is about governance. It is about completing the Internal Market whilst simplifying the regulatory environment and about creating a clear and predictable legal framework to ensure that businesses can thrive and operate effectively on a level playing field in the internal market. For me, this means a framework consisting of an innovative mix of legislation and self-regulation, best adapted to address the unique new challenges that technological change involves.

#### ***The lesson from the New Approach***

Exactly 15 years ago, Member States agreed to follow a « New Approach » in the completion of the Internal Market. Instead of detailed technical harmonisation, the New Approach proposed to define a clear legal framework, based on requirements essential to guarantee a high level of protection for the collective interest at issue.

The New Approach also proposed to leave the definition of the detailed rules, which would be one way of assuring the compliance with the essential requirements, to the economic actors in the framework of the European Standardisation structures. Not to regulate for the sake of regulation, but to harmonise only when and where necessary.

The White Paper on the single market envisaged that there is a need for nearly 300 legislative proposals. The New Approach was the instrument

used to avoid such a massive flow of legislative texts leading to highly detailed technical discussions at Council and Parliament level.

In a fast moving and fast expanding environment, micromanaging harmonisation was no longer an option. The Council also realised that attempting to build the Internal Market through detailed harmonisation was doomed to failure. In short, the New Approach was born of « force majeure ».

## **Co-Responsibility**

### ***A success based on co-responsibility***

The New Approach is today considered a success. By leaving the technical work to the private sector, it was possible to greatly speed-up progress towards a Single Market. At the same time, a huge new market for standards was developed. Most importantly for the future, the New Approach boosted the role of self-regulation and the role of the private sector in shaping and implementing the agenda.

## **New Challenges**

The work over the past 15 years in building the Internal Market provides a useful springboard for the challenges of today's economy, characterised by the pace of technological advances. We should learn from the past to answer the challenges ahead. We have to apply the lessons learnt in the field of technology to other, less technical domains. Standardisation is not only about technology. It is also about quality, reliability, and performance. The time is ripe to build on the lessons and extend the scope of past efforts.

The challenge is how can we extend the successes of the New Approach to other areas. The Council has already, last October, invited the Commission to examine systematically the possibility of using the New Approach for all legislative proposals. For example, in areas such as communication services, electronic commerce, consumer protection and environmental protection.

# ***Future Activities***

## **Future FITCE.BE activities**

### **Fall – Winter**

Four lunch sessions in Brussels on developments in access networks. "Migration towards Broadband Access Networks in Belgium". Each one will be presented by a Belgian Telecom Operator. Technology, economic aspects and the Unbundling of the Local Loop will be systematically addressed. Belgacom, KPN Belgium, Telenet and Versatel are participating.

The lunches are on Thursdays. Please reserve in your agendas the following dates : 21/9, 19/10, 23/11, 25/1.

### **2001 January**

General Assembly and New Year reception