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**VOLUNTEER SUMMER SUMMIT 2009**  
**LIVES UP TO EXPECTATIONS**

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Four days of learning and sharing under the hot Turkish sun in a most inspiring environment turned out to be the highlight of this summer for the AFS volunteer network in Europe. From July 30<sup>th</sup> till August 4<sup>th</sup> 2009 close to 250 enthusiastic and motivated AFS volunteers from 33 countries gathered near Istanbul for EFIL's second Volunteer Summer Summit – this year focused on Innovation and Creativity in Intercultural Exchanges. Participants enjoyed a wide range of educational workshops, a project addressing the local community, Turkish Bazaar, fun events, and most of all: each other's company!




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*Participants Volunteer Summer Summit (photo: EFIL)*

The international Preparatory Team of this year's edition: Hazar Yildirim, Karin Bitterli, Eva Vitkova, Anna-Maria Hass, Cemre Ak'in, Rasmus Poulsen and Markus Wilthanner worked extremely hard for the success of the event for the past 11 months. Additionally, a group of volunteers from the European Pool of Trainers (EPOT) provided the participants with learning and sharing sessions during the Summit. And finally the amazing Turkish Support Team went through extra-ordinary efforts to make this a superb and unforgettable experience for all involved. A big thank you to all of the volunteers who made it possible!



*Community project (photo: EFIL)*

Following in the footsteps of the pioneering event last year in Vigy, France, Istanbul 2009 has confirmed the EFIL Volunteer Summer Summit as a not-to-be-missed event for the active AFS volunteers across Europe and beyond. Once again, the Summit has shown that there is an absolute need for volunteers to share their experiences and challenges, and indeed their whole AFS life with their peers, and what better than to meet in a superb summer setting, once a year. Next year we will meet in Zanka, Hungary, and already now volunteers are making plans to be there. And of course we are aiming at an even higher number of participants!




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**INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE DAY  
24 SEPTEMBER 2009**

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INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE DAY 2009 is just around the corner. All over the continent, on Thursday 24 September 2009, AFS volunteers will

organise activities under the title "Intercultural Europe in 5 senses", ranging from school based events, markets, competitions and street entertainment to debates and seminars. In the next edition of EFILife we will report on the events.

On 3 August a Volunteer Coordinators Meeting took place as one of the workshops of the Volunteer Summer Summit in Turkey. Volunteers from 24 different countries across Europe shared ideas and experience in preparation of the activities of 24 September. Around the same time, an official press release was issued by EFIL to ensure greater visibility of the events with the wider public through various relevant media channels.



*Volunteer Coordinators meeting in Turkey  
(photo: EFIL)*

Take note that the official website of this year's event is online & updated and all participating partners are invited to make it a vital & interesting space to share your ideas and show your work! Go to: [www.interculturalday.eu](http://www.interculturalday.eu).

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**EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP TRIMESTER  
PROGRAMME LAUNCHED**

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111 young students, age 15 to 18, have just started their trimester exchange under the new European Citizenship Trimester Programme. They come from Croatia, Austria, Latvia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Spain, Italy, Russia, Germany, Hungary, Portugal, Switzerland, Czech Republic and Belgium. At the end of November, they will all gather in Brussels, for a unique end-of-stay

camp in Europe's capital, before returning to their home countries.



The preparatory team is working hard to make the closing camp in Brussels an unforgettable experience for all youngsters involved. The participants will have the opportunity to share their experience with students from various other European countries. In workshops and sessions they will reflect on their stay abroad and also on issues like European citizenship and integration. Guided visits to the European Parliament and the European Commission have been included in the programme. This new idea of bringing all participants together in the capital of Europe, will be a substantial added value to the trimester stay for all students involved, and will highlight the European dimension of their exchange term.

#### FIRST HOST STUDENTS HAVE ARRIVED IN BOSNIA-HERZOGOVINA

UG ISU of Bosnia-Herzegovina proudly announces that their first host students have walked through the gates at Sarajevo Airport!



Host students and Mirela Hrnjic at Sarajevo Airport, 6 September (photo: UG ISU)

Back in 2003, six Bosnian returnees from Germany established ISU BIH with the dream of becoming AFS BIH, the dream of setting up an organisation which would connect the young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina again, help them to accept and respect the diversity of culture, not the least in their own country, and be able to show the beauty of their country and culture to the world. The mission and spirit of the AFS programmes provides the perfect frame work for working on this dream.



Host students from Turkey and their Bosnian host families, Sarajevo Airport, 6 September (photo: UG ISU)

Volunteers in Bosnia-Herzegovina have put a lot of energy and time in this dream and with the great support of the AFS family, they now have made a big step forward, by receiving their first host students from Turkey!

As Mirela Hrnjic, President of UG ISU, puts it: “ The first year of hosting will not be easy, but the feeling of happiness is stronger than the feeling of fear, since we know that you are there, AFS friends, who will guide us and help us through this new experience which for us is a significant step forward to make our dream come true.”

Congratulations to all the volunteers of Bosnia-Herzegovina for the wonderful efforts of the past years!

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#### INNOVATIVE TRAINING FOR TRAINERS

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With participation of 24 experienced volunteer trainers from 13 AFS organisations, a training for trainers “AIM (Applying Innovative Methods) for Better Training” took place in Sile, Turkey, from the 26 July till 2 August, prior to the EFIL Volunteer Summer Summit.

The main focus of the event was on developing trainer competences of participants in the widest possible sense – looking into both existing and new creative concepts or approaches to training. The general methodology was largely based on self-directed learning, giving the participants entire ownership of the process and content of the project. During the course they not only explored and learned about the training and learning issues, but also worked on practical training sessions which were delivered in a real-life setting to the participants of the Volunteer Summer Summit at the end of the course. Thanks to these sessions, the beneficiaries of the training course included a much larger group of AFS volunteers from all over Europe and more.



*Participants Training for Trainers (photo: EFIL)*

A round of thank you's goes not only to the preparatory team (Christina Unterberger, Stephan Winiker, Izabela Jurczik, plus two external trainers Zara Lavchyan and Nuno da Silva) and the training rapporteur, Jibid Bulgan, but also to all the participants, since it is their joint effort which constructed the major part of the training content. A separate word of gratitude is addressed to AFS Turkey for organising the venue and all logistics, next to the enormous work put into the preparation of the Summer Summit.

We will be following closely the next steps of the training participants (most of whom are already members of the European Pool of Trainers), as they are the ones who constitute the key group of multipliers, both in their countries and at European level!

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#### PARTNER NEWS

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*In each edition of EFILife, we dedicate some space to partner news, including personnel changes as well as relevant events that have taken place over the past month.*

Late August, six secondary school teachers from China, India and Turkey arrived in Denmark for a ten-week exchange. In the beginning of 2010, Danish teachers will return the visit as guest teachers in the three countries. This is the second year **AFS Denmark** is running this teacher exchange programme.



*Juhong and Ping (China), Christian, Monica, Tapan and Alice (India) and Nesrin (Turkey)  
(photo AFS DEN)*

**AFS Germany** proudly announced that the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development has granted 500.000 Euro to AFS partners. A joint proposal filed by AFS Germany on behalf of 12 AFS partners and affiliates involved in the “weltwaerts” programme, has been approved to start from July onwards. Partners will implement the planned activities, covered for 75% by the Ministry’s contribution, with AFS Germany acting as the single accountable partner towards the Ministry.

There have been quite some movements and changes among the office staff of the AFS offices across Europe over the past two months. Since mid September Danny Martinez Aller is part again of **AFS Spain**, returning to his former position as Organisational Development Coordinator (ODC). **AFS Iceland** is happy to announce that two new staff members have taken up their new positions in July: Linda Gunnarsdottir is the new Sending Coordinator, and Gudrun Eythorsdottir is AFS Iceland’s new Hosting Coordinator. The staff leaving, Olof and Eyrún, will both remain active as dedicated volunteers with AFS in Iceland.

**AFS Finland** is waving goodbye to two of their staff members too. Hilikka Molloy started her career as a staff member way back in 1988. Hilikka’s commitment and dedication are widely known by all volunteers and

staff. Anni Siltanen joined the Finnish team in 2006. Anni will return to Germany, where she did an AFS exchange, to continue her university studies. Meanwhile, Elina Lane has joined the Finnish team as the new Hosting Coordinator. Elina, an AFS returnee from Italy, got her university degree in Milan, and has worked in the Colle and Milan offices of AFS Intercultura in Italy.

From **Intercultura Italy** comes the news that Francesco Fratagnoli has been appointed as the new Programme Director. Francesco has been with Intercultura for the past 14 years. The new Volunteer Development Coordinator for Intercultura is Andrea Franzoi, a long time active volunteer, who recently joined the staff in the office in Colle.

Following a long sick leave on both the hosting and sending side, **AFS Norway** announced a great deal of changes in the staffing. On the hosting side, Marte Turnes Brondbo currently covers for Turid Lystrup as Hosting Coordinator, while Tiril Krogh will be handling support during Turid’s absence. On the sending side, Cecilie Jakobsen covers for Helle Gravli as Sending Coordinator, working closely together with Siri Bolstad. Nalia Franca operates as Programme and Logistics Assistant during Cecilie’s absence.

**AFS Switzerland** has a new Sending Support Coordinator for students from the German region, Corinne Zwysig. A big thank you goes to Julia Neugebauer, who left at the end of July. Claudia Stirmweiss is now in charge of Programme Operations, while Organisational Development has shifted to Monika Bühler. Marianne Knechtl joined the staff to take care of Volunteer Support for the German speaking region of Switzerland. Read more about AFS Switzerland in the article below.



*Janine White, Eunice Neta, Claudia Organ and Gerrit Mnguni (photo: AFS South Africa)*

In July/August, for three weeks, AFS South Africa benefitted from the presence of Eunice Neta from **AFS Portugal**, who covered for AFS South Africa's Support Coordinator during her leave.

That's it for this month. Do let us know what's happening in your offices!

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#### FOCUS ON AFS SWITZERLAND

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*Starting from our September newsletter, in every issue of EFILife, we will put the spotlight on one of EFIL's Member Organisations. With the limited space available, focus will be on the organisational structure. To launch this new column, here's AFS Switzerland!*



AFS Switzerland recently adapted its working structure to the actual requirements and its strategy (2008-2013). As a partner operating in a very competitive and saturated sending and hosting market, there is a need to focus on a broad and stable basis of the organisation which includes a strong volunteer force, excellent services, optimized processes with well defined interface functions, and a strong market position.

AFS Switzerland has nearly 600 participants participating in an exchange experience every year. The organisation works with about 12 full

time staff equivalent, several interns, 1 apprentice and 800 active volunteers providing services to these participants in two languages - German and French. It is the organisation's aim to reach the vision's first goal and grow with quality despite the very challenging market environment. They have therefore decided to invest in innovation (new programmes, new target groups), staff competences and volunteers. This also means that they will divide the full time staff equivalent among more specialized part time staff than before. A challenge indeed.



*The staff team of AFS Switzerland: ready to survive any crisis! (photo: AFS SUI)*

In order to recruit staff with excellent competences and with very limited personal budget AFS Switzerland has re-defined its organisational structure. There are now two main teams:

The Programme team, which provides and coordinates all programme related activities (admission, support, coordination of programme related volunteer services), in two languages - German and French.

The ODS team (Organisational Development & Services) which provides services to internal target groups (Programme Team and Volunteers) and to external customers and partners in two languages - German and French. It coordinates the areas of

- Volunteer Development (Key Volunteer recruitment, Chapter support and Training)

- Customer Service
- Marketing & Communications (recruiting campaigns, media work, branding)
- process related IT services
- School relations

Next to these two main teams there are two staff positions: Resources & Partnership Development (Fundraising, Alumni & partnerships), Financial services and Projects (GAP year). AFS Switzerland is now in its first phase of experiences with this new team structure and will carefully evaluate the outcome.

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#### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE 2008

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An EU publication « Highlights of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 » has been issued recently. It presents a selection of projects and activities that have taken place throughout Europe during 2008 in the framework of the EYID. As Commissioner Jan Figel states in the foreword, the selection represents only a fraction of the many hundreds of initiatives which took place in 2008, from festivals to art competitions, academic seminars to concerts, and conferences to sports events, so EFIL can be justifiably proud to feature in the publication with pictures and an article referring to our Volunteers Summer Summit (Vigy, France), our Intercultural Dialogue Day in more than 300 locations across Europe on 26 September last year, the International Educational Conference in Berlin in October, and the much praised Worldscope project on diversity.



*Commissioner Jan Figel' (left)  
(photo: European Commission)*

Jan Figel points out that the European Year successfully raised awareness of the benefits of the cultural diversity which characterises Europe and generated reflection and debate on themes including minorities and migration, the role of the media, education and science, as well as the contribution of different religions and beliefs to intercultural dialogue. More than 1000 partners registered on the EU's website of the Year, firmly placing intercultural dialogue in the spotlight. As for media coverage, there were over 11.000 printed articles and more than 710.000 visits to the official web-page, amounting to more than 4.6 million page views during the Year. Beyond 2008, intercultural dialogue remains a priority for the Commission, and together with committed partners the Commission wants to build upon the positive momentum created by the Year, to pursue the shared vision of an intercultural Europe which values civic participation, human dignity and respect for diversity as a basis for strong and cohesive communities. EFIL is proud to be part of this, and with a continuation of our activities (Dialogue Day, Volunteer Summit, etc.) we strongly support the Commission's vision.

The 72 pages brochure and CD "Highlights of EYID 2008" can be obtained at the European Commission's representations or delegations. You can obtain their contact details on the internet (<http://ec.europa.eu>) or by sending a

fax to +352 29 29 42758.  
Alternatively you can request the  
publication by e-mailing [eac-culture@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eac-culture@ec.europa.eu).

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PLATFORM FOR INTERCULTURAL EUROPE –  
NEWS BULLETIN

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*For the news bulletin #2 of the Platform for Intercultural Europe, please visit <http://www.intercultural-europe.org/>.*

The Platform for Intercultural Europe is a network that connects the work of grassroots practitioners, associations, public bodies and European institutions, forming strong links from practice to policy and back again. In this way the Platform aims to strengthen the work of all those who work towards intercultural dialogue in Europe.



**PLATFORM FOR  
INTERCULTURAL EUROPE**

The Platform is a civil society initiative developed as a response to the *European Year of Intercultural Dialogue in 2008*. It is financed by the Network of European Foundations and the European Union. The Platform is a democratic association whose membership is open to any organisation or individuals that support its vision and constitution. From its roots in the arts and culture the Platform also welcomes partners concerned with intercultural action in the context of youth and social affairs, education and learning, human rights, anti-racism and minority rights. EFIL is a founding member of the Platform. 37 organisations with an interest in cultural diversity and interculturality have so far joined the Platform since membership became an option at the beginning of May 2009.

To subscribe to the news bulletin, you can contact [newsbulletin@intercultural-europe.org](mailto:newsbulletin@intercultural-europe.org)

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NEW ACADEMIC JOURNAL IN CROSS CULTURAL  
MANAGEMENT

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The first online issue of the new “European Journal of Cross-cultural Competence and Management (EJCCM)” is available at the following address: [www.inderscience.com/ejccm](http://www.inderscience.com/ejccm)

EJCCM is the official scholarly publication of the International Association of Cross-Cultural Management and Competence (IACCM). It will be published quarterly in an online and print version in English language. The journal aims to widen and deepen the discussion about issues regarding the influence of cultural differences and diversity on the management of organisations of all kinds. Of particular relevance is the question of how culture affects both managers and decision-makers in situations involving the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge, values and experiences.

For an overview of topics covered by the EJCCM, please consult the website above.

As a special feature the EJCCM has a section called the *Practitioner's Corner* in which applied articles relevant also for people outside the immediate academic community will be published. This section is the result of cooperation with SIETAR Europa.

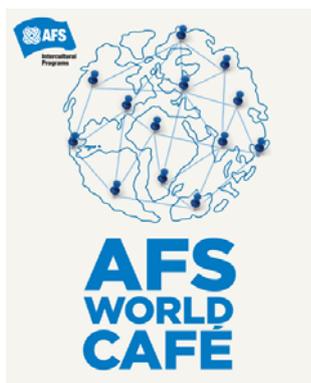
If you want to add the EJCCM to your library, you fill in the following form: <http://www.inderscience.com/libraryform.html>. You could also choose the new journal as a platform for the publication of your own articles in any of the cross-cultural fields mentioned above. Executive Director of EJCCM is Dr. Frank Brück, attached to the Vienna University of Economics and Business (Dept. for Foreign Language Business Communication).

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## AFS WORLD CAFÉ

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The team from AFS International recently posted an announcement for volunteer programmers to help build the new AFS World Café.



At AFS we are always interested in increasing participation from individuals and communities worldwide while educating possible participants

about our programmes and mission. As the Internet grows and expands in bolder, more efficient ways, we are very much aware that our cultural understanding of what it means to “communicate” is developing alongside emerging technology, and that as new methods of communicating in various social networking forums develop, it is in our best interest to keep up with the speed of technology and reach the broadest amount of people as possible. With this in mind, a cross-functional project was born: the AFS World Café.

The AFS World Café is a virtual space where volunteers, participants, alumni, staff and anyone interested in the mission of AFS can join the diverse world of AFS to connect with other people around the globe, share ideas and cultures and learn from one another through interaction at the virtual café. By providing this platform, AFS lays the foundation to create a worldwide movement of people endorsing the mission and values of AFS, including intercultural learning, peace, harmony, respect, and diversity.

As a first step in this direction we are working together to define a pilot

prototype, inviting volunteers from around the AFS Network with experience in IT and social networks to participate in developing this site. If you are interested in building the AFS World Café, please check the required qualifications in the AFS inbox announcement posted on 7 August, and send a letter of motivation and CV to Dominik Scherrer ([dominik.scherrer@afs.org](mailto:dominik.scherrer@afs.org)) at AFS International, the sooner the better.

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## GOODBYE AND THANK YOU TO KARIN BITTERLI

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It has been almost six months since Karin - a volunteer of AFS Switzerland - joined the EFIL Secretariat as an intern. We didn't have a clue then what enormous contribution she would be to the EFIL work and team. We kept discovering her capabilities every day, learning how competent and hard-working a volunteer can be.



*Karin Bitterli (photo: EFIL)*

During the time with EFIL, Karin worked most of all on preparing the EFIL Volunteer Summer Summit 2009 and many of the AFS volunteers and staff have directly benefitted from these efforts. We don't know what we would have done without her in this project! Next to that, she was involved in the EFIL seminar on re-entry orientations in Denmark "The challenge of returning home" and she has contributed to the preparations of the European Citizenship Trimester Programme Brussels Camp taking place later this year.

The internship has now come to an end (why oh why?) and we will have to accept the fact the Karin's unforgettable laugh will no longer be part of our every day office life... Thank you, Karin, for having been with us, you will be missed! We wish you all the best for your future projects and we hope that many of them will have a link with AFS and EFIL.

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#### WELCOME TO ALEXANDER

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My name is Alexander Müller (19) and I will be with EFIL until the end of July 2010 as a volunteer under the German FSJ Programme. I am taking over Benjamin Ledwon's tasks and therefore I will mainly be responsible for the monthly EFILlife newsletter, EFIL's website and the update on European policies and developments based on the EU's daily 'Europolitics' newsletter. Apart from these tasks I will also work closely with Izabela Jurczik, EFIL's Training Coordinator, and support her wherever I can.



*Alexander Müller (photo: EFIL)*

I am from Göttingen, a city roughly 100 km south of Hannover. I graduated from high school this year. I have spent a year (06/07) as an exchange student in Hebron, North Dakota, US. In the past years I have also been on a few short term

exchanges, including stays in South Korea and Tanzania. The upcoming year in Brussels is my second longer period abroad, and I have no doubts that I will enjoy my time at EFIL. Maybe my time at EFIL will help me make up my mind about what and where I am going to study.

Next to travelling and getting to know different cultures, countries and places, I am into badminton, biking, skiing, surfing and lots of other things. I like to take part in many activities of all types, and I see myself as a fairly outgoing and open-minded person.

I am looking forward to working with EFIL, the AFS offices and volunteers and I hope I will get to meet many new people in the upcoming year.

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#### INTERNET LINKS

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- [www.ye2009.cz](http://www.ye2009.cz)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/youth/index_en.htm)
- [www.efilsummersummit.org](http://www.efilsummersummit.org)
- <http://ec.europa.eu>
- [www.intercultural-europe.org/](http://www.intercultural-europe.org/)
- [www.inderscience.com/ejccm](http://www.inderscience.com/ejccm)
- [www.interculturalday.eu](http://www.interculturalday.eu)

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#### EFIL CALENDAR 2009

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- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 13-14 September | Training Advisory Body Meeting in Budapest, Hungary |
| 18-20 September | EFIL Board meeting, Vienna, Austria                 |
| 24 September    | Intercultural Dialogue Day 2009                     |
| 06-10 October   | EFIL Meeting/training for Support Staff             |

19 October	Heads of Office meeting, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
20-25 October	AFS World Congress, Kuala Lumpur
22-26 Nov	European Citizenship Trimester Programme-End of Stay Camp, Brussels, Belgium
3-6 December	EVS Coordinators Meeting, Leuven, Belgium

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**Contributions:** Paul Claes, Izabela Jurczik, Alexander Müller

Many thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue of EFILife.

Please do not hesitate to share with us your **comments and suggestions**.  
 We welcome your **contributions!**

If you would like to subscribe to (or unsubscribe from) this Newsletter, please contact the EFIL Secretariat at: [efilife@efil.be](mailto:efilife@efil.be).

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