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**EFIL VOLUNTEER SUMMER SUMMIT 2010-
PREPARATORY WORK IN PROGRESS**

The preparations of the largest AFS European volunteer gathering of the year are progressing!

The call for participants went out a couple of weeks ago and now the early application deadline is quickly approaching. Early applications can be made online at www.efilsummersummit.org until **28 March**. Why apply so early? Early applicants have less expensive participation fees and have better chances of being accepted for the Summer Summit. We will confirm the acceptance of participants by the 16th of April. After confirmation you can go ahead and book your ticket to Hungary. The sooner you book, the cheaper the travel costs will be.

Already more than 80 motivated volunteers from 18 different countries have applied. We have applicants from non-European countries as well, such as Argentina, Malaysia, South Africa, Egypt, etc. Currently AFS Belgium Flanders and AFS Italy have registered the highest number of participants.



The deadline for trainer applications has now passed and the prep team received a good number of interesting applications. 10 trainers will soon be selected according to the required training competences, ensuring the diversity in terms of origin, gender, age and profile.



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This year's theme is **Intergenerational Learning**. We aim at having volunteers of a wide age range present at the VSS. Many workshops will focus on the theme, including such specific topics as: Host Family and Intercultural Learning, Conflict Resolution – An Intergenerational Perspective, Intergenerational Learning at Chapter Level, How to Be Forever Young-at-Heart, The Concept of Age in Different Cultures, Volunteering for Life, etc.

We are happy to announce that at the moment 16 per cent of the applicants are “young-at-heart” - as the prep team agreed to call the higher age group. Our oldest applicant is 67 years old! The average age of applicants is 27. Do we want it to be higher? It is up to you!

The EFIL Volunteer Summer Summit is an event not to be missed, so mark the dates **4 – 9 August** in your calendars and apply as soon as possible!

EURAFRICAN PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE PROJECT- FOCUS ON GHANA -

The first of three visits to the African partner countries in the project is taking place in Ghana from 08-19 March 2010. A team of 10 experienced volunteers from AFS organisations in Latvia, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Austria, Germany, Kenya and South Africa arrived in Accra, Ghana, for two weeks of project activities.



Training in Accra, Ghana (Photo: EFIL)

As part of the first week's programme, AFS Ghana has set up appointments with government

institutions, private sector, NGOs and local organisations for participants to collect information in the framework of a feasibility study. The feasibility studies in the EurAfrican Partnership for Change project aim at proposing a framework to help empower the AFS organisations in the African partner countries and further support them in their organisational and volunteer development.



Over the weekend, a training for volunteers took place in three regions in Ghana, this way reaching as many local volunteers as possible. Altogether, in Accra, Cape Coast and Sunyani, some 50 volunteers attended the trainings, which covered a wide range of topics such including volunteer motivation, promotion of AFS, intercultural learning, hosting and finding host families, recruitment and selection of participants, preparations and orientations, etc.



EurAfrica-Team Ghana (Photo: EFIL)

The next country visit is planned to take place from 19-29 April in South Africa.

ECTP 2010

In 2009, EFIL and its AFS partners launched the European Citizenship Trimester Programme (ECTP). The initial aim to help programmes and organisations grow with quality was welcomed with a lot of support from

EFIL members. The ECTP is adding a European dimension to the regular AFS exchange programmes by focusing the educational scope of the programme on European Citizenship & Identity. In its very first cycle in November 2009, 16 partners joined and sent 107 participants to the End-of-Stay camp in Brussels. The numbers of participants of the 2010 ECTP programme is estimated to be over 160.

The preparations for the second ECTP End-of-Stay camp in Brussels are about to start, the call for members of the preparatory team has been spread. EFIL. The actual camp will take place from 28 November to 2 December, in a youth center near Brussels. Stay tuned for more information and calls about ECTP.

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING SEMINAR

Last days to apply for the EFIL reflective seminar on Intercultural Learning and AFS Exchanges!

As mentioned in the previous edition of EFILife, the recruitment of participants for the abovementioned seminar, which will take place 10-16 May in Strasbourg, is in progress. The call for participants has been distributed to EFIL Member Organisations and all the interested candidates (including non-European ones) should contact their national office to be nominated for participation. The deadline for applying has been set for the 18th of March 2010 – do not miss it!

The idea of this event is to bring together about 25 participants - volunteers and staff from within AFS network (primarily from Europe) who deal with different aspects of Intercultural Learning within the organisation. The 5 days of seminar will focus on a deep reflection and debate on the AFS situation in ICL, confronted in addition with the external developments in the field.



Preparatory Meeting (Photo: EFIL)

The seminar's preparatory team represents very diverse profiles, which will enrich the event's shape and content: Florin Feldmann (AFS Germany volunteer, EPOT), Hazar Yildirim (AFS Turkey staff, EPOT), Elisabeth Hardt (Belgium, AFS Germany Board), Mark Taylor (France/UK, freelance trainer) and Izabela Jurczik (EFIL Training Co-ordinator), supported by Alexander Müller (FSJ volunteer of EFIL).

The team met in person in Brussels on 5-7 March, to discuss the details of the event's programme. During the fruitful meeting several leading themes were chosen as the seminar focal points. The planned process will put together external input with our own views and experience, decomposing separately the approach to **Learning**, the understanding of **Culture/Intercultural** and finally looking at the **AFS educational framework** holistically. Moreover, it is planned to identify areas for further work - during future events and other activities at national and international levels.

The interactive working methods will maximise exchange of practices, opinions and peer learning - hence the importance of the profile of participants' group.

PROGRAMME DIRECTORS MEETING SARAJEVO

In Sarajevo, from 1 - 4 March, Programme Directors from across Europe met for the annual EFIL

Programme Directors meeting. The programme included an overview of the mid- to long-term EFIL activity calendar and a discussion following the evaluation of the first European Citizenship Trimester Programme and the Brussels end-of-stay camp, which took place at the end of 2009. Further topics included Youth Pass and Mobility Pass, the challenge of participant growth and quality, and several other matters of interest, bundled in an Open Space session on Wednesday afternoon.



Programme Directors meeting (Photo: EFIL)

A highlight of the meeting was the very visible presence of our new partners in South Eastern Europe, as compared to some 15 months ago, when they first joined us at the Programme Directors meeting in Belgrade, Serbia. Congratulations to the volunteers in Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina for the remarkable progress made in developing AFS in their countries, since that meeting in November 2008. Thank you also to Urszula Sienczak for representing Poland at the meeting and bringing the dream of establishing AFS in Poland a bit closer.

Prior to the Programme Directors meeting, at the same venue, EFIL organised a volunteer training, targeting volunteers from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia and Poland (see next article). We've now clearly come to a point where the new partners will start playing an active role in the AFS network at

large. Look out for further announcements from EFIL and AFS INT, updating you on the current situation with the new partners organisations in South Eastern Europe.



Programme Directors meeting (Photo: EFIL)

A special word of thanks goes to Mirela Hrnjic and the volunteers of Bosnia-Herzegovina, for being the perfect hosts of our meeting. EFIL also wants to thank Dominik Scherrer of AFS International for his valuable contributions to the meeting (including a full day workshop on leadership and innovation), and his strong commitment to the development of new network partners.

The hotel in Sarajevo was the scene of a full week of constructive discussions, a varied programme with interactive sessions and various methodologies used. The participating Programme Directors all took home some great learning experiences and plenty of good memories of Sarajevo.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING FOR DEVELOPING ORGANISATIONS

From 26 February to 1 March 2010 EFIL organised a training weekend for volunteers from South Eastern Europe and Poland in Sarajevo. The event was attached to the Programme Directors Meeting and saw the participation of 16 motivated young people from the Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Slovenia, as well as from Poland.

The event is part of EFIL's efforts in new partner development and was primarily aiming at providing the starting organisations and their volunteers the knowledge and skills on basic AFS aspects like programmes, sending and hosting cycle, European and international structures, volunteer life cycle, etc. The training also was an opportunity for participants to exchange hints and best practices on how to overcome challenges that beginning organisations face.

An interactive programme had been put together. Participants were able to ask the experienced AFS trainers questions about chapter development and organisational structure. In a special session "Meet the Programme Director" the volunteers had an opportunity to talk to the Programme Director of AFS France and get to see the office perspective of their AFS work.



Volunteer Training, Sarajevo (Photo:EFIL)

The training established some regional links and initiated the planning of a potential common mid-stay camp for exchange students in the South Eastern Europe region. On the Polish side, there was a lot of enthusiasm to further build on to the recently made progress.

In the same weekend, a parallel training for another eight key volunteers from the countries of South Eastern Europe focusing on Global Link, was organised by AFS

International. Croatia (CRO), Bosnia (BIH), Serbia (SRB) and Slovenia (SLO) now have access to AFS Global, and their AFS contact details can be found in the International Directory.

We warmly welcome the volunteers from South Eastern Europe and Poland into the international AFS family. "Hvala!" to all of them and the team for the excellent work done in Sarajevo!

TAB MEETING COMING UP

The first meeting in 2010 of the EFIL Training Advisory Body (TAB) is planned to take place 11-12 April in Zurich, Switzerland.

The TAB had been created as an advisory structure at European level to support EFIL in the training field. Thanks to its composition including two Organisational Development Co-ordinators (Diana Rosta from AFS Hungary and Manuel Schwinn from AFS Germany), two experienced volunteers (Michela Bortoli from AFS Italy and Stephan Winiker from AFS Switzerland) and a representative of AFS International (Lisa Cohen), the TAB helps EFIL in keeping the overview of AFS training needs in Europe.

As the agenda of the TAB meeting is still in preparation, we would like hereby to open up the floor to all interested AFS contributors (staff, volunteers) to bring in their proposals for issues to be tackled. In the usual practice, the TAB discusses evaluation of past EFIL training events, brings input to those already planned and proposes ideas for further projects in the future. Agenda topics might also include training issues of general concern. Your proposals are welcome on tab@afs.org until the 23rd of March.

BOARD MEETING ROME

The EFIL Board held its first meeting of the year in Rome, 12-14 February 2010. The agenda featured a wide range of topics, including an update by the Secretary General on recent developments in EFIL and in Europe, EFIL's mid- to long-term activity calendar, new partner development, governance issues, EFIL's financial situation.

Over the past years the EFIL calendar of activities has developed into a mid- to long-term plan for trainings, meetings and projects, including several recurring activities (annual events like the Volunteer Summer Summit, Intercultural Dialogue Day, European Citizenship Trimester Programme, Programme Directors meeting, Training for Trainers, plus biennial events like the Governance Seminar, ODC meeting, Support Staff meeting, plus twice a year a HOO meeting). In 2009 external funding was obtained for the majority of the activities, and statistics show an increasing number of participants in activities. An overview was presented of facts and figures related to EFIL's annual flagship projects, the Volunteer Summer Summit, Intercultural Dialogue Day and the European Citizenship Trimester Programme, and statistics were discussed about the participation of Member Organisations in EFIL events.



Coliseum, Rome

The discussion on new partner development included a proposal to introduce a new membership status

to accommodate the newly established partners in South Eastern Europe (Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Slovenia), as well as a brainstorming on EFIL's future endeavours aiming at expanding the network into EU countries that currently don't have an AFS presence.

The EFIL Board continued its discussion "what about the remaining 99%", referring to the large group of young European pupils that are currently not involved in any form of mobility. In a brain storming session the following corner stones were identified: a strong volunteer network; strong leadership; appealing programmes and activities; strong school relations; financial stability, fundraising. EFIL plays a role in helping the Partners to build up these corner stones and reinforce them as 'drivers' of our organisations, by providing trainings that help motivate and educate all levels of the organisations (leaders, volunteers); by providing social networks on international level; by stimulating sharing between Partners, including the exchange of good practices; by looking for European funding; etc.



EFIL Board at the GA in Moscow (Photo:EFIL)

The next EFIL Board meeting is scheduled for 4-6 June, in Nice, France, prior to the Heads of Office meeting in Sernhac, France (6-9 June).

BOARD ELECTIONS AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The EFIL Board calls for an extraordinary General Assembly in June in order to elect new Board members. The e.o.G.A. will take place alongside the Heads of Office meeting in Sernhac, France in June 2010.

Four Board members are to be elected. As by the set procedures, on 1 March 2010, a message was sent out on behalf of the Election Committee calling on full EFIL Member Organisations to nominate candidates. Candidacies for the vacant Board positions have to be sent to EFIL by e-mail, addressed to the Chair of the Election Committee. Deadline for submission of the candidacies is 9 April 2010. The Election Committee consists of Johanna Nemeth (AFS Austria), Gérard Sautereau (FS France) and Filipa Santos (AFS Portugal).

EFIL (on behalf of the Election Committee) will inform the Members of all candidacies received the latest by 19 April 2010, and send by e-mail all documentation received from the candidates or the Member Organisations who have appointed them.

At the extra-ordinary General Assembly in June in Sernhac, the full Members will be invited to vote for the new Directors from the pool of candidates nominated.

PARTNER NEWS

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.

On the weekend 5-7 March 2010, 115 volunteers, staff and board members met in Linz/Steyregg for **AFS Austria's** biggest annual national volunteer training event, the Megaworkshop 2010.



Megaworkshop 2010 (Photo: AFS Austria)

Participants enjoyed various seminars dealing with questions like "how to improve the preparation and support of host families?", "how to improve the preparation of sending participants?", "new perspectives for returnee-camps", "how to deal with sending parents and participants' selection?", "camp essentials", "how to strengthen the community service programme?".



AFS Turkey recently held two workshops on Total Quality Management and Organizational Excellence (6 and 21 February). The workshops brought together about 55 volunteers, board members and staff from all corners of Turkey.

Ana Beekhof, **AFS Spain's** External Relations Coordinator, has left the organisation since the beginning of March. During AFS Spain's General Assembly in Valencia on 27-28 February, Sandra Lois Fraga, former Treasurer of the Board, was elected the new Chair of AFS Intercultura España for a 3 year term. Vice-Chair is Nacho Forcadell Utrilla.

AFS Iceland held its General Assembly on 6 March. Kristján Gíslason was re-elected as Chair for one year. The board is currently recruiting a new Partner Director in collaboration with AFS International. In the transition phase, Petrína Ásgeirsdóttir, current Board member

and former Partner Director (1997-2004), will be in charge for communication with the AFS network on matters other than student related issues.

DENMARK TRAINING NOVEMBER 2010

AFS Denmark currently works on a model for a training to take place during their "Uddannelsesbazar" (National Volunteer Training) from 5-7 November, whereby volunteers from other countries will get an opportunity to experience a Danish AFS training. In order to make this event as valuable as possible it will focus on experienced volunteers, young and old, who have been active in their AFS organisation for at least two years.

AFS Denmark is expecting anywhere from 2-4 participants from each participating country and is working out ways to keep the costs and fees low for participating volunteers.

Stay tuned for further information as the project progresses.

REVIVING AFS IN SLOVAKIA

Since the closing down of **AFS Slovakia** at the end of June 2009, plans are emerging to revitalize the organisation, with the support of AFS Czech Republic and AFS Austria.



Volunteers from Austria, Czech Republic and Slovakia (Photo: AFS Czech Republic)

On Saturday 20 February, a successful launch took place of a volunteer

chapter in Slovakia, which will now run its operations through AFS Czech Republic. 15 motivated volunteers from different walks of life gathered in Nitra to plan their upcoming activities, decide on a structure and get a training on what it means to be an AFS volunteer.

Present at the event were Michael Rosak (Chairman of AFS Czech Republic and EFIL Board member) and Philipp Wagner (Chairman of AFS Austria), who welcomed the volunteers back to the AFS Network. With programmes running through the AFS Czech Republic's office, the core volunteer group offers the AFS network a historical reunion of Czechoslovakia in the AFS community! At this time, 5 Slovakian students go on an AFS programme via AFS Czech Republic and soon hosting too should revive in Slovakia.

AFS Czech Republic is grateful to AFS Austria, AFS Italy and EFIL for support in this endeavour. In the near future a civic organization "Interkultura Slovakia" will be established by the volunteers and the aim is to expand the Slovakian volunteer base in different regions across the country.

I LIVE IN VYATKA AND AM EUROPEAN

Following an AFS presentation for the Regional Government in November 2009, by the Chair of AFS Russia who is at the same time Vice-Governor of the Kirov Region, Alexander Galitskihk, the Region donated about \$25 000 from its budget for the organisation of a youth contest "I live in Vyatka and I am European", targeting students 15-18 years old. AFS Russia decided to offer participation in EFIL's ECTP programme 2010 as the main prize for the 6 winners.

Participants in the contest were required to write an essay in which they had to demonstrate their

knowledge of local history by telling about political, economical and cultural connections between the Region and European countries, to prove that while living in Vyatka (this is a traditional regional name, the name of the river), far from the European countries and cities, they are still Europeans. Participants wrote in Russian and sent their work to AFS Russia. 17 students who were selected for the second stage, then had to present their work in English or French.



(Photo: Government of Kirov region)

Mass-media in Russia attached a lot of attention to the contest. The Governor of the Region, Nikita Belykh, greeted the winners and awarded them with diplomas. During the final ceremony, AFS Russia made a presentation of AFS, of EFIL and of the ECTP programme. The governor stated that “such regional actions will be continued in future and hopefully even at a larger scale”.



(Photo: Government of Kirov region)

Congratulations to the winners of the contest (2 from Italy, 2 from Belgium French, 1 from France, 1 from

Portugal)! We look forward to meet them in Brussels for the ECTP end-of-stay camp.

**YVF NFE- QA PILOT PROJECT
MID-TERM MEETING**



On 13 March 2010 an interim meeting of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) project in Quality

Assurance of Non-Formal Education took place. The meeting was attended by Ilyana Panteleeva from the EFIL Secretariat and Viviana Galli – a volunteer from Intercultura Italy.

After a successful application, EFIL became part of this pilot initiative in September 2009 together with AEGEE, Youth for Exchange and Understanding (YEU), World Association of Girl Guides and Scouts (WAGGS) and 2 National Youth Councils – VJR from Flanders and LIJOT from Lithuania.

The meeting focussed on the progress of the project and evaluated the work of the partners. Within this project, a Quality Assurance framework is being tested on the example of 6 NFE projects and events run by each organisation. EFIL has chosen as its pilot initiative the ECTP Camp and is now developing Quality Indicators to assess the work done in 2009. In this respect, our participation in this YFJ project is helping us to improve the ECTP Camp 2010, to reflect on the results and make it an even better experience than last year's.

In the long-term, the YFJ initiative is meant to make NFE accountable for its quality and gain better recognition among the external partners and stakeholders. Furthermore, the project helps the partnering organisations learn a lot from each other & improve their internal quality assurance systems.

**MULTILINGUALISM PLATFORM
MID TERM MEETING**



On Friday 12 March, another external project, part of EFIL's lobby & policy work, had its mid-term meeting and reported on the progress done. The Civil Society Platform for Promoting Multilingualism is working towards its formal establishment: the members of the platform are planning to apply for an operational European Commission grant provided next month. This development will see the work of the platform more structured and will provide for real actions to promote multilingualism in the years to come.

EFIL has sent out two questionnaires aiming to collect AFS' best practices, experiences and suggestions related to raising awareness on the value of learning more than just one foreign language. The AFS non-formal learning approach – long-term youth exchanges – is quite successful in the effort of young people to learn a language through living in a native environment and getting to know the local culture and everyday life. AFS' added value and contribution to multilingualism and intercultural dialogue are even more interesting because of the less widely used languages that are offered in our programmes.

With the aim to focus attention on youth exchanges also in this field, EFIL will continue its work within the Multilingualism Platform. We need your good examples and expertise on that – do take time to fill in the survey that will be re-sent to EFIL Members in the next days.

COE ADVISORY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

The Advisory Council on Youth (AC) of the Council of Europe is the only Co-Management body of the Council of Europe dealing with topics related

to youth. It brings together 30 representatives from youth NGOs and networks who provide opinions and input on all youth sector activities of this international institution. The diversity of youth NGOs represented in the AC is essential to the quality of its inputs and proposals to the Committee of Ministers. In order to increase visibility and awareness among youth NGOs the Advisory Council on Youth (AC) of the Council of Europe has opened its series of newsletters, which will be published twice a year after each Advisory Council meeting. The newsletter will feature the focus and main outcomes of the meeting as well as the work carried out since its last edition had been published.

This first issue introduces the reader to the AC, the CoE, the Directorate of Youth and Sport and its Co-Management structure. For more information please check the following website: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Coe_youth/co_management_en.asp Not only does it outline the priorities of the AC, like the promotion of Youth Rights and the implementation of Agenda 2020, but it also lists the events attended by members of the AC in its name.

We'd be very happy to receive your questions in case you are interested in the work of this CoE body – please get in touch with Ilyana Panteleeva in the EFIL Secretariat.

YFJ POOL OF TRAINERS MEETING

Believe it or not, EFIL's well known training body – our EPOT – is not the only pool of trainers active on European level. The pool of trainers of the European Youth Forum (YFJ www.youthforum.org) is a group of 40 experienced trainers from the YFJ network. YFJ is a platform gathering more than 90 youth organisations and representing their common interests on European level. YFJ aims to

represent the voice of young people in Europe. Among other activities, YFJ supports the development of its member organisations and offers different training activities for young people. And that's why POT – the training resource group – is here.



(Photo: Eva Vítková)

POTties are people with very diverse backgrounds – coming from National Youth Councils, political or environmental organisations and literally from all over Europe. And two of them have roots in the AFS/EFIL network: Eva Vítková (AFS Czech Republic) and Florin Feldmann (AFS Germany).

POT meets once a year and the most recent meeting took place at the end of February 2010 in Kandersteg, Switzerland. About 35 trainers and representatives of the YFJ met in the well equipped International Scout Center to evaluate the past year, discuss the role of POT, current policies and priorities of YFJ and to talk about the future training events. Some time was also dedicated to sharing training methodologies.



(Photo: Eva Vítková)

Here are some words from Eva Vitkova, who's been on the POT for a year: "Being a pottie brings great training and learning opportunities. It enables you to work with trainers from different countries and organisations, which I personally find very valuable. And last but not least, my group of international friends grew much bigger and I have had a lot of fun!"

WELCOME TO LAURA



Hello everybody!
My name is Laura Licari, I'm Italian and I came from Catania (eastern coast of Sicily).

I'm an Intercultura-AFS volunteer since 2003 when my family hosted an exchange student from Germany for the first time, on the occasion of the "Italian exchange week", where AFS participants have the opportunity to change their family and city for one week to have a glance at another reality.

I arrived in Brussels in the beginning of March, after having spent six months in Northern France as a volunteer for a European pilot programme named AMICUS. I now have the possibility to join EFIL thanks to the second part of the same pilot programme, this time for a four month period. I'm finishing my studies at the University on foreign languages and literature in Catania, where I do a major in International Communication. In the past I participated in a few short term exchanges and projects, including travelling to Germany and Uruguay.

I'm ready to learn as much as I can and build up new experiences, hoping to be helpful whenever and wherever I can in the EFIL office. How about preparing some real Sicilian specialities for the staff?

CALENDER	
8-19 March	EurAfrican Partnership for Change project, Ghana
11-12 April	Training Advisory Body meeting, Zürich, Switzerland
19-30 April	EurAfrican Partnership for Change project, South Africa
28 April – 1 May	EurAfrican Partnership for Change project, Steering Group meeting, South Africa
10-16 May	Intercultural Learning Seminar, Strasbourg, France
4-6 June	EFIL Board meeting, Nice, France
6-9 June	HOO Retreat and EFIL Extra-ordinary General Assembly, Sernhac, France
31 July-7 Aug.	Training for trainers, Hungary
4-9 August	EFIL Volunteer Summer Summit, Hungary
23-27 August	Closing Seminar EurAfrican Partnership for Change project, Vienna, Austria
30 September	Intercultural Dialogue Day
8-10 October	EFIL Board meeting, Belgium

28 Nov – 2 Dec European Citizenship Trimester Programme Brussels Camp

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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.

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