







# 03

## EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

## 3

# EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

### 3.1 ACTIVITIES WITH THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF) AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The BCL handles Luxembourg's financial transactions with the IMF. For this purpose, it manages Luxembourg's assets and liabilities vis-à-vis the IMF in both the general account and the Special Drawing Rights (SDR) account. As of 31 December 2009, Luxembourg's quota, recorded in full on the BCL's balance sheet, amounted to SDR 279.1 million, whereas the reserve position (the difference between Luxembourg's total quota at the IMF and the euro-denominated assets held by the IMF at the BCL) represented 18.67% of Luxembourg's quota.

The IMF's operational budget defines the currencies to be made available to its members on a quarterly basis and the distribution of reimbursements among its members. During 2009, the BCL granted credits amounting to €17.7 million.

According to Resolution 63-2 adopted on 28 April 2008 by the IMF Board of Governors, Luxembourg's quota would increase from SDR 279.1 million to SDR 418.7 million. The 19 December 2008 Law approves the amendments to the IMF Statutes and allows the Luxembourg government to take all necessary measures in view of the quota increase. However, Resolution 63-2 has not yet been accepted by the required double majority, that is by at least three fifths of the members of the institution, representing 85% of attributed voting rights.

At the end of 2009, Luxembourg held SDR 243.23 million, which represent 98.6% of its SDR allocation compared to 79.1% end 2008. This increase is mainly explained by the entry into force of a general SDR allocation on 28 August 2009 amounting to 250 billion dollars, and of a special allocation on 9 September 2009 amounting to around 33 billion dollars. The general allocation resulted in an increase of about 74% of the SDR allocation in each country. Luxembourg was allotted a total

amount of SDR 229.7 million: SDR 206.9 million under the general allocation and SDR 22.8 million under the special allocation, also called "fourth amendment allocation".

As SDR trading arrangements against currencies were expected to increase following the new SDR allocations, from mid-2009 the IMF sought to widen the amounts that could be handled under voluntary SDR trading arrangements with some of its members. Thus, following a decision of the ECB Governing Council in October 2009, a great majority of Eurosystem central banks, including the BCL, decided to conclude new voluntary SDR trading arrangements with the IMF or to increase the amounts mentioned in existing agreements.

This SDR allocation is part of the mighty 1000 billion-dollar plan concluded by the London G20 Summit in April 2009 and endorsed by the International monetary and financial committee (IMFC) to curb the crisis. G20 leaders had decided to immediately provide the IMF with additional loan resources totalling 250 billion dollars, which would then be incorporated into the looser framework of new arrangements to borrow (NAB), whose amount, initially fixed at 500 billion dollars, has been exceeded. Luxembourg already participates in the former NAB up to SDR 340 million, and this amount will reach a total of SDR 970.6 million under the new NAB. The new agreements will thus go over the initial objective of 500 billion dollars.

The BCL President, being also Alternate Governor of the IMF, attended the Annual Meeting of the IMF and the meetings of the International Monetary and Financial Committee. One BCL member is on secondment to the IMF.

The BCL also attended the meetings of several working groups at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and at the Bank of International Settlements (BIS), contributing, in particular, to the work of the OECD's Financial Markets committee (FMC) and that of the BIS' committee on the global financial system (CGFS). As every year, the BCL's Governor attended the BIS Annual General Meeting.

## **3.2 ACTIVITY AT THE EUROPEAN LEVEL**

### **3.2.1 Contribution at the ECB decision-making bodies**

During 2009, the Governor of the BCL participated in all 22 meetings of the Governing Council and in all four meetings of the General Council.

The Governing Council meetings are held twice a month most of them at the ECB's headquarters in Frankfurt. While the first meeting is devoted to the analysis of economic and monetary evolutions and to monetary policy decisions, the second meeting deals with issues related to the other missions of the Eurosystem. Besides these meetings, the Governing Council also takes decisions via written procedures. In 2009, some 500 legal acts were adopted by the Governing Council following this procedure; many were opinions related to draft laws at the European or national level, according to article 127 paragraph 4 of the Lisbon Treaty.

The General Council meetings, that gather the ECB President, the ECB Vice-President, and the 27 ESCB Governors together, are held in Frankfurt, four times a year.

When making decisions, the members of the Governing Council do not act as national representatives but in their personal capacity, which is reflected by the principle "one member, one vote".

Committees assist the decision-making bodies of the ECB in the fulfilment of their tasks. The Governing Council or the Executive Board can ask Committees to carry out analyses on precise topics. The Committees report to the Governing Council through the ECB Executive Board.

Committees are established by the Governing Council in accordance with article 9.1 of the ECB's rules of procedure. There are currently 16 committees, which are composed of members of the Eurosystem, but can also include, for some issues, ESCB members. Each member is appointed by the Governor of his/her national central bank or by the ECB's Executive Board. Under the aegis of Committees, working groups or task forces are established, with specific objectives, but in conformity with their Committee's mandate. The Governing Council also created High Level Groups to help solve particular issues.

The BCL contributes to the Eurosystem's and the ESCB's work through the participation in the meetings of committees, working groups and task forces of members of its staff.

### **3.2.2 The enlargement of the euro area**

On 1 January 2009, two years after Slovenia and one year after Cyprus and Malta, the euro was introduced in Slovakia, bringing to 16 the number of euro area Member States.

### **3.2.3 The economic and financial committee (EFC)**

A BCL representative participates in meetings of the Economic and Financial Committee (EFC). The EFC is composed of representatives from the finance ministries and central banks of EU Member States, the European Commission and the ECB. According to the Treaty, one of the tasks of the EFC is to keep under "review the economic and financial situation of the Member States and of the Union and to report regularly thereon to the Council and to the Commission".

In 2009, the EFC continued to analyse the evolution of financial stability in the EU, the risks weighing on this stability and possible reforms to be envisaged in the aftermath of the financial crisis.

The EFC also works on economic policy issues discussed at informal ECOFIN meetings, which are attended by the BCL's President and which were strongly marked, in 2009, by the economic impact of the financial crisis, especially on public finance, as well as by the proposal for reforming European financial supervision. In the context of signs of a gradual economic recovery, these discussions also dealt with the designing of appropriate exit strategies, notably vis-à-vis extraordinary fiscal measures adopted by public authorities in order to face the crisis.

### **3.2.4 The Committee on Monetary, Financial and Balance of Payments Statistics**

In the context of the mission of the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), the Committee of Monetary, Finance and Balance of Payments Statistics (CMFB) works on the development and coordination of statistical categories that are required under the policy implemented by the Council, the Commission and various committees assisting them. Central Banks, National Statistics Institutes as well as the Commission and the ECB are represented in the CMFB. Under the leadership of this Committee, different "task forces" operate with specific duties assigned to them.

The BCL has contributed actively in 2009 to this framework. Progress has been made particularly in terms of financial accounts, balance of payments, financial services and public finance statistics as well as national accounts.

### 3.3 NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

#### 3.3.1 Legal developments

##### 3.3.1.1 Treaty of Lisbon

##### 3.3.1.2 Payment services, payment and securities settlement systems and payment instruments

At the national level, the organic law of the Central Bank has been amended by the law of 10 November 2009.

The law of 10 November 2009 on payment services<sup>1</sup> transposed into Luxembourg law the Directive 2007/64/EC dated 13 November 2007 on payment services in the internal market<sup>2</sup> (hereinafter, the PSD<sup>3</sup>), to which the BCL has contributed by participating in a working group established by the Ministry of Finance (see BCL 2008 annual Report, par. 3.3.1.6.a.) and the ECB has been consulted.

The PSD's goals are to regulate payment services uniformly within the European Union and to create a new category of financial institutions which will benefit from the European passport – the payment institutions. The PSD establishes a uniform legal framework for the achievement of the single Euro payment area (see Single Euro Payment Area project – SEPA).

The law of 10 November 2009 also transposes Directive 2000/46/EC, dated 18 September 2000, of the European Parliament and the European Council on the taking up, pursuit of and prudential supervision of the business of electronic money institutions. In addition, the 10 November 2009 law also transposes Directive 98/26/EC dated 19 May 1998 of the European Parliament and the European Council on settlement finality in payment and securities settlement systems (hereinafter the SFD<sup>4</sup>), which was previously part of the amended law of 5 April 1993 on the financial sector.

#### *"Oversight" mission of the BCL*

The law also ensures the strengthening of the implementation of one of the fundamental missions of the Central Bank – the mission of promoting the smooth operation of payment systems and securities settlement systems<sup>5</sup>. The law replacing the former law dated 10 January 2001, fully recognizes the oversight power of the BCL with respect to payment and securities settlement systems and payment instruments, by inserting a new paragraph 5 in article 2 of the BCL's organic law: "In view of its mission relating to the promotion of the smooth operation of payment systems, the Central Bank shall ensure the efficiency and safety of payment systems and securities settlement systems, as well as the safety of payment instruments".

The ECB<sup>6</sup> welcomed these amendments by pointing out that "a) they clarify the division of tasks between the CSSF and the BCL as far as payment instruments, payment systems and securities settlement systems are concerned, in line with article 105, paragraph 2 of the Treaty and article 3.1 of the Statutes of the ESCB and b) they broaden the BCL's oversight role to cover all payment and settlement systems, regardless of their designation under Directive 98/26/EC".

1 Mémoires A N°215 of 11 November 2009, p. 3698.

2 Directive 2007/64/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2007 on payment services in the internal market amending Directives 97/7/EC, 2002/65/EC, 2005/60/EC and 2006/48/EC and repealing Directive 97/5/EC, OJ, 5.12.2007, L319/1.

3 Payment Services Directive.

4 Settlement Finality Directive.

5 This task stems from fourth dash of article 127 (2) of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union (ex-article 105 (2) of EC Treaty) and article 22 of the Statutes of the European system of central banks and of the European central bank.

6 Opinion of the ECB on the broadening of the Banque centrale du Luxembourg's oversight role by a draft law on payment services, electronic money institutions and settlement finality in payment and securities settlement systems. (CON/2009/46), paragraph 3.2.1, p.3.



### *Ancillary missions stemming from the SFD*

Since the enactment of the law of 10 November 2009<sup>7</sup>, the BCL has been in charge of the official database of the payment and securities settlement systems which are notified to the European Commission. Accordingly, the BCL published the 2009 database in the Mémorial B<sup>8</sup> and on its internet website.

The BCL also became<sup>9</sup> the competent authority in respect of: (i) providing notification of any decision involving the initiation of an insolvency proceedings against a Luxembourg participant to the relevant member States' competent authorities, and (ii) receiving from another member State or third party country, appointed to that effect, any notification of a decision initiating insolvency proceedings taken by the relevant judicial or administrative authority of that member State or third party country vis-à-vis their participation to a system.

### *Exercise of the oversight mission*

The new article 27-3 of the organic law provides that "For the purpose of performing the missions set out in Article 2(5), the Central Bank may ask payment systems and securities settlement systems to provide any information relating to the operation of those systems which is necessary in order to assess their efficiency and safety and may also ask issuers of payment instruments to provide any information relating to those payment instruments which is necessary in order to assess their safety.

The Central Bank shall be authorised to perform on-site visits in order to collect the information referred to in paragraph 1. It shall coordinate with the Commission de surveillance du secteur financier to this end."

Such a new provision should, thus, enable the BCL to efficiently implement its oversight mission with respect to payment and securities settlement systems, by requiring, from these systems and issuers, any relevant information and by conducting on-site controls as deemed necessary.

### *Payment instruments concept*

The payment instrument concept (as defined in article 1 paragraph 26 of the law) also covers any device which enables the transfer of electronic money. Indeed, electronic money is considered both a payment method<sup>10</sup> as well as a transfer of funds in the context of a payment transaction<sup>11</sup>. Any device or procedure which enables a payment transaction based on electronic money should, therefore, constitute a payment instrument pursuant to the PSD. The European Commission affords a broad and open interpretation in relation to different technologies that are used to initiate payment transactions. As such, the European Commission states that the concept of payment instrument covers "physical devices (such as cards or mobile phones) and/or set of procedures (such as PIN codes, TAN codes, digipass, login/password, etc) which a payment service user can use to give instructions to their payment service provider in order to execute a payment transaction<sup>12</sup>". This

7 See article 110 of the law dated 10 November 2009.

8 Mémorial B n°101 of 28.12.2009.

9 Pursuant to article 113.1 of the law dated 10 November 2009.

10 See article 1 paragraph 17 of the draft law, which incorporates article 1.3.a) of the directive 2000/46/EC referred to above: "electronic money institution": an undertaking or any other legal person, other than a credit institution as defined in Article 1, point 1, first subparagraph (a) of Directive 2000/12/EC which issues means of payment in the form of electronic money".

11 See article 1 paragraphs 23 and 31 of the law.

12 See Your questions on PSD, Payment services directive 2007/64/EC, p.31, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/payments/docs/framework/transposition/faq-2009\\_01\\_27\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/payments/docs/framework/transposition/faq-2009_01_27_en.pdf)

aspect is important not only in order to assess the scope of competence of the BCL with respect to payment instruments, but also to ensure an enhanced legal certainty of all relevant players. Indeed, the provisions regarding payment instruments shall apply, unless express derogation, to any instrument enabling a transfer of electronic money<sup>13</sup>.

### 3.3.1.3 Regulatory power of the BCL

By inserting a new paragraph 1 in article 34 of the organic law of the BCL, the law of 24 October 2008 amending the organic law of the BCL has granted a regulatory power<sup>14</sup> to the BCL in accordance with the new provision included in the Constitution. In 2009, the BCL issued four regulations<sup>15</sup>. Regulations n°2, 3 and 5 aim at transposing some monetary policy acts of the ECB within the Luxembourg legal framework.

Regulation BCL 2009/N°4, dated 29 April 2009, is of particular interest, given that it seeks to specify the mission of the BCL with respect to the supervision of the general liquidity as granted by the law of 24 October 2008, referred to above. As underlined by the Government in the preamble of the law of 24 October 2008, "the regulation of liquidities is of particular importance for the Central Bank, since it can, together with solvability requirements and intervention as lender of last resort, (i) avoid a chain of defaults in the markets, and (ii) limit systemic risks in the future". Regulation 2009/4 states the principles and basic procedures for the prudential liquidity supervision by the BCL; it defines the scope and provides a general framework for the exercise of the liquidity supervision and it defines the market participants' general obligations in terms of management of the liquidity risk<sup>16</sup>. It is intended to be completed by specific regulations.

### 3.3.1.4 Independent auditor's mandate

The law of 10 November 2009 referred to above also specifies the appointment process of the independent auditor (article 124). The BCL Council proposes an independent auditor to the Governing Council in accordance with the procedure prescribed by the Statutes of the ESCB and the ECB. Once the authorization procedure at European level is completed, the auditor is appointed by the Government in Cabinet. The auditor's mandate is five years.

### 3.3.1.5 Share capital increase of the BCL

Under a grand-ducal regulation, dated 22 May 2009, taken on the basis of article 4 (1) of the organic law, as amended by the law of 24 October 2008, the share capital of the BCL was increased up to EUR 175,000,000 by capitalization of reserves in an amount of EUR 150,000,000.

### 3.3.1.6 Legal rate of interest

The rate was fixed at 4.25 per cent for the year 2009 by a grand-ducal regulation of 22 January 2009 (published in the Mémorial A no. 8 of 27 January 2009, page 88). For 2010, this rate has been fixed at 3.50 per cent by a grand-ducal regulation of 5 February 2010 (published in the Mémorial A no. 24 of 23 February 2010, page 480). It is observed that this rate does not correspond to a specific rate of reference of the money markets.

<sup>13</sup> See article 52 paragraph 5 of the law.

<sup>14</sup> For more details, see BCL's annual Report 2008, paragraph 3.3.1.1.

<sup>15</sup> For a complete list, see annex 5.2 below.

<sup>16</sup> For a detailed analysis, see "Financial Stability Report 2009 of the BCL", pages 13-27



### 3.3.2 External committees

#### 3.3.2.1 The Economic Committee (Comité de conjoncture)

The Economic Committee acts on the basis of the legislation which authorises the government to take measures to stabilise employment. Thus, the Committee provides a framework for examining business cycle fluctuations in the country's economy and for monitoring economic policy issues as they arise.

The BCL takes part in the Economic Committee for two reasons: it collects information on Luxembourg's cyclical position and it contributes to the Committee's work by monitoring and commenting on the latest developments in the monetary domain and in the financial sector.

#### 3.3.2.2 The Consumer Price Index Commission (Commission de l'indice des prix à la consommation)

The BCL has an observer status at the meetings of the Consumer Price Index Commission (CPIC), which is in charge of advising and assisting STATEC in the preparation of consumer price indices. This Commission also issues technical opinions on the design of the monthly consumer price index and supervises the compliance of this index with national and European regulations. The BCL presents its inflation projections for Luxembourg to the CPIC and provides explanations related to BCL work in the area of consumer prices.

#### 3.3.2.3 The Committee "Comptabilité bancaire"

The committee "*Comptabilité Bancaire*" set up by the Commission de surveillance du secteur financier (CSSF), aims at ensuring an exchange of views between the supervisory authority, the BCL and players of the Luxembourg financial centre. The committee is consulted during the preparation of CSSF circulars concerning bank accounting issues.

Committee members met once in May 2009 to discuss various aspects of IAS / IFRS, the new regulation of capital adequacy, financial reporting (FINREP) and common reporting (PRC) defined by the "Committee of European Banking Supervisors". In this context, the committee discussed the consolidation: IFRS versus CRD (Capital Requirements Directive) concerning national discretion, the link between taxonomy and FINREP IFRS taxonomy and the definition of retail banking.

#### 3.3.2.4 The Higher Council for Statistics of Luxembourg

The Higher Council for Statistics carries out advisory functions on behalf of the national statistical institute of Luxembourg (STATEC) and is mandated to provide appraisal on the STATEC's annual programme.

The BCL contributes in two ways to the work of the Higher Council for Statistics: on the one hand, it provides its opinion on the documents elaborated during meetings and submitted to it and, secondly, it provides the STATEC with data collected on the financial centre to enable the latter to achieve its work programme.

#### 3.3.2.5 The XBRL Luxembourg asbl

XBRL (eXtensible Business Reporting Language) is a financial reporting standard based on XML, which main objective it is to improve the correct character, transparency and efficiency of internal and external reporting. The non-profit association XBRL Luxembourg asbl includes some twenty

organisations using XBRL and / or providing services related to XBRL technology. The role of the association is to promote the XBRL standard within Luxembourg's economy.

The BCL, as a founding member of XBRL Luxembourg, will analyse the potential to adopt the XBRL standard in the context of the statistical reporting it collects from companies of the Luxembourg financial sector.

### **3.3.3 BCL Committees**

#### **3.3.3.1 The Statistics committee**

The Statistics Committee has been set up by the BCL to ensure a constant dialogue between the actors of the financial centre that are subject to statistical reporting requirements and the main users of this data. The Committee is regularly consulted on issues relating to the statistical reporting in the financial sector.

#### **3.3.3.2 The Monetary and banking statistics consultative commission**

The Monetary and banking statistics consultative commission has been set up by the BCL to enhance the dialogue between reporting agents and the central bank. The commission also ensures the efficiency of the reporting procedures in the area of monetary and banking statistics. During 2009, the Commission has been informed and consulted on various conceptual issues in relation with the revision of statistical data collection for credit institutions, the security-by-security reporting for credit institutions as well as the revision of the statistical data collection on interest rates applied by credit institutions.

#### **3.3.3.3 The Balance of payments statistics consultative commission**

The Balance of payments statistics consultative commission acts as an advisory group and assists the BCL in its mission to collect data in the areas of balance of payments and international investment position. The Commission ensures an efficient organisation of data collection in order to avoid redundancies and to limit the collection charge for the entities requested to submit statistical data.

#### **3.3.3.4 The Economic and financial statistics consultative commission**

The Economic and financial statistics consultative commission has been set up by the BCL in order to ensure an efficient organisation of the data collection in the area of economic and financial statistics as well as to enhance the dialogue between financial intermediaries and the central bank. During 2009, the Commission has been informed and consulted on various conceptual issues in relation with the revision of statistical data collection and the security-by-security reporting for undertakings for collective investment.

#### **3.3.3.5 The Lawyers' committee (Comité des Juristes)**

The Lawyers' Committee provided assistance on BCL's legal activity in particular on the new regulation relating to the supervision of liquidity and on the scope of the Bank's legal privilege provided for in article 27-1 of its organic law.

### 3.3.3.6 The Market operations commission

The Market operations commission focused its discussions on the impact of the financial market crisis on the monetary policy operational framework.

### 3.3.3.7 The Operational Crisis Prevention Group (OCPG)

The Banque centrale du Luxembourg has established the Operational Crisis Prevention Group (OCPG) with the intention to enhance the financial sector's preparation with regards to operational crises. Members include ABBL, CSSF and critical market participants.

The group met twice in 2009.

### 3.3.4 BCL Research Programme

In 2008, the BCL established a Research Programme fixing five main research domains:

- Business cycles and long-term trends;
- Competitiveness and productivity;
- Labour markets;
- Monetary analysis, credit and financial markets;
- Other subjects.

These main themes were confirmed in 2009 and provided a framework for research at the BCL as well as helping to raise its visibility. Research output is regularly disseminated through BCL publications and also published in peer-reviewed scientific journals (Applied Economic Letters, Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv).

BCL researchers also regularly present their work in many seminars and workshops organised by the Eurosystem and its research networks (Wage Dynamics Network, Household Finance and Consumption Network), as well as those organised by other institutions such as the Bank of England, the Nederlandsche Bank, the University of Amsterdam, the Vienna Institute of Demography and the European Association of Labour Economists (EALE). The BCL is also a member of several more academic research networks including the EABCN, SUERF and CEPR.

Lastly, the BCL developed several collaborations with external researchers in order to benefit its research projects and to share its competences. The Perfilux project has continued in collaboration with the Luxembourg School of Finance (University of Luxembourg) and STATEC, financed in part by the Fonds National de la Recherche. BCL research on the labour market was also presented at a workshop organised by the Ministry of economics during a visit of OECD experts.

### 3.3.5 Training at the BCL

The BCL furthered its cooperation with the University of Luxembourg, where a staff member gave lectures on institutional aspects of the Eurosystem. Other staff members gave economics lectures at the Catholic University of Louvain and at the European campus of the Miami University (MUDEC) in Luxembourg.

The BCL is shareholder of the *Agence de Transfert de Technologie financière* (ATTF). This agency, established in 1999 at the initiative of the Luxembourg government, shares with mostly emerging countries Luxembourg's know-how in financial matters. In July 2009, in the context of a study visit, the BCL held a lecture for twenty members of the Banking and Finance academy of Uzbekistan.

The BCL organises presentations on the Eurosystem and the BCL for high school students (usually in the course of their last two years) following economics classes. Classes are greeted, along with their economics teachers, at the auditorium of the Monterey building, for an educational and interactive presentation of the organisation and on the missions of the BCL and the Eurosystem. Immediately after the presentation, students are invited to test their knowledge with an interactive quiz. Other topics can also be tackled according to teachers' requests and students' questions.

### 3.3.6 External events

#### 3.3.6.1 Conferences and international meetings

The Governor of the BCL attended following meetings:

- IMF spring meeting held in Washington in April and World Bank yearly meeting held in Istanbul in October;
- Half-yearly informal ECOFIN Council of Ministers;
- 16th annual meeting of Governors of French-speaking central banks, held in Nice in May. Around thirty delegations from Africa, North America, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific participated in the meeting. Working sessions were devoted to the financial crisis and its impact on economies;
- 270th ECB Governing Council meeting held in Luxembourg on 2 July. The Governing Council usually meets at the ECB's headquarters in Frankfurt, twice a month. However, two meetings a year are held in a central bank of the euro area, following a rotation system;
- Celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Central Bank of Malaysia in February. Outside this event, the Governor of the BCL gave a speech at the 2nd Islamic Financial Services Board Public Lecture on Financial policy and stability;
- Conferences organised by the association the Bridge Forum Dialogue ([www.forum-dialogue.lu](http://www.forum-dialogue.lu)) chaired by the BCL's Governor and composed of representatives from European institutions and bodies and the nations' resources;  
The first was held in March, under the chairmanship of Mr Vassilios Skouris, President of the Court of Justice of the European Union and Vice-President of the association. Mr Hans-Gert Pöttering, former President of the European Parliament, gave a speech on the topic: "The European perspective: values, politics, the economy";  
The second, held in April and chaired by Mr Mersch, dealt with the topic: "Food economics in today's world". Speeches were given by Dr. Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and Mr Jean-Louis Schiltz, Minister for cooperation and humanitarian action;
- Round table in May, on the topic "Never again: the shape of a new global financial architecture", organised by the independent group of experts Friends of Europe in Brussels;
- International symposium on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Bank Al-Maghrib, organised in Marrakech on "The role of central banks and the IMF in detecting and managing financial crises: lessons of recent experience";
- Symposium organised by the Federal Reserve of Kansas City in Jackson Hole, in August. This event has been held every year since 1978. Discussions dealt with "Financial stability and macroeconomic policy";
- At the occasion of a ceremony organised in March at the BCL, the Governor received the first special postage stamp "Ten years of euro" from Mr Marcel Gross, Director General of the Post and Telecommunications Company;
- Inauguration in June of the numismatic exhibition entitled "Roman coins – Trier coins" by the BCL's Governor and by Mr Athanasios Orphanides, Governor of the Central bank of Cyprus. This exhibition illustrated the evolution of coinage over different periods of the Roman Empire, emphasizing the importance of the city Augusta Treverorum which accommodated for more than two centuries the most active monetary workshop of the Empire;



### 3.3.6.2 Bilateral relations

- Working visit in Laos on 15 and 16 February 2009, with Mr Phouphet Khamphounvong, Governor of the Laos Republic Bank, in order to further bilateral cooperation between the two central banks;
- Working visit at the BCL of Mr Nur Hassan Wirajuda, Foreign Affairs Minister of the Republic of Indonesia, on 5 March 2009;
- Working visits:
  - On 23 March, at the Central bank of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in order to discuss the possible extension of cooperation of the two institutions in the field of training;
  - On 25 March, at the Central Bank of Montenegro (CBM), in order to discuss with Mr Ljubisa Krgovic, Governor of the CBM and the members of the Executive Board, about different topics such as the consequences of the world economic crisis on both countries, the situation in the financial and banking sectors, and the possible future cooperation between the two institutions;
  - On 26 and 27 March, at the Central Bank of Albania;
- Working visit of Mr Somphao Phaysith, Vice Governor of the Laos Republic Bank, at the BCL on 12 May;
- Working visit of Mr Somsavat Lengsavat, Deputy Prime Minister of the Laos Republic, accompanied by a High-level delegation, on 25 May at the BCL;
- From 10 June to 13 June, successive working visits:
  - To Slovenia: after a meeting between Mr Mersch and Mr Mitja Gaspari, Minister in charge of development and European affairs, the Boards of Slovenia's and Luxembourg's central banks held their annual meetings to take stock of their cooperation agreements;
  - To Kosovo: working visit with Mr Hashim Rexhepi, Governor of the Central Bank of Kosovo. The BCL's Governor also met Mr Ahmet Shala, Economics and finance minister of Kosovo. The BCL was represented by Mr Romain Schintgen, member of the BCL Council, on the occasion of the festivities for the tenth anniversary of the Central bank of Kosovo in Pristina on 30 October.
  - To Bulgaria: celebration of the 130th anniversary of Bulgaria National Bank.
- General Assembly of the Bank of International Settlements on 29 June: Mr. Mersch and Mr. Taoufik Baccar, Governor of the Central Bank of Tunisia, signed a bilateral cooperation convention.
- On 1 July, outside the Governing Council in Luxembourg, signature of a cooperation convention on the CashSSP IT application, with the Governors of the central banks of Belgium, Finland, Ireland and the Netherlands. This platform aims at supporting daily central cash activities and to handle in a secure way the cash relations between financial institutions and their respective central bank. On 2 December, the Bank of Cyprus joined this agreement.
- Annual meeting between the BCL and the National Bank of Belgium on July 17 in Luxembourg;
- Visit of Mr Jean-Baptiste Compaore, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of West African states, along with a delegation, at the BCL on 13 October;
- Conference organized at the BCL on 3 November and chaired by Mr Mersch, on the topic "Financial stability and banking regulation in Germany and Turkey". It gathered Mr Axel Weber, Governor of the Bundesbank, and Mr Durmus Yilmaz, Governor of the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, together.

### 3.3.6.3 Relations with the Luxembourg Parliament

On 10 November 2009, the Governor of the BCL presented the opinion of the Bank on the state budget motion to the Financial and Budget Commission of the Luxembourg Parliament.

## 3.4 COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

### 3.4.1 Annual reports

As required by its statutes the BCL publishes each year a report on its activities. This report is published in French and in English.

### 3.4.2 Periodical Bulletins

In 2009, the BCL has published 3 Bulletins and 1 Financial Stability Review. (see 5.3.1)

### 3.4.3 Working papers

In its working papers the BCL publishes the results of research conducted by its staff. Each working paper contains a non-technical summary. (see 5.3.3)

### 3.4.4 The BCL's website

The BCL 's website, [www.bcl.lu](http://www.bcl.lu), provides information about the Bank's activities and services, its internal organisation, as well as statistics about Luxembourg and the Eurosystem. It also contains links to the ECB's website and to other central banks of the ESCB. Based on its search engine and its configurable mailing list, the site offers to each visitor a clearly structured information package, suitable for professionals as well as private individuals.

All BCL publications can be viewed and downloaded from the Publications and the media section. Hard copies are available from the BCL on request, as long as stocks last.

The website is bilingual: French and English. Publications are displayed in their original language (English, French and German).

Overall, 136 464 persons visited the website in 2009 (137 337 in 2008), with 15 520 237 hits. The numismatic programme witnessed more than 20 600 downloads (15 000 in 2009).

The numismatic products electronic shop ([eshop.bcl.lu](http://eshop.bcl.lu)), directly accessible through the BCL website, has attracted more than 53 500 visitors in 2009.

### 3.4.5 The library

The library, opened in 2005, uses the ALEPH library management system, as do a number of other central banks. This system is electronically linked with other public libraries in Luxembourg.

The library is open to the public upon request, either by telephone (+352 4774 4275) or by email ([bibliothèque@bcl.lu](mailto:bibliothèque@bcl.lu)).

### 3.4.6 Press relations

The Governor of the BCL gave 14 interviews to the international and national press. Six press conferences were held, on the occasion of the presentation of the BCL 's financial accounts, of the Annual Report and of the BCL's Bulletins, the Financial Stability Review and the numismatic programme. Three seminars for representatives of the press, during which the authors of the Bulletin's analyses presented their contribution, were organised. In 2009 the BCL also proposed training sessions for the members of the national press. In total, 95 press releases were published.

