

**‘Connecting the World, Linking People’
Liege, candidate for the International Expo 2017 !**

On November 23rd, Belgium officially presented its bid to host the International Expo in 2017 before representatives of 157 member States at the General Assembly of the *Bureau International des Expositions (BIE)* in Paris.

Liege, the third largest city in Belgium (600,000 inhabitants), has been chosen by Belgium due to its exceptional location, making an Expo accessible to all. Its strategic positioning in the heart of Europe and its ambition to create sustainable, environmentally-friendly infrastructures are the main features of its bid.

“Over the past 15 years, this city has undergone a remarkable economic and urban transformation, an Expo would be a milestone for this change. Liege 2017 would symbolise the successful reconversion of a city which has stood for hundreds of years,” underlined **Yves Leterme, Prime Minister of Belgium**.

“Belgium is proud to be the only European candidate to date. Both of the country’s governments and all political affiliations have given their support to Liege’s bid. 33,000 global citizens are already backing us!” added **Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance**.

The original, topical and universal theme ‘Connecting the World, Linking People’, illustrates Liege’s desire to bring to life a theme where human creativity is used for common, harmonious progress. From scientific, technological, economic and social advances to developments in healthcare, education, culture, transport, communication and also environment.

The Expo aims to be a unique, thought-provoking space of exchange and reflection on important subjects. Liege wants to stimulate dialogue between all countries and

global socio-economic players, involving all population groups in a discussion on how best to use connectivity to create a better world. Leaving a lasting heritage, locally and globally is important to Liege – not only changing mentalities but becoming a motor of change.

This theme has attracted the support of H.E. Adama Samassékou, senior African dignitary and member of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development: *“I chose to present the theme for Liege Expo 2017 as it is essential to start to bridge the digital gap in the world. ITC, a major global issue, presents a fundamental challenge for the developing world.”*



An International Exhibition is a major event.

Held approximately every five years, alternated with World Exhibitions, an International Exhibition lasts for three months and is the chance for the host country and city to invite the whole world to exchange on subjects of global importance.

The intergovernmental organiser, the **Bureau International des Expositions (BIE)**, supervises the calendar, candidacy, selection process and the organisation of World Exhibitions and International Exhibitions.

To date, **157 states** are members of the BIE (Belgium has been a member since 1931). These member states will select the organising city that will host the Exhibition in 2017 at the General Assembly on the 23rd of November 2012. Each state has one vote (voting is by secret ballot).

International Calendar of Exhibitions:

2012: International Exhibition, Yeosu – South Korea

2015: World Exhibition, Milan – Italy

2017: International Exhibition, presently competing:

Liege – Belgium, and Astana – Kazakhstan

2020: World Exhibition. Competing: Izmir – Turkey, Ayutthaya – Thailand, Sao Paulo – Brazil, Ekaterinburg – Russia and Dubai – United Arab Emirates.

Calendar for Liege Expo 2017’s Candidacy:

November 2011: submission and official presentation of the bid to the BIE

March-April 2012: BIE’s fact-finding mission in Belgium

September 2012: Liege hosts an international forum on the theme

November 22nd 2012: BIE names the successful city at the General Assembly in Paris

Jean-Christophe Peterkenne, CEO of Liege Expo 2017: *“With the evolution of information technology, mankind now possesses fantastic tools to improve the quality of life for men and women across the five continents. New instruments are now in the hands of those working in the **health, education, culture and environmental sectors, as well as global mobility.** Liege hopes to affirm its position as a world citizen by organising an international event which provokes original thought on these themes.”*

The first International Expo dedicated to ITC and connectivity

Looking back over the history of mankind, the development of communication methods and information technology is astonishing. Their use has intensified and diversified thanks to networks such as the internet or mobile phone technology. This reality opens new perspectives for mankind's links with the environment, at a personal and community level, as well as locally and internationally. The development of communication technology and the multiplication of digital tools help human beings to flourish as individuals as well as increasing solidarity between mankind.



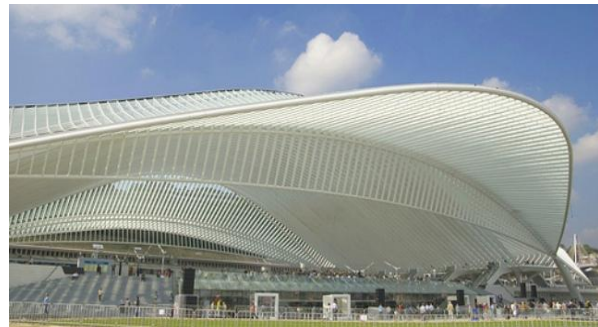
Liege Expo 2017 will seek to answer the following question :

How can technology that connects users all over the planet be harnessed for human development?

The exhibition **‘Connecting the World, Linking People’** will provide an occasion for the international community to engage and exchange on this rarely broached topic.

An exceptional location, accessible to all

Belgium naturally finds itself at the centre of global exchange. Hosting numerous international institutions, drawing tourists from all over the world Belgium offers the highest levels of infrastructure in many sectors such as healthcare, logistics and research. Easily accessible, only a few hours from international and Belgium airports, the city can also be reached by train from the UK.



The city of Liege, third largest city in Belgium (600,000 inhabitants), is the economic capital of Wallonia. Over the past decade, the city has put in place an ambitious reconversion strategy. Step by step, the city and surrounding area are being transformed in order to develop new economic activities which promise to be lucrative in the future (logistics, scientific research...). In parallel to this, an urban transformation has been taking place driven by education, culture and mobility. Liège-Guillemins station, designed by Santiago Calatrava, situated at the junction between Paris and Frankfurt perfectly typifies this evolution.

“For more than 10 years, Liege has been undertaking an urban and economic redevelopment project, leaning on its position at an international crossroads and on its wealth of culture. The renovation of the city and its region can be seen in the current and future investments by the private and public sectors on an international scale” underlines **Willy Demeyer, Mayor of Liege.**

The city of Liege has chosen the site of the Coronmeuse to host the future International Exhibition. This northern gateway to the city, boasts numerous features starting with its strategic position at the crossroads of European transport networks.



The newly designed Expo site will be subsequently reconverted into leading eco-district, a model of sustainable development bringing together buildings with high energy performance, excellent access and numerous green spaces. The exhibition's buildings will be constructed using sustainable methods. Once transformed after the exhibition, the site will be 'given back' to citizens who will find housing and services in this new eco-district. All facilities will comply with eco-architectural guidelines.

Bringing together a forward-looking universal theme and a local desire for sustainable development, Liege Expo 2017 has already received the support of over 33,000 global citizens.

CONTACTS



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