

**START YOUR
BUSINESS**



PRESS RELEASE

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Start Your Business

ING, Belgacom, Electrabel and Systemat have joined forces to develop www.startyourbusiness.be (link), a new website that aims to provide initial step-by-step guidance for new entrepreneurs running start-ups and recently established companies.

Since this initiative involves more than just setting up a new website – and because Start Your Business is a long-term project – the partners have decided to put their cooperation on a more permanent footing by setting up a non-profit association.

The Start Your Business non-profit association sees the four partners pooling their expertise in start-up services. Thus the website (which focuses on the specific needs of start-ups, based on a market survey) provides not only workshops, management tools, information sessions at trade fairs and so on, but also the best commercial deals available on the market.

In many cases, the main asset available to start-ups and start-up entrepreneurs is time – time they can usefully spend visiting a website which features answers to all their questions, tools providing them with the best possible conditions for launching their company and a forum to communicate with other start-ups and start-up entrepreneurs. The goal is to actually support new entrepreneurs by providing them with personalised services.

ING, ‘the Bank for Start-ups’, offers start-up entrepreneurs not just comprehensive and unique three-stage coaching before (especially via the ING Business Plan), during and after the launch of their business, but also highly appealing products and services developed specially for them (see www.ing.be/starter).

Together with its partners from Start Your Business, ING was already running start-up workshops, focusing in particular on energy and telecommunications, alongside its services for start-up entrepreneurs. A website specifically for start-ups complements this perfectly.

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Belgacom and Proximus are participating in this initiative to help SMEs and self-employed people to forge ahead. Telecommunications are crucial to a company's success. A new self-employed person or SME needs to have the right communication tools on hand from the outset to ensure a quick and efficient launch. Being the ultimate one-stop shopping partners, start-ups can contact Belgacom and Proximus for any telecommunications solution: mobile or landline phone, internet and data, phone exchanges, e-mail solutions and security solutions. The start-up also receives individual advice in the Bizz Corners of Belgacom retail outlets and a 'start-up pack' with a list of the most appropriate telecommunications solutions.

Electrabel, a subsidiary of the GDF SUEZ Group, hopes that this joint initiative will make it *the* energy partner for start-ups so that they can make the right decisions in terms of Rational Use of Energy. This is because the consumption behaviour and investments of today will quickly have a positive effect on both the energy bill of tomorrow and on reduction of the CO₂ emissions of every start-up, in line with Electrabel's sustainable development commitments.

Among other facilities, Electrabel offers starters the Energy Start-up Service which provides special deals and guides start-ups through the energy measures they have to take to make their lives easier so that they can concentrate fully on their new activities.

Systemat with its product Popsy has always prided itself on supplying efficient, financially viable and user-friendly software to SMEs and the self-employed. Today, more than ever, new companies need to have effective administration tools. Start Your Business is an attractive initiative both for start-ups and for Systemat, which is running a promotion to coincide with the launch of Start Your Business to give thousands of new companies the chance to use a free version of Popsy and also the Popsy helpdesk for one financial year.

For more information, please contact:

ING Belgium: Press Office, tel. +32 (0)2 547 26 37, pressoffice@ing.be, www.ing.be

Belgacom: Haroun Fenaux: tel. +32 (0)2 202 48 67 or +32 (0)476 60 03 33;

Jan Margot: tel. +32 (0)2 202 85 01 or +32 (0)475 58 50 37; Frédérique Verbiest: tel. +32 (0)2 202 99 26 or +32 (0)476 60 60 10

Electrabel: Anne-Sophie Hugé, tel. +32 (0)2 518 60 20, anne-sophie.huge@electrabel.com, www.electrabel.be

Systemat: Frédérique Jacobs, tel. +32 (0)479 429 636, frederique_jacobs@hotmail.com

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