

PRESS RELEASE

How US companies are anchored in the Belgian community

Brussels, December 2, 2015 – US companies in Belgium make a positive contribution to the communities in which they operate, according to a [new report](#) released today by the American Chamber of Commerce in Belgium (AmCham Belgium).

“US companies demonstrate their commitment to Belgium, not only through their high value-added economic activities, but also through their deep engagement in local communities,” said **Marcel Claes**, Chief Executive of AmCham Belgium.

KEY FINDINGS

AmCham Belgium surveyed US companies in Belgium in order to gauge their community impact, on a project-by-project basis, and found that:

- 81% of projects are organized in the company’s **immediate surroundings**;
- Projects are well-matched to **societal needs**, with a particular emphasis on youth issues, and are increasingly linked to the company’s **core business** (33%);
- Companies make in-kind and/or monetary **donations** in 87% of reported projects, while employees are also engaged in the community through **volunteering** (76%), often on company time;
- Community engagement is part of the organizational culture, as demonstrated by the high-level of involvement from **senior management** (78%).

PROJECT SHOWCASE

AmCham Belgium’s new report features an illustrative map, showcasing 15 examples of community projects supported by US companies in Belgium. The projects represent different thematic areas – disability, health & sports, poverty, education, etc. – located throughout Belgium. Most of these projects are carried out with local partners, as is the case between Coca-Cola and Special Olympics Belgium.

“Coca-Cola is a global brand, but our activities are very local. 70% of the beverages we sell in Belgium are produced here. As a business, we can only thrive if we contribute to sustainable local communities. That’s why we invest in community projects on a long-term basis. One example of this is our over 25-year-old partnership with Special Olympics Belgium, which culminated in a substantial support for the organization of the Special Olympics European Summer Games in Antwerp in September 2014. In this, unified sports – bringing together athletes with and without a mental disability – was and remains a logic focus area, given our strong sports heritage and the inclusiveness

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of our brand,” said **Jean Eylenbosch**, VP Government Relations, Coca-Cola Enterprises, and **Jeroen Langerock**, Communications Director, Coca-Cola Services.

Other US companies have initiated their own community projects. MSD, for example, promotes health literacy in Belgium with a country-wide awards program. “MSD is a global healthcare company, and as such, our mission goes beyond the development, manufacture and commercialization of pharmaceutical products and innovative solutions. We are very proud of our footprint in Belgium, and it is our responsibility to activate, encourage and reward healthcare actors at all levels that contribute to better healthcare for millions of Belgian patients. This is why we launched in 2013 the ‘Well Done – MSD Health Literacy Awards,’ an initiative which aims to recognize and promote health literacy projects and thus help citizens make sound judgments about their health. A lack of health literacy contributes to health inequalities, because the population groups most at risk of low health literacy are also known to have the poorest health outcomes. We believe that partnership and collaboration are key to bring significant changes in society for the well-being of all,” said **Patricia Massetti**, Managing Director, MSD Belgium & Luxembourg.

The below table provides the list of all US companies whose projects are showcased in the report, and their local partner, where applicable.

US Company	Local Partner
AbbVie	Red Cross
AIG	Les Fauteuils Volants
Baltimore Aircoil Company	Hestival
Cargill	(Own initiative)
Cisco	Greenlight for Girls (g4g)
Coca-Cola	Special Olympics Belgium
Dell	Transplantoux
Dow Corning	ESoP
FedEx Corporation	Child Focus
IBM	BON (Brussels Onthaal)
ManpowerGroup	FOREM and Actiris
MasterCard	YouthStart
MSD (Merck & Company)	(Own initiative)
Temco/Euroclean	Belbos
UPS	L'Espoir

Download the new publication [The Importance of US Companies in Belgium: Community Impact](#) from our website

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About AmCham Belgium

The American Chamber of Commerce in Belgium (AmCham Belgium) is a dynamic non-profit organization dedicated to improving business and investment opportunities for the US-Belgian business community. With approximately 900 US groups in Belgium, AmCham Belgium plays a pivotal role in an evolving business environment by focusing on three key areas: advocacy, knowledge-sharing and networking.

To learn more about AmCham Belgium, visit www.amcham.be

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