

**Gaming forum popular**

More than 250 members of the ITC community attended the LU-CIX Online Gaming Forum in mid-December, forcing organisers, who'd expected 60 attendees, to rapidly rent a tent to accommodate the crowd. The event was held in the wake of announcements that several firms working in the area of computer video games had decided to set up here. The event featured a professional fair, and a "speed-dating" business match-making session. Economy Minister Jeannot Krecké congratulated LU-CIX for its impact on the development of the ITC sector. The forum also heard speeches from representatives of RTL and



The bigger-than expected attendance took place in rented tent

Photo: Steve Eastwood

Microsoft about their online games strategies, as well as a round-table

featuring experts on the new sector. Business Review will look more

deeply at this growing sector in next month's edition.

**ADEM reform passed**

The Chamber of Deputies passed the reform of employment administration ADEM on 15th December, over the strong objections of the opposition parties. The reform changes ADEM's status into that of an "agency" and gives new job titles to those working with the unemployed. The new "professional counsellors" are to work more closely with job-seekers, carrying out detailed interviews to assess their qualifications and skills and to improve their employability, as well as work more closely with employers. ADEM will also play a larger role in

setting up training opportunities. The agency recently added 35 new staff and three new regional branches (Differdange, Dudelange and Wasserbillig) to help it carry out its new mandate. Opposition legislators said the reform didn't go far enough in solving the growing problem of structural unemployment, where healthy job creation by itself is insufficient to cut the unemployment rate. The parties described the reform as more of a change of vocabulary than the change of philosophy heralded by the government.

**A legal question of language**

Deputies have been unable to agree on how to respond to a European Commission decision that Luxembourg has violated European law by requiring lawyers practicing here to speak the three official languages. The commission has launched infraction proceedings against this country, finding the obligation to be indirect discrimination. Most deputies defended the role of Luxembourgish in court but they were

unable to agree on implementing the commission's proposed solution of splitting the profession of lawyer into consulting lawyers - who don't often need Luxembourgish - and pleading lawyers, who need the language in court.

However, deputies were able to agree on 15th December on a law allowing lawyers here to organise themselves under

a civil or commercial entity, as a "legal person". The change has been under consideration for four years. Luxembourg has had several reasons for moving forward with the law. First to follow neighbouring countries like Belgium and France. Second, to get into line with European Community rules allowing lawyers to exercise their profession in EU member states other than where they qualified. Lastly, the

change is to ensure the competitiveness of Luxembourg in attracting foreign law firms. The law still forbids lawyers to undertake any commercial, industrial or craft-based activity or act as a company director or manage a for-profit-company.