



PRESS RELEASE – For immediate release

## Nine-Month Sales Up 5.6% at Constant Exchange Rates

**MARCY-L'ETOILE, October 20, 2004** – bioMérieux, a global leader in the field of *in vitro* diagnostics, today announced its sales for the first nine months of 2004:

(in € millions)	<b>9 months 2004</b>	9 months 2003	% Change	<b>% Change (at constant exchange rates)</b>	<b>Q3 2004</b>	Q3 2003	% change	<b>% Change (at constant exchange rates)</b>
<b>Net sales</b>	<b>687.6</b>	674.5	+1.9%	<b>+5.6%</b>	<b>227.0</b>	227.3	-0.1%	<b>+3.0%</b>

Net sales amounted to €688 million in the nine months ended September 30, 2004, an increase of 5.6% from the year-earlier period at constant exchange rates. Reported growth was 1.9%, reflecting the appreciation of the euro against most other currencies and especially the US dollar.

Growth was led by strong performance in clinical applications with the VIDAS®, bacteriology and molecular biology lines, and in industrial applications. On the other hand, the hemostasis business, that accounts for less than 6% of sales, fell short of targets due to increased competitive pressure.

The company continued to drive sustained growth in its installed base, with an increasing proportion of placed instruments.

The slowdown in growth at September 30 also reflects the breakdown of 2003 sales, which were significantly stronger in the second half than in the first.

- **Geographically**, all of the regions improved at constant exchange rates:

(in € millions)	<b>9 months 2004</b>	9 months 2003	% Change	<b>% Change</b> (at constant exchange rates)	<b>Q3 2004</b>	Q3 2003	% change	<b>% Change</b> (at constant exchange rates)
Europe <sup>(1)</sup>	<b>394.2</b>	380.9	3.5%	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>127.5</b>	124.2	2.7%	<b>2.5%</b>
North America	<b>180.6</b>	187.0	-3.4%	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>60.2</b>	64.8	-7.0%	<b>0.7%</b>
Asia-Pacific	<b>65.6</b>	61.3	7.0%	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>22.6</b>	21.6	4.4%	<b>9.0%</b>
Latin America and India	<b>47.2</b>	45.3	4.2%	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>16.7</b>	16.7	0.1%	<b>8.7%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>687.6</b>	674.5	1.9%	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>227.0</b>	227.3	-0.1%	<b>3.0%</b>

(1) Including the Middle East and Africa

- ♦ **In Europe**, sales growth was led by good results in Italy, Germany and Spain. Yet, this good performance was impacted by developments in France, where bioMérieux holds major positions. France accounts for nearly one-third of European sales, but local growth is currently limited as the market awaits the introduction of the new instruments.
  - ♦ Sustained growth in **North America**, at constant exchange rates, reflected continued expansion:
    - In the clinical segment, with sales of the VIDAS® immunoassays range and molecular biology sales.
    - In industrial applications, despite lower than expected instrument sales, especially to tissue banks.
  - ♦ The 10.8% gain at constant exchange rates in the **Asia-Pacific region** primarily reflected the good performance in China and more recently in Japan, where bioMérieux has returned to growth, particularly in bacteriology.
  - ♦ Business was brisk in **Latin America** (up 10%) and **India** (up 19%).
- **Clinical applications** rose 5% in the first nine months, while **industrial applications** gained 10.1%, both at constant exchange rates.

(in € millions)	<b>9 months 2004</b>	9 months 2003	% Change	<b>% Change</b> (at constant exchange rates)	<b>Q3 2004</b>	Q3 2003	% change	<b>% Change</b> (at constant exchange rates)
Clinical applications	<b>600.5</b>	592.5	1.3%	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>198.1</b>	199.2	-0.5%	<b>2.7%</b>
Industrial applications	<b>87.1</b>	82.0	6.3%	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>28.9</b>	28.1	2.9%	<b>5.9%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>687.6</b>	674.5	1.9%	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>227.0</b>	227.3	-0.1%	<b>3.0%</b>

- Growth in the **clinical segment** was driven by good results in the VIDAS® immunoassay line and in the bacteriology and molecular biology lines.
- **In the industrial segment**, reagent sales rose quickly despite stiffer competition, while instrument sales were virtually unchanged.

In a more competitive environment, bioMérieux expects to end 2004 with sales growth in line with that of the past two years, excluding the currency effect.

## Next release

bioMérieux will release its full-year 2004 sales on January 19, 2005.

## ABOUT bioMérieux

bioMérieux is a leading international diagnostics group that specialises in the field of *in vitro* diagnostics for clinical and industrial applications. bioMérieux designs, develops, manufactures and markets systems (i.e. reagents, instruments and softwares) used in:

**Clinical applications:** the diagnosis of infectious diseases such as hepatitis, HIV, tuberculosis and respiratory illnesses, as well as pathologies such as cardiovascular diseases and cancer, based on the analysis of biological samples (such as blood, saliva or urine); and

**Industrial applications:** the microbiological analysis of food, environments (such as water and air), surfaces and pharmaceutical and cosmetic products, based on the analysis of product or environmental samples. bioMérieux has pioneered this business and is world leader.

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