



PRESS RELEASE – **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **First-Quarter 2005 Sales Stable** at Constant Exchange Rates

**MARCY L'ÉTOILE, FRANCE – April 20, 2005** — bioMérieux, a global leader in the field of *in vitro* diagnostics, today announced its first-quarter 2005 sales.

Net sales for the three months that ended March 31, 2005 amounted to €227.6 million, virtually unchanged, at constant exchange rates, from the €229.3 million reported in first-quarter 2004.

The year-on-year stability mainly reflects the unusual nature of first-quarter 2004, when sales rose an especially strong 8.9% at constant exchange rates due to a combination of favorable factors: acquisition of new blood culture instruments by blood banks in the United States and invoicing on major tender wins in China and in Latin America.

(in € millions)	<b>Q1 2005</b>	Q1 2004*	% change	<b>% change</b> (at constant exchange rates)
Europe <sup>(1)</sup>	<b>135.3</b>	133.3	+1.5%	<b>+1.0%</b>
North America	<b>56.7</b>	59.7	-5.0%	<b>-1.1%</b>
Asia-Pacific <sup>(2)</sup>	<b>22.2</b>	22.7	-1.8%	<b>-0.1%</b>
Latin America	<b>13.4</b>	13.6	-1.8%	<b>-1.7%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>227.6</b>	229.3	-0.7%	<b>+0.2%</b>

\*Adjusted to new International Financial Reporting Standards

(1) Including the Middle East and Africa

(2) Including India, formerly reported with Latin America

### **Sales performance varied from one region to another.**

- **In Europe**, which accounted for 59% of business, sales edged up 1% at constant exchange rates, while positions were strengthened in bacteriology, led by the very encouraging launch of the VITEK®2 Compact. France returned to growth, with sales gaining 2% for the quarter. Germany and Spain pursued their expansion, while Italy and the United Kingdom were adversely affected by stiffer competition in the immunoassay market and, in the UK, in the coagulation segment.
- **In North America** (25% of the total), sales contracted by 1.1% at constant exchange rates, due to the high prior-year comparatives mentioned above. The BacT/Alert® blood

culture range reported a good performance, in clinical applications, as did the VIDAS® range (up 14%) in Physician Office Labs and in emergency rooms with the D-Dimer parameter. On the downside, however, sales were hurt by delivery delays due to the tighter quality controls implemented following FDA inspections in 2004.

- In the **Asia-Pacific region** (10% of the total), the turnaround in Japan was confirmed by a 4% increase in sales, led by bacteriology. Business in China was impacted by the deferral to the second quarter of invoicing on a number of instrument tender wins.
- In **Latin America**, (6% of the total), double-digit increases in sales were recorded in Argentina and Chile. Brazil and Mexico, however, did not benefit from the especially large number of tenders won in first-quarter 2004.

In the area of applications, **the clinical segment** rose by 0.8%, while **the industrial segment** declined by 3.8%, both at constant exchange rates.

(in € millions)	<b>Q1 2005</b>	Q1 2004*	% change	<b>% change</b> (at constant exchange rates)
Clinical applications	<b>199.3</b>	199.5	-0.1%	<b>+0.8%</b>
Industrial applications	<b>28.3</b>	29.8	-4.9%	<b>-3.8%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>227.6</b>	229.3	-0.7%	<b>+0.2%</b>

\*Adjusted to new International Financial Reporting Standards

- **In the clinical segment**, bacteriology benefited from the successful launch of the VITEK®2 Compact, whose sales were in line with forecasts. The VIDAS® immunoassays line continued to deepen its penetration of the Physician Office Labs segment in the United States and Germany. VIDAS sales lagged in Europe, however, ahead of the launch of VIDIA®. Competition was again fierce in coagulation.
- **In industrial applications**, the decline in sales was due to the above-mentioned sharp drop in blood culture instrument sales in the United States.

The Company is maintaining its objective of **full-year 2005 net sales** on a par with 2004 at constant exchange rates.

### **Forthcoming events**

June 9, 2005: Annual Meeting of Shareholders

July 20, 2005: Second-quarter sales announced

## About bioMérieux

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

**Clinical applications:** the diagnosis of infectious diseases such as hepatitis, HIV, tuberculosis and respiratory illnesses, as well as pathologies such as certain cardiovascular diseases and certain cancers, 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 product or environmental samples.

bioMérieux is listed on the Eurolist by Euronext (Paris) (symbol: BIM; ISIN code: FR0010096479).

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