



European Association of Development Agencies  
Association Européenne des Agences de Développement

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# EURADA NEWS

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## EDITORIAL

The question of sustainable development was addressed on several occasions in conferences and seminars organised by EURADA or in cooperation with third organisations.

Will the adoption end of January of the Energy-Environment package by the European Commission really give market opportunities to the enterprises and territories which will be able to innovate in products and services allowing the respect of the standards and objectives assigned to the 27 Member States ?

The question is no longer to take into account the impact on the environment of the business support policies, investment in infrastructure and even the rehabilitation of derelict industrial sites, but rather to create regional ecosystems for the innovation and commercialisation of products and services in connection with energy savings, the production of alternative energies and the reduction of CO<sup>2</sup>.

When analysing the ranking of the 100 most environment friendly world enterprises listed on the stock exchange established by the CNBC-European Business magazine in its January/February 2008 edition, big gaps appear between the territories accommodating leading enterprises in their sectors. Out of the 56 enterprises having as their core business products and services in connection with the environment or alternative energies, 13 of them are American, of which 5 from California. The geographical breakdown of the European companies of this sample is as follows :

UK: 15 D: 6 DK: 3 CH: 2  
FIN, B, NL, I, IRL, S, E : 1 each

The problem of the cost of energy and environment might also give rise to a prospective study which would be entitled "The territorial impact of the deglobalisation of industrial production due to transport costs and constraints linked to environmental protection".

## IMPORTANT DATES

14/15.4.08	EBAN Congress 2008 – Arnhem (NL)
4/5/6.6.08	WIC La Baule 2008
2/4.7.08	INSME Annual Meeting 2008 – Guangzhou (Canton) (CN)
18/19.9.08	CNER Annual Congress – Dunkerque (F)
1/2.10.08	8 <sup>th</sup> CEEC Congress – Rzeszow (PL)
19/22.10.08	IEDC Annual Conference in Atlanta (USA)
20/21.11.08	<b>Agorada 2008+</b>

## LIFE OF THE NETWORK

### SNAPSHOT OF THE SEMINAR ON REGIONAL MARKETING OF 24.1.08

The round table discussions organised with the EURADA members and representatives of Ernst & Young and IBM Plant Location mainly concerned the following subjects :

- the relations between RDAs and national FDI agencies;
- the new marketing tools;
- the difficulty to create a common image and a coherent message for a territory;
- the importance of the quality of life for attracting foreign investors;
- the attraction and retention of talents as well as the reverse brain drain;
- the phases or cycle of the location decision process;
- the sectorial specialisation (cluster) of the promotion campaigns;
- RDT and innovation as intangible assets of a territory and their impact on the attractiveness of enterprises and talents.

The following subjects were identified for future exchanges of experience between the members :

- attraction, retention and reverse brain drain;
- marketing European regions in the BRIC Countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) and other emerging countries;
- the valorisation of the University-Enterprise relationships in clusters as factor of attractiveness of a region;
- How to coordinate the branding of a territory in order to reconcile the messages of different target audiences (tourists, students, researchers, skilled workforce, enterprises) according to different types of needs: production, logistics, back offices, research centres, ...) ?
- Which strategy to target the enterprises operating in the high added-value services sector?
- How to maximise the exploitation of the national, regional and urban networks to attract foreign investors?

It was suggested to study the feasibility of a regional marketing guide on the basis of case studies covering the various situations which the development agencies have to face in their regional marketing and branding approach.

### CENSUS OF THE DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF 25.1.08

1. Adoption of the minutes of the General Assembly of 15 November 2007.
2. Adoption of the 2007 Annual Report (cf. Eurada-News Nr 285, 8.2.08).
3. Cooptation of Lucyan PAPIERNIK of IGRETEC Charleroi (B) and of Stanislaw GINDA of the Bielsko-Biala RDA (PL) as members of the Executive Committee until 31 December 2008.

4. Adoption of the structure of the agenda of the **Agorada 2008** event on the topic "Towards better RDA-University Partnerships for Regional Economic Development".
5. Exchange of views on the documents preparing the Round Table of Practitioners in Economic Development on the cohesion policy post 2013 (February 2013) and the PPP meeting of the RDT regional strategy (end of April / early May 2008).
6. Creation on an experimental basis of a EURADA resource centre in Timisoara for RDAs of the Central and Eastern European Countries.
7. Tentative to obtain a quota of EURADA members participating in the Education/ Business Forum organised by DG Education and Culture on 28/29 February 2008 (cf. e-mail dated 4.2.08).
8. Launching a reflection on the way to take advantage at regional level of the EU 2 X 20% climate change plan (cf. editorial).

### DISCUSSION ON THE COHESION POLICY POST 2013

During the exchange of views between the members of the Round Table of Practitioners in Economic Development and DG Regio of 22 February last, the following topics were addressed :

- ✓ vision of the future cohesion policy;
- ✓ objectives of the future cohesion policy, namely the balance between the objectives linked to solidarity and those relating to the competitiveness and attractiveness of regions;
- ✓ coordination of the sectorial policies having a territorial impact;
- ✓ evaluation as a management instruments;
- ✓ administrative simplification, incl. in the field of State aid control and flexibility;
- ✓ concept of thematic programme of Community interest;
- ✓ relaxing the n+2 rule for projects/programmes focusing on intangible investment;
- ✓ integration of the rural development policy in the cohesion policy and use of the CAP budget for cultures with an energy potential and the agro-food sector;
- ✓ balance between grants and loans and other financial engineering mechanisms;
- ✓ strengthening the role of the regions in Community fund management;
- ✓ better coordination of the actions eligible for ESF and ERDF at regional level.

With regard to the European Commission's working programme, here is the indicative calendar :

- June 2008 : 5th mid-term report
- September 2008 : Green Paper on the territorial cohesion, namely the challenges for regions in the field of demography, globalisation (exposure of the sectors of the socio-economic fabric), sensitivity to energy prices and impact of climate change
- 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2008 : results of the foresight studies launched by DG Regio
- End 2010-Early 2011 : 5th periodical report on cohesion laying down the big balances of the cohesion policy post 2013

The document adopted by the Round Table's members was posted on DG Regio's web site as the contribution of EURADA to the consultation on the future of the cohesion policy. It is the subject of Eurada-News Nr 287, 12.3.08.

### SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 6 MARCH 2008

The 2007 financial year showed a carry over of €78,436.

Mrs Laura de Esteban (IMADE) replaces Félix Bellido in the Board of Directors.

The cooptation of Lucyan Papiernik (IGRETEC Charleroi, B) and Stanislaw Ginda (Bielsko-Biala RDA, PL) in the Executive Committee until 31.12.08 was adopted.

The next statutory election will take place during the General Assembly of 20 November next.

### CHRISTIANE BOM AWARDS 2008

During **Agorada 2008**, Jacques Evrard, President of EURADA, has handed over the Christiane Bom Awards to :

- ✓ Nicola De Michelis of DG Regio
- ✓ Pierre Guénant and Patrice Lefeu of the Europe+ Foundation WIC La Baule

Nicola De Michelis is the fourth representative of the European Commission to be rewarded, after Mikel Landabaso (DG Regio), Timo Summa (DG Enterprise and Industry) and Dimitri Corpakis (DG Research).

### WIC LA BAULE 2008 – AWARDS

Three awards will be given this year to development agencies having attracted a significant investment on their territories.

The participation form is available on <http://www.labaulewic.org/awards/best-investment-europe.asp>

See also the enclosed brochure.

## REALISATIONS OF THE MEMBERS

### CO-MAKERS ROMANIA SUBCONTRACTING NETWORK

Global sourcing is becoming more and more important in the fast changing European automotive and machine building industries. The entry of Romania to the European Union has created new opportunities for Western European companies for outsourcing and subcontracting industrial activities to Romania. Western Romania is located ideally close to the well developed transport infrastructure of Hungary.

*This is one of the main reasons why the Dutch company Co-makers International and West Regional Development Agency Romania decided to open a joint office in Timisoara, under the brand "Co-makers Romania Subcontracting Network", in August 2007.*

For the kick-off of the activities of Co-makers Romania and the first activity for the Co-makers Romania Subcontracting Network a matchmaking event was organised in December 2007 in Timisoara. This matchmaking event was the highlight of a three day mission organised by Co-makers Romania which consisted of a delegation of 9 buyer companies from the Benelux.

For further information, contact :

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### LAUNCH OF WEST REGION FORESIGHT EXERCISES ON ICT AND AUTOMOTIVE SECTORS WITHIN THE BEFORE PROJECT

The Kickoff Conference of the Regional Foresight Exercise for the ICT and Automotive Sectors in West Romania Region took place on 28 February 2008. The event was organized by the Regional Development Agency of West Romania in the framework of the FP6 Project *Benchmarking and Foresight for the Regions of Europe* (BeFore). BeFore is an EC-funded initiative coordinated by Castilla y Leon that aims at carrying out foresight studies of policies and support instruments for RTD- intensive and high value-added sectors. West Romania decided to focus on ICT and Automotive.

The conference opened to public consultation the two foresight projects proposed by the RDA and its specialized consultant - Manchester Institute of Innovation Research (MIOIR): a foresight exercise on the theme of developing a research-driven automotive cluster in West

Romania and one foresight study focusing on identifying a list of key technologies around which the service portfolio of the future ICT Pole of Excellence would be defined.

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## S M E

### SMALL BUSINESS ACT

DG Enterprise and Industry launches a public consultation regarding the adoption of a "Small Business Act" for Europe. This Act's main aim will be to set principles and measures to improve the framework conditions for European SMEs. This consultation is part of the process to come up in June 2008 with a proposal from the EU Commission.

Members can of course send their own contributions to this consultation. To take part in this consultation go to the SBA dedicated web site

<http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch>

### ACCESS TO FINANCE

#### Microcredit

Further to the communication on microcredit (cf. Eurada-News Nr. 283, 7.12.07) the European Investment Bank and the European Commission are studying the modalities of a pilot action endowed with €40 million which would target the non banking operators active in the area. This initiative should be launched end of 2008 or early 2009.

#### Small Business Act

Within the framework of the "Access to Finance" part, the Commission would like to address the concept of "Mezzanine", above all for small amounts, and the concept of techniques to improve the quality of the demand for finance (hands-on management, by-measures, investment readiness), insofar as the European Union is able to bring an added value in this matter (which one ?).

#### SME financing market

According to the European bank associations, the subprime crisis does not affect the volume of money available for SMEs. However, the cost of credit should increase in the short term as well as the guarantee requirements.

Note by the Secretariat: I would be interested in any information explaining why banks have considered as less important the risk linked to subprime than the risk linked to loans to innovative SMEs. Thanks in advance.



## STATISTICS

### INNOVATION SCOREBOARD 2007

As a reminder, this yearly exercise carried out on behalf of the European Commission aims at comparing the performance of the EU member States with the one of third countries (USA, Japan, Switzerland, Israel, Norway, ...).

The gap between Europe and the USA is progressively closing.

The EU Member States are grouped in four categories:

- The innovation leaders, with Sweden as the most innovative country, and other countries including Denmark, Finland, Germany, Israel, Japan, Switzerland, the UK and the US.
- The innovation followers include Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.
- The moderate innovators include Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Italy, Norway, Slovenia, Spain and Australia.
- The catching-up countries include Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovakia. Turkey is currently at a lower level of performance.

The 2007 report presents data on the input/output relations and on non technological innovation.

Document (only in English) available on request from the Secretariat.

### REGIONAL GDP IN 2005

Eurostat has just published the 2005 GDP figures of the European regions (see enclosed document).

Compared with the 2004 data, the gap is stable between the region with the highest GDP level (Inner London: 303) and the region with the lowest level (North-East Romania: 24).

Groningen (NL) and Hovedstaden (DK) are accessing the Top 15 of regions with the highest GDP level, replacing Bremen (D) and North-East Scotland (UK) which are out.

Vest (RO) is no longer on the list of regions with the lowest GDP level. Switokrzyskie (PL) is just coming.

## STATE AID

### NO OBJECTION TO AN AID BY ADVANTAGE WEST MIDLANDS

O.J. L45, 20.2.08, contains the text of the European Commission's decision to accept for a five-year period maximum, a £3 million aid granted by Advantage West Midlands (UK) to Investbx with a view to creating an electronic stock exchange.

You will find below the description of the objective of Investbx, the budget and duration of the measure, as well as the Commission decision.

#### **Objective of Investbx**

The primary objective of the measure is to create a means for small and medium-sized enterprises<sup>(3)</sup> in expansion stage<sup>(4)</sup> (hereinafter 'SMEs') in the West Midlands region of the United Kingdom to raise equity gap finance<sup>(5)</sup>. It will bring together SMEs, service providers and investors to make it easier for companies to raise money by creating a practical forum for issuing and exchanging new shares. Investbx will also provide and facilitate the provision of services at market rates to SMEs to enhance their ability to raise funds.

The measure intends to overcome the market failure for provision of equity financing between GBP 0,5 million and GBP 2.0 million for SMEs in the West Midlands. The UK authorities declared that the ceiling for fundraising will be GBP 2 million per annum during the initial five-year stage in order to focus the measure tightly on combating the market failure in SME fund raising. They are concerned, however, that the market failure is changing over time as private equity is increasingly drawn to bigger scale projects. The CBI report<sup>(6)</sup> estimates the market failure between GBP 0,25 million and GBP 3 million. A GBP 2 million ceiling might therefore, according to the UK authorities, create real barriers to the success over time of the Investbx project, excluding certain SMEs which may require a higher level of investment. If this proves to be the case, AWM will gather the evidence and notify an amendment to the Commission asking for the ceiling to be raised.

Investbx aims at providing a bridge between private investors, including business angels and venture capitalists, to whom it will provide an additional exit opportunity, and more senior established markets. Investbx will prepare investees for the listing on the more senior established markets, namely the Alternative Investment Market (hereinafter 'the AIM') and the London Stock Exchange (hereinafter 'the LSE').

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(3) The definition complies with Commission Recommendation of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and mediumsized enterprises (OJ L 124, 20.5.2003, p. 36).

(4) SMEs in expansion stage are SMEs as defined in point 2.2 (h) of the Risk Capital Guidelines (Community Guidelines on State Aid to Promote Risk Capital Investments in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, OJ C 194, 18.8.2006, p. 2).

(5) Equity gap finance refers to the investments in the equity gap range of GBP 0,5 to 2 million.

(6) Confederation of British Industry: *'Improving access to finance — Enabling the enterprise revolution'* (July 2006).

### **Budget and duration**

A government body, the West Midlands Regional Development Agency, ('AWM'), will grant Investbx funding of up to GBP 3 million for a period of at most five years. The amount may be lower and/or the period may be shorter if the project becomes self-sustainable. Investbx will use this grant to cover its investment and other start-up costs that may not be covered by the revenues of its activity. Investbx will use the grant according to a financial plan, which projects an increasing number of SMEs to be served by Investbx over the initial five-year period (totalling 47 by the end of the five-year period), and foresees an increasing revenue generation and lowering use of the grant for loss compensation until, in five years at the latest, Investbx breaks even.

The projections foresee a part of the grant to serve as a reserve. After this period, Investbx will repay the remaining unused funds to AWM and AWM will either sell shares of Investbx on the market through an open and non-discriminatory public tender or close it down.

### **Commission Decision**

#### *Article 1*

The aid which the United Kingdom is planning to implement in the form of a grant of GBP 3 million in favour of Investbx is compatible with the common market within the meaning of Article 87(3)(c) of the Treaty.

Implementation of the aid is accordingly authorised.

#### *Article 2*

The United Kingdom shall submit an annual report on the implementation of the aid, which will include the following elements:

- the number of SMEs for which capital was raised,
- the volume of capital raised for each SME,
- the volume of investment capital raised per type of investor, and
- financial accounts.

At the end of the fifth year after setting up Investbx the United Kingdom shall inform the Commission whether Investbx was sold successfully to private investors through a public open and non-discriminatory tender process or whether it was closed down.

Full text available on demand from the Secretariat.

**CALLS FOR PROPOSALS**

### **PROGRAMME OF DG ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY**

In addition to the expected projects of Europe Innova and Pro Inno Europe, further call for projects will be launched concerning :

- Eco-innovation : pilot and market replication projects  
Co-financing rate : 40%, 50%, 60% (large, medium or small enterprise)
- Social responsibility of enterprises  
1st quarter of 2008 – €510,000  
Co-financing rate : 50%

- European tourist destinations of excellence  
March 2008 – € 1,000,000  
Co-financing rate : 75% with a maximum of €58,000.

## EVENTS

### OPEN DAYS

Brussels, 6/9.10.08

Organised by DG Regio and the Committee of the Regions

The concept of Investors' Café will be implemented from 7 until 9 October. Interested regions can conduct discussions or have an exhibition stand there.

Timetable to prepare the Investors' Cafés :

- 31.3.08 Deadline for submission of proposals for seminars through [www.opendays.europa.eu](http://www.opendays.europa.eu)
- 19.5.08 Deadline for requesting a stand

Further information : [Elodie.Chevenier@cor.europa.eu](mailto:Elodie.Chevenier@cor.europa.eu)

As a reminder, the concept of Investors' Café enable representatives of regions and representatives of the business world to meet. There will be five thematic villages: Knowledge society, Health, Research-Innovation and talent attraction; Energy; Environment and transport.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN A RUBIK'S CUBE WORLD. HOW TO TURN GLOBAL TRENDS INTO LOCAL PROSPERITY

IBM Global Business Services – IBM Institute for Business Value

This document should interest all the persons working on the attractiveness of regions.  
Copy available on request from the Secretariat

## **ERM REPORT 2007**

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions has just published a report entitled "Restructuring and Employment in the EU: The impact of globalisation". The table of content is as follows :

### Introduction

- Chapter 1 Economic globalisation and labour markets
- Chapter 2 Evidence of offshoring in the European Restructuring Monitor
- Chapter 3 Future perspectives on globalisation and its policy implications
- Chapter 4 Mitigating negative effects of globalisation
- Chapter 5 Active labour market policy and displaced workers
- Chapter 6 Active labour market policies for trade-induced displacement
- Chapter 7 Social partners and relocation

The study shows among other things that between 2003 and 2005, 51.5% of the job losses resulting from delocalisations occur in the manufacturing sector, as against 8.3% in administrative and financial services, 4.6% in back offices, 11.7% in call centres, 7% in ICT support, 0.5% in research and 16.4% in other operational activities.

The document is available from the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions – Mr Willy Buschak – Fax. +353 1 282 42 09

## THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S WORKING PROGRAMME 2008

The 2008 working programme of the European Commission is structured around 2 types of initiatives : the strategic initiatives (12) and priority initiatives (48).

Regarding the major fields of interest of RDAs, we identified the following list with eight initiatives :

- White Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change
- Green Paper on European territorial cohesion
- Communication « Small Business Act (SBA) for Europe »
- Communication and Action Plan on Sustainable Industrial Policy (SIP)
- Sustainable Production and Consumption (SPC) Action Plan
- Green Paper on developing agricultural product quality policy
- Council Regulation – Review of the Less Favoured Areas Scheme
- Communication on anticipating and managing change

Also noteworthy is that the European Commission will continue its work for the adoption of a general block exemption regulation under the legislation on regional aid in favour of SMEs, R&D, environment, employment and training.

The following is a brief description of the challenges as well as the roadmap for each of the initiatives that have come to our attention.

### *Brief description of the initiatives*

<b>White Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change</b>	<p>Policy statement covering measures to ensure adaptation to climate change in a broad range of areas fundamental to the EU way of life (e.g. industry, agriculture, energy, fisheries, forestry, tourism, social policy), reduce their vulnerability, increase their resilience to the inevitable negative impacts of climate change and anticipate and accompany those changes.</p> <p>The objective is to avoid significant effects on human health, biodiversity and habitats, and on EU citizens' quality of life. Measures in the White Paper will also imply changes in existing Community policies.</p>
<b>Green Paper on European territorial cohesion</b>	<p>The objectives of this action are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to analyse from an institutional, political and operational perspective the way in which Member States understand and apply the concept of territorial cohesion. This work will be mainly based on questionnaires and analysis of operational programmes.</li> <li>• to provide a common definition of the concept and to propose possible tools for a better integration of this territorial dimension in the Structural funds and in some sectoral policies having a territorial impact.</li> <li>• to initiate an in-depth dialogue between Member States and the Commission.</li> </ul>

<b>Communication « Small Business Act (SBA) for Europe »</b>	<p>The Small Business Act for Europe will combine a mix of general principles (for example, specific treatment for SMEs in legislation according to 'Think Small First' principle, reduce obstacles to go cross border, improved access to EU programmes and increase SMEs access to innovation and growth), legal actions (for example proposal for a European Company Statute) and concrete actions to be taken both by Member States and the Commission (for example improving SMEs access to public procurement).</p>
<b>Sustainability package:</b> <i>a) Communication and Action Plan on Sustainable Industrial Policy (SIP)</i> <i>b) Sustainable Production and Consumption (SPC) Action Plan</i>	<p>The SIP/SCP initiative consists of an integrated strategy to help the EU economy become more environmentally sustainable and competitive. The strategy covers innovation, the internal market and the external dimension, including production and consumption patterns. This initiative will set out the approach, map out action plans for delivery and may include legislative proposals. A key element of the initiative will be the launch of a new product policy setting dynamic sustainability requirements, through an extension of the Energy-using products Directive, coupled with voluntary "performance standards". These will be leveraged internationally through international sectoral agreements. There will also be important measures to stimulate innovation (e.g. a European Environmental Technology Verification Scheme), stimulate smarter consumption (including through the revision of the Ecolabel) and measures to help Industry to make production processes more sustainable (including through the revision of the EMAS scheme and through the SME Environmental compliance programme) and initiatives towards more sustainable public and private procurement.</p>
<b>Green Paper on agricultural product quality policy</b>	<p>The Green Paper will explore ideas and options for farmers and producers who want to orient their production towards quality and thereby better meet consumer demand and add value to their production. The document will ask for contributions, views and proposals for developing measures and the appropriate legal framework to facilitate a shift to quality production and marketing. It will build on the outcome of the Food Quality Certification Conference (5-6.2.2007, Brussels) and respond to calls for EU agriculture to follow a path of greater market orientation. The Green Paper will also seek the views of stakeholders on the development of existing EC quality schemes for geographical indications and traditional specialities.</p>
<b>Council Regulation - Review of the Less Favoured Areas Scheme (delimitation of designated areas)</b>	<p>Support for Less Favoured Areas (LFAs) is granted with the objective to contribute through the continued use of agricultural land to maintaining the countryside, as well as to maintaining and promoting sustainable farming systems. It is a vital part of the Rural Development Policy. The initiative will result in an improved delimitation system for areas with handicaps, thus adjusting the measure to changed circumstances.</p>
<b>Communication on anticipating and managing change</b>	<p>The Communication will present a political overview of initiatives undertaken since the adoption of the Communication on Restructuring and employment (COM(2005) 120). The communication will launch a European partnership for the adaptation to change highlighting the role and responsibilities of main actors in change management (Commission, Member States, regions, sectors, enterprises, workers and social partners). The Communication will launch the second phase of consultation of European social partners on anticipating company restructuring.</p>

### ***Roadmaps of the initiatives:***

Further details on these initiatives (in English, except for the point entitled “Communication sur l’anticipation et l’accompagnement du changement”).

<p><b>White Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change</b> Expected date of adoption of the initiative: <b>November 2008</b></p>	<p><b>Context and problem definition :</b> This initiative was launched as part of the second phase of the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP) in October 2006 as envisaged in the Commission Communication "Winning the battle against climate change" (COM/2005/0035). Subsequently, ECCP working groups were established in early 2006 covering water, marine resources/coastal areas/tourism, human health, agriculture and forestry, biodiversity, regional planning/energy infrastructure/structural funds, urban planning, development co-operation, insurance, and national strategies of Member States (see <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/eccp_impacts.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/eccp_impacts.htm</a>). On this basis and the recent IPCC reports of early 2007, the Commission issued a Green Paper "Adapting to climate change in Europe – options for EU action" (COM/2007/0354). This is followed by a public consultation phase until end November 2007 which should lead to a White Paper on adaptation. Adaptation to the inevitable effects of climate change touches on almost all EU policies.</p> <p><b>Main problems identified:</b> Climate change impacts are becoming increasingly more severe, and represent a critical challenge in Europe, not just as an environmental issue affecting the economy and competitiveness of regions. Although actual planning measures are implemented at a local or regional level, in a number of areas there is a clear value added and there are economies of scale and scope for a European adaptation policy framework to be developed.</p> <p><b>Objectives of EU initiative :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist member states reducing their vulnerability and increasing their resilience against the negative impacts of climate change.</li> <li>• Making Community policies and support programmes 'climate proof'.</li> </ul> <p>The negative impacts of climate change could significantly jeopardise the results of Community policies (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, water, energy, transport). EU policies will have to anticipate the potential impacts of inevitable climate change and integrate the needs for adaptation in order to limit the potential damage. Adaptation to climate change is of geo-strategic importance for the EU as climate models predict in particular a significant increase in water scarcity in North Africa, Middle East, Black Sea region, and Central Asia.</p>
<p><b>Green Paper on European territorial cohesion</b> Expected date of adoption of the initiative: <b>3rd quarter 2008</b></p>	<p><b>Context and problem definition:</b> Debate on territorial cohesion has been going on since the beginning of the 90's with the publication of the Commission document EUROPE 2000. Member States reached a first consensus on this issue with the European Spatial Development Perspective adopted in 1999. The concept was first made operational at Community level with the INTERREG initiative and the European Spatial Planning Observatory Network.</p>



	<p>It received much attention during the constitutional debate with the addition of the word "territorial" to the economic and social cohesion. Since then, successive Presidencies have re-launched the discussion which culminated in the adoption by Ministers responsible for spatial planning and regional development of the Territorial Agenda in May 2007. In that context, Ministers invited the Commission to prepare a report on territorial cohesion.</p> <p>The Green Paper will therefore constitute the Commission's contribution to the Territorial Agenda, while simultaneously improving its internal thinking on an important dimension of the constitutional debate. It will further provide analytical and policy support for the assessment of the programmes co-financed under cohesion policy during the period 2007-2013.</p> <p><b>Main problems identified:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of a common definition of territorial cohesion in the Member States;</li> <li>• Diversity of governance systems (vertical and horizontal coordination) in the member states;</li> <li>• Low level of implementation of territorial cohesion issues in the programming under cohesion policy;</li> <li>• Lack of integration of the concept in sectoral policy designing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Objectives of EU initiative:</b></p> <p>In the new Constitutional Treaty, territorial cohesion will be added, beside economic and social cohesion, as a shared competence. In this context, the policy objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to provide for a common definition of the concept at EU and Member States level;</li> <li>• to report on how the concept is implemented in the governance systems and in the programming under cohesion policy in the Member States;</li> <li>• to propose possible operational tools to better integrate this dimension in cohesion policy and in the sectoral policies having a territorial impact;</li> <li>• to initiate an in depth dialogue between Member States (on the basis of the Territorial Agenda) and the Commission.</li> </ul>
<p><b>A Small Business Act for Europe</b></p> <p>Expected date of adoption of the initiative: <b>June 2008</b></p>	<p><b>Context and problem definition:</b></p> <p>In November 2005, the Commission launched Modern SME policy to integrate SMEs in the renewed Lisbon Partnership for Growth and Jobs (COM(2005) 551). The principal objective of the policy is to mainstream SMEs' concerns into EU and national policies by applying the "Think Small First" principle. In addition, the Commission set out five priority areas where Member States and the Commission have made efforts to create a better business environment and to encourage more people to become entrepreneurs. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) cutting red tape</li> <li>(2) improving SMEs' access to markets</li> <li>(3) promoting entrepreneurship and skills</li> <li>(4) improving SMEs' growth potential</li> <li>(5) strengthening dialogue and consultation with SME stakeholders.</li> </ol>

A Mid-term review on Modern SME policy (COM (2007) 592), adopted in October 2007, takes stock of the progress that the Commission and the Member States have made in implementing Modern SME policy. The Communication concludes that SMEs are now part of most Community policies, like competition, cohesion policy and research. The Commission has also increased the SME focus within major EU spending programmes for the period 2007-2013. The Commission has taken important steps towards creating a more SME-friendly regulatory environment by proposing, among others, ten fast-track actions in areas where such actions are likely to have the greatest impact, such as statistics and company law.

Member States have made efforts to deliver on the five priority actions requested by the 2006 Spring European Council, thus contributing to the implementation of the "Think Small First" principle throughout the European Union. In particular, the majority of Member States have established a one-stop-shop for setting up a company and most of them have reduced the time required to do so. Many of them have taken measures to develop entrepreneurial mindsets through education although progress is relatively slow.

Despite the progress made, more emphasis needs to be put on SMEs in the context of the next Lisbon cycle 2008-2011 to fully release their potential to grow and create new jobs. Therefore, the Commission will prepare a "Small Business Act" for Europe which will contain economically and politically significant initiatives tailored for SMEs according to the "Think Small First" principle. It will draw together SME elements present in various policies and laws, with the aim of reducing further the administrative burden on SMEs, increasing SMEs participation in EU programmes, increasing SMEs share in public procurement, improving SME access to standardisation and reducing obstacles to cross-border trade thus fostering further innovation and growth.

The Small Business Act was announced in the Commission discussion paper for EU Heads of State and Government at the Lisbon informal summit on 18-19 October. It is also part of the initiatives announced in the Communication "A Single Market review for 21st century Europe" (COM (2007) 724 final).

**Main problems identified:**

The roughly 23 million small and medium-sized enterprises which account for 99% of all business and represent two third of total employment have a strong potential to contribute to the growth and job creation in the EU. They encounter, however, proportionally more difficulties than large companies, for example in terms of coping with regulatory burden, running cross-border activities and accessing finance, innovation and skills. Also, the EU does not adequately exploit its entrepreneurial potential. 45% of Europeans state that they prefer self-employment compared to 61% in the USA. Europe generates fewer start-ups relative to the USA and after start-up enterprises demonstrate lower expansion rates. Overall, good progress has been made in implementing Modern SME policy.

However, there is still room for improvement, both at Community level and in the Member States, in particular in the following areas:

**The “Think Small First” principle and reducing the regulatory burdens**

Although the progress made in applying the “Think Small First” principle is encouraging, the objective is to make it a leading principle in all law and policy making that should be applied systematically when drafting new laws and policies. The benefits of better regulation need to be felt at all levels. It has been estimated that where a big company spends one Euro per employee because of a regulatory duty, a small business might have to spend on average up to ten Euros.

To cut the burdens for SMEs who are disproportionately affected by such burdens, there should be a presumption that SMEs will not be covered by administrative requirements of EU legislation unless there is a clear need to do so and the issue can not be better tackled at national, regional or local level. Where SMEs are covered by EU legislation, special measures should be designed to help them. More generally, the EU needs to find ways to cut existing burdens wherever circumstances allow.

**SMEs access to markets**

SMEs have more difficulties than large enterprises to engage in cross-border activities. Only 8% of them are involved in export. The main constraints to exports are the lack of knowledge of foreign markets, the import tariffs/custom duties in the destination countries and the lack of capital.

The Single Market is set to guarantee access for enterprises to a wide common market operating on a common set of rules. However, SMEs do not fully benefit from the opportunities provided by the single market largely because of the lack of information on business opportunities and applicable rules in another Member States.

**SMEs access to public procurement**

In 2005, EU SMEs obtained 42% of public procurement contracts above EU thresholds. More than half of these contracts were won by medium-sized enterprises which seem to be performing relatively well when considering their contribution in the economy. This however is not the case of micro- and small enterprises.

There is, therefore, scope for action to encourage Member States to make a better use of the possibilities the European public procurement Directives offer to promote SMEs’ participation in public tenders. Training and awareness-raising measures could be used to improve the skills level and knowledge on procurement procedures.

**SMEs’ access to finance**

Innovative and high growth SMEs typically look for venture capital that can finance fast growth and quick market entry. However, the fragmentation of the European venture capital market along national lines seriously limits the growth of early-stage capital for innovative SMEs. Venture capital funds limited to their national markets face problems reaching the critical mass they need to spread their portfolio risk and cover their costs. It also hinders

	<p>efficient specialisation. Facilitating cross-border operations is necessary to overcome this hurdle and increase the overall supply of early-stage capital. Many start-ups do not promise very rapid growth and are not interesting for venture capital investors. Other SMEs cannot access (further) debt financing and not wish to dilute ownership via equity finance. Transfer of businesses benefits from financing that does not change the ownership structure. In all these cases mezzanine finance can be a practical solution. To improve SMEs' access to this type of finance, the crucial range of demand is between €100 000 and €1 million, where supply is not sufficient. Most entrepreneurs require only small amounts of external financing to get started, but accessing small amounts is often difficult. The SME guarantee facility (SMEG) has provided guarantees for microcredit (loans up to € 25 000) for financial intermediaries. It is important to find ways on how to strengthen the microcredit schemes in the EU.</p> <p>The Lisbon strategy re-launched in 2005 has placed competitiveness firmly at the centre of political attention. It calls for action to deliver growth and competitiveness and to make Europe a more attractive place to invest and work. When working towards these objectives, the activities proposed are based mainly on Articles 95 (Internal Market), 157 (Competitiveness) and Title XVIII (Innovation and Research) of the Treaty. Although most of the factors which determine the environment in which firms operate are the responsibility of national, regional and local authorities, the Commission has a complementary role in supporting coherence, addressing certain market failures, ensuring consistency in implementation and establishing a level playing field for SMEs throughout the EU.</p> <p><b>Objectives of EU initiative:</b>        The objective of the EU initiative is twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to set out minimum requirements/common principles for the Member States and the EU in order to release the full potential of SMEs to create jobs, to grow and to contribute to economic and social cohesion in the EU.</li> <li>• to launch major initiatives with the aim to boost SMEs' competitiveness.</li> </ul> <p>To this end, it will address the existing market gaps, improve the transparency and flow of information and strengthen the exchange of good practices in the areas which are the most relevant to SMEs, such as access to markets, finance, and better regulation.</p>
<p><b>Communication and Action Plan on Towards a Sustainable Industrial Policy. An industrial policy for a competitive low carbon economy</b></p> <p>Expected date of adoption:  <b>March 2008</b></p>	<p><b>Initial impact assessment screening:</b>        There are four main reasons for acting at European level. First, the challenge is European. GHG emissions are a clear example of environmental externalities. The impacts of Climate Change are supported by everyone and they do not respect borders. Second, innovation support for low Carbon technologies, products and services varies among Member States, resulting in some countries improving rapidly their Carbon profile, while some others continue lagging behind in their production processes. Critical mass for research requires action at EU level. Third, internal markets for more energy efficient, low carbon products and services in</p>

	<p>particular for environmental industries hardly exist. In some Member States, the market penetration for these products is quite extensive, in some others quasi inexistent.</p> <p>Common minimum requirement and best performance benchmarks in terms of energy and environmental efficiency would facilitate the free circulation of products, provide the adequate uniformed information for consumers, create an internal market for this type of products and rewarding front-runners. Existing companies with a lead position in providing environmental services could play an important role in controlling environmental damage if the internal market was to function adequately. Fourth, international negotiations to facilitate level playing field for the different EU industries requires a common front to convince the partners from the rest of the world and achieve reduction of GHG emissions.</p> <p>Independent actions by Member States in these four areas would not only be less efficient but also would very partially contribute to the ambitious targets in GHG reduction, renewable energy and energy efficiency set by the EU 2007 Spring Council to respond to the worsening of the climate change situation. There is a need to complete the EU Climate Change and Energy package with a strong third pillar, the Sustainable Industrial Policy.</p> <p>This initiative aims at encouraging industry to attain the highest environmental profile through development and deployment of European low carbon, energy efficient technologies, products and services by removing obstacles, tackling market failures and furthering internal and external demand. It will comprise the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Innovation for low carbon, energy efficient technologies</li><li>• Make use of the internal market instruments to create a critical, dynamic mass of demand for low carbon and energy efficient technologies, goods and services, thereby reducing their cost through economies of scale</li><li>• Exploit first mover advantages to export EU know-how in a low-carbon economy to external markets and create a level playing field for industry through global sectoral agreements.</li></ul> <p>It will be complemented by the Action Plan on “Sustainable Consumption and Production”. This action plan will extend the scope of SIP to cover most environmental impacts. It will comprise activities in the field of leaner and cleaner production and smarter consumption.</p> <p>There is a strong synergy between both Action Plans. It is clear that the objective of a Low Carbon economy will not be achievable if there are no changes in terms of production and consumption patterns. On the other hand, the latter will not be reachable without innovation and a stronger market for better products. Actions in the international arena are essential for the rightly valorisation of the EU effort in all these fields.</p> <p>The initiative will be launched though an Action Plan in the form of a Communication. No regulatory legal act will be included at this stage although proposals for amending existing Directives such as the EUP Directive might be proposed. To promote the most</p>
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	<p>energy efficient, low carbon technologies, products and services, several options have already been identified: market based instruments, use of minimum performance standards coupled with advanced performance benchmarks and labels, facilitation of the emergence of key markets for advanced performing products, promotion of sectoral agreements, risk sharing funding facility for innovation, enhanced use of CIP and FP7, use of IPR.</p> <p>The Communication is geared mainly to national and Community authorities and enterprises, depending on the actions foreseen (for instance, public procurement, IPR, minimum performance requirements and advance performance benchmarks , innovation and export framework conditions to be dealt by public authorities whereas enterprises would need to act in the deployment of technologies). In terms of impacts, it will be necessary to analyse the economic and environmental effects of the Communication and its Action Programme. In the case of putting forward an amending Directive for the EUP Directive (scope, dynamism, incentives), a full impact assessment will be carried out.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Action Plan</b></p> <p>Expected date of adoption of the initiative: <b>February 2008</b></p>	<p><b>Context and problem definition:</b></p> <p>The decision to develop an SCP-Action Plan was taken by the Commission in its Proposal for a reviewed Sustainable Development Strategy (in Dec 2005. Furthermore, in June 2006, the Council adopted the renewed Sustainable Development Strategy and identified sustainable consumption and production as one of the seven key challenges, inviting the Commission to draw up an Action Plan on sustainable consumption and production. Finally, the Environmental Council in its conclusions on the Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources in October 2006 drew particular attention to the forthcoming SCP-Action Plan. The forthcoming SCP-Action Plan would help to identify and overcome barriers for SCP and to ensure better coherence between the different related policy areas, and to raise awareness among citizens and change unsustainable consumption habits. This Action Plan will be presented as a package including also the revisions of the Eco-label and EMAS Regulations, and a communication on Green Public Procurement. The SCP Action Plan builds further on existing SCP-related policies such as the Integrated Product Policy (IPP) Communication and the Thematic Strategies on Sustainable Use of natural Resource and Waste Prevention and Recycling.</p> <p>European and global consumption and production patterns exceed the carrying capacity of ecosystems, causing environmental degradation. Actions have to be taken at all levels, including the European level, according to their specific competencies.</p> <p>As a result of intra-Community and global trade, the environmental impacts related to consumption and production are likely to affect more than one country. Coordinated actions on SCP are thus needed at EU level in addition to initiatives at the international, national and local levels. This coordination will ensure policy coherence and synergies, and allow ensuring single market issues and simplification.</p>

	<p><b>Objectives of EU initiative:</b></p> <p>The main policy objective is to promote sustainable consumption and production by addressing social and economic development within the carrying capacity of ecosystems and decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation. Specific objectives of an EU policy on sustainable consumption and production should encourage to design or promote policies which lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• products that use less materials and energy and generate less emissions</li> <li>• production processes with material and energy efficient, low pollution technologies</li> <li>• consumption of eco-efficient products within the environment's carrying capacity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Green Paper on Agricultural Product Quality Policy</b>        Expected date of adoption of the initiative: <b>October 2008</b></p>	<p><b>Context and problem definition:</b></p> <p>Farmers and producers of agricultural products face increasing competition in the marketplace, (in general) downward pressure on farm-gate prices, and increasing demand from consumers for quality products. Those who can respond by improving quality and supplying quality markets should be able to better valorise production and improve their economic performance and prospects. The Green Paper is a first step towards a possible revision of policy. It will build on the conclusions to the Food Quality Certification Conference (Brussels, 5-6.2.2007) and will cover development of existing EU marketing standards and quality instruments for protected geographical indications, protected denominations of origin and traditional specialities guaranteed, as well as the increasing number of private and national schemes and initiatives.</p> <p>The Green Paper will seek views of stakeholders on any developments needed in the legal framework, such as labelling, as well as measures to assist farmers and producers both pre- and post-farm gate to improve quality production and successfully market product on the basis of quality characteristics.</p> <p><b>Main problems identified:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased competition and, in general, downward pressure on prices;</li> <li>• difficulties in communication by farmers about the quality attributes of products to final consumers through the food chain;</li> <li>• difficulties for farmers (usually small businesses) to make improvements in quality production and secure</li> <li>• access to markets for quality products; need to ensure consumer confidence in the increasing number and variety of claims concerning farm</li> <li>• production qualities of products and foodstuffs; need to ensure the smooth operation of quality schemes in the single market.</li> </ul> <p>EU action is justified as measures and the legal framework applicable to farmers fall within the Common Agricultural Policy and to ensure the functioning of the single market. However, much action should take place at the level of private operators, representative organisations, or regional and national authorities.</p>

	<p><b>Objectives of EU initiative:</b> The objectives of the Green Paper are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to seek views on the development of existing EU quality schemes;</li> <li>• to consult stakeholders on the challenge of improving quality production and marketing of agricultural product and foodstuffs.</li> <li>• to hear views on possible options for the evolution of agricultural product quality policy, marketing rules, and initiatives for development of measures and the legal framework.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Review of the method to delimit Less Favoured Areas (Article 37 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005</b> Expected date of adoption of the initiative: <b>December 2008</b></p>	<p><b>Context and problem definition:</b> Support for Less Favoured Areas (LFAs) is granted with the objective to contribute through the continued use of agricultural land to maintaining the countryside, as well as to maintaining and promoting sustainable farming systems. In accordance with Article 93 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 the current provisions with regard to the delimitation of LFAs shall be repealed with effect from 1 January 2010, subject to an act of the Council. There are doubts as to whether the criteria used to delimit LFAs are still justified. There seems to be a risk that criteria applied at present do not result in an optimal LFA delimitation which could have consequences for the success of the policy objective to maintain the countryside and to promote sustainable farming systems</p> <p><b>Main problems identified:</b> Support for LFAs has been in place since 1975. Over time the precise criteria to delimit LFAs has evolved. The Commission has been requested to update indicators used to delimit LFAs with a view to ensure the coherent application of delimitation criteria.</p> <p>Support for LFAs is common policy and is (partly) community financed. Therefore, the establishment of common rules is justified.</p> <p><b>Objectives of EU initiative:</b> The initiative is necessary to evaluate the delimitation criteria used in the Member States. If and to adjust them with a view to ensure a coherent delimitation of LFAs.</p>
<p><b>Communication sur l'anticipation et la gestion du changement (2ème phase de consultation des partenaires sociaux)</b> Expected date of adoption of the initiative: <b>Juillet 2008</b></p>	<p><b>Context and problem definition :</b> Différents facteurs tant internes (politiques communautaires) qu'externes (progrès technique, évolution de la demande, globalisation,...) créent le besoin d'adaptations rapides des entreprises européennes. Ces adaptations entraînent des restructurations ou des réorganisations au sein des entreprises dont certaines peuvent avoir des effets non négligeables dans certaines régions, secteurs ou catégories de travailleurs. Ce type de répercussions peut se traduire par un sentiment de rejet des adaptations à réaliser freinant d'autant les nécessaires changements de l'industrie européenne et dans bien des cas par une perte de capital humain. Il apparaît donc opportun de compléter les actions précédemment mises en oeuvre au niveau européen.</p>



Plusieurs actions passées de la Commission sont en relation avec la présente initiative. On peut citer la mise en oeuvre du Fonds européen d'ajustement à la mondialisation, la nouvelle période de programmation des Fonds structurels, la politique industrielle et bien évidemment la stratégie de Lisbonne. Plusieurs autres débats actuels peuvent également s'inscrire dans le cadre de la présente initiative comme celui sur la flexicurité. Concernant directement le sujet traité par cette initiative, la Commission a lancé en janvier 2002 une première phase de consultation des partenaires sociaux qui leur demandait de définir et de mettre en oeuvre des bonnes pratiques en matière d'anticipation, de préparation et de gestion des restructurations. En 2003, les partenaires sociaux ont présenté des orientations de référence dans ce domaine, toutefois sans mécanisme de mise en oeuvre et de suivi. En mars 2005, la Commission a adopté une Communication qui présentait une série d'actions permettant notamment de renforcer la coordination de nos politiques et de favoriser l'anticipation et l'établissement de partenariats en insistant auprès des partenaires sociaux qu'ils développent et mettent en oeuvre les orientations de référence 2003.

Les principaux problèmes identifiés résident dans la nécessité de réaliser des adaptations et de la peur que ces dernières peuvent générer, compte tenu des conséquences sociales qu'elles peuvent entraîner quand elles sont mal anticipées, préparées et gérées. Il est donc essentiel de pouvoir offrir un climat et des outils aptes à faciliter les nécessaires adaptations et de réduire les pertes en capital humain. Cette problématique a tout récemment été rappelée dans plusieurs études et documents émanant par exemple de l'OCDE, du FMI ainsi que de la Commission. Plus particulièrement, il importe de renforcer l'implication des partenaires sociaux au niveau européen sur cette question. A cet égard, on se doit de constater que les orientations de référence présentées par les partenaires sociaux en 2003 n'ont pas pu être adoptées formellement par l'ensemble de ces derniers par manque de mécanismes de mise en oeuvre et de suivi. En second lieu, l'anticipation, la préparation et la gestion des restructurations nécessitent une pleine coopération et coordination de l'ensemble des acteurs concernés (les entreprises, les travailleurs, leurs représentants et les autorités publiques (locales, régionales, nationales et européennes)) si l'on désire qu'elles soient socialement acceptables.

Or, on constate que trop souvent la coordination entre les différents acteurs est insuffisante lors de restructurations. L'établissement de partenariats ayant pour objet de favoriser la coopération, tel qu'en discussion dans le secteur automobile au niveau européen, constitue donc un autre besoin.

Les enjeux, les facteurs déclencheurs et les moyens de traitement dépassent les cadres nationaux. Plusieurs politiques communautaires mises en oeuvre depuis longtemps entraînent elles mêmes des restructurations (marché intérieur, politique commerciale, politique de concurrence,...). Tandis que d'autres permettent à la fois d'exploiter le potentiel positif des changements en cours (politiques industrielle, d'innovation et de

	<p>R&amp;D,...) ou de pallier à leurs impacts problématiques (politiques structurelle et d'emploi). La poursuite de l'action dans ce domaine respecte donc le principe de subsidiarité.</p> <p><b>Objectives of EU initiative :</b></p> <p>Les principaux objectifs de cette initiative sont :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• de faciliter les changements dans un contexte socialement acceptable et permettant de préserver le capital humain;</li><li>• de faire le bilan des actions développées depuis la Communication de mars 2005;</li><li>• de renforcer ou de mieux cibler les instruments précédemment mis en place.</li></ul> <p>Cette initiative permettra de renforcer des domaines stratégiques existants compte tenu du fait que l'objectif principal est de faciliter l'introduction des changements.</p>
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