



European Association of Development Agencies  
Association Européenne des Agences de Développement

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## EDITORIAL

The more seminars and expert meetings I attend, the more I can see a gap between knowledge, the perception of a potential to better harness this knowledge and the behaviour of public authorities when it comes to leveraging the outcomes of knowledge.

Among other societal issues, economic development provides a good example of this realisation. To illustrate this finding, I would like to examine the substance – or rather the lack thereof – of the latest EU Commission Communication on innovation, i.e. the one called “Putting knowledge into practice: A broad-based innovation strategy for the EU”.

Although the Communication recognises that any innovation strategy must focus on companies and their needs, the ten action proposals look like a catalogue of public intervention tools rather than a quantitative and qualitative response to business requirements. Additionally, its provision fails to reckon with the key success factors of any strategy, i.e. (i) leadership, (ii) governance, (iii) critical mass, (iv) development of high value-added services, (v) demand segmentation, (vi) a culture of evaluation, (vii) investment willingness and readiness and (viii) enthusiasm. All serving a vision.

In light of the above, what could have been the content of the EU Commission document?

- (i) Leadership. A Commissioner could be appointed to implement the innovation strategy and a DG Innovation set up to support, facilitate and possibly dictate the reforms needed to deliver the strategy.

This DG could include as many units as there are action points in the document and would be in charge of committing EIF funding. The fund itself would consequently be renamed European Innovation Fund and would be managed like a private company with the Council of Ministers as its Board of Directors meeting every month to evaluate progress with the implementation of the strategy.

- (ii) Governance. Rather than discussing how a number of Community and national policies may be able to support the innovation strategy, the document should have shown how policies have to *serve* the strategy. Indeed, the present document is a patchwork of existing proposals for measures and action (JEREMIE, IRC, EIC, EIF, etc.) and more or less vain wishes (European patents, maximising the potential of the Single Market, innovation-friendly public procurement, etc.).

- (iii) Critical mass. The document could have sought to recognise that a major financial effort alone could enable the development of gazelles and possibly protect them against takeovers by US equity. In its Communication, the EU Commission gloats that Skype – indirectly – managed to secure EU intervention but fails to underscore that the price paid by eBay to sustain its growth is almost equivalent to the total 2007-2013 budget of its CIP for innovation and competitiveness! How often do we hear that start-ups with great potential fail to secure equity in Europe when pooling for funding for the second or third time to raise €30-50 million?

The document does not discuss the absence of a European intellectual property market nor the possibility – and potential – of setting up a European institute in charge of leveraging research outcomes based on the results of research developed as part of RTD-

FPs and national efforts. Indeed, many applications fail to secure adequate funding to maximise exploitation in the Member States.

- (iv) High value-added services. The EU Commission could have sought to highlight services that are more innovative than the IRCs and even clusters. It should have examined the essential links in the innovation supply chain and its prerequisites, tools and delivery mechanisms. It could have settled the issue of European patents once and for all by declaring that all companies – regardless of national origin – would from now on only have to file for patents in two languages (English and another language of their choice) and that translation costs would be 100% deductible – since the present deadlock is solely the consequence of the Member States' linguistic ideology! (public sector failure).
- (v) Segmentation. Companies are not all equal when it comes to the innovation process, so why does the document fail to segment the effort according to the different categories of innovation (products or services, process, etc.) and also based on its nature (market opportunity, integration of new technologies in traditional industries, breakthrough innovation, innovation resulting from the outcome(s) of research projects, etc:).
- (vi) Evaluation. The EU Commission should offer an argument both on the methods used to evaluate national policies and on business innovation stimulation tools.  
It would have been interesting to learn about the impact of a number of technology transfer units operating within universities and research centres. It is equally legitimate to expect the results of a survey comparing the opportunity costs, return on investment and value added of an innovation policy based on grants as opposed to refundable loans, equity participation in investment funds, tax relief, etc.  
The document could have compared the relative advantages of subsidising public or private research organisations to provide business services rather than giving companies innovation vouchers to buy services that match their actual needs.  
The Council of Ministers – see Leadership above – could constantly measure the evolution of a selection of indicators as well as the amounts invested by venture capital market players and the number of European patents filed – i.e. routine work for a Board of Directors.
- (vii) Investment Willingness & Investment Readiness. The document could have contained a menu or list of ingredients for an innovation strategy and a description of the parameters against which its true implementation – rather than just its announcement – can be measured.  
It should also have discussed the issue of innovation readiness among businesses. Becoming innovation ready requires analysing the business potential, reviewing the business model and adopting a new approach to business financing. This departs quite radically from what the EICs have to offer but comes quite close to what can be provided by Business Angels Networks – whose crucial role in the development cycle of innovative businesses has been recognised by the EU Commission in several Communication over the last ten years without ever granting them any financial support or even a Community quality label. Business angels provide a good illustration of this gap between knowledge, acknowledgment thereof and attitude thereto.
- (viii) Enthusiasm. While the document admittedly looks at innovation in the services sector, is there evidence of any examples of innovation in the public sector that do not stem from levels of enthusiasm that are high enough to take up the toughest of challenges? Does the enthusiasm that was evident at the time of such momentous projects as the Single Market or the Euro still exist at present in Europe?

Is it possible to talk about a European vision for innovation when the term “innovation” itself is nowhere to be seen in the organisational charts of the EU Commission and Parliament?

## IMPORTANT DATES

23.11.06	EBAN Winter University
29.11.06	DQE Project – Final meeting in Brussels
30/11-1/12/06	<b>Agorada 2006</b>
12/14.3.07	EU Policy Update
16/17.4.07	EBAN Congress
28/29.6.07	WIC La Baule
16/19.9.07	IEDC Annual Conference (Phoenix, Arizona)

## ACTIVITIES OF THE MEMBERS

### 2ND EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON FINANCING INNOVATION AND CREATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY BASED FIRMS

Seville (E), 23/24 November 2006

The Conference is jointly organised by the Agencia de Innovación y Desarrollo de Andalucía (IDEA), the Instituto Andaluz de Tecnología – IAT (Andalusian Institute of Technology) and the Red de Espacios Tecnológicos de Andalucía – RETA (Network of Technological Areas of Andalusia) and counts on the funding from El Monte, Caja de Ahorros de Huelva y Sevilla and from the Tecnoemprende Project (Interreg III B Sudoe).

Info and registration : [www.iat.es/cfi](http://www.iat.es/cfi)

### ROISSY CARGO RAIL EXPRESS

In cooperation with the Comité d'Expansion Economique du Val d'Oise (F), an association named Roissy CAREX has just been set up in order to develop high-speed freight from the Roissy-Charles de Gaulle airport to other airports. Liège and Lyon have already expressed their interest.

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## LA SITUATION ET LES PERSPECTIVES DE DÉVELOPPEMENT DE LA FILIÈRE SÉCURITÉ-SÛRETÉ ET GESTION DES RISQUES EN VAL D'OISE

Document available in French from the Comité d'Expansion Economique du Val d'Oise  
[ceevo@ceevo95.fr](mailto:ceevo@ceevo95.fr)

### REGIONAL POLICY

#### INTERREG IV C

It seems that DG Regio will propose the following model for implementing this strand of Article 6 of the new ERDF regulation :

→ Thematic priorities : 2

- Lisbon, i.e. RDT, innovation, enterprises, employment
- Göteborg, i.e. sustainable development

→ Implementation :

- Cooperation projects (similar to those implemented in the 2000-2006 period)
- Strategic cooperation actions in two strands :
  - Thematic networks (minimum 5 partners, maximum 3 years. One theme related to the mainstream)
  - "Fast Track" (maximum 1 year, best practice helping a better use of the mainstream)

At this stage, some 23 topics would be included in this initiative, probably :

1. Improving air quality
2. Moving to the low carbon economy
3. Improving quality of water supply and treatment
4. Making healthy communities
5. Integrated policies on urban transport
6. Developing sustainable and energy efficient housing stock
7. Improving the capacity of region for research and innovation
8. Bringing innovative ideas faster to the market
9. Improving the competitiveness of European union research
10. Helping to structure regions most heavily dependant on traditional industries
11. Meeting the challenge of globalisation
12. Better connections between regions
13. Improving qualification for innovation
14. Promoting entrepreneurship
15. Meeting the demographic challenge
16. Promoting healthy workplaces
17. Integrating marginalised youth

18. Managing migration and facilitating social integration
19. Managing coastal zones
20. Reaping the benefit of the sea
21. Achieving sustainable urban development
22. Re-using brownfield sites
23. Bring E.government to regions and business

## ENTERPRISES

### STANDARDIZATION : BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES

As a complement to Eurada-News Nr 264, 12.4.06, you will find below the subject of the work being carried out by CEN in this matter.

*Standardization in the field of business support services*

*The aim of this work is to establish the general elements of services of appropriate quality, as delivered to the expectations of micro and small enterprises, whatever the technical part of the activity and whoever delivers it (public, private, professional network structures, consulting organisations).*

*The work should concentrate on the service provided rather than the internal organisation involved in providing it.*

*NOTE : Facility management is outside the scope.*

## INNOVATION

Complement to Eurada-News Nr 268, 8.9.06. The Commission services have worked out a communication entitled "Putting knowledge into practice: A broad-based innovation strategy for the EU".

The document contains the following five chapters :

**1. Our future depends on innovation**

**2. Making The EU more innovation-friendly**

This chapter deals with the following topics: education and training, a better use of the potential of the internal market, enhancing the regulatory environment and ensuring an effective IPR framework, cooperation between stakeholders, of which the clusters, and interactions with universities, and financial boost to research and 'innovation.

**3. Facilitating the emergence of innovation-driven lead-markets**

A few sectors are mentioned : eco-innovation, space, health, transport, marine technologies, culture, ...

**4. A better European governance for innovation**

**5. A roadmap for a more innovative Europe**

An action plan in 10 points is proposed. These 10 points focus on :

- The education system
- The European Institute of Technology
- Labour market for researchers
- Knowledge transfer
- The role of the cohesion policy
- Tax incentives for R&D
- IPR strategy
- Digital products, services and business models
- Innovation friendly lead-markets
- Publication of an handbook on public procurement and 'innovation.

Copy of the communication is available on request from the Secretariat.

## **CALLS FOR TENDERS**

### **SUPPORT FOR INFORMATION MEASURES RELATING TO THE AGRICULTURAL POLICY**

O.J. C 236, 30.9.06

Deadline : 24.11.06

Implementation between 1.6.07 and 31.5.08

One of the strands deals with rural development.

## **EVENTS**

### **EUROPEAN FINANCE CONVENTION**

Bucharest, 28/29 November 2006

3<sup>rd</sup> Conference on financing regional development in acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidate countries.

Info : <http://www.euroconvention.com>

### **WORLD FREE ZONE CONVENTION**

Paris, 11/12.12.06

Title : Financing foreign direct investment in today's competitive environment and "destination economy".

For further information visit <http://www.freezones.org> or e-mail to [info@freezones.org](mailto:info@freezones.org)

### **INNOVATION FOR GROWTH: THE CHALLENGES FOR EAST AND WEST**

Warsaw, 17/20.6.07

2007 Conference of the International Society for Professional Innovation Management.

Call for papers : Deadline on 31.12.06

Info : <http://www.ispim.org/conference>

## CREATIVE JOBS AND CREATIVE COMPANIES – KEY FACTORS FOR GROWTH AND COMPETITIVENESS

Barcelona, 2/4.7.07

IASP World Conference on Science and Technology Parks

Call for papers : Deadline on 1.11.06

Info : <http://iaspbarcelona2007.com>  
[iasp2007papers@iasp.ws](mailto:iasp2007papers@iasp.ws)

### PARTNER SEARCH

## INTELLIGENT ENERGY FOR EUROPE – 2006 CALL

ERVET (I) partner search. Deadline : 31 October 2006.

### **Project proposal brief description**

Policies aimed at supporting energy efficiency of the local industries are traditionally oriented by two different approaches: the technological/sectorial approach and the territorial approach. As a result of the adoption of these different single approaches by the different local actors (according to their own competence and nature) companies, also if located within local well defined clusters, are managing individually their energy efficiency, while local public authorities and local energy operators are implementing their own policies.

A number of barriers makes obstacle to optimization of energy efficiency of local industrial clusters (and/or echo- parks) : lack of knowledge (companies), lack of adequate evaluation tools (public authorities), lack of the territorial vision (local energy operators), lack of contribution by industrial operators (industrial associations, etc.) and lack of coordination. The development of competencies and local relations may bring to optimal options and the institution of specific structures for the managing of energy efficiency throughout the local industrial cluster.

The project aims at:

- applying and developing a model functional to overcome barriers to optimisation of energy efficiency of local industrial (and/or echo- parks) clusters and to promote energy savings and use of renewable sources combining the two different approaches above mentioned.
- Providing local administrators and companies with adequate tools to move towards energy optimisation.
- Promoting the diffusion of organizational practices and/or the establishment of local cluster competent bodies for energy optimisation

Steps of the project will consist of analysis of the local contexts and involvement of the local industrial clusters; energy balance of the clusters; preparation of tools (for training,

assessment and local decision-making); development of tools for transnational relations and technical support; application and adjustment of tools; synthesis of results.

The project will be better realised with involvement of all actors competent for energy management at local level (public administration, energy agencies, energy providers, companies, ecc.).

The project will be prepared having the opportunity of obtaining significant direct results and strategic impacts at European level (wide application of the developed model, integration with other IEE projects, extension of activities and network over the project).

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