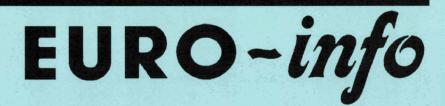
Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Craft sector





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'PHILOXENIA': The Commission Proposes the First Multiannual Programme in Favour of European Tourism (1997-2000)

Joint the initiative of Commissioner Christos PAPOUTSIS, responsible for tourism, the European Commission adopted on 30 April 1996 a proposal for a Council Decision to establish the first multiannual programme in favour of European tourism (1997-2000). Christened 'PHILOXENIA' (hospitality), this programme¹ aims to improve the quality and stimulate the competitiveness of European tourism by incorporating it within a truly strategic approach designed to contribute to growth and employment.

In an area of activity as heterogeneous as European tourism, only a targeted Community action can be effective in implementing a coordinated strategy around a limited number of priority projects. The strategy proposed by the Commission, with a budget of ECU 25 million, is designed around four mid-term objectives over the period from 1 January 1997 to 31 December 2000.

- A. Improving knowledge in the field of tourism by developing tourism-related information, gathering tourist-related information from other sources and facilitating studies on the impact of Community actions on tourism.
- B. Improving the legislative and financial environment for tourism by strengthening cooperation with Member States, industry and the other parties concerned.
- C. Raising quality in European tourism by promoting sustainable tourism and by removing obstacles to tourist development.
- D. Increasing the number of tourists from third countries by promoting Europe as a tourist destination.

¹ COM(96)168 Final

European Commission Directorate general XXIII Enterprise policy, Distributive Trades, Tourism and Cooperatives

Rue de la Loi, 200 (AN 80) B-1049 Brussels Belgium Through these targeted objectives, the programme is designed to provide a coherent framework in which both the public authorities and industry will be able to perceive the weak points and the problems in European tourism in the areas of quality and professionalism.

Implementing the programme's actions will require a closer cooperation with national authorities and, where necessary, with regional and local authorities, industry and the other parties concerned.

The Commission will regularly assess the programme's results and will present an annual report on all the Community actions effecting tourism which are carried out in the context of other Community policies. PHILOXENIA was presented by Commissioner PAPOUTSIS to the Fifteen at the 'TOURISM' Council of 13 May 1996.

PHILOXENIA: actions in favour of European tourism

A. Improving knowledge in the field of tourism

A.1 Developing tourism related information, through

- Consolidation of the European statistical system for tourism, improving the availability of reliable and up-to-date statistics
- Development of surveys, studies and desk/field analyses, taking into account the tourism industry needs.

A.2 Pooling tourism information from other sources, through

- Establishment of a European research and documentation network on tourism.

A.3 Facilitating the assessment of Community measures affecting tourism, through

- Establishment of a legal and financial watch allowing for a systematic assessment of Community measures affecting tourism.

B. Improving the legislative and financial environment for tourism

- B.1 Reinforcing cooperation with Member States, the industry and other stakeholders, through
 - Organisation and follow-up of regular meetings with the parties concerned, to reinforce cooperation at European level and to raise awareness of Community initiatives (technical/thematic meetings, round-tables, European fora).

C. Raising quality in European tourism

C.1 Promoting sustainable development, through

- Support to local initiatives geared towards sound management of visitors flows and stimulation of their networking
- Support to the implementation of environmentally friendly management systems in tourist accommodations
- Organisation of a 'European Prize for Tourism and Environment' (every two years).

C.2 Removing obstacles to tourism development, through

 Identification of the principal obstacles at European level faced by various forms of tourism as well as by specific categories of tourists (such as young people, the elderly and disabled people), development of appropriate responses.

D. Increasing the number of visitors from Third Countries

D.1 Promoting Europe as a tourist destination, through

- Support for multi-annual promotion campaigns in major issuing countries and/or emerging zones, with the support of participating sponsors.

Evaluation of the 1993-1995 Community Action Plan²

The multiannual programme incorporates the results of the consultation based on the 'Green Paper on Tourism' (December 1995) and the recommendation of the report on the Action Plan for the period 1993-1995. The multiannual programme was aimed at consolidating the horizontal approach to tourism and at implementing a series of specific measures to assist the sector.

Before proposing new actions in the tourism sector, the Commission first carried out a rigorous and exhaustive assessment of the Action Plan. This assessment took into consideration the conclusions of an external audit on the strengths, weaknesses and limitations of the Plan.

According to the report, the Commission holds that, despite its experimental nature, the plan has nonetheless provided a useful framework in which links have been established between Commission departments, Member States and other interested parties at the regional and sectoral level. It has also established landmarks for partnership with industry. The development of vigorous and effective policies in favour of tourism is a real challenge. The diversity, the character and the enormous potential in tourism requires actions adapted to different local, regional, national and European scales. Only the combination of complimentary efforts will allow the tourism industry to reach a high level of competitiveness and quality in the context of a sustainable development.

While pointing out both the negative and positive aspects of the Community Action Plan, the report has helped in defining the actions which will support the development of this vital industry which employs 9 million people in the European Union and which contributes upwards to 5.5% of the Community's GNP.

For further information: EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DG XXIII/C/3 Concerted Actions and Community Contributions in Favour of Tourism Nassos CHRISTOYANNOPOULOS rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80) B-1049 BRUSSELS Tel: +32-2/295.256.17 Fax: +32-2/296.13.77

SOCIAL ECONOMY: Meeting of the Consultation Committee³

Informing and consulting workers are politically sensitive topics which give rise to impassioned disputes. The proposed Directives on worker participation in completion of the statute for the European company, the European association, the European cooperative, the European mutual and the articles on worker participation in the 'fifth directive' on company law has been blocked in the Council of Ministers for many years. However, the adoption in 1994 of the directive on instituting a Community of European enterprises comprising Community-wide enterprises or groups of enterprises with regard to informing and consulting with workers, has shed new light on this problem.

In a communication⁴ adopted at the end of 1995, the Commission holds that it has been shown that it was possible — even desirable — to set general legal norms in this area at the European level. It now remains to be seen if the piecemeal approach of the five proposals now under the Council's scrutiny. The Commission considers that several options are open to Community action:

- 1. Maintain the status quo: the piecemeal approach.
- 2. Global approach: establishment at the Community level of general managers for informing and consulting workers.
- 3. Immediate action on proposals concerning the statute for the European company, the European association, the European cooperative, the European mutual.

If a global approach involving the establishment of general managers is adopted, then, given the existence of the directive on European enterprise committees, immediate actions could be taken to unblock these

4 COM(95) 547 final

² COM(96) 166 final

³ Created in 1994, the Consultation Committee (54 members) is composed of representatives of cooperatives, mutuals, associations and foundations themselves, and not by the Commission. It's mission is to communicate the sector's views on the social economy to the Commission.

proposals. With the global approach, two scenarios are possible: a) no European company, European association, European cooperative or European Mutual company could be established in a Member State which has not transposed the directive on instituting a European enterprise committee OR b) the directive on European enterprise committees could be applied in the same way as it is applied to other Community-wide enterprises, without the application of additional conditions.

At its meeting of 23 April 1996, the Consultation Committee for cooperatives, mutuals, associations and foundations issued its 'OPINION' on the subject. It highlights the importance to the actors in the social economy of 'having immediately a legal instrument which takes into consideration their specific needs, allowing them to take part in transnational operations and to participate in the completion of the Single Market.' The Consultation Committee 'finds that, given that transposing the directive on 'European enterprise committees' in all Member States will take time, a short-term procedure must be adopted which corresponds to option 3b of the Commission document on questions of informing and consulting with workers as only this will provide for the rapid adoption of the rules pertaining to these three statutes.

For further information: DG XXIII/A/2 - Social Economy Francesco IANNELLO rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80) **B-1049 BRUSSELS** Tel: +32-2/295.51.55 Fax: +32-2/296.58.57

COMMUNITY SME INITIATIVE:

Adoption of Programmes to Strengthen the Competitiveness of SMEs in Austria and Flanders (Belgium)

During its meeting on 15 June 1994, the Commission decided to implement a Community initiative⁵ to assist in adapting small and medium-sized enterprises to the Single Market. With a budget of ECU 1 billion for the period 1994-1999 — of which 800 million are destined to Objective 1 regions (regions with delayed development) - the Community SME initiative⁶ forms part of all the actions undertaken under the Integrated programme in Favour of SMEs and the Craft Sector.

In 1995⁷ and in 1996⁸ the Commission gave the green light to a series of SME development programmes in the different regions of the European Union. On 11 April 1996 the Commission approved SME programmes for Austria and for Flanders in Belgium.

• SME Programme for AUSTRIA

To strengthen the competitiveness of Austrian SMEs located in regions of delayed development, rural regions and regions in decline, the SME programme centres on promoting advanced information techniques, introducing environmentally-friendly production techniques and the rational use of energy and raw materials. The actions included in this programme are:

AEco-audits in 350 SMEs;

- advice from specialists and expert opinions for 600 individual firms and 250 groups of enterprises in the areas of strategic planning, information techniques and the rational use of energy;
- creation of a house of telecommunications;
- up-dating a distance learning course;
- training of 800 collaborators for SMEs information techniques and environmental technologies.

Requests for aid can be addressed to: Bundesministerium für Wirtschaftliche Angelegenheiten – Abteilung III/8 — Hans Janik — Stubenring 1 — A-1011 VIENNA — Austria — Tel.: +43-1-71100/5929 — Fax: +43-1-71100/5403

⁵ Community initiatives are measures proposed by the Commission to resolve problems of particular interest to the European Community.

⁶ Official Journal of the European Communities - C 180 of 1 July 1994.

 ⁷ See EURO-INFO 86 — December 1995
 ⁸ See EURO-INFO 87 — January/February 1996

• SME Programme for FLANDERS (Belgium)

The programme aims to reinforce the competitiveness of SMEs by promoting permanent technological innovation. It comprises two measures: the increased awareness of information to SMEs about innovation in matters of products and process; promotion and implementation of innovation: setting up networks; technical assistance. The assistance will benefit those areas of Limbourg and Campine most affected by industrial decline as well as the regions of Westhock — Middenkust — Zeeveisserijgebied and Meetjesland, characterised by relatively low level of economic development and a high rate of unemployment. Moreover, in order to diversify the economy of Flanders and to support viable activities in the textile and clothing sector, the Commission has approved, under the Community RETEX initiative, a programme with the following measures: advise, aid and training for textile and clothing enterprises according to their real potential for industrial diversification; technological support aimed at viable segments of the textile and clothing sector.

Requests for aid can be addressed to: Ministerie van de Vlaamse GEmeenschap – Administratie Economie – Markieestraat, 1 – B-1000 BRUSSELS – Tel: +32-2/507.38.64 – Fax: +32-2/502.47.02

For further information: DG XXIII/A/1 — Improving the Environment for Enterprises Anne-Marie FIQUET rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80) B-1049 BRUSSELS Fax: +32-2/295.97.84

EUROPARTENARIAT: After Luleå (Sweden), Genoa

EUROPARTENARIAT NORTHERN SCANDINAVIA will take place in LULEÅ, Sweden on **13 and 14 June 1996.** The event will provide an opportunity for 386 small and medium-sized enterprises from the north of Sweden, Finland and Norway to meet directly with 1,500 businessmen from the European Union as well as from third countries such as the Baltic States, Central and Eastern European and Mediterranean countries. A catalogue containing the profiles and offers and demands for cooperation of the enterprises from the northern Scandinavian companies has been distributed by a network of specialised national consultants⁹ which will assist participants in formalising their projects. The pre-arranged meetings will be managed by a computerised system which will also allow for organising appointments the day of the event. The 386 SMEs from the host region described in the catalogue represent such major sectors as: wood industry, electronics, electricity, foodstuff, metal construction, machining, chemicals and plastics, construction, energy, the environment, and information technology.

EUROPARTENARIAT ITALIA 1996 will be held in Genoa, Italy on 27, 28 and 29 November 1996. Following on the success of the EUROPARTENARIAT MEZZOGIORNO event which took place in BARI, Italy in December 1992, SMEs from eleven 'Objective 2' regions in northern and central Italy will now have an opportunity to present their proposals for cooperation in the technical, financial or trade sectors to heads of enterprises from 60 countries. Some 80,000 copies of a catalogue translated into five languages will be available at the end of June. This catalogue will contain the profiles and offers and demands for cooperation of approximately 400 Italian enterprises selected for their dynamism and will be distributed by a network of specialised national consultants (EURO-INFO will soon publish a full list). EURO-PARTENARIAT will be promoted with support from such Community networks as the BCC (Business Cooperation Centres), BC-NET (Business Cooperation Network), EURO-INFO Centres, and the European Centres for Enterprises and Innovation.

For further information: EUROPARTENARIAT NORTHERN SCANDINAVIA

Varvsgatan 41 — S-97232 LULEĂ — Sweden Tel: +46-920.23.15.55 Fax: +46-920.23.15.60

EUROPARTENARIAT ITALIA 1996 MONDIMPRESA Scpa Via di Porta Pinciana, 36 — I-00187 ROMA — Italy Tel: +39-6-488.07.27 Fax: +39-6-488.20.34 Internet E-mail: EP.Genova@MONDIMPRESA.it

DG XXIII EUROPARTENARIAT rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80) — B-1049 BRUSSELS Fax: +32-2/295.17.40

⁹ See EURO-INFO – March 1996

¹⁰ Objective 2: Reconversion of zones in industrial decline

'BALTIC SEA PARTENARIAT': 19 and 20 September 1996 at GDYNIA, Poland

The political and economic upheaval of these last few years have turned the region surrounding the Baltic Sea into a zone of great economic interest. The European agreements negotiated with Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania underline this region's importance to the European Union. Following on the success of the EUROPARTENARIAT POLOGNE at Gdansk in 1994, the 'BALTIC SEAS PARTENARIAT' project aims to encourage the small and medium-sized enterprises of this area to reposition and internationalise their trade strategies and to develop profitable partnerships with their EU counterparts in the areas of trade, finance and technology. The group targeted by the 'BALTIC SEAS PARTENARIAT' project are SMEs from the 'MARI-TIME INDUSTRIES' sector: shipbuilding, offshore construction, marine equipment, transport, fishing and fish products, technical services, research and development, etc. Those suppliers associated with the development of maritime industries (mechanics, electricity, electronics, information technologies, etc) will also participate in the GDYNUA event. Prior to the days of direct contact between heads of enterprises, programmed for 19 & 20 September 1996 at GDYNIA, Poland, a catalogue will be distributed throughout Europe. This catalogue will contain the 'cooperation profiles' of some 200 selected enterprises (125 enterprises from Poland, 25 from Latvia and 25 from Lithuania) and will be made available through a network of specialised national consultants throughout the Europe Union as well as in Hungry, and the Czech and Slovak Republics (see below).

For further information: 'BALTIC SEA PARTENARIAT'

Andrzej ERECINSKI Armii Krajowej Street, 24 P-81372 GDYNIA – Poland Tel: +48-58.615.057 Fax: +48-58-614.886

The following National consultants are at your disposition for further information on the BALTIC SEA PAR-TENARIAT event:

• AUSTRIA: Heinz Kaufmann — Austrian Federal Economic Chamber — Wiedner Hauptstrasse 63 — A-1045 Wien — Tel.: +43-1-501.05.43.08(05) — Fax: +43-1-502.06.255

• **BELGIUM**:

- Jos Helsen GOM Vlaams-Brabant Toekomststraat 36-38 B-1800 VIlvorde Tel.: +32-2-251.51.71 - Fax: +32-2-252.45.94
- Corinne De Rycker SOCRAN, Parc Scientifique du Sart-Tilman B-4031 Angleur (Liège) Tel.: +32-41-67.83.33 – Fax: +32-41-67.83.00
- DENMARK: Per Sondergaard The Danish Chamber of Commerce Borsen DK-1217 Copenhagen Tel.: +45-33-95.05.00 Fax: +45-33-32.52.16
- FINLAND: Timo Karisto The Finnish Foreign Trade Association Euro Info Centre Arkadiankatu 2 — PO Box 908 — FIN-00101 Helsinki — Tel.: +358-0-695.93.88 — Fax: +358-0-685.15.73
- FRANCE: Anne Sibille ACFCI 45, Avenue d'Iéna F-75769 Paris Cedex 16 Tel.: + 33-1-40.69.37.96 Fax: + 33-1-40.69.38.08

• GERMANY:

- Beate Warneck IHK Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Aussenwirtschaft und der Unternehmensführung mbH — Schedestrasse 11 — D-53113 Bonn — Tel.: +49-228-10.41.65 — Fax: +49-228-10.42.38
- Katrin Ruh Schoenholzer Strasse 10/11 D-13187 Berlin Fax: +49-30-488.06.130 Fax: +49-30-488.06.103

• GREECE: May Demertzi – Exporters' Association of Northern Greece – 1, Morihovou Square – GR-54625 Thessaloniki – Tel.: + 30-31-54.61.03.54.54.57 – Fax: + 30-31-54.61.02

- IERLAND: Jonathan Ryan The Irish Trade Board An Bord Trachtala PO Box 203 IRL-Dublin 4 Tel.: +353-1-269.50.11 Fax: +353-1-269.58.20
- ITALY: Gabriella Degano Mondimpresa Via di Porta Pinciana, 36 I-00187 Roma Tel.: + 39-6-591.10.42 Fax: + 39-6-590.36.11

• LUXEMBOURG: Arjan Brands – EMDA Institute, Project secretariat – 117, Route de Stavelot – L-9991 Weiswampach – Tel.: + 352-979.117 – Fax: + 352-979.099

• THE NETHERLANDS: Ruud M.C. Geene — Netherlands Council for Trade Promotion — Bezuidenhoutseweg 181, PO Box 10 — NL-2501 CA The Hague — Tel.: +31-70-344.15.44 — Fax: +31-70-385.35.31

• **PORTUGAL:** Mariano Dos Santos — I.A.P.M.E.I. — Rua Rodrigo da Fonseca 73 — P-1297 Lisbon — Tel.: +351-1-386.43.33 — Fax: +351-1-386.31.61

• SPAIN: Izaskun Arteixe — Diputacion Foral de Bizkaia — Oblapo Orueta, 6 — E-48009 Bilbao — Tel.: + 34-4-420.80.98, 420.73.00 — Fax: + 34-4-420.80.87

• SWEDEN:

 Gunnar Olsson – Chamber of Commerce of Southern Sweden – Skeppsbron 2 – S-21120 Malmoe – Tel.: +46-40.735.50 – Fax: +46-40.611.86.09

- Birgitta Svensson - NUTEK - S-11786 Stockholm - Tel.: +46-8-681.94.66 - Fax: +46-8-744.40.45

• UNITED KINGDOM:

England and Wales: Robin Bussel – The Association of British Chambers of Commerce – 4 Westwood House, W. Business Park – Coventry CV 4 8 HS – Tel.: +44-1203-69.44.84 – Fax: +44-1203-69.46.90

North Ierland: Arthur Bell – Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry – 22 Great Victoria Street – Belfast BT2 7BJ – Tel.: +44-1232-24.41.13 – Fax: +44-1232-24.70.24

Scotland: Agnes Barclay — Scottish Innovation — 62 Templeton Street — Glasgow G40 1DA — Tel.: +44-141-554.59.95 — Fax: +44-141-556.63.20

• CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC: Vladimir Prokop – Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic – Argentinska 38 – CZ-17005 Praha 7 – Tel.: +42-2-66.79.48.53 – Fax: +42-2-80.48.94

• HUNGARY: Csaba Ivanyi — Hungarian Foundation for Enterprise Promotion — Etele ut 68 — H-1115 Budapest XI — Tel.: +36-1-203.03.48 — 203.03.07 — Fax: +36-1-203.03.77

• SLOVAK: Stefan Szabo – National Agency for Development of SME – Nevadzova 5 – SL-61000 Bratislava – Tel.: +42-7-23.18.73 – Fax: +42-7-290.73.42

• NORWAY: Geir Hjelle — Norwegian Trade Council — Drammensvn, 40 — N-0243 Oslo — Tel.: +47-22.92.63.00 — Fax: +47-22.92.64.00

• RUSSIA: Andrej Brusov – Business Communication Centre – Izmaylowsky Prospect 14 – Leontiev Centre, R.318 – R-198052 St. Petersburg – Tel.: +7-812-251.76.77 – Fax: +7-812-112.66.07

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

PARTNERSHIP '96: In Luxembourg, 11 & 12 July 1996

The annual 'Partnership '96' conference will focus on the theme **Transnational Development of SMEs** and the Supporting Role of Banks and will take place in Luxembourg on 11 and 12 July 1996. The conference will bring together members of the cooperation network BCC (Business Cooperation Centre), BC-NET (Business Cooperation Network), members of the partenariat network (Europartenariat and Interprise) and representatives from intermediary subcontracting organisations. Meetings dealing specifically with these networks will bring members up to date on the work currently under way with the prospects for developing initiatives in favour of transnational inter-enterprise cooperation. In addition, two seminars will deal with SME transnational cooperation. The first will analyse opportunites and programmes for Central and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, America and Asia. The second seminar will tackle the financial aspects of internationalising SMEs as well as the tighter partnership between enterprises and banks in the context of their financial and non-financial support of SMEs. A seminar on best practice of savings banks will be organised conjointly by the *Groupement Européen des Caisses d'Epargne* (European Grouping of Savings Banks).

Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission, will be on hand to open the conference along with Commissioner Christos Papoutsis, responsible for Enterprise Policy, and Mr Goebbels, Luxembourg's Minister of the Economy.

For further information on the content of this conference, contact: DG XXIII/B/2 — Cooperation Development between Enterprises at the European and International Level and Promotion of Internationalism — Tel: +32-2/296.72.40 — Fax: +32-2/296.60.48.

PROMOTING THE IDEAS OF YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

At a Conference supported by the European Commission, the Italian National Confederation of Craft Businesses and SMEs (CNA) of the Emilia-Romagna region launched the 'COMITATO GIOVANNI IMPRENDITORI' for their members under 35 years of age. A series of specific proposals were presented.

For information: COMITATO GIOVANNI IMPRENDITORI – Mme Maria CHIARA BANDI – Viale A. Moro 22, I-40127 BOLOGNA – Italy – Tel: +39-51.60.99.400 – Fax: +39-51-37.54.85.

DG XXIII: Mobile Stand

For the past several years DG XXIII has maintained a mobile information stand which is available for events such as Interprise, Europartenariat, inverted trade shows and, within budget restraints, for other events of interest to SMEs upon request by the organisers.

The goal of this service is to improve contact between DG XXIII and businessmen, its main target group.

Civil servants from DG XXIII and other qualified persons staff the stand during the duration of the event and give out information on commission actions and programmes in favour of SMEs and the craft sector.

The calendar of events for the second semester of 1996 is currently being drawn-up. A detailed programme of meetings will be published in upcoming issues of EURO-INFO.

For information: European Commission – DG XXIII/B/1 – Information – Carmelo CALAMIA – rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80 1/25) – B-1040 Brussels – Tel: +32-2/295.95.77 – Fax: +32-2/299.27.69.

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