

ENTERPRISE INDUSTRY *magazine*



Better standards to enhance European competitiveness

Access to finance: instrumental in SME success

Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean industrial co-operation

Projects promoting resource efficiency

CONTENTS

●	Editorial	2
●	Better standards to enhance European competitiveness	3
●	Promoting resource efficiency	6
●	Access to finance: instrumental in SME success	8
●	Security first in Europe	10
●	Social innovation in action	12
●	Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean industrial co-operation	14
●	Shaping a new EU space policy	16
●	Success stories in improving business conditions	18
●	THE ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK IN ACTION	20
●	News in brief & upcoming events	22

EDITORIAL

*A dynamic European standardisation system is essential to drive quality and innovation. This is why the European Commission has put forward a package of proposals aimed at making European standards more responsive to changing circumstances and better able to support Europe's global competitiveness. This issue of E&I magazine examines the **future of standardisation** and the specific objectives of the Commission's proposals.*

We also look at interesting examples of how the EU is working to ensure that European business leads the way towards a more **resource-efficient future**.

The Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) finances several projects in this field, with a view to both making more efficient use of our resources, and boosting European competitiveness through the creation of new markets.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) often struggle to convince financial institutions to invest in them or lend to them. The CIP also funds tools specifically aimed at giving SMEs **greater access to loans and equity finance**: these financial instruments already have a strong track record of success.

The promotion of a **Euro-Med area of shared prosperity** – with a special focus on entrepreneurship and small business – is

also featured. This new partnership seeks to promote inclusive economic development in the southern Mediterranean, much as the Europe 2020 strategy already does in the EU.

Other articles in this issue highlight the new **space policy** the European Commission is developing to ensure continued success to this strategically important sector, and the role **security-related research** plays in protecting European citizens. We also take a look at the launch of the **Social Innovation Europe Initiative**, and the practical support the **Enterprise Europe Network** gives to women entrepreneurs. In addition, we review this year's **European Enterprise Awards**.

If you like what you read in our magazine, why not subscribe? It costs you nothing – simply turn to the back cover for details of how to subscribe. And visit our regularly updated on-line magazine, too.

(www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/magazine) ■

ENTERPRISE & INDUSTRY

The *Enterprise & Industry* magazine is published three times a year, in English, French, German and, as of issue n° 7, Italian, complementing the on-line magazine of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry.

The magazine is financed under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme which aims to encourage the competitiveness of European enterprises.

Issue n° 11 (2-2011)

The content of this issue was finalised in August 2011.

Published by

Communication and Information Unit
Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels
entr-communication-information@ec.europa.eu
www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/magazine



LEGAL NOTICE

Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for the use to which information contained in this publication may be put, nor for any errors which may appear despite careful preparation and checking. This publication does not necessarily reflect the view or the position of the European Commission.

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2011

ISSN 1831-1237

© European Union, 2011

Reproduction is authorised, provided the source is acknowledged, save where otherwise stated.

For use/reproduction of third-party copyright material specified as such permission must be obtained from the copyright holder(s).

Front cover images: © dutch icon™, © Sodafish bvba

Printed in Belgium

BETTER STANDARDS TO ENHANCE EUROPEAN COMPETITIVENESS

*By outlining clear requirements for goods and services, standards help **protect consumers, create new and larger markets and boost innovation.** The European Commission has put forward proposals to modernise the European standardisation system to meet the challenges of our ever faster changing world, thus contributing to the objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.*

Whether at work or at play, standards are all around us: in our homes, in our workplaces and even on the routes in between.

For example, most of the electrical appliances in the home conform to one European standard (EN) or another, as do the tiles or other types of flooring you walk on and the lock which secures your front door. At the office, everything from your desktop computer and photocopier to the chair you sit on or the sprinkler system above your head is covered by European standards.

Standards keep Europeans safe and ensure that the quality of the products they use is high. They also enhance the competitiveness of European industry by facilitating innovation and laying down common requirements upon which a particular product market can be built and a level playing field can be ensured.

For example, the world-leading GSM standard, which was developed in Europe but is used by over 2 billion phone subscribers around the world, placed the EU's mobile phone manufacturers and content creators in pole position in

this massive global market. The virtuous cycle of innovation and competition it generated also served consumers by providing them with top-quality products and services and constantly falling prices.

Standards are not only good for consumers and industry, but they can also be beneficial to the environment. For example, the recent standards for a universal phone charger, in addition to the convenience it will afford millions of mobile phone users by allowing them to use their charger on any phone, will cut waste – and cost – by enabling manufacturers to sell devices and chargers separately.

Striving for harmony

For standards to be useful and usable, they cannot simply be dictated from on high by regulators. Besides, given the length and breadth of products and services available in the EU's single market and the rapid, relentless rate of innovation, regulatory bodies lack the resources and technical know-how to develop the necessary standards in a timely and efficient fashion. >>



For that reason, for the past quarter of a century, the EU has exploited, within technical harmonisation, voluntary European standards developed by the European standardisation organisations (CEN, CENELEC and ETSI) in co-operation with all relevant stakeholders. The first success story where voluntary European standards have a key role in harmonisation was guided by the so-called 'New Approach' (NA), which applied an innovative and voluntary approach to standards supporting EU legislation.

Within the context of NA, European legislators drafted legislation in which they defined the essential requirements, how these were to be assessed for conformity, and whether a CE marking was required. European standardisation organisations then drew up the voluntary technical specifications, also known as 'harmonised standards', which provided the most direct way to comply with such essential requirements.

Since 2010, the 'New Legislative Framework' has replaced and updated the NA with a broad package of measures which seek to remove the remaining obstacles to the free circulation of goods in the single market.

Speed is of the essence

Despite the efficiency and responsiveness of the current system, it can still take a significant period of time before new European standards see the light of day – indeed, the required lead time can be too high for a number of highly innovative sectors, which results in standards lagging behind market realities. This can result in a certain reluctance to engage in European standard setting in some sectors.

In June 2011, the European Commission adopted a package of proposals aimed at tackling these issues. "To be successful, Europe needs to react to the challenge of rapid innovation, sustainability, convergence of technologies, and fierce global competition," explains European Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani who is in charge of industry and entrepreneurship. "A dynamic European standardisation system is essential to spur quality and innovation and to strengthen Europe's role as a global economic player."

The proposed set of measures comes in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy. For instance, the flagship 'Industrial policy for the globalisation era' emphasises that European standards need to be highly responsive to rapidly changing circumstances for them to be able to support Europe's global competitiveness and thus to meet the needs of both industry and public authorities.

World Standards Day on 14 October

Since 2003, the European Commission has hosted an annual open event to mark World Standards Day. This year's conference, organised by DG Enterprise and Industry, will have as its theme 'Competitiveness through standardisation'. The event, to be opened by European Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani, will also feature three panel debates: 'How standardisation supports Intelligent Transport System (ITS)'; 'Standards as a tool for Security Industrial Policy'; and 'Standardisation for interoperability and competitiveness in space'.

Another Europe 2020 flagship, the 'Digital agenda for Europe' underscores the importance of information and communication technology (ICT) standards in ensuring interoperability, while the 'Resource-efficient Europe' initiative highlights the crucial role of standards in encouraging eco-innovation.

For its part, the Innovation Union (IU) flagship initiative identifies areas where the current approach to setting standards needs to be modernised: "The rapid shortening of innovation cycles and the convergence of technologies across the boundaries of the three European standardisation organisations (CEN, CENELEC and ETSI) are a particular challenge."

One of the mechanisms the IU foresees to promote a more effective standardisation process is what it calls European Innovation Partnerships which seek to mobilise stakeholders to work together towards well-defined goals in areas which combine tackling societal challenges with boosting European competitiveness.

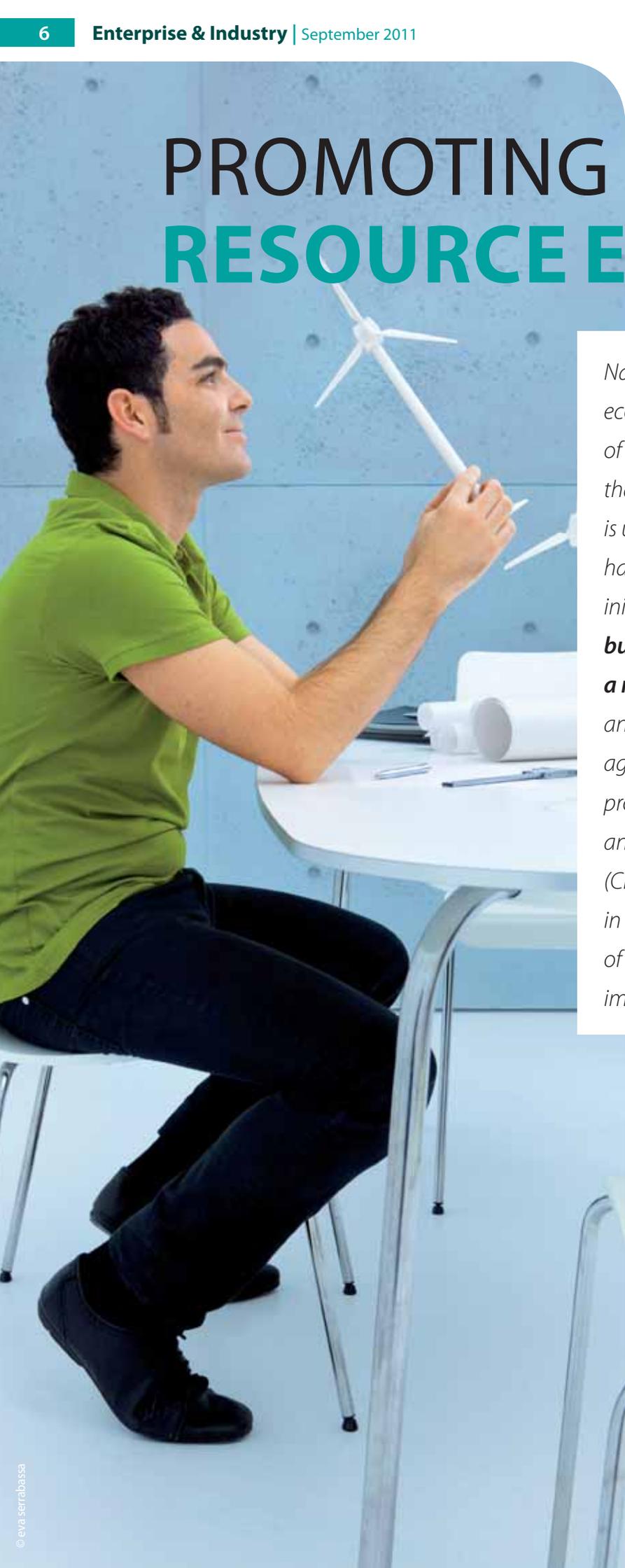
In its conclusions on the Innovation Union, the European Council requested, in February 2011, that the European Commission "make proposals to accelerate, simplify and modernise standardisation procedures, notably to allow standards developed by industry to be turned into European standards".

Market-driven and inclusive standards

The proposal put forward by the European Commission includes both legislative and non-legislative measures focusing on a number of key areas: boosting industrial competitiveness and addressing key societal challenges



PROMOTING RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

A man in a green polo shirt and dark trousers is sitting on a white stool at a white desk. He is looking up and to the right, holding a white model of a wind turbine. On the desk in front of him are some rolled-up documents and a pen. The background is a light blue wall with some faint patterns.

*Natural resources are vital for our economy and for sustaining our quality of life, but there is growing recognition that our current pattern of consumption is unsustainable. The European Union has responded with a number of initiatives to ensure that **European business leads the way towards a more resource-efficient future** and the topic is high on the political agenda. An interesting example is provided by the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), which finances several projects in this field, thus showing the variety of challenges that can be met by improving the use of resources.*

Making more efficient use of our resources is vital if we are to adequately protect the environment and maintain our standard of living. However, resource efficiency is more than just about protecting what we have got. It is also about opening up new economic opportunities, increasing productivity and boosting competitiveness through the creation of new markets. In this respect, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) has an important role in supporting innovation activities – including eco-innovation – especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Making good use of energy

Promoting resource efficiency is a key element of the CIP, which makes a significant contribution to the Environmental Technologies Action Plan (ETAP). The CIP is divided into three operational programmes, one of these being the Intelligent Energy – Europe Programme (IEE), which has €730 million in funding available between 2007 and 2013 to support activities in the area of energy efficiency and renewable energy.

The IEE programme supports concrete projects, initiatives and best practices via annual calls for proposals. Examples of projects funded under the IEE include training on new construction techniques that can lead to 50% or more energy savings compared with traditional buildings, improving the effectiveness of support schemes for electricity generation from renewable energy sources across Europe, and helping Europe's cities to develop more energy-efficient and cleaner transport.

Raising awareness about energy efficiency is another important consideration. In this respect, the Change project proved to be successful by training staff within chambers of commerce across the EU to pass on their knowledge of energy-efficient practices to businesses. As far as consumers are concerned, the Euro-TopTen team set up a website to inform consumers about the most energy-efficient appliances on the market. They are listed alongside their cost over a typical 15-year life cycle.

Eco-innovation

A second operational programme under the CIP is the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP) which, among other things, focuses on eco-innovation. A €38-million call for project proposals under this eco-innovation scheme is open until 8 September 2011. The European Commission is particularly keen to support small businesses that are developing green products or services and need a financial boost to get into the market place.

One interesting eco-innovation project involves regenerating big tyres into reusable rubber and steel wire/fibres. The recycling process covers three main activities: cleaning, measuring and scanning the tyres; cutting and jetting; and drying and sieving the resultant powder. The project aims to address the issue that since there is currently no way of recycling big tyres (with a diameter greater than 1.4 metres) at the end of their lives they are either burned or dumped. The project will therefore build and run the first full-scale

continuous process plant for big tyres, the goal being to recycle 2 000 tonnes of end-of-life tyres in the first year of operation.

Long-term strategy

Resource efficiency is also high on the political agenda: in 2011, the European Commission has presented its flagship initiative for a resource-efficient Europe under the Europe 2020 strategy, which aims at building smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The initiative promotes the move towards a resource-efficient, low-carbon economy through providing a long-term framework for actions in many policy areas, supporting policy agendas for climate change, energy, transport, industry and regional development. It also seeks to encourage new investment and innovation, and ensure that resource efficiency is taken into account throughout the whole range of policy formulation.

The strategy includes a number of specific initiatives to be tabled in 2011, such as the low-carbon economy roadmap 2050, the 2011 energy efficiency plan, and the White Paper on the future of transport, all of which were published in March 2011. There will also be a roadmap for a resource-efficient Europe.

Leading the way

The attention paid to achieving resource efficiency underlines that this is no longer simply a trend but an essential and unavoidable practice which all businesses will sooner or later have to address. It is also an opportunity: through creating an open global market in environmental goods, services and technologies that allows green technology and investment to move freely throughout the global economy, the EU can become a world leader.

Europe has good reason to be confident in this respect. In both waste management and recycling, the EU has around 50% of the global share, and the EU is pushing hard for an Environmental Goods and Services Agreement in trade talks. Looking to the future, the EU also aims to liberalise trade in key climate-friendly technologies such as solar panels and wind turbines. A lot of hard work lies ahead, but Europe is firmly on the road to a more sustainable future. ■

» Contact

Intelligent Energy - Europe

ec.europa.eu/intelligentenergy

Eco-innovation

ec.europa.eu/ecoinnovation



ACCESS TO FINANCE: INSTRUMENTAL IN SME SUCCESS

*While small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are crucial to Europe's economic well-being, they often find it difficult to secure financing. To tackle this issue, the EU has developed tools specifically aimed at giving SMEs greater access to loans and equity finance: these **financial instruments**, funded under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), have a **strong track record of success**.*

The Small Business Act (SBA), along with the recent SBA Review, aims to encourage and support SMEs in taking full advantage of the global economy. Access to finance is critical for this, especially for small start-ups and enterprises looking to break into new innovative markets. However, SMEs often struggle to convince financial institutions to invest in them or lend to them.

Key to success

In order to address this issue head-on, the EU has established tools specifically targeted at SMEs. The Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) for 2007-13, which aims to improve the competitiveness of European enterprises, provides financial instruments under its Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme. These instruments enable financial institutions to invest in or lend to small businesses that might otherwise not receive the financing they need due to their perceived 'risk' or lack of collateral.

The instruments are not directly available to SMEs but are implemented by the European Investment Fund (EIF), which acts on behalf of the European Commission and works with selected financial institutions. The tools have been specifically developed to cover areas of

Backing the loans that help small businesses

The SME Guarantee Facility (SMGF) guarantees those banks lending to SMEs. This is designed to help small firms with growth potential but limited or no collateral to obtain loans. Microcredit guarantees are also available for loans of up to €25 000 to micro-enterprises – particularly entrepreneurs starting a business – as are equity and quasi-equity guarantees. These guarantees are targeted to support investments in businesses with up to 250 employees.

Supporting speech therapy and healthy eating

Microloans have transformed lives. Manuela Voigt was able to set up her speech therapy clinic in Thale, Germany following a €25 000 loan from German lender KfW (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau) which was guaranteed by the SMEG. Banks had previously shown no interest in lending her money after she graduated with a diploma in speech therapy. Her clinic, which provides support to children, teenagers and adults, has gone from strength to strength and she expects to recruit another two members of staff in the next few years. Similarly, a microloan of €20 000 from the First-Step Microfinance Institution helped Almaz Abdiez provide healthy eating canteen facilities to schools in Ireland, once he realised that banks were reluctant to lend to small businesses. Happy Foods has since gone on to savour the taste of huge success and support from students and parents.

the market where access to finance is difficult and to target SMEs' start-up, expansion and business transfer phases. There are two kinds of tools provided through the EIF: the High Growth and Innovative SME Facility (GIF), which provides venture capital, and the SME Guarantee Facility (SMEG), which guarantees portfolios of microloans and larger loans.

Aiming high

The High Growth and Innovative SME Facility (GIF) aims to improve access to finance for the start-up and growth of SMEs and to invest in clean technology or eco-innovation. The facility has already had a positive impact. By the first quarter of 2011, 19 GIF agreements had been signed with venture capital funds, targeting investments in 17 participating countries and committing some €221.2 million in EU investment. Three of these venture capital funds are investing in eco-innovation across Europe.

Innovative SMEs in their early stages, such as Danish natural dietary supplements firm Fluxome, have benefited from these EU-supported investments: €5 million enabled the firm to apply its technology and know-how to bring a new product to market. Resveratrol, a compound found in grapes and berries, has been reported in several studies as having anti-ageing, anti-inflammatory, cardiovascular and cancer-protective properties. "With the help of CIP funding, Fluxome has, within a short time frame, developed from a start-up company to a product- and sales-oriented organisation," says Fluxome's President and CEO Steen Andersen.

Realising growth potential

The SME Guarantee Facility (SMEG), on the other hand, guarantees bank loans to SMEs in order to help small firms with growth potential but limited or no collateral. By the end of March 2011, some 35 agreements had been signed with financial intermediaries from 15 countries, with EU commitments amounting to around €279 million. And by the first quarter of 2011, almost 130 000 SMEs had received financing supported by SMEG, through 144 383 loans.

Guarantees for bigger loans have helped European SMEs to realise their growth potential. For example, Biotech is a key player in the Hungarian medical market, producing and trading orthopaedic, trauma and spine implants and providing mobility solutions for patients. It recently became clear, however, that the firm needed additional space if it was to develop and grow. In 2010, the company received a loan of nearly €500 000 supported by the SMEG to buy a new factory, warehouse and office in Diósd near Budapest. An R&D centre was also created and, thanks to this recent expansion, the firm has increased production and research and has the capacity to take on another 28 employees during 2011.

Helping SMEs access finance is vital to ensuring that the backbone of Europe's economy, its primary source of growth and job creation, remains healthy and strong in these uncertain economic times.

Additional information on CIP financial instruments is available on the following websites:

- www.access2finance.eu (for entrepreneurs);
- www.eif.org (for financial intermediaries). ■

Venture capital for innovative firms

The primary objective of the High Growth and Innovative SME Facility (GIF) is to improve access to finance for the start-up and growth of SMEs and to invest in clean technology or eco-innovation. The GIF provides risk capital – usually in the order of millions of euros – for innovative SMEs in their early stages (GIF 1) and risk capital for SMEs with high growth potential in their expansion phase (GIF 2).

» Contact

Financing Innovation and SMEs Unit
Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry
ENTR.E.3@ec.europa.eu

SECURITY FIRST IN EUROPE

*The EU ensures the security of its citizens across a wide swath of activities, from civil protection against natural hazards to the protection of their food chain. Guarding against chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRNE) hazards is an especially important focus of the **EU's Security Research programme**, which will also boost Europe's industrial competitiveness.*

The severe earthquake and tsunami of March 2011 that caused the Fukushima nuclear disaster has refocused public attention across the globe on the issue of nuclear and other natural and man-made hazards.

Research is a crucial tool to improve how we deal with nuclear and radiological incidents. For this reason, the EU finances CBRNE research since incidents in this area – although rare – can have a huge potential impact.

In November 2010, the European Commission organised a high-level workshop focused on pertinent CBRNE issues. The gathering concluded that Europe's CBRNE stakeholder community benefits greatly from co-operating and sharing CBRNE-related information and resources – and that they should continue working closely with end-users.

A second workshop on CBRNE in June 2011 highlighted the importance of security technology demonstration projects in this sector. One example is the project known as 'Demonstration of Counter-Terrorism System-of-Systems against CBRNE phase 1' (DECOTESC1). It is developing a roadmap for demonstration of a consistent portfolio of countermeasures – from prevention to response and recovery – for CBRNE hazards linked to terrorism.

Underwriting the food chain

Another important security goal is to ensure the safety and security of the food we consume. Given the cross-border nature of Europe's complex food supply chain, the EU has been pursuing an integrated 'farm-to-fork' approach. This seeks the highest level of food safety and quality, animal health, animal welfare and plant health, while assuring the effective functioning of the single market.



This is achieved through a mix of legislative measures, strict monitoring and reporting and coordinated management of the Union's trade relations with third countries.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) carries out food and animal feed safety risk assessments at EU level. It works closely with national authorities, while consulting widely with stakeholders to provide independent scientific advice and clear communication on existing and emerging risks in the agro-food sector.

The importance of fast and effective action in this area was dramatically highlighted by the recent outbreak of a deadly strain of the *E. coli* bacteria in Germany, which quickly spread across the country and to other parts of Europe. The outbreak infected nearly 4000 people and caused around 50 deaths.

Despite this significant toll, the situation could have been far worse had it not been for the timely reaction of German and European authorities. Each EU Member State has a well-established structure in place to deal with food and other health scares. In addition, the European Union's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) was immediately set in motion after Germany's *E. coli* outbreak to inform the 27 Member States about initially suspected and then confirmed sources of the outbreak, and to recommend action to avoid further contamination.

Some high-tech scientific sleuthing by German investigators, backed by the EU's Reference Laboratory for *Escherichia coli* in Rome, meant that the source of the outbreak was eventually traced to an organic farm in Lower Saxony.

Food for action

As knowledge is a vital tool in the fight against food- and feed-related risks, the Union's Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7) funds numerous collaborative research projects in this field.

One example is the network-of-excellence (NoE) project called 'Plant and Food Biosecurity', which received €6 million in EU funding. Known as PlantFoodSec and launched in February 2011, this five-year effort seeks to improve the quality and impact of plant and food biosecurity training and research in Europe, and establish how to deal with the possible use of plant pathogens as biological weapons against crops.

PlantFoodSec will help safeguarding animal and plant welfare, while protecting the environment. For European farmers and the food and drink industry,

All about security

The European Union faces a number of common security threats which require a coordinated European approach. These include combating terrorism and organised crime, coping effectively with natural and man-made disasters, and dealing with possible disruptions to its economic infrastructure such as transport, energy and information networks.

Beyond EU legislation and co-operation among the 27, the EU also funds a broad range of security-related research which can enhance the safety and welfare of citizens, as well as the competitiveness of industry.

Given the growing importance of security, FP7 is the first EU funding programme to include a specific security research programme, with a budget of €1.4 billion. Focused exclusively on civil applications, the security theme is developing the needed technologies and knowledge to protect EU citizens, while respecting their privacy and other fundamental rights. It also seeks to boost the competitiveness of the European security industry, while delivering targeted research results to public end-users to reduce security gaps.

In recognition of the innovative potential of small and medium-sized enterprises the security research programme supports co-operation between SMEs from different countries.

At its halfway stage, FP7 had already funded more than 130 security research projects. The European Commission has released a catalogue of related success stories.

the increased biosecurity promoted by the network should help them to avoid the damaging impact of contaminations and other scares on their sales and credibility. Its activities include the creation of a virtual centre of competence to bring together specialists from a wide range of countries, the promotion of exchanges of expertise and knowledge, and the development of new ideas via its online platform.

The project's research deliverables include tools for counteracting and responding to the spread of plant pathogens, more effective means of dealing with the health implications of food-borne pathogens, improved disease-surveillance detection systems, and spatio-temporal risk models. ■

» Contact

Security Research and Development Unit
Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry
entr-security-research-dvlpmt@ec.europa.eu
www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/security

SOCIAL INNOVATION IN ACTION

The EU has identified social innovation as crucial in helping Europe meet the challenges of the 21st century, and a number of initiatives have recently been put forward to spread awareness of social innovation and encourage the private sector to get involved.

*Central to this strategy was the recent launch of the **Social Innovation Europe initiative**. In addition, changes in society create **new business opportunities** to develop new services and products in sectors such as care, transport and education.*

Social innovation, a concept that has been in practice for decades, has had a direct and positive impact on the lives of millions.

One only has to think of social enterprises, co-operative banks, hospices and microfinance to see how certain ideas have met pressing social needs and created new social relationships or collaborations. This is social innovation at its core, and it makes a difference.

While the concept is not new, the idea of social innovation as a field or policy is quite new.

The EU has identified social innovation as a key means of responding to societal challenges in which the boundary between 'social' and 'economic' blurs, and wants to see this field become an integral part of social policies and schemes as it can meet changing social needs which are not adequately addressed by the market or the public sector.

A flagship for the future

The growth of social innovation, however, has often been hampered by insufficient knowledge of the sector, limited support of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship activities, and insufficient scaling-up of good practices. In order to address this issue, the Innovation Union, the ambitious blueprint unveiled by the European Commission in October last year, is not just about enterprise and markets, but it also includes a focus on public-sector and social innovation. This flagship of the EU's Europe 2020 strategy set out a strategic approach designed to harness innovative solutions to address



Europe's pioneering spirit

The work of six prominent social innovation pioneers was highlighted during the Social Innovation Europe launch conference in March 2011. Ana Vale of EQUAL in Portugal discussed her model for mainstreaming social innovations, while Vickie Cammack of Tyze Personal Networks in Canada talked about creating a secure, personal, online network for people facing life-challenges, as well as the savings this kind of initiative could generate for governments funding healthcare.

Gorka Espiau discussed a Social Innovation Park in Bilbao, Spain, and the benefits of making social innovations marketable, while Martin Hirsch of the Agency for Civil Service in France argued for the use of experimental techniques in social circumstances. Simon Roberts of Ideas Bazaar in the UK talked about using information technology to connect older people. Finally, Miroslaw Miller of the Warclawskie Centrum EIT+ in Poland considered the need for academics to break out of the ivory tower and collaborate with the private and public sectors.

pressing challenges such as climate change, energy, health and an ageing population.

As part of this strategy, the European Commission has recently launched the Social Innovation Europe initiative, a networked 'virtual hub' and expertise centre for social entrepreneurs, the public and third sectors. The aim of the initiative is to contribute towards building a dynamic, entrepreneurial and innovative Europe and to deliver on the objectives of inclusive, smart and sustainable growth.

Facing up to the challenges

Social Innovation Europe is about connecting people and ideas, and integrating social innovation across sectors and borders. By 2014, this initiative will have established itself as the meeting place – virtual and real – for social innovators, entrepreneurs, non-profit organisations, policy-makers and anyone else inspired by social innovation.

"It's about helping Europe get through the next few years," says Social Innovation Europe Initiative project leader Louise Pulford, of the Young Foundation.

"The basic point is that we cannot find all the answers in our own countries. And it's about learning from successes as well as mistakes." Furthermore, the private sector has huge potential when it comes to social innovation. "Social innovation should be integrated into all structures, integrated into all societies, and this goes very much for the private sector. Is it social innovation

if it makes money? I think it is social innovation if it has social value." The technology sector, for example, will find huge potential in the field of health if it develops creative solutions to address challenges such as an ageing population.

The Social Innovation Europe initiative plans to incorporate the ideas and examples generated at the launch event into a series of reports. Furthermore, the Initiative has opened its virtual hub. Anyone interested in social innovation is welcome to use and to contribute their ideas and activities to this hub.

Solidarity and responsibility

The EU is also currently promoting and coordinating social innovation in Europe through a number of other initiatives. The European Social Fund (ESF), for example, has made significant investments in social innovations, ranging from supporting local partnerships and enhancing the capacity-building and networking of local stakeholders to implementing active labour market policies and partnerships under the EQUAL Community Initiative. In the current programming period, the ESF is investing more than €2 billion in institutional capacity-building. In the Structural Funds, there are many examples of social innovation in cities and in rural areas. Under CIP and Framework Funding Programmes, research and innovation is available for technologies that help older people live independently for longer, and where social scientists work together with NGOs and citizens on social cohesion in cities.

It is clear that coordinated actions at the EU level in the field of social innovation are needed in order to properly address the societal challenges ahead. "In a nutshell, social innovation is for the people and with the people," said European Commission President José Manuel Barroso at the launch of the Social Innovation Europe Initiative. "It is about solidarity and responsibility. It is good for society and it enhances society's capacity to act. The [economic] crisis has made it clear that most of the challenges we are facing have taken on an increasingly social dimension from poverty and social exclusion to demographic ageing and to the needs for better governance and more sustainable resource management." ■

» Contact

Support for Industrial Innovation Unit
Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry
industrial-innovation-support@ec.europa.eu

STRENGTHENING EURO-MEDITERRANEAN INDUSTRIAL CO-OPERATION

*The EU will support the Southern Mediterranean people's democratic aspirations by creating a Euro-Med area of shared prosperity with **a special focus on entrepreneurship and small business**. To this end, industry ministers have agreed upon a series of practical actions during the latest Euro-Med Conference held in Malta.*

Starting in Tunisia, a veritable 'youthquake' has swept across North Africa and the Middle East and has led to the dawning of what is being widely referred to as the 'Arab Spring'.

What does this mean for the EU?

The thirst for greater democracy and freedom, as well as for jobs and a better future, are major driving forces behind the current wave. Given that these principles are integral to the European model, the EU has come down politically on the side of the people.

At the same time, the geographic proximity of the uprisings makes them of concern to Europe. For instance, the instability in North Africa has caused a wave of illegal migration, particularly from Tunisia and Libya, into Europe. In addition, the southern Mediterranean represents some 10% of the EU's external trade, and so continued disruption could have serious economic repercussions not only for the countries concerned but for the Union too.

Working for peace and prosperity

In fact, the European Union has been working to create a Euro-Med region of "peace, security and shared prosperity" since 1995, when the so-called 'Barcelona Process' was launched. This evolved to become, in 2008, the Union for the Mediterranean between the EU and 16 Med partner countries. The current of change

Facts and figures

- The EU enjoys a long-standing and extensive trading relationship with the southern Mediterranean. In 2009, this was worth €224 billion (€119 billion in exports and €105 billion in imports).
- Despite inequalities, GDP and private consumption growth have been growing steadily in the southern Mediterranean. Although this growth will slow in the coming years, it is set to continue.
- Despite the economic crisis, the EU remains the main foreign investor in the region. Fuelled by growing domestic demand and low-cost local production, the number of EU foreign direct investment (FDI) projects in the southern Mediterranean shot up by more than 50% in 2010, to reach 826.

gripping the region however has led to a recognition that the EU needs to adjust its involvement and step up its support. Towards that end, the European Commission proposed, in March 2011, a new strategy entitled 'A partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean'.

Mutual benefit

The EU is the southern Mediterranean's main trading partner, with a relationship worth some €224 billion a year. It enjoys considerable leverage to help deliver the jobs, growth and prosperity needed through deeper co-operation. European businesses which have

Entrepreneurs, a key to the future

The young at the forefront of the movements for reform in North Africa and the Middle East have exhibited tremendous creativity, flare and resourcefulness in their drive for change. "The dynamism of SMEs is crucial for creating employment and offering concrete opportunities to the younger generations," notes Vice-President Tajani.

Numerous entrepreneurs in the EU and the southern Mediterranean have, in recent years, been demonstrating the benefits of cross-border entrepreneurship. Take *Energie del Sole*, a Tunisian company established with Italian capital, which is seeking to transform the country's abundant supply of sunshine into sustainable, clean energy for the future. Not only has the company performed well in Tunisia, where the government supports and subsidises the spread of the technology, but it is now also investing back in Italy with plans to develop in the photovoltaic and biomass sectors.

And *Energie del Sole* is not alone. Although most people are aware that Europe exports a lot of technology to the Med region, a reverse flow has been growing in recent years. For instance, the Egyptian company *Electrometer El Sewedy*, which is one of the largest manufacturers of electricity meters in Africa and the Middle East and the fifth largest globally, has used the Czech Republic as its launch pad into the EU market place, following successfully entering several African, Latin American and Asian markets.

Similar success stories can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/international/files/success-stories_en.pdf

expanded to the Med countries have the capacity to build EU-MED value chains to help them compete in the broader world.

This new partnership seeks to promote inclusive economic development in the southern Mediterranean, much as the Europe 2020 strategy already does in the EU. SMEs – long recognised as Europe's economic engine through the Small Business Act (SBA) and the 'Think small first' principle – take centre stage in these plans to stimulate economic growth and job creation.

"The EU needs to give a clear signal that a strong industrial co-operation and the creation of a favourable environment for SMEs is of mutual benefit for Mediterranean neighbours and the EU," reiterated European Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani, who is responsible for industry and entrepreneurship, at a Union for the Mediterranean conference of industry ministers which took place in Malta in May 2011.

"Further economic development and job creation is essential for political stability in the region, as well as help to manage migration."

At the gathering, Vice-President Tajani unveiled a number of far-reaching proposals for the progressive economic integration between the EU and the Mediterranean, with the eventual aim of creating a single Euro-Med market.

The ministers at the conference agreed to a number of actions at national, regional and intra-regional level: to develop the current Euro-Med Charter for Enterprise into a Small Business Act for the Med region, to stimulate European and diaspora investment in the Mediterranean, to facilitate trade in industrial products through the conclusion of agreements on conformity assessment (ACAA), to build innovation capacity, to promote sustainable enterprise development and energy efficiency, and more.

As a first major step towards turning these ambitious goals into realities, the European Commission released a work programme for the 2011-2012 period which mirrors closely the priorities identified by the ministers. Its implementation has already started in co-operation with a large number of public and private stakeholders from the North and the South. ■

» Contact

International Affairs Unit
Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry
entr-international-affairs@ec.europa.eu
www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/international

SHAPING A NEW EU SPACE POLICY

While some may consider space to be a luxury that Europe cannot afford during a time of austerity, nothing could be further from the truth. Improving the safety and daily lives of European citizens thanks to radio navigation, guiding tractors by satellite for high-yield crops, optimising responses to humanitarian crisis. This is not science fiction but just a few examples of innovations related to space technologies developed today. Many thousands of highly skilled jobs rely on the sector, which is working to make people's lives easier and safer, and European industry as a whole more competitive. To ensure continued success, the European Commission is developing an integrated space policy that will strengthen Europe's space infrastructure.

Space is a strategically important sector for Europe. As well as being a source of skilled jobs for scientists, engineers and technicians, the space industry provides Europe with a technological cutting edge, vital in an increasingly competitive world. It also stimulates innovation and creates commercial opportunities for a range of other business sectors and hi-tech SMEs (see box).

This key role was recognised by the Lisbon Treaty, which gave the EU a legal grounding to develop policies that explore and exploit space. Space is a priority area for the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. In fact, space has been earmarked as one of 10 key actions under the strategy's flagship initiative, 'An integrated industrial policy for the globalisation era'.

Key objectives

This initiative states that the European Commission will propose measures in 2011 to implement the priorities of the space policy based on Article 189 of the EU Treaty. The Commission is also charged with developing, in close collaboration with the European Space Agency (ESA) and Member States, a space industrial policy whose main objectives would be the steady, balanced development of the industrial base as a whole, including SMEs, greater competitiveness on the world stage, independence for strategic sub-sectors such as launching, which require special attention, and the development of the market for space products and services.

In April 2011, the European Commission released a Communication entitled 'Towards a space strategy for the European Union that benefits its citizens'. It sets out priorities for the future EU space policy to enable it to meet important economic, societal and strategic challenges:

- Pursue the achievement of the **European satellite navigation programmes** Galileo and EGNOS
- Implement with Member States the European Earth Monitoring Programme (**GMES**) which is designed to monitor the land, ocean, atmosphere, air quality and climate change, as well as to aid in emergency response and security, with the objective of becoming fully operational from 2014. Galileo, EGNOS and GMES are the top priorities of European space policy
- Protect space infrastructures against space debris, solar radiation and asteroids by setting up a **European Space Situation Awareness (SSA)** system. It is estimated that collisions with debris cost Europe's space industry about €330 million a year
- Identify and support actions at EU level in the field of **space exploration**. The Union could notably explore options to work with the International Space Station (ISS), ensuring that all Member States participate in it
- Pursue a **space industrial policy** developed in close collaboration with the European Space Agency and Member States
- Support **research and development** to increase European technological non dependence and ensure that **innovation** in this field will be of benefit to non-space sectors and citizens. Communication satellites play a key role in this context
- Strengthen the **partnerships** with EU Member States and the European Space Agency (ESA) and implement improved management schemes

To strengthen collaboration in space, the European Commission also plans to step up discussions with its partners in Russia and the USA, and will start talks with other space players like China. ■

A thriving sector means big business

Europe's space manufacturing industry has an annual turnover of €5.4 billion and employs a workforce of 31 000, most of whom are highly skilled.

The continent is also home to 11 major satellite manufacturers which together operate more than 150 communications satellites, employ 6 000 people and produce a combined turnover of about €6 billion. A further 30 000 people rely directly on the satellite business for their jobs. They work in 'downstream' businesses, such as 'satnav' providers, which exploit satellite-borne technologies.

The market for GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite Systems)-enabled applications and devices has certainly taken off in recent years, and is expected to achieve a worldwide annual turnover of €240 billion by the end of this decade. And although the earth observation market is less mature, the economic benefits of the Earth Observation Programme could reach up to €137 billion by 2030.

© GSA

»» Contact

Space policy Unit

Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry

entr-space-policy-and-coordination@ec.europa.eu

SUCCESS STORIES IN IMPROVING BUSINESS CONDITIONS

*While small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are vital to Europe's economic growth by providing jobs and driving innovation, they require a business-friendly environment to flourish. This year's **European Enterprise Awards** recognised the hard work of many public administrations, at the local and regional level, which have provided support to small businesses through effective projects aimed at promoting excellence in entrepreneurship.*

The European Enterprise Awards, which aim to stimulate the exchange of good practice in promoting entrepreneurship and SMEs, were held on 24 May in Budapest, Hungary. As usual, the competition was open to national, regional or local authorities as well as public-private partnerships between public authorities and entrepreneurs, educational programmes and business organisations.

"Business is the key for job creation," said European Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani at the award ceremony. "Public authorities can do a lot to improve the business conditions for SMEs. We need to multiply these concrete success stories and make Europe more business-oriented and business-friendly, as set out in the Small Business Act."

Six prizes were up for grabs: Promoting the Entrepreneurial Spirit, Investing in Skills,

Improving the Business Environment, Supporting the Internationalisation of Business, Responsible and Inclusive Entrepreneurship, and the Jury's Grand Prize, awarded to the entry considered the most creative and inspiring.

And the winners are...

This year, the Grand Jury Prize went to Barcelona Activa, the entrepreneurship centre of the Barcelona Council. The Centre was selected for its innovative entrepreneurial support and training actions which have led to the creation of 6 214 new businesses and 11 800 jobs. As a result, it has become a reference point for the city's entrepreneurs. Using an innovative model of both online and on-site services, the centre has coached more than 134 000 individuals. Every year, it organises a large array of events and summer camps for entrepreneurs, attracting over 222 000 participants.

The Promoting the Entrepreneurial Spirit award went to Düzce University in Turkey, which has turned the discovery of a unique bee species into an opportunity to help the local economy by training disadvantaged groups in bee-keeping; while the Investing in Skills prize went to the Centre for Amsterdam Schools for Entrepreneurship for its entrepreneurship education in all faculties and at all levels of study.

The E-factory in Uppsala, Sweden, a rural entrepreneurship project based on a public-private partnership, won the Improving the Business Environment category for its creative solutions to creating jobs and companies in rural Uppsala County; and the Internationalisation of Business prize went to the Rethinking the Product initiative from the Prato Chamber of Commerce in Italy. This initiative encourages product experimentation and helps companies find new uses and markets for their products.

Finally, the Responsible and Inclusive Entrepreneurship prize went to Hotel Panda, in Budapest, which uses a unique training and employment model to integrate disabled people into the business world. With 95% of its staff disabled, the hotel has doubled its profits, proving that it is possible to combine successfully social goals with a profitable business performance.

Seeds of success

The European Enterprise Awards have been organised by the European Commission since 2006. Every year, more than 300 initiatives take part in the national rounds of the competition, before a high-level European jury selects the best entries.

For those that make it through, the recognition can be life-changing. For example, the winner of the Jury's Grand Prize in 2007, Lan Ekintza-Bilbao, has seen its successful urban regeneration initiative replicated across other cities in the Basque Autonomous Community and elsewhere in Spain. The award-winning initiative helps prevent city decay by providing financial support to start-ups to help them relocate to the old heart of the city. The survival rate of businesses linked to the project is an impressive 90%.

Likewise, last year's Jury's Grand Prize winner is already noticing the effects. The Agence Regionale de Developpement des Territoires d'Auvergne in France picked up the award for its Entrepreneurs' Residencies, which provide short- and long-term support measures for business creators willing to settle in the region. "After winning the EEA, we were featured

on national French television to explain how our short- and long-term support initiatives bring entrepreneurs from outside the region to settle in our region," explained Henri Talamy from Entrepreneurs' Residencies. "This generated strong interest in our project, at one point reaching 250 phone calls per day. Since 2010, the number of projects we support has increased by 30%, and we are currently looking to extend our initiative to the Massif Central region."

The ongoing success of the European Enterprise Awards is yet more proof that SMEs are increasingly at the heart of European policy-making. ■

»» Contact

SME Policy Development and Crafts Unit
Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry
entr-sba@ec.europa.eu

Think Small First

The European Enterprise Awards underline the importance the European Commission places on promoting SMEs and entrepreneurship. They are part of an overall European strategy, tied together by the Small Business Act (SBA) of 2008, which aims to ensure that European SMEs have appropriate access to finance and markets and can thrive in a regulatory environment conducive to growth. The awards also highlight the fact that SME interests are increasingly being taken into account in law and policy-making at the EU, national, regional and local levels through the application of the 'Think Small First' principle, and that schemes to encourage excellence in enterprise and entrepreneurship are out there.

The implementation of the SBA has certainly contributed to strengthening a business-friendly environment in the EU. For example, it is easier to start up a company, while initiatives such as the European SME Week, the EU Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors, and the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme have helped to open doors for numerous enterprising citizens. However, while progress has been made, this implementation has tended to vary between Member States. The recent Review of the SBA identified new challenges to tackle and stressed that all Member States must now step up their efforts to support SMEs in what is still a challenging economic climate.




ENTERPRISING SOLUTIONS FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Tuula Antola

*Female entrepreneurship is a key resource for Europe. The **Enterprise Europe Network** provides the practical support needed to thrive in the business world.*

Fewer women than men in the EU are self-employed and even fewer start businesses or express the ambition to do so. Today, women make up around a third of the EU's entrepreneurs.

One woman who took the plunge and started her own business is Finland's Tuula Antola. Inspired by her daughter's scented toy bunny, she came up with the innovative business idea of using nanotechnology to embed any scent for several weeks into Kaipaus, her ceramic jewellery line, in order to personalise it and help the wearer express different moods.

Her nose for business led her to explore export opportunities abroad, which resulted in the doubling of her small company's turnover. She was supported by her local Enterprise Europe Network branch, based in Espoo's Tekel technology centre, which has helped her to break into the Italian and French markets.

Entrepreneurs like Antola can turn to the Network for help taking their companies to the next level. Made up of more than 600 business and innovation organisations in 49 countries, the Enterprise Europe Network offers practical services for small businesses.

It can help find business, technology or research partners abroad, as well as offering advice on how to access EU funding, understand EU law and protect intellectual property. Enterprise Europe Network partner organisations also organise specific events targeted at women, such as seminars and networking events.

The Network was also involved in delivering the first phase of the European Commission's Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors. The aim of the Ambassadors' Network is to have successful entrepreneurs campaigning on the ground to inspire women of all ages to become entrepreneurs and to set up their own businesses. The Ambassadors act as role models to inspire other women to become entrepreneurs by "telling their own story". They help to raise the confidence necessary to set up and run a successful business.

Through its powerful partnership tools and direct contacts, the Enterprise Europe Network helped Antola identify potential partners, both in terms of distributors and companies that could help develop new applications for her innovation.

The Enterprise Europe Network in the words of women entrepreneurs

"While web surfing one day I chanced across a video of the bubble in action. I was sure it would be a hit with children here, and sensed a great business opportunity. The hardest part is behind me, thanks to the Enterprise Europe Network."

Sandrine Jourdain, visual communication specialist, Marseilles, France. The Network helped Jourdain realise her business idea by providing her with advice on import requirements and putting her into contact with a Europe-based importer of the Chinese product.

"The Network delivered quick results, and we will continue to work with them as our company grows."

Rodica Chiorean, co-founder, Westline, Paris, France. Thanks to the Network's support, the small French electronics engineering firm was able to find a business partner in Poland and distribute its innovative SmartDrive device in a new market.

"Thanks to the Enterprise Europe Network I could get through complicated procedures and finally obtain significant financial support for my business."

Dr Małgorzata Włodarczyk, dentist, Cracow, Poland. Aided by the Network, the Polish dentist secured EU funding to upgrade her practice and increase the quality of treatment and the competitiveness of her business.

"With the help of the Network, we have been able to open doors that would not have been opened just by ourselves," says Antola. "The Enterprise Europe Network acts as an SME business accelerator – that's what has happened to Kaipaus."

Explaining the benefits the Network can bring SMEs, Marjo Uotila, director of Tekel's technology transfer services, noted that "every country is another market, with cultural differences and unique possibilities". The Enterprise Europe Network, with its presence in dozens of countries, can tap into just that kind of local know-how and expertise.

Europe needs more women entrepreneurs

Antola's story shows the role the Enterprise Europe Network can play in providing practical support to women entrepreneurs. This fits with the objectives of the European Commission's landmark Small Business Act (SBA), which aims to ensure that European SMEs have access to finance and markets and can thrive in an environment conducive to growth.

Entrepreneurship is one of the key building blocks upon which Europe's modern prosperity is founded. And as the European Union turns the corner on the financial and economic crises and ventures down the road to sustained and sustainable recovery, it needs its entrepreneurs more than ever.

Unsurprisingly, the European Union attaches great importance to entrepreneurship, which constitutes a central plank of the EU's enterprise policy. However, not enough Europeans are going into business for themselves and creating SMEs, which constitute the backbone of the EU economy by driving employment, economic growth and innovation.

To address this, the EU has a wide range of policies, programmes and initiatives in place to promote entrepreneurship in general and to target specific groups that are under-represented or face specific challenges, such as migrants and minorities.

Due to the gender imbalance in the business world, one important target group is women, who still make up only about 30% of the EU's entrepreneurs, despite a promising upturn in recent years. Bringing more women into business is good for the women involved, the economy and society as a whole. ■

»» Contact

Enterprise Europe Network

www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu

EU policy activities related to female entrepreneurship:

Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry,
'Entrepreneurship' Unit,

www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/

[promoting-entrepreneurship/women](http://www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women)



Business Support on Your Doorstep

NEWS IN BRIEF



AN ENGINE FOR INNOVATION

Through public procurement, European governments and public authorities can play an important role in promoting the uptake of innovative solutions and developing new markets, while simultaneously improving the quality of public services. The European Commission has launched several initiatives with a view to maximising the innovative potential of public procurement across the EU. A recent call for proposals, whose deadline is 27 September 2011, focuses on areas related to major societal challenges.

www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/magazine/articles/innovation/article_11008_en.htm

SAFER TOYS

Strengthened toy safety requirements, set out in the European Toy Safety Directive adopted in 2009 (see *E&I magazine* n° 5), oblige manufacturers and importers into the EU to meet strict new criteria as of 20 July 2011. The updated rules fulfill the highest safety requirements in the world, especially those relating to the use of chemical substances.

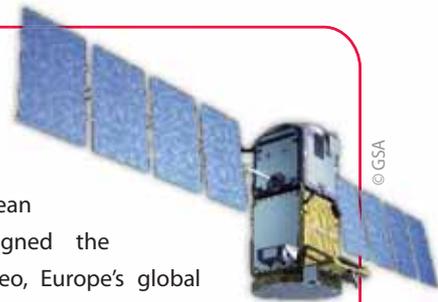
www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/779



EU SATELLITE NAVIGATION

The European Space Agency – on behalf of the European Commission – recently signed the final two contracts for Galileo, Europe's global navigation satellite programme. The two contracts, worth a combined total of €355 million, concern the formatting of navigation information for broadcast by satellites and the maintenance and correct positioning of satellites in orbit. These contracts are essential to ensuring the deployment of three initial services by Galileo in 2014: the free Open Service basic signal, the Public Regulated Service and the Search-and-Rescue Service. The first two operational Galileo satellites are due to be launched from the French Guiana Space port on 20 October 2011.

www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/772



SUPPORTING EUROPE'S BIO-SECTOR

The European Commission was a visible presence at the annual BIO International Convention, the world's largest event for the biotech industry. The Commission's stand was expressly meant as a 'conviviality space' and was used by European associations and trade organisations as an informal meeting place. The Commission also organised a number of break-out sessions during the Convention, one of which dealt with the new Innovation Union, how it will foster innovation and the funding opportunities it presents.

www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/magazine/articles/industrial-policy/article_11007_en.htm



A BOOST FOR TOURISM

The European Commission is promoting a collaborative project between South America and Europe, which aims to attract an additional 50 000 tourists. In order to achieve this, the Commission is working with several European governments, the tourism industry and major airlines to make better use of available airline and accommodation capacity. Antonio Tajani, European Commission Vice-President in charge of industry and entrepreneurship, said: "We are committed to promoting Europe as a tourism destination and to strengthening co-operation with countries of considerable tourism growth potential. Both the European and the South American markets will benefit greatly from this venture."

www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/669



© Denis Raev

» Find out more...

For further information on recent activities and policy developments related to Enterprise and Industry, visit our website:

www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise



UPCOMING EVENTS

● European SME Week 2011, 3-9 October 2011, throughout Europe

The European SME Week, in which 37 countries participate, aims to inform entrepreneurs about available support, give recognition to their role in society and promote entrepreneurship. This year's central event, the European SME Week Summit, will take place at the European Parliament in Brussels on 6 and 7 October 2011. It will focus on two issues: transfers of business and a second chance for entrepreneurs. The Summit will feature an exhibition on 6 October and a plenary in the EP Hemicycle for 750 guests including MEPs, business organisations and entrepreneurs on 7 October. Hundreds of other events covering a wide range of topics and sectors will be held across Europe: consult the regularly updated website to discover interesting events taking place near you.

www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/sme-week/about

● European Tourism Forum 2011, 5-7 October 2011, Krakow

The European Tourism Forum brings together major stakeholders in the tourism industry to discuss a variety of European-level issues. This year's event, organised in collaboration with the Polish Presidency, will focus on stimulating competitiveness in the European tourism sector. A plenary session involving, among others, European Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani and Polish Economic Minister Waldemar Pawlak will also take place.

www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=5247

● Future of the Lead Market Initiative and Innovation Partnerships, 26-27 October 2011, Warsaw

Entrepreneurs, public organisations, and policy-makers at EU, national, regional and local levels will meet to discuss the outcomes of the Lead Market Initiative and the development of future demand-side policy actions. The conference, organised in co-operation with the Polish Presidency, will showcase how demand-side and supply-side innovation policies can be effectively combined, for example in the European Innovation Partnerships. Particular attention will also be devoted to reinforcing the link between innovation policy and industrial policy.

www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation

● International Space Exploration Conference, 10 November 2011, Lucca

The third edition of this conference will launch a new collaboration mechanism (High-level International Platform on Space Exploration) enabling stakeholders to discuss the future of international co-operation in this domain. During the meeting, delegations will also debate key fields for space exploration, such as enabling technologies, space transportation and robotic exploration.

www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/space

ENTERPRISE & INDUSTRY *magazine*

The *Enterprise & Industry* on-line magazine provides regular updates on policy development, on legislative proposals and their passage to adoption, and on the implementation and review of regulation affecting enterprises. Articles cover issues related to SMEs, innovation, entrepreneurship, the single market for goods, competitiveness and environmental protection, industrial policies across a wide range of sectors, and more. In short, it addresses all EU policies under the responsibility of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry.

Three times a year, the best of the on-line articles, together with a feature article, are presented in the printed edition of the magazine. You can subscribe to receive the magazine – in English, French, German or Italian – free of charge by post. Visit the website and subscribe on-line.

Visit the magazine website to find out more:
www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/magazine

On the site, you can sign up to receive notification of all new articles through the RSS feed.

