



Partnerships for better  
innovation support

# Sparkz

The newsletter of the **Europe INNOVA** initiative



## How can **European clusters** become **more competitive?**

**To try and answer this question, over 250 participants from companies, clusters, development agencies and the field of industrial policies met for the 'Clusters in Europe II, Mobilising Clusters for Competitiveness' Conference, which took place in Budapest on 27- 28 January, 2010.**

The conference was opened by prominent speakers from Hungarian and European Commission Policy Units as well as by senior officials from leading Research Institutions. During the conference, Christian Ketels, Principal Associate at the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at the Harvard Business School, provided some answers to the question of how clusters can become more stable institutions within national economies. Also, the opportunity to consider ideas and experiences from countries such as Japan and Turkey opened the minds of members of the audience to cluster practices outside the EU.

The conference also included a role play initiated by Emiliano Duch, President and Founder of the firm COMPETITIVENESS, an international consultancy group, specialising in building business clusters. By asking participants to adopt different

roles like industry managers, researchers or policy-makers, he showcased the many difficulties that can occur and helped the audience appreciate all of the issues that surround the successful operation of clusters or cluster programmes.

On the second day, conference participants joined one of four working groups to discuss predefined questions related to 'Industries,' 'Cluster Management,' 'Regional Development and Cluster Development' or the 'Visegrad Four Countries.'

During the closing address, Jean-David Malo of the European Commission's DG Research, presented the European Commission's ideas for a new innovation plan. He said that he considered clusters as an ambitious tool for creating and disseminating knowledge but nonetheless, compared to Japan and the US, there were still weaknesses in Europe's innovation performance. In conclusion, Jean-David Malo highlighted the complex landscape of the EU's R&D and innovation programmes and proposed that the programmes should be streamlined to maximise the synergies between the activities of different DGs.



**Cluster Policy**  
the Way to Go!

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European experts adopt  
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## Clusters in Europe II Conference

# Cluster Policy – the **Way to Go!**



**Christian Ketels,**  
Principal Associate at the  
Institute for Strategy and  
Competitiveness at the  
Harvard Business School,

was one of the keynote speakers at the 'Clusters in Europe II' Conference in Budapest. Sparks took this chance to hold an in-depth interview with him on his views about clusters and cluster development in Europe.

**Sparks:** What role do clusters play in enhancing the competitiveness of industry sectors?

**CK:** "Firstly, there is clear evidence that clusters provide an environment in which entrepreneurship is more likely to thrive. However, activities at the level of industrial sectors are increasingly insufficient to achieve the improvements in productivity and innovative capacity needed to succeed in global competition. What is needed is collaboration within the wider context of a cluster, i.e. including partners along the value chain as well as the research and educational institutions that provide critical inputs into an industry.

Take the example of the European chemical industry: Traditionally a global leader, it has come under increasing pressure from rivals in Asia and the Middle East, where markets are growing more dynamically and costs for inputs tend to be lower. To compensate for these disadvantages, chemical firms first focused on upgrading their internal efficiency. Once that turned out not to be enough, they increased pressure on their suppliers, particularly on the logistical firms that account for about 30% of value creation in this industry. But the traditional approach, with short-term supply contracts and intense price pressure only provided temporary relief. The industry is now working on a much broader effort with suppliers and research institutions to improve the overall productivity of the system, rather than shifting costs from one part to the other. The cluster approach turned out to be the right way to overcome the limitations of the traditional sectoral perspective."

**Sparks:** Is there statistically reliable data to prove the positive effects of clusters?

**CK:** "Over the last few years, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of quantitative studies on the impact of clusters on economic performance. While such studies had been done before on individual cases, the emergence of broader databases, like the European Cluster Observatory and its North American predecessors in the US and Canada allowed for more systematic quantitative tests. The evidence is clear: Agglomerations of companies in related activities do have a positive impact on many indicators of productivity and innovation, from wages to value added to patents. There is also clear evidence that clusters provide an environment where entrepreneurship in related activities is not only more likely, but also one in which new companies face better odds of survival.

Where data is still painfully missing, is in the area of large-scale impact assessments of cluster policies. The evidence of significant economic returns for a region or country is much harder to come by from the data available so far. There is data that companies engaged in cluster efforts tend to do better than their peers who remain outside. But whether this is the result of cluster programmes or a selection bias – strong firms are more likely to become partners in cluster projects – is hard to say.

The European Commission plays a crucial role in working with the statistical offices across Europe to provide better data on clusters. Government agencies, too, have, through the European Cluster Memorandum and other initiatives, indicated their willingness to find practical solutions to impact measurement. It is an issue that clearly is on the agenda."

**Sparks:** How do you think the EU is performing in terms of its other cluster policies and practice?

**CK:** "The decisions most important for the future of European clusters are not taken in Brussels but in companies, research



institutions and government agencies across European regions and capitals. However, having said that, the European level can help Member States to improve the ways in which they use cluster policy.

The European Commission is already moving in the right areas for Member States. It is supporting quality criteria and training schemes for cluster managers through the European Cluster Excellence Initiative and is engaged in a number of other efforts that will enable EU member countries to improve the quality of their cluster efforts. Indeed, the new phase of the Lisbon agenda which

is currently under discussion could include stronger reporting mechanisms to exert some soft pressure on member countries to use these opportunities.

Finally, in terms of its own instruments, the European Commission has to better integrate the existing ones in order to develop a common understanding of clusters and cluster policy. This is a complex process and is not just a matter of political will, as the institutional structures within the Commission and between the Commission and Member States create further complexities. But it is the way to go!"



***"You need stable nuclei to be able to form flexible clusters"***

**Dr. József PÁLINKÁS**, President, Hungarian Academy of Sciences



***"Cluster policy is an art. It has to be further examined what the best ways are to run a cluster but practitioners always have to keep the changing framework conditions in mind"***

**Reinhard Büscher**, Head of Unit 'Support for Innovation' at DG Enterprise and Industry



***"Member States should strongly focus on framework conditions for clusters to achieve excellence and competitive advantages globally, particularly a strong focus on internationalisation"***

**Tea Petrin**, President of the European Cluster Policy Group of the EU



***"Cluster development is divided into five steps: competition, collaboration, cooperation, common venture and common future"***

**Christoph Beer**, tcbe.ch - ICT Cluster Bern, Switzerland



Clusters in Europe II Conference

# Hungarian Pole Programme identifying **Successful Clusters**



**At this conference in Budapest, Zita Zombori, Managing Director of the Pole Programme Office, informed the audience that Hungary had developed a unique four-stage cluster development model, with the most successful clusters being entitled to preferential treatment and dedicated sources of support.**

She also presented Hungary's economic development programme, which harmonises the sources of several operational programmes of the Hungarian NSRF 2007-2013 and has funds available that total €1.5 billion.

The national cluster development policy forms part of the Pole Programme.

This Pole Programme aims to identify, by 2013-2015, five to ten successful Innovation Clusters in Hungary that are able to attain a significant market share in Europe.

The evaluation model used to assess the clusters is a fact-based, accreditation system incorporating both quantitative and qualitative criteria in order to reach a final selection of the most promising initiatives.

It covers:

- Cooperation in the cluster;
- Members of the cluster;
- Business performance of the SME members;
- R&D performance;
- Strategic and operational planning.

Together, the selected clusters will have the sole right to apply for dedicated Pole Programme sources of support. They will also benefit from advantages and preferential treatment in many calls for proposals.

Finally, Zita Zombori explained that a further aim of the Pole Programme was to support cooperative actions that are innovative and export-oriented and have the potential to produce high added value.

**For more information:**

<http://polusprogram.eu/hu>

<http://>

# Boosting the Satellite-based Services' single European market

**Europe wants to be a world leader in the satellite services industry. It also wants to use this position to respond positively to current societal challenges that have major implications for areas such as transport, environmental observation, security and e-health. The first event involving ENCADRE, ESINET and KIS4SAT, held during January 2010, underscored the need for improved coordination if these ambitions are to be fulfilled.**

The event was initiated by the ENCADRE European Association, which was founded in February 2009 by two cluster regions in Germany and France, and was supported by the European Commission's DG Enterprise and Industry, the European Space Agency (ESA) and the European GNSS Supervisory Authority (GSA). In addition, it brought together actors from 12 cluster regions and the European Business Network (EBN).

In the past, many projects and cluster activities have been created at European, Member State and regional levels to promote the development of the satellite-based services market, based on the European GALILEO initiative. Whilst these projects have enjoyed partial success, the market for satellite-based services is still fragmented and also lacks transparency. Thus, it was recognised that a more coordinated approach was required and that the event should be regarded as an initial step in joining forces and combining activities.

It was agreed to continue to organise joint events and three working committees were established, focusing on market offer or

SME innovative solutions, the public and private market demand and education and communication.

The intention is to engage ENCADRE as a central coordinating entity by 2011, in line with the joint EC/GSA/ESA objectives for coordinated action in the creation of a lead market



for satellite downstream applications and services.

ENCADRE also aims to be the key European support network for SME business development after the incubation phase support that is provided by ESINET. One of the tools to be promoted by the ENCADRE network is the innovation voucher, which is currently being tested by the KIS-IP initiative, which is described in Sparks16. ENCADRE has agreed to use this approach in the cluster regions and to generate regional co-funding for a successful roll-out of this new tool to support SME innovation and international business development.



ENCADRE is also providing go-to-market business development support via its strategic partner, Bearing Consulting, and now includes 16 member clusters representing more than 1000 SMEs.

**For more information:**

<http://encadre-association.org>

<http://>

## Related links

**European Space agency (ESA):**

[www.esa.int](http://www.esa.int)

**European Space Incubators Network (ESINET):**

[www.esinet.eu](http://www.esinet.eu)

**European Business & Innovation Centre Network (EBN):**

[www.ebn.be](http://www.ebn.be)

**Galileo programme:**

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise>

> Policy highlights > Space  
> Galileo

<http://>



# Eco-Innovation

## Supporting a major policy objective

The **European Eco-Innovation Platform** (Eco-IP) aims to help users adopt eco-innovative solutions. The innovation support services that it will test will be designed for those SMEs which are active in the emerging eco-innovation markets identified by the Lead Market Initiative and the Environmental Technology Action Plan (ETAP).

The **Eco-IP** consists of partnerships in three different eco-innovation market areas that are complemented by two horizontal actions, which aim to structure the eco-innovation community and establish an Eco-Innovation Observatory.

### **BIOCHEM** Eco-IP Partnership for Driving Innovation in the Sector of Bio-based Products



**Steve Fletcher**

**Director of Delivery Programmes,**  
*Chemistry Innovation Knowledge Transfer Network, UK*



*“BIOCHEM aims to stimulate demand driven bio-based business in the chemical sector and improve the innovation capacity of start-ups and SMEs”*

The **BIOCHEM** project, which began on 1st February 2010, aims to support companies, especially SMEs, in entering the emerging market for bio-based products in the chemical sector. Bio-Based Products are made from renewable, biological raw materials such as plants and trees or by the use of biotechnology processes. They are typically sold into market sectors such as bio-plastics, bio-lubricants, surfactants,

enzymes and pharmaceuticals. It has been identified as one of Europe's six “Lead Markets”. The project will develop a toolbox to provide technical and business support to reduce barriers to entering this market, including topics such as innovation management, life cycle methodologies, business planning and fund raising. This will be tested on at least 250 companies across seven European countries.

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### **REMake** Recycling and Resource Efficiency driving innovation in European Manufacturing SMEs



**Dr. Uwe König**

**CTO - Technical Director,** *Zentralverband Oberflächentechnik e.V.*  
*Association of German Surface Technology Federations, Germany*



*“The European manufacturing industry is about to undertake a tremendous effort towards a major paradigm shift - to break the old link between growth and resource consumption”*

**REMake** is concerned with innovation support for the lead market area of recycling and resource efficiency (RRE). The core of its activities will be the testing of a comprehensive set of consultancy tools by means of a two-stage voucher scheme. These tools will be developed for, and tested with, manufacturing SMEs that produce or apply RRE technologies. The project's six national and regional agencies and seven technical

centres and consultants plan to test a self-assessment tool on RRE innovation performance, as well as training and consultancy modules on RRE-oriented eco-design, life-cycle assessment and eco-innovation management. The search for a competitive advantage through an early adoption of eco-innovation standards and labels in the RRE field will be supported by a new database information system.

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## INNOWATER

Innovation partnership for better innovation support tools and delivery mechanisms in sustainable water and wastewater.



**Harro Riedstra**  
**Project Manager,**  
European Water Partnership



*“The INNOWATER partnership will assist innovative SME’s and facilitate the market uptake of new technologies addressing water challenges”*

INNOWATER aims to provide better innovation support tools and delivery mechanisms in sustainable water and wastewater. It is a public private partnership of public innovation agencies, water associations and technology specialists, innovation experts and eco-innovative cluster organisations. The overall objective of INNOWATER is to develop and test new and better innovation support

tools and delivery mechanisms for innovative SMEs and first-user industries. The approach is of matching together developers of eco-innovative solutions for water management and suitable clients for these solutions. This will happen in various industrial sectors, such as textiles, surface and agro industries and will be accompanied by business support programmes.

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## ECOLINK+

A platform to strengthen Europe’s Eco-innovation community



**Andrea Di Anselmo**  
**Vice President,**  
META Group, Italy



*“ECOLINK+ is the place where to unleash entrepreneurial potential and showcase talents, innovators and regions strongly believing in green economy”*

ECOLINK+ is the horizontal support action of the Eco-innovation Platform (Eco-IP) aimed at strengthening Europe’s Eco-innovation community. It is designed to exploit the results of the Europe INNOVA Eco-IP to the greatest extent and to integrate Eco-innovation support into industry and economic development policy. It will be the platform where innovation service providers, regions strongly

believing in Eco-innovation and the EU best performing eco-innovators will showcase, share their experiences and co-operate. **ECOLINK+ key actions:**

- 1 integrate efforts and creating synergies among Eco-IP activities,
- 2 engage and network the best eco-innovators and stakeholders,
- 3 reach out the widest audience of service providers, innovation practitioners and policy makers.

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## The Eco-Innovation Observatory



**Michal Miedzinski**  
**Senior Consultant,**  
Technopolis Group, Belgium



*“The Observatory will be the first integrated European-level knowledge source on eco-innovation for enterprises, innovation service providers and policy-makers alike”*

The **Eco-Innovation Observatory**, financed by DG Environment, was anticipated in the Environmental Technology Action Plan for 2004-2009. It is to become a strategic knowledge resource on eco-innovation for businesses and policy-makers. The main objectives of the observatory are to gather market intelligence on eco-innovation and technology trends, provide sector analysis and analyse eco-innovation in the Member States.

The observatory will liaise with other EU initiatives working in related fields, in particular, ETAP and the Lead Market Initiative. Its main output will be an annual report on the state of eco-innovation in the EU and an on-line information tool for businesses and policy-makers. The aim is to offer a complete service in support of businesses and SMEs by providing them with the latest market insights, which can be used to spot and exploit market opportunities and trends.

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# The Future is for **Services Innovation**



Mette Koefoed Quinn,  
DG Enterprise and Industry

**The Partnering Forum organised by the Knowledge Intensive Services – Innovation Platform with the support of BIC Lazio Business Innovation Centre heard that services innovation was finally getting the political recognition it deserved. The forum, held in Rome on 11-12 February 2010, brought together over 140 innovation practitioners, policy-makers, companies and investors.**

The point about the recognition of services innovation was made very strongly by Reinhard Büscher, Head of Unit 'Support for Innovation' at DG Enterprise and Industry. He encouraged the KIS partnerships funded under the Europe INNOVA initiative to concentrate on substantial, tangible objectives, so that they might obtain the best results and achieve sustainable impact. More than ever there is a need to demonstrate that the activities in the KIS-IP have real impact in terms of innovation and creation of new jobs. There are still lots to be done in order to create a single market for innovation in Europe. Mr. Büscher also emphasised that the common mandate of the projects was ultimately to provide improved, concrete support to innovative SMEs through a variety of tools such as vouchers and other funding mechanisms that were presented later in the Forum.

## Sharing Experiences and Ideas

During the event, participants from all over Europe and from many different backgrounds, discussed new forms of support for innovation, taking into account the specific needs of service companies, as well as the potential role of services innovation in meeting societal needs.

An interesting feature of the Forum was a series of presentations from selected start-up entrepreneurs that had been coached in investor readiness during the venture academy review sessions. Over

ten companies had been evaluated and given the tools to make a successful short presentation and an elevator pitch.

Two companies, U-Hopper, presented by Diego Taglioni, and FHOSTER, presented by Antonio Leonforte, were given the award for the most convincing pitches by their coaches.

## Innovation Management stimulates Growth

In her keynote presentation, Eva Diedrichs from A.T. Kearney stressed the significance of innovation management. Very frequently, the importance of innovation management is underestimated, even though statistics demonstrate a strong correlation between innovation management and the business success of both SMEs and large companies. By building on the results of the research, which involved 50 case studies, Eva Diedrichs presented recommendations for the development of effective support mechanisms for KIS companies. Her findings were based on the final report of the first phase of the IMP<sup>3</sup>rove project. The report indicated the importance of raising awareness about innovation management and that, to implement innovation management efficiently, both practitioners and academics should be involved in education on innovation management.

The message to policy-makers was to integrate innovation and innovation management into every new programme for SMEs and to increase the skills of innovation support providers in translating and transposing effective concepts to KIS companies. Indeed, the benefits of innovation management should be clarified for all stakeholder groups.

## The diversity of needs

Gertraud Leimüller from Winnovation, Creative Wirtschaft Austria, provided insights into how demanding customers can be and

*i*

**The Venture Academy** aims to help SMEs to get investor-ready. Experienced coaches from the relevant industry areas work very pragmatically with entrepreneurs to prepare their approach to investors.

The Venture Academy is highly encouraged for entrepreneurs looking to access international markets as they will be provided with concrete information, tools and resources in order to successfully partner and grow their business. Focus is on how to meet strategic partners and potential investors' expectations. Participants receive guidance on how their presentations and propositions compare with those of other participants, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses which need to be addressed and improved.



how their very sophisticated needs can shape innovation activities. Ethical, environmental and health considerations can all influence the needs and behaviour of customers and clients and this trend will continue to grow in the future. Despite the challenge of selling services, there has never been a better time for services innovation and this is confirmed by research results, which demonstrate that the more technology we use the more services innovation we need. Gertraud Leimüller encouraged participants to think outside-the-box and reminded the audience about the synergies in innovation development achieved through collaboration between experts from diverse fields.

The keynote theme was further discussed by an expert panel. The participants in the panel again picked up the point about the complexity of customers' needs. However, whilst people are the main drivers of services innovation this does not mean that the customer is always right. Customers may not even know what they need and therefore stronger and deeper collaboration between companies and researchers is necessary in order to identify the clients' requirements. Service development should always be undertaken in a systematic and sustainable way.

## The regional potential

The Partnering Forum was closed by Mette Koefoed Quinn from the European Commission's DG Enterprise and Industry, who highlighted the important role of regions. Regions have great potential to help knowledge intensive service companies to succeed and the examples of Rome, Milan and Amsterdam demonstrate this potential. Such examples will hopefully encourage other regions to support and believe in the service companies in their area. The subject will be further discussed in four Regional KIS Events to be held in Tartu (Estonia) on 11 May, in Stuttgart (Germany) on 18 May and in Athens (Greece) and Paris (France) later in the year. The Regional Events will promote services innovation in the particular region by bringing together innovation practitioners, policy makers as well as SMEs and industry experts. A number of regional SMEs that are successful in knowledge intensive industries will be showcasing their approach to services innovation. In addition, the issues of how regions can support the emergence and growth of knowledge intensive service companies, for example through clusters or regional support measures, will be discussed. More information about these events will appear in future editions of Sparks.



**Read more about the KIS Partnering Forum**

[www.europe-innova.eu](http://www.europe-innova.eu)

- > Innovation in Services
- > KIS Partnering Forum

<http://>



## Expert Validation Platform launched in Rome

**In Rome, at the KIS Partnering Forum, the TAKE IT UP project launched its Expert Validation Platform (EVP). The EVP is a high-profile panel of innovation support professionals that will assist Europe INNOVA projects in designing their tools for easy uptake by others.**

*"Across Europe 40% of companies receiving innovation support were not satisfied with the services they received. TAKE IT UP and its expert validation group shall act on that by targeting the tools under development by the Europe INNOVA projects to the needs and by accelerating the uptake in the regions."* stated Sven Schade, responsible project officer in DG Enterprise and Industry at the opening

of the meeting. The members of the EVP learned more about, and from, TAKE IT UP and together they took part in roundtable discussions to debate three key issues to be investigated during their meetings with Europe INNOVA projects: 1) the level of awareness of and compliance with Europe INNOVA's 6 quality principles, 2) the level of awareness/ implementation by the projects with regard to the testing process, and 3) the level of development of their "capitalisation" strategy. The role of the EVP is to offer the Europe INNOVA partnerships expert feedback for improving the services or tools that they are developing. It will also provide advice on the testing process and represent third parties interested in the results of Europe INNOVA.



# European experts adopt the calling for a **strengthening of**



Job Cohen, Mayor of Amsterdam

**More than 75 participants at a two-day workshop organised by the European Commission during February supported the idea of establishing a 'European Creative Industries Alliance' and of following a more strategic approach to strengthening this sector.**

In his welcome, the Mayor of Amsterdam, Job Cohen, indicated that creative approaches were needed to help solve today's societal problems and that such approaches often have great economic potential. He fully subscribed to the development of a European strategy for the creative industries.

The participants also believed in the huge economic and social potential of the creative industries, which comprise, for instance, publishing, software, consultancies, advertising, media, entertainment and the arts. Michael Söndermann from the Office of Culture Industries Research, Cologne, Germany highlighted the fact that the turnover of cultural and creative industries in 2007 was 626 billion euro. Dominic Power presented the results of a study by the European Cluster Observatory, which showed that during 2006 there were more than 5.2 million employees in these industries. Then, Edna dos Santos-Duisenberg from UNCTAD pointed to the dynamism of the creative industries, which had been able to increase their exports by 43%, between 1996 and 2005.



Rene Kooyman from the Utrecht School of Arts, Netherlands

*You need stable nuclei to be able to form flexible clusters*



**Xavier Troussard**, DG Education and Culture

In addition, Rene Kooyman from the Utrecht School of Arts, Netherlands underlined the role of creative industries as a key strategic sector that also had a positive influence on other industries. This was confirmed

by Gertraud Leimüller from Winnovation, creative wirtschaft who presented the results of the third Austrian report on the creative industries, which had discovered that 46% of the firms supported customers outside this sector in generating innovation.

It became clear from the discussions that there was a dual challenge in taking full advantage of this potential - making businesses more creative and making creative people more entrepreneurial. Experts stressed that there was a need to build upon the core of arts and creativity and to improve the links with the surrounding interconnected layers of entrepreneurial and innovative services. Participants welcomed the cooperation of the Commission's Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry and the Directorate-General for Education and Culture in this respect. This cooperation had resulted in the bringing together of stakeholders from innovation communities and representatives of the



*The Commission has a crucial role in linking up creative hubs*

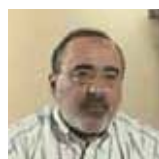
**Allan Mayo**, UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

creative industries. The views of these participants were also captured in a video diary.

As input for the workshop, the DG Enterprise and Industry had published a series of studies to facilitate the debate on how to adopt a more strategic approach to supporting innovation in the creative industries. These policy recommendations and subsequent discussions showed that more work was required to increase the understanding of the framework conditions and drivers of favourable eco-systems for the creative industries. Many ideas and

# 'Amsterdam Declaration' Europe's Creative Industries

approaches were presented during the discussions. For example, Jørgen Rosted from FORA Denmark outlined how new cluster concepts, open innovation and business



*Creative industries should be integrated into programmes for entrepreneurship, incubation and clusters strategies*

.....  
**Fernando José Freire De Sousa**, University of Porto, Portugal

support services with a more specific focus on creative industries could be developed to promote such conducive eco-systems.

Problems such as access to finance for entrepreneurship and growth were raised and some practical examples of better methods of financing creative industries were presented by the ImMediate project and IFCIC. In general, participants called for more funding and also for more action to raise the awareness of investors about the sector's economic potential and to raise the awareness of creative entrepreneurs about the need to become investment-ready as soon as possible. Hasan Bakhshi from NESTA, UK stressed that more 'creative credits' were required that might be provided through innovation vouchers. He explained that R&D tax credits had not served the creative industries, as they were not in a traditional research-driven sector and thus were often excluded from traditional innovation support measures.

Mette Koefoed Quinn, Policy Officer from the 'Support for Innovation' Unit at DG Enterprise and Industries presented the proposal for a 'European Creative Industries Alliance.' This Pan-European initiative plans to create a cooperation platform for local, regional and national policy-makers and institutions that recognise the potential of creative industries for future competitiveness and job creation

that can deliver better policies and practical instruments and support. A total of 91% of the participants was convinced of the huge potential of the creative industries and welcomed the idea of establishing a European Creative Industries Alliance to help



*With the European Creative Industries Alliance, we would like to create something new – not another talking shop or network. We want to bring together policy-makers willing to experiment with and develop new or better policies and instruments to support innovation in creative industries*

.....  
**Mette Koefoed Quinn**, DG Enterprise and Industry

exploit the innovation potential of the sector. It was also suggested that such an alliance could be launched in 2011.

The Amsterdam Declaration was constructed on the basis of the outcomes of the electronic voting session at the end of the workshop. Participants urged regional, national and European policy-makers to promote a favourable 'eco-system' for creative industries in order to transform Europe's cultural diversity into a real competitive advantage for the rejuvenation of Europe's industries. The challenge now is to promote improved transnational cooperation and support services, with a view to creating new and better jobs and sustainable growth in the EU.

**Further information at:**

[www.europe-innova.eu/  
creative-industries](http://www.europe-innova.eu/creative-industries)

<http://>





Partnerships for better  
innovation support

Europe INNOVA is an initiative of the European Commission's Directorate General Enterprise and Industry which aspires to become the laboratory for the development and testing of new tools and instruments in support of innovation with a view to help innovative enterprises innovate faster and better.

It brings together public and private innovation support providers such as innovation agencies, technology transfer offices, business incubators, financing intermediaries, cluster organisations and others.

**The newsletter  
of the Europe INNOVA initiative**

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**Sparks**  
[www.europe-innova.eu](http://www.europe-innova.eu)

# The News in Brief

## CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHT:

### WIRE 2010 focuses on synergies between the **Structural Funds**, FP7 and CIP

**Key political leaders and stakeholders in regional competitiveness met during the Week of Innovative Regions in Europe (WIRE) to discuss how to use R&D funds more effectively. They also considered the possibilities of creating stronger synergies between the Structural Funds, the 7th Framework Programme . Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.**

This high-level conference, held in Granada on 15-17 March, was organised by the Spanish EU Presidency together with the European Commission. It also provided a forum for the first assessment of the Regions of Knowledge and Research Potential Initiatives, under the FP7 Capacities Programme.

Although at EU level, the first steps have been taken to achieve more and improved synergies in programme design, there was still a need for further cooperation to translate these steps into 'synergies in practice.' It was also stressed that the funds used to drive cohesion policies should be complementary to those intended for transnational research activities, innovation and competitiveness.

During the Conference Roundtable on Clusters, Tea Petrin, Chair of the European Cluster Policy Group, highlighted the various roles that clusters can play. She indicated that they can be used as a tool for establishing synergies and aligning policies such as science policy, regional policy and industrial policy to make the best use of European, national and regional funding for R&D and innovation. She also emphasised their role in creating enabling framework conditions and regional business environments. Other speakers insisted on the importance of industry-driven leadership and international cluster cooperation and drew attention to new cluster development concepts based on macro-regions and strategic innovation alliances.

## COMING EVENTS:

### ► 20 - 21 April 2010, Bilbao, Spain

8<sup>th</sup> European Forum on Eco-Innovation:  
Making Eco-Innovation happen in Small  
and Medium-sized enterprises



**More information at:**

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/etap>

► Events ► Agenda ► April 2010

### ► 12 - 15 May 2010, Palo Alto, California, USA

Integrating expatriate innovators in European innovation systems

Seminar organised by the European Commission in collaboration with the German-American Business Association and Stanford University, USA. Contact for further information: [Sven.Schade@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Sven.Schade@ec.europa.eu)

### ► 14 - 16 June 2010, Copenhagen, Denmark

Europe INNOVA Annual Partnering Event

This year, Europe INNOVA is combining forces with the EPISIS INNO-Net on services innovation for the Annual Partnering Event which will focus on the theme of "Services innovation as a catalyst for the Europe 2020 strategy". This joint event will address the topic from the policy perspective (EPISIS) as well as the angle of SMEs' needs for new services (Europe INNOVA). Please reserve the dates in your agenda. More information on the event will be made available on the website over the next weeks.

### ► 27 - 29 October 2010, Liège, Belgium

Reshaping Europe: Addressing Societal Challenges through Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Pre-registration for the Europe INNOVA Conference, organised in collaboration with the Belgian EU Presidency is now open. Those who pre-register will automatically receive an email notification once the official registration process opens.

**You can pre-register at:**

[www.europe-innova.eu/liege2010](http://www.europe-innova.eu/liege2010)

