



Business Support on Your Doorstep

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EU NEWS

State aid: Commission approves German real economy crisis measure

The European Commission has approved a German aid measure that addresses mid-sized enterprises increased demand for funding for research and development (R&D) in the current financial and economic crisis. The aid measure temporarily amends the existing aid scheme 'Zentrales Innovationsprogramm Mittelstand' (ZIM), initially targeted at funding R&D activities of SMEs only. As of now, R&D projects of mid-sized enterprises of up to 1,000 employees will be also eligible for funding until 31.12.2010. Germany will commit an extra budget of €900 million for that purpose, bringing the fund available to €2.4 billion in total.

The European Commission concluded that the proposed measure is in line with the Community Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation because it will not exceed the prescribed limits and will provide an incentive to increase the level of R&D activity.

DG Competition website, State Aid

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/overview/index_en.html

DG Competition website, State Aid Register

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/register/

Community Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/c_323/c_32320061230en00010026.pdf

State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation, FAQ

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/06/441&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>


European Enterprise Awards 2008

The European Enterprise Awards (EEA) recognises and rewards public initiatives supporting entrepreneurship across Europe. The objectives of the awards are to:

- identify and recognise successful activities that promote enterprise and entrepreneurship;
- showcase and share examples of best entrepreneurship policies and practices;
- develop a greater awareness of the role entrepreneurs play in society; and
- encourage and inspire potential entrepreneurs.

The nominees to compete for the 2008 EEA have been short-listed and the final results will be announced on the 13th of May 2009 at a ceremony marking the end of the European SME week in Prague. An exhibition of the short-listed initiatives will enable nominees to showcase projects, while an interactive workshop will offer the chance for the laureates to present their winning practices.

The high-profile jury, made up of European entrepreneurs, leading business people and academics as well as members of the European Commission and national governments, has already met in Brussels and reviewed the 47 nominees, which represent a wide variety of projects facilitating business and supporting entrepreneurship across Europe.



From the final nominees 13 candidate regions were short listed for the 2008 awards covering five categories: entrepreneurship promotion, red tape reduction, enterprise support, investment in skills, and responsible and inclusive entrepreneurship.

European Enterprise Awards

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/smes/awards/index_en.htm

TEN-T: A policy review – Towards a better integrated trans-European transport network at the service of the common transport policy

With the Green Paper on TEN-T, the European Commission initiates a broad review process of the trans-European transport network policy (TEN-T). It considers future political and economical challenges such as the achievement of climate change objectives, further economic growth, economic and social cohesion as well as the strengthening of Europe's international role.

Based on 15 years of experience with the TEN-T policy and in the light of the new challenges, the Commission sets objectives and proposes options for the future TEN-T development. It seeks the opinion of a broad range of shareholders on its proposals before deciding about legislative proposals and other relevant action to be taken. The Commission foresees, as a major legislative proposal to follow from the Green Paper process, a revision of the TEN-T Guidelines.

The following target groups are invited to participate to this public consultation: Member States, regional and local authorities, infrastructure managing companies in the different transport sectors, transport service providers / operators in the different transport sectors, research institutes, financial institutions, non-governmental organisations, business associations, citizens.

The deadline to submit the contribution is 30 April 2009

Green Paper

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/basis_networks/guidelines/doc/green_paper_en.pdf

Questionnaire

<http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=TRENB1GREENPAPER>

For more information

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/consultations/2009_04_30_ten_t_green_paper_en.htm

The recast version of the Directive on textile names has been adopted

As long ago as 1971, the Commission issued a Directive to harmonise the names of textile products as well as their appearing on labels and marketing documents. This Directive was amended several times and consolidated in the Directive 96/74/EC. Finally, after several amendments the text was consolidated again in the current recast Directive.

According to Directive 2008/121/EC, adopted in January 2009, textile products have to be labelled or marked whenever they are put on the market for production or commercial purposes.



DG Enterprise and Industry website, information sheet on the new Directive on textile
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/textile/dir2008_0121.htm

The 2008 Northern Dimension Information System is online

The System is a way of sharing information between the different partners and stakeholders developing projects in the Northern region of Europe. The 2008 edition is online and lists these projects in order to avoid duplication and maximize synergies. Information on each project is basic and mainly intended to provide contact information.

The Northern dimension provides a joint framework for addressing the challenges of Northern Europe, especially its fragile environment and the socio-economic problems faced by its inhabitants. The System includes the EU, Russia, Norway and Iceland.

Northern Dimension Information System webpage

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/north_dim/nis/index.htm

DG External Relations website, overview of the 'Northern Dimension' policy

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/north_dim/index.htm

Information on excise duty rates in the EU is available

In collaboration with the Member States, the European Commission has established the 'Excise Duty Tables' showing rates in force in the Member States of the EU. As from 1 January 2007, this information publication covers the 27 Member States of the EU and has been divided into three different sections (I: Alcoholic Beverages; II: Energy products and Electricity; III: Manufactured Tobacco).

It is intended that Member States regularly communicate to the Commission all modifications of the rates covered by this publication and that revised editions of the tables will be published twice a year.

For further information on excise duties, a list of contact details in the Member States is also available at the end of each section.


DG Taxation and Customs Union website, 'Excise Duty Tables' 2009

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/excise_duties/alcoholic_beverages/rates/index_en.htm

Business panel on the tourism sector

The so called "business panels" are company panels established out of the specific call "SME panels". This means that such activities are covered by the Enterprise Europe Network Agreement as long as it has been foreseen in the work programme. It can be done on a subject, on which the Commission has launched a consultation.

In this framework, a first consultation targeting the tourism sector has been just launched. A message announcing the panel was posted the 17th February in the Circular Note Conference on FirstClass.



All documents to participate in the consultation, i.e. the instructions (in EN), the questionnaire (in two formats, word and pdf in EN, DE, FR) and a short background paper (in EN, DE, FR) are attached to the message. Besides, a technical manual on the use of SME feedback tool (IPM tool) is included, as referred in the instruction note.

For any question about the panel, please send a message to the following functional mailbox of DG ENTR: entr-listening-tools@ec.europa.eu

EC Customs Code: Draft implementing provisions have recently been published

The Commission has published provisions for the implementation of Council Regulation (EEC) Nr. 2913/92 establishing the Community Customs Code, which was already voted in the Customs Code Committee but not yet adopted by the Commission. The information is purely indicative as only the official texts published in the EU Official Journal may be considered authentic.

Web page on the draft implementing provisions

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/procedural_aspects/general/community_code/article_5660_en.htm

DG Taxation and Customs Union website, presentation of the EC Customs Code and its implementing provisions

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/procedural_aspects/general/community_code/index_en.htm

European Transparency Initiative: Register of Interest representatives

By opening this voluntary Register, in the context of the European Transparency Initiative, the European Commission wishes to let citizens know which general or specific interests are influencing the decision-making process of the European Institutions and the resources mobilized to that end. Registrants have the opportunity to demonstrate their strong commitment to transparency and the full legitimacy of their activities. While registering, interest representatives commit themselves to the elements of the code of conduct.

This page offers direct access to interest representatives to register, update or prolong their registration as well as direct access for the public at large to all information available in the Register. It also offers the possibility to lodge a complaint related to a suspected violation of the Code of Conduct.

The European Commission will experiment with this instrument for one year; a period in which to test the practicalities of the register and gain valuable practical experience for the future.

Code of Conduct for Interest Representatives

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/transparency/regrin/infos/codeofconduct.do?locale=en#en>

FAQ

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/transparency/regrin/infos/faq.do>

To register your organisation

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/transparency/regrin/infos/howtoregister.do>

Problems and questions concerning registration? Contact the Helpdesk: +32 (0)2 29 56 028 or fill this online form: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/transparency/regrin/infos/contact.do>

MEETINGS, FAIRS & EVENTS

High-level Conference: Industrial Competitiveness - Challenges, opportunities, and the role of policy in difficult times

The European economy is greatly affected by the fall-out of the disorderly unwinding of the global financial crisis. Coping with these unexpected shocks comes on top of other well-known challenges, such as accelerating globalisation, the need to decarbonise our economies and to make our energy systems more sustainable, and the demographic challenge. This all calls for an ever faster pace of structural adjustment while at the same time avoiding a long-lasting recession and social hardship. But it also provides an opportunity to position the European economy as a front-runner to meet these challenges.

The conference will bring together European Ministers, the President and Commissioners of the European Commission, Members of the European Parliament as well as business leaders, internationally renowned economists, including Nobel Price Laureate Prof. Paul Krugman and journalists. They will discuss ways ahead for policy-makers and businesses to set the framework conditions for success in the next decade.

Organiser: European Commission

When: 17 March 2009 (8:30am – 18:30pm)

Where: Charlemagne Building (room *Gasperi*),

170 Rue de la Loi (Wetstraat) – 1049 Brussels – Belgium

Contact: ENTR-INDUSTRY-CONF-17-MARCH@ec.europa.eu

For further information, contact details and registration

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/industry/industrial_competitiveness_conference.htm

The list of the events advertised in the EU and Services Bulletin is not exhaustive. Therefore, you are kindly invited to visit the events page on the events section of the intranet or the Enterprise Europe Network website.



TRAININGS

Reminder: Decentralised training on 'Energy from the Sun', Naples – 26 March 2009

There are still some free places to register for the Enterprise Europe Network's decentralized training on solar technology, which will focus on the scenarios and opportunities of the market as well as on the peculiarities and criticalities of technology transfer in the solar energy sector.

The host organization is ENEA (BridgeEconomies consortium partner), which is the Italian Agency in the Energy field specialized in Photovoltaic technologies. The organisers have decided to lift the participation fee.

Organiser: ENEA

When: 26 March 2009

Where: Mostra D'Oltremare, Kennedy street, Naples – Italy

Contact: Fulvio Miraglia (ENEA, BRIDGEconomies), e-mail: fulvio.miraglia@portici.enea.it

Decentralized training on 'Enterprise Europe Network services for the ICT sector', Rome – 27 and 28 April 2009

Registrations for the Enterprise Europe Network's decentralized training session on 'Enterprise Europe Network services for the ICT sector' are open.

Organiser: Italian Agency for European Research (APRE)

When: 27-28 April 2009

Where: Rome, Italy

Contact: Francesca Zinni, e-mail: zinni@apre.it

Christin Pfeiffer, e-mail: pfeiffer@apre.it


Valentina Spagnoli, e-mail: spagnoli@apre.it

For any further information about the training activities organised or supported by the EACI send an e-mail to the "Training-Team" functional mailbox on FirstClass.

PUBLICATIONS

Information Technology Outlook 2008

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has recently published the Information Technology Outlook 2008. This report examines recent developments in the information technology (IT) goods and services industries. The report suggests that the IT sector will experience continued long-term growth.



Despite the current uncertain macroeconomic environment, cross-border investment, trade and mergers and acquisitions remain high. Digital-content-based creative industries (covering user-created content, online video games, film, etc.) are changing everyday life for one and a half billion people worldwide.

The report also analyses recent trends in ICT policies, revealing that high priority areas for policy makers are: investing in ICT R&D and innovation, improving government online activities, spreading broadband, increasing the use of ICTs, raising ICT skills and employment, and supporting digital content development.

The highlights and main findings of the Information Technology Outlook 2008 are summarised in a brochure that is available for free download at the OECD Web site.

http://www.oecd.org/document/20/0,3343,en_2649_33757_41892820_1_1_1_1,00.html

Enterprise & Industry online 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.

The magazine is regularly updated with new articles. We encourage you to bookmark its webpage. You can receive notification of all new magazine articles through a dedicated RSS service and also subscribe to the paper version.

Enterprise & Industry on-line magazine webpage

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/e_i/index_en.htm

For any comment about this document, please post your message in the "Business Services" Conference on FirstClass.

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