

**EREF-2008 Guest Regions:
Styria, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Prague, Vojvodina and Istanbul.**

EUROPEAN REGIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM, EREF-2008



PPP and Private Funding of RTD, Innovation and Education

Nova Gorica, Slovenija, 5-6 June, 2008

Dear Members and Friends of EREF Network,

Under the high patronage of the Committee of the Regions, the fourth **Forum** – addressing pertinent issues of implementing Lisbon Agenda in European regions – is taking place this year on **5 and 6 June, 2008** in **Nova Gorica**

The Forum will bring together senior representatives of regional authorities and entities from business, research, innovation and education domains, as well as knowledge stakeholders from South-Eastern and Eastern Europe. Members of several other European networks, such as Lisbon Regions Network, NIROC, IGLO, ERRIN, RIBN are also expected to actively participate in the Forum.

This year the Forum has two main goals. Firstly, it will contribute to raising awareness among knowledge stakeholders on the strategic importance of comprehensive and effective implementation of all aspects of Lisbon policies. Secondly, the adoption of a number of specific recommendations to be addressed to EU institutions, national and regional entities as well as all categories of knowledge stakeholders to formulate and efficiently implement knowledge society policies through learning from best practice cases from around Europe.

Several Lisbon coordinators in European regions are expected this year and they will exchange experiences in implementing Lisbon Agenda policies.

The special focus of EREF 2008 is the role of private public partnerships and private funding in the fields of RTD, innovation and education. The Forum is expected to encourage and motivate participants in enhancing their knowledge based competitiveness and contribute to accelerated realization of the concept of European Research Area.

EREF-2008 Guest Regions and Partners



Before the Forum in April and May, series of preparatory workshops in Graz, Trieste, Prague, Istanbul and Novi Sad will be organised by EREF partners. The proposals of conclusions and recommendations from these workshops will be presented to the Forum on the second day in presence of Commissioner for Regional Policy Prof. Danuta Hübner and President of Committee of Regions Mr. Luc Van den Brande.

The **working languages** of the Forum are English, Slovenian, Italian, Serbian and Croatian. In order to facilitate active and productive involvement in Forum deliberations, the participants will receive before the event the following two documents:

1. Analytical Compendium of EU decisions and recommendations in the field of the development of knowledge society, with particular emphasis on financing research, innovation and education;
2. Directory of schemes and support programmes in the EU, Member states and European regions for research and innovation projects.

The Forum will also provide participation with opportunities to establish fruitful contacts and to hold exploratory discussions about possible joint projects. In order to benefit effectively from the match-making process, please fill out the **Project Fiche** that you will find at www.eref.si at your earliest convenience. There will be also opportunity for participants from South-Eastern European countries to discuss with invited representatives of the EU institutions and to collect the latest brochures, reports and manuals.

To **register** for the event and to find out how to get to Nova Gorica, please go to the EREF-2008 portal at www.eref.si.

Thanks to a subsidy from the Slovenian government there is **no registration fee** for EREF-2008.

As in the past the organizers have secured favourable hotel and flight rates, however booking has to be made directly by each participant:

- 4 star-hotel Perla (Forum Venue): t +386 5 336 34 49
B&B (72€ per person) f +386 5 336 32 98
mail: booking@hit.si
- Special conference rates from all European Adria Airways destinations to Ljubljana airport (200 € + tax), www.adria-airways.com, contact your local Adria Airways Agent for early booking
- reference: EREF - 2008

We hope to be able to welcome you in Nova Gorica on this occasion.

Best regards,

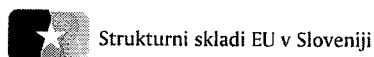
Brussels, 13 May 2008

dr. Boris CIZELJ
Director SBRA



Attachment:

- Draft programme



www.eref.si

Public-private partnerships and private funding of RTD, innovation and education activities

Nova Gorica, Slovenia, 5-6 June 2008

Draft-Programme EREF-2008

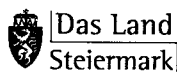
The EREF Forum in Nova Gorica (European Regional Economic Forum) is a platform of European regions on knowledge economy and society, and has also acted as a bridge between EU Member states and countries of South-Eastern Europe supporting them in their efforts of gradual integration with the Union through discussing policies and measures aiming at implementing the Lisbon Strategy and through the presentation of good practices from European regions.

The fourth Forum in Nova Gorica will bring together about 250 representatives of the economic, research, innovation and education spheres, as well as local and regional actors from EU regions and countries, and regions from South-Eastern and Eastern Europe.

On behalf of the EREF Network the Forum is organised by the Municipality of Nova Gorica, the Government Office for Local Self-government and Regional Policy, together with the Slovenian and Business Research Association in Brussels, under the patronage of the Committee of the Regions and sponsored by HIT Nova Gorica. Members of several European networks will actively participate in the Forum, such as: Lisbon Regions Network, NIROC, IGLO, ERRIN, RIBN, and others.

The EREF Network consists of the following 16 regions: Stockholm, Lapland-Oulu, Flanders, Wallonia, Scotland, Baden Württemberg, Styria, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Lombardia, Emilia Romagna, Valencia, Cataluña, West Pannon, Slovenia, Croatia, Turkey.

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A P Vojvodina



The profile of EREF-2008 participants will include the following categories:

- i. Regional Lisbon Agenda Coordinators, as well as Cohesion policy Coordinators, policy makers and senior executives from national institutions in the fields of RTD, innovation and education from the public and private sectors;
- ii. Senior executives from companies, research institutes, regional development agencies, entities supporting innovation activities, universities and other institutions of higher learning, business associations, technology parks, and other national and regional knowledge stakeholders.
- iii. Senior representatives of financial organisations and groups: banks, investment companies, funds management companies, business angels, etc.
- iv. Representatives of EU institutions, European associations, think-tanks, and other non-governmental organisations supporting the implementation of Lisbon Agenda;
- v. Media representatives specialized in research, innovation and education.

Thanks to the cooperation of authorities and experts from European regions – members of EREF Network, the EU institutions and European associations, the participants of the Forum will learn about the best practices in gaining competitiveness in the knowledge-based society through cooperation among different actors from the public and private sectors, thanks to the support of European, national and regional institutions.

Proposals of conclusions and recommendations for targeted and necessary actions to successfully implement the Lisbon strategy will be presented in Nova Gorica, produced through 5 preparatory workshops which will be organised by EREF partners during their own workshops, like in Graz, Prague, Trieste, Novi Sad, Istanbul and Portorož.

The SBRA team, as EREF Secretariat has been scanning since Autumn 2007 hundreds of documents, studies, and conference papers containing conclusions and recommendations on relevant topics adopted recently by the Commission and other EU bodies, as well as by various European associations – including all relevant documents adopted during the Slovenian EU Presidency - and thereby assist the workshop organizers to offer for discussion a good collection of ideas to be structured and prioritized within a set of interrelated policies and measures supporting knowledge economy in European regions, and implementation of the Lisbon Agenda.

The Forum will adopt a set of recommendations which will be addressed to the EU institutions, national and regional entities, but equally to companies and institutions active in research, innovation and education. These recommendations will be distributed very broadly around Europe, and should contribute to the debate in Europe, and should encourage more decisive activities in favour of knowledge society and enhancement of international, knowledge-based competitiveness. An effort will be made to increase the awareness of stakeholders about their own

responsibilities and indeed interest to permanently innovate and strengthen their human capital base.

The Forum will also aim at accelerating the realization of the concept of the European Research Area (ERA), to which all European countries and regions from the Baltic sea to the Balkans are to be committed. Discussions will focus on the following issues through evaluation of selected good practice:

- upgrading the levels and efficiency of public RTD funding through better communication and closer collaboration between public and private sector;
- Ways of opening regional and national RTD programmes and innovation support schemes to other ERA stakeholders;
- Effective use of Structural and Cohesion funding for building RTD infrastructure for knowledge economy;
- Fiscal incentives for corporate RTD investment;
- Fuller use of philanthropic funding for supporting knowledge economy;
- Knowledge sharing systems as support to innovation;
- Making the researchers' profession more attractive;
- Bologna-type reforms and closer business-university collaboration;
- Mobility of top experts among academic life, business, and administration?
- Enhancing economic, social and political values of a European knowledge society model;
- Implications of knowledge society model for education and training.

In order to ensure an active and productive participation of potential participants to the Forum, they will receive a few weeks before the event an "Analytical Compendium of EU decisions and recommendations in the field of the development of knowledge economy, with particular emphasis on financing research, innovation and education".

Besides organized mutual learning – like every year - the Nova Gorica Forum will be a good opportunity for the participants to establish fruitful contacts and to hold exploratory discussions about possible joint projects. For participants from South-Eastern European countries the Forum will provide an opportunity to discuss with representatives of the EU institutions and to complete their EU documentation (a number of useful brochures, reports and manuals published by the different EC offices will be available at the Forum).

The participants are also encouraged to deliver beforehand, or bring along some promotional material about their organisation/region or project, which will be available for participants. Upon request, the organizers can organize for participants bilateral meetings, preferably with their interests indicated before the Forum.

Again this year the participation at the Forum will be free of charge. This is the draft-programme which will be updated at the Forum's Portal: www.eref.si.

The Forum on PPP and Private Funding of RTD, Innovation and Education activities at the regional level covers activities representing the core of the European research Area, the focus of the Forum will be placed on which funding instruments and their

combinations should be used and further developed in order to best accelerate the process of building knowledge society.

The Forum discussions represent also a response to the invitation of DG RTD from the last chapter of the ERA Green Paper of 4 April 2007 for public debate among stakeholders and a consultation with them on how to best implement the proposals and initiatives.

The findings of the EU project on support to RTD policy and funding (BIS-RTD) will be disseminated among the Forum participants, and some participants will be invited to take part in the Joint Validation Workshop to be held on the morning of Saturday 7 June in Nova Gorica.

The 2-day programme of the Forum will be divided into 2 parts:

Thursday 5 June

08.00 Registration

09.00 Opening

Welcome Addresses:

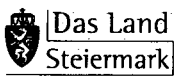
Mirko Brulc, Major of Nova Gorica,
Niko Trošt, President of HIT, the General Sponsor,
dr.Ivan Žagar, Slovenian Minister for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy.

Keynote Address:

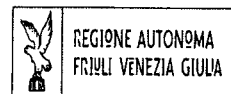
Dr.Žiga Turk, Slovenian Minister for Development:
Lisbon Agenda in Slovenia and the Views of Slovenian Presidency on Imperatives for European Knowledge Economy

Short Topical Addresses by senior representatives of 5 Guest Regions: Styria, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Prague, Vojvodina, Istanbul.

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10.00 Introductory Panel: Building a Competitive Europe of Knowledge

1. Progress Towards ERA – Achievements and Challenges, James Gavigan, European Commission, DG RTD
2. Presenting the Dimensions of European Knowledge & Innovation Gap – Scenarios of Non-Lisbon – prof.dr.Pavle Sicherl, Director SICENTER
3. Regional Lisbon Monitor - Committee of the Regions
4. European Funding Support for companies' R&D Effort, with special reference to SMEs - Mrs.Maive Rute, Director in DG Enterprise and Industry
5. Integrating RTD, Innovation and Education Policies at the Regional Level – lessons from Canada - Prof.Howard Alper, Chair of Canada' Government Science, Innovation and Technology Council

Discussion

LUNCH (13.00 – 14.30)

15.00 Implementing Good Practice in PPP and Private Funding in RTD, Innovation and Education at the Regional Level

- Bottom-up Approach to Lisbon Agenda Implementation - Lessons from Sweden Lotta Finstorp, County Commissioner, County Council in Sörmland; Benita Vikström, Mayor, Oxelösunds Municipality;
- Science Education – a Precondition for Knowledge Society; Professor Yves Quere, French Academy of Sciences;
- Regional and national Potential for creating “Power Brands” - prof.dr. Jürgen Häusler, Interbrand Zintzmeyer & Lux, Zürich and dr Hermann Drummer, Pleon, Brussels.
- Science Parks – Generators of Innovation and Growth: Prof.Malcolm Parry, The Surrey Research Park, UKSPA;
- Regional Innovation Policy Implementation through PPP – Lessons from the Finish Experience; Kyösti Jääskeläinen, Executive Director, TEKEL;
- Corporate Impact on Business School Curricula – an Instrument of Bridging universities and Business: Gert Van Mol, The Wall Street Journal;
- PPP as an Instrument for Stimulating Business-Academia Collaboration – Guidelines developed in the BIS-RTD Project –presented by prof.dr.Stane Pejovnik, Dean, Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology, University of Ljubljana.

16.30 - 18.00 Parallel Events:

(A) Workshop on Inter-regional Technology Transfer Models

(B) Meeting of regional/local Lisbon Agenda Coordinators

20.00 Dinner offered by EREF-2008 Guest Regions: Styria, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Prague, Vojvodina, Istanbul, and Slovenia.

Friday 6 June

09.00 Keynote Addresses

Role of European Regions in strengthening Knowledge Economy – Luc van den Brande, President, Committee of Regions

Linking Cohesion Funding with Building European Regional Knowledge Economies – Prof. Danuta Hübner, Member of the Commission responsible for Regional Policy

10.00 Towards Forum's Conclusions and Recommendations

Reports from Preparatory Workshops: Presentation of Draft-Recommendations by the Rapporteurs

Workshop A: Regional Support to Innovation and Internationalization of SMEs, InternationalizierungsZentrum Styria, Graz, Rapporteur Michael Azodanloo,

Workshop B: Industry-Academia Collaboration, TURBO, Istanbul, Rapporteur Mehmet Gokgoz,

Workshop C: Participation in EU RTD Programmes – Instrument of building Knowledge Society; ECPD/Vojvodina Regional Government, Novi Sad, Rapporteur prof. dr. Aleksandar Sedmak

10.45 – 11.15 Coffee Break

Workshop D: PPP in Research Priority Setting – particular emphasis on Energy, ČEZ, Praha, Rapporteur dr. Ivo Vaša

Workshop E: Role of Science and Technology Parks in boosting regional knowledge-based competitiveness; Area Park Trieste, Rapporteur Gabriele Gatti

Workshop F: Philanthropic Funding's Contribution to Building Knowledge Economy, Slovenian Science Foundation, Portorož, Rapporteur dr. Edvard Kobal

Comments on draft Recommendations by Commissioner for Regional Policy Prof. Danuta Hübner, and Slovenian Minister for Local Self-Government and Regional Policy dr. Ivan Žagar

LUNCH (13.00 – 14.30)

14.30 Discussion

16.00 Adoption of Conclusions and Recommendations

16.30 Topic and date of EREF-2009 and Closure