



Business Support on Your Doorstep

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EU NEWS

Website of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation for 2009

The European Year of Creativity and Innovation for 2009 has the objective to raise awareness of importance of creativity and innovation for personal, social and economic development, to disseminate good practices, stimulate education and research, and promote policy debate and development.

A website has been launched and provides all kind of information about the objectives of the Year, the institutions involved, the participating countries, the Ambassadors of the Year, the links to European projects such as INNOVA and Intelligent Energy Europe, events, press releases and documents. There is also a communication toolbox.

If you have a project, which fully corresponds to the objectives of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009, you can be part of the communication campaign and benefit from the moral support of the Year by using its name and logo.

European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009 website
http://create2009.europa.eu/index_en.html

Urban Atlas, the European digital city mapping tool

The European Commission and the Member States with the support of European Space Technology produced and launched the Urban Atlas, a satellite instrument made of thousands of photographs, which provides detailed and cost-effective digital mapping. Thanks to the information gathered by the Urban Atlas, city planners will have from now on the most up-to-date and accurate data available on land use and land cover. These pieces of information will help them to better assess risks and opportunities, ranging from threat of flooding and impact of climate change, to identifying new infrastructure and public transport needs.

Whether big or small, European cities need reliable and comparable urban planning information for safe, sustainable and prosperous development. At the moment, 185 cities from all 27 EU Member States can benefit from Urban Atlas but the goal is to cover all EU cities by 2011.

The Urban Atlas is part of the implementation of the Global Monitoring of Environment and Security (GMES) service and benefits from one million euro from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Press release with the list of the cities mapped in 2009
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/65&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Excises duties: a new Directive on fight against fraud and EMCS (Excise Movement and Control System)

This new Directive 2008/118/EC, which strengthens the fight against fraud by providing a legal framework for the use of a computerised system to monitor the movement of excise goods (which concerns alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and energy products) within the EU, was published on 14 January 2009. It will replace the Directive 92/12/EEC from 1 April 2010.

The EMCS will help to better tackle excise fraud by creating a faster and more efficient means of information exchange between excise authorities. Among others, the new Directive also allows Member States to simplify existing rules for commercial movements, including distance sales, of excise goods from one Member State to another on which excise duty has already been paid in the Member State of dispatch.

Text of the Directive 2008/118/EC

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:009:0012:0030:EN:PDF>

DG Taxation and Customs Union

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/excise_duties/circulation_control/legislation/index_en.htm

EU prepares WTO action over US sanction law

With reference to the EU-US hormones treated in beef dispute the outgoing US government decided on 15 January 2009 to suspend the so called "carousel" trade sanctions legislation and thereby allow the US to revise, every six months, the list of goods subject to sanction. For European exports, this measure is more punitive than the current one, which imposes duties of 100% on certain products. The value of the sanctions amounts to 116.8M \$ on a fixed list of goods. It is clear that exporters will face increased uncertainty as their goods could be subject to tough duties at short notice.

The trade implications of this measure will be significant. A great deal of efforts had been put into finding a mutually agreed settlement to this on-going dispute. The achievement of a common agreement has now become much more difficult. The EU has then no choice but to start preparations in order to take this case to the World Trade Organisation (WTO). As the WTO has not yet taken a view on the EU current hormone regime dating from 2003, the US sanctions are illegal.

Information on the original dispute:

<http://trade.ec.europa.eu/wtodispute/show.cfm?id=186&code=2>

<http://trade.ec.europa.eu/wtodispute/show.cfm?id=176&code=2>

Information on the dispute and on the sanctions

<http://trade.ec.europa.eu/wtodispute/show.cfm?id=276&code=1>

<http://trade.ec.europa.eu/wtodispute/show.cfm?id=275&code=1>

Information on EU trade policy and contact details

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

EU and Cameroon sign trade agreement

The EU and Cameroon have signed a "stepping stone" Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the first of this kind between the EU and a Central African trade partner. The agreement combines the benefits of a trade agreement with development assistance targeted at accelerating growth and development in Cameroon. The final goal remains to conclude a full EPA with all the members of the Central African region that will promote competitiveness, growth and investment while accelerating regional integration.

The stepping stone or "interim" EPA gives Cameroon duty free quota and free access to the EU market, with only an asymmetric and gradual opening of its own economy. On its side, Cameroon has excluded a number of agricultural and manufactured goods from the agreement but will liberalise 80% of imports from the EU over a period of 15 years.

The Agreement includes also some commitments of the EU and its Member States to assist Cameroon to improve its competitiveness as well as some measures to help exporters to meet EU import standards (sanitary and phyto-sanitary -SPS- measures). Besides, a better cooperation on more efficient customs procedures is foreseen as well as on fiscal adjustment in order to ensure that removal of tariffs does not destabilise the country's public finances.

Press release on the EU agreement with Cameroon

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/09/11&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

DG Trade website, bilateral trade relations between the EU and the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries

http://ec.europa.eu/trade/issues/bilateral/regions/acp/index_en.htm

DG Development website, relations between the EU and Cameroon with contact details

http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/regionscountries/countries/country_profile.cfm?cid=cm&type=short&lng=en

MEETINGS, FAIRS & EVENTS

IPR Transatlantic Collaboration - Washington – 27 & 28 April 2009

The IPR Transatlantic Collaboration is organizing a two-day conference, where the preliminary results of a study on transatlantic approaches to IP will be presented for debate and discussion.

Day 1: "US and EU Approaches to Protecting IP"

Day 2: "Communicating the Value of IP"

When: 27 and 28 of April 2009

Where: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1615 H Street, NW – Washington D.C. – USA

IPR Transatlantic Collaboration webpage

http://www.ipr-policy.eu/web/about_project

To register for the conference:

<http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=623210>

European Patent Forum and PATINNOVA - Prague - 28 to 30 April 2009

This conference is based on the project on best practices in IPR enforcement support measures which is financed by the European Commission and it is being co-organised by the European Patent Office and the European Commission with the support of the Industrial Property Office of the Czech Republic.

When: 28 – 30 April 2009

Where: Prague

For more information

<http://www.epo.org/about-us/events/epf2009.html>

MEMBERS' CORNER

SME Feedback intranet page open!

The SME Feedback page has been published this week on the intranet. You can find there the user manual of the SME Feedback Tool (from the former EIC Network), the access to the e-learning module on listening to SMEs as well as useful links. To consult this page, click on "documents".

Brokerage Event organised by the Tourism and Cultural Heritage Sector Group – ITB Berlin, 11 March 2009

The Tourism and Cultural Heritage Sector Group will organise a brokerage event, which will take place during the ITB in Berlin. The aim of the event is to give participants an opportunity to develop cross-border relations with other companies of the tourism sector.

Where: ITB Berlin

When: 11 March 2009

To register: http://www.itbmatching.de/p_index.php?q=&q_offer=&q_request=&

ITB web page:

http://www1.messe-berlin.de/vip8_1/website/Internet/Internet/www.itb-berlin/englisch/index.html

Contact detail of the ITB

http://www1.messe-berlin.de/vip8_1/website/Internet/Internet/www.itb-berlin/englisch/Contact/index.html



TRAINING

Decentralised training on "SMEs Participation in FP7" – Skopje, 4 & 5 February 2009

The registration is open for the Enterprise Europe Network's decentralised training course on 'SME Participation in FP7'. The course will cover the role of Enterprise Europe Network in FP7 and the possibilities opened to SMEs. Besides, it will give a practical focus on the different steps in the preparation for applying for an FP7 project.

Organiser: European Information & Innovation centre in Macedonia

When: 4 – 5 February 2009

Where: Economic Chamber of Macedonia, Skopje – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Contact: Dr Trpe Ristoski, e-mail: tristoski@fvm.ukim.edu.mk

Decentralised training on "Enhancing Communication through Creative Thinking" – St. Julians, 12 & 13 February 2009

The registration is open for the Enterprise Europe Network's decentralised training course on 'Enhancing Communication through Creative Thinking'. The workshop will focus on a systematic method of thinking in a completely new and different way and can be applied to the workplace immediately!

Organiser: Malta Enterprise.

When: 12 – 13 February 2009

Where: Golden Tulip Vivaldi Hotel, St. Julians – Malta

Contact: brigitte.tanti@maltaenterprise.com

PUBLICATIONS

SME Newsletter

The first issue of the SME newsletter is available on-line. It contains, amongst others, interesting articles concerning the European Year of Innovation and Creativity and the updated legislation on state aids,

Link to the newsletter

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/entrepreneurship/sme-week/newsletter/20090119_en.htm

European SME Week webpage

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/entrepreneurship/sme-week/index_en.htm



Latest issue of the Export Help Desk Newsletter

The December 2008 issue includes very interesting articles on the Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and the Caribbean States, the new general tariff preferences schemes that entered into force on 1 January 2009 and news about the Export Help Desk. At the moment, the newsletter is available in English but it will later be available also in French, Spanish and Portuguese.

Export Help Desk Newsletter

<http://exporthelp.europa.eu/whatsnew/index.cfm?languageId=EN>

Export Help Desk website with contact details

<http://exporthelp.europa.eu/index.html>

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