



Business Support on Your Doorstep

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EU & SERVICES BULLETIN

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EU NEWS

Europe Seeks out most Innovative Public Procurers

Nearly one year ago, the European Commission presented the "Lead Market Initiative for Europe" which aims to stimulate demand for innovation in six identified markets: e-health, protective textiles, construction, bio-based products, renewables and recycling.

The time has come to put this programme into practice. The first leverage targeted is public procurement. The European Commission has launched a call to bring together leading public procurers into European networks to undertake a better coordinated and articulated dialogue with suppliers about future needs, and to realize the benefits of European cooperation in exchanging experience in procurement practices and strategies and in undertaking joint or coordinated actions.

The call is open until the 27th February 2009 for consortia of public procurers from at least three EU Member States or associated countries. Three to four proposals will be selected for funding, for up to 95 percent of eligible costs and up to 1 million euro per project for a period of up to three years.

In general, applicants and partners of applicants must be Contracting Authorities which mean the national, regional or local authorities, bodies governed by public law, associations formed by one or several of such authorities or bodies governed by public law. As an exception to this, the role of consortium coordinator may be assumed by a non-for-profit organisation which is not a Contracting Authority.

In order to support potential participants to find partners, interested organisations are invited to compete and submit the expression of interest form. Completed forms will be made available on a regular basis to all organisations that have expressed an interest in each lead market area. Forms will be accepted and circulated up to Friday 9 January 2009.

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/leadmarket/public_procurement_networks.htm

Towards World-Class Clusters in the European Union: Implementing the Broad-based Innovation Strategy.

Competitive clusters are powerful engines of economic development and drivers for innovation in the European Union. A recently published Commission Communication calls for more efforts for facilitating the emergence of world-class clusters in the European Union. It addresses key challenges to achieve this objective: deepening the internal market, improving cluster policies, fostering trans-national cooperation, promoting excellence of cluster organisations and improving the integration of innovative SMEs into clusters.

Press release

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=1855

Commission Communication, COM(2008)652

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

Market Access Policy and Tools to SMEs' Clients

In continuation with the newcomers' training, the Market Access Unit of DG TRADE disseminated three articles, which can help promote and explain the Market Access Policy and Tools to your clients.

The reviewed Market Access Strategy

The review of Market Access Strategy aims to reinforce the EU approach to all kinds of export barriers, including 'behind the border' non-tariff barriers and other regulatory restrictions. This initiative will help to strengthen the EU's Market Access Policy and will allow stakeholders to learn more about EU contribution to support European SMEs in doing business in third countries.

Promotion of Market Access Support Tools

The Market Access Partnership of the "Global Europe" framework is a unique joint effort of EU Member States, Business Organisations and the European Commission Services to tackle trade barriers in key-export markets. The Market Access Partnership can count on information and communication tools such as a Complaints Register, a Newsletter, and Flash Notes.

Improving the EU's Market Access Service to SMEs

As you know, although SMEs represent more than 99% of European companies, only 8% of them export goods or services. The main reason is that they often do not have the capacities to handle export market barriers. DG TRADE helps SMEs in their exporting and importing activities by offering a range of free-of-charge on-line tools, e.g. the Market Access Database and the Export Help Desk.

http://ec.europa.eu/trade/issues/sectoral/mk_access/index_en.htm

Commission Regulation on Combined Nomenclature for 2009

When declared to customs in the Community, goods must be classified according to the Combined Nomenclature or CN. Imported and exported goods have to be declared stating under which subheading of the nomenclature they fall. This determines which rate of customs duty applies and how the goods are treated for statistical purposes. The basic regulation is Council Regulation (EEC) 2658/87 on the tariff and statistical nomenclature and on the Common Customs Tariff. An updated version of the Annex I to the Combined Nomenclature Regulation is published as a Commission Regulation every year in the L-series of the Official Journal of the European Communities, as well as on CD-ROM.

2009 version of the CN (EU Official Journal)

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:291:SOM:en:HTML>

CN on DG Taxation and Customs Union website

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/customs_duties/tariff_aspects/combined_nomenclature/index_en.htm

New eBusiness Guide for SMEs

This is an on-line tool that helps enterprises self-diagnose their eBusiness competences and related ICT needs. Based on this diagnosis, the eBusiness Guide proposes a range of suitable eBusiness solutions, as well as local ICT service providers that can offer such



solutions. The service is available in English, French and German. This brand new on-line service "eBusiness Guide for SMEs: eBusiness software and services in the European market" is financed by DG Enterprise and Industry (DG ENTR) in the frame of the European e-business support network (e-BSN). It is one of the actions foreseen under the Small Business Act for Europe (SBA), which recognizes the crucial need to promote all forms of innovation among SMEs, including ICT-enabled innovation. A digital booklet describing the use and functionalities and some scenarios of use of the eBusiness Guide for SMEs is available in PDF at the e-BSN portal.

Should you wish to receive paper copies for own use, or to distribute to your constituency, please contact:
entr-ict-for-comp-and-innovation@ec.europa.eu.

DG ENTR is mostly interested in your opinion and feedback, or the ones from your SME clients from using this service, with a view to enhance and improve it in the future. Please use the feedback mechanism available in the service to keep DG ENTR informed of your views.

eBusiness Guide

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/e-bsn/ebusiness-solutions-guide/selectLanguage.do?languageId=2&forwardPage=welcome>

e-BSN portal

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/e-bsn/index_en.html

New Version of the 'Your Europe' Web Portal

Your Europe is a multilingual public information service portal for citizens and enterprises intending to carry out cross-border activities within the European Union. Administrations, whether national or European, operate differently and for those unaccustomed to the administrative procedures of different countries, this can prove to be a real obstacle. Your Europe portal is contributing to breaking down this barrier by pooling all this information into one single entry-point online, targeting explicitly the cross-border dimensions. The former version of the 'Your Europe' part for business has been completely revamped. It includes country fact sheets and EU information on various aspects of business life and legal requirements, for example on setting up a new business, paying taxes, benefiting from public contracts, selling goods, sharing news ideas, conducting research, etc....

http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope/index_en.html

MEETINGS, FAIRS & EVENTS

First SME Week (6th – 14th May 2009)

As it has been presented at the Annual Conference in Stasbourg, the SME Week is an umbrella campaign aiming to promote entrepreneurship and inform entrepreneurs about support that is available to them at European, national and local level. It is coordinated by



DG Enterprise and Industry and will be launched on 6th May 2009. The opening will be followed by an array of events organised by public administrations, business organisations and SME support providers at national and local level throughout Europe. The closing event will be organized together with the Czech Presidency on the 13th and 14th May 2009. This event will include the European Enterprise Awards ceremony.

The SME Week is an excellent opportunity to promote the services that the Network is providing and one of the major events next year. Do not hesitate to contact the national coordinators of your country and see how you can participate.

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/smeweek2009/index.htm

MEMBERS' CORNER

Good Practices on Panels of Enterprises for Commission's Public Consultations

Many Network partners have foreseen to organise business panels or panels of enterprises in their contract with related human and budget resources. For these panels, the Commission will provide policy topics as from 2009. However there are other ways to organise SME business panels by taking local initiatives and linking it to online consultations organised by the various Directorates General (DGs) of the European Commission.

Two good practices from French Partners were identified, combining the organisation of a panel or group of enterprises, which is not part of the centrally coordinated SME panel, but is a panel of enterprises giving its opinion to a public consultation launched by the Commission. The document with good practices was posted in the First Class 'SME Feedback' Conference on 1st December 2008.

Commission's public consultations on 'Your Voice in Europe' website

http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/index_en.htm

MISCELLANEOUS

Enterprise News e-Newsletter

It keeps you update on the Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry (DG ENTR) related issues, such as reducing administrative burdens, advancing the internal market for goods, improving the competitiveness of industrial sectors, promoting small and medium-sized enterprises, supporting innovation, and encouraging entrepreneurship.

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/enewsletterarchive.cfm?month=9&year=2008&type=daily>



Latest Issue of the Market Access Newsletter

The issue of 13-31 October 2008 includes an editorial from Catherine Ashton, the new European Commissioner for External Trade, information on market access initiatives in the field of services, accessing Japanese market and the lift by Malaysia of its ban on import of new brands of alcoholic beverages.

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http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2008/october/tradoc_141215.pdf

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