

# Hungary takes over the EUREKA Chairmanship

## Hungarian EUREKA Chairmanship seeks smart growth through international R&D cooperation

On 8 July 2011, the Hungarian EUREKA Chairmanship started its Chairmanship year actively (July 2011-June 2012) with a high-level conference on Smart Growth through International R&D Cooperation, in Budapest.

In line with the Europe 2020 strategy and its Innovation Union flagship initiative, the event's aim was to serve as a forum for stakeholders to discuss how international R&D&I cooperation activities, in particular EUREKA, could contribute to strengthening the competitiveness of European SMEs and enhancing smart growth in the regions.



*EUREKA NPC Chairperson Szonja Csuzdi*



*EUREKA HLG Chairman Sándor Erdő*

The main focus areas were:

- Smart growth strategies in the ERA;
- Effective tools and instruments to support R&D&I activities of European SMEs;
- The role of international R&D cooperations in boosting regional competitiveness.

High-level stakeholders from the EU institutions, industry and academia actively contributed to a lively debate during both sessions.

The incoming EUREKA Chairman Sándor Erdő presented the main priorities of the Hungarian Chairmanship year:

1. To improve the position of EUREKA in the ERA and further strengthen the Eurostars programme;
2. To facilitate the regional dimension of EUREKA;
3. To develop EUREKA services to finance innovation;
4. To promote industry-driven R&D&I project generation.

How should EU and international R&D&I programmes best cover the full innovation cycle from research to market uptake; the contribution of EUREKA to this process; how the EU SME policy can be improved and the role of Article 185 and the Eurostars model in the next CSF-Horizon 2020 and boosting competitiveness and innovation in Europe, were some of the issues addressed and answered by the audience.

The role of the Structural Funds in stimulating R&D and innovation investment in European regions was also discussed, especially its relationship to stimulating the emergence of clusters of technological competence and excellence especially involving SMEs.

The conclusions of this conference will have a significant role in the relevant priorities for the Hungarian EUREKA Chairmanship aiming at creating a continuously evolving and improving network with an ability to meet today's challenges.

Germany's Director for European Affairs and Deputy Director-General for European and



International Cooperation at the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and EUREKA High-Level Representative Walter Moenig, gave the keynote address on Strengthening the Competitiveness of European SMEs. This panel was chaired by Director of Research Council of Norway and EUREKA High-Level Representative Kristin Danielsen.

Head of Unit, the Regional Dimension of Innovation at the European Commission's DG for Research and Innovation Dimitri Corpakis, was the keynote speaker for the Role of international R&D programmes in boosting competitiveness at regional level session chaired by Lajos Nyíri of the Zinnia Group (Hungary).

Other panellists were: Luuk Borg, Head of EUREKA Secretariat; András Sebők, Managing Director, Champden BRI Magyarország Ltd., ETP Food for Life, chairman of the SME Task Force; Lieve Van Woensel, Policy Officer, European Commission, Research and Innovation DG, SME Unit; Rudolf Haggemüller, ITEA2 Chairman; Ilmar Pralla, Director of Innovation Division, Enterprise Estonia Chairman of TAFTIE Board for 2011; Frits H. Von Meijenfeldt, Head of Division for International Affairs, Department for Innovation, NL Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation; Maura Claramunt, Cooperación Tecnológica Internacional, Norbert Grasselli, Managing Director, INNOVA Észak-Alföld Regional Innovation Agency, Richard Tuffs, ERRIN Director and Fopke Klok, Director ITEA 2 Office.