

## European Commission publishes its response to the Eurostars Programme Interim Evaluation Report



On 8 April, the European Commission (EC) published its response to the Interim Evaluation Report of the Eurostars Joint Programme. The Interim Evaluation was carried out by a Group of Independent Experts between July and December 2010 chaired by Anne Laperrouze, former MEP and Vice-Chair of the ITRE Committee. In its communication, the EC welcomes the strong SME interest in Eurostars and highlights its support for the current programme (until 2013). According to the panel's report, the Eurostars Programme - the first European funding and support programme to be specifically dedicated to SMEs - is an 'attractive programme

for R&D-performing SMEs and should be continued'. Its bottom-up approach, the easy access to participation and its central evaluation system at EU level are assessed as some of its key strengths.

EUREKA welcomes the panel statement that 'Eurostars is an excellent programme concept that is well aligned with the objectives of Europe 2020 and the need to nurture technology-intensive SMEs.'

On 31 May 2011, the European Competitiveness Council welcomed the expert group's conclusions in the presence of the Research and Innovation Commissioner Máire Geoghegan-Quinn.

**Eurostars new application deadline!**  
The next deadline for the submission of applications is 22 September 2011, 20:00 C.E.S.T

## UK's Technology Strategy Board develops a strategy for business innovation

The Technology Strategy Board (TSB) - the UK's national innovation agency - publishes its strategy for business innovation for 2011-2015. With its concept to commercialisation, the TSB aims to accelerate economic growth by stimulating and supporting business-led innovation. Important references are made to the Eurostars Programme as a best practice example to strengthen help for companies accessing EU innovation funding and support for SMEs. TSB's budget for the period 2011-12 to 2014-15 is over 1.13 bn euro. In partnership with business and other funders, this will generate investment of around 2.84 bn euro to drive economic growth.



the evaluation of EUREKA's socio-economic impact. Started in 2010 under the German EUREKA Chairmanship, as an objective of its strategic roadmap, the impact assessment project has been carried out by the EUREKA Secretariat in close collaboration with its network of national offices and in cooperation with the Israeli Chairmanship. The assessment of the EUREKA Eurostars Programme for SMEs, recommended by the European Commission, will be given specific attention in the future. A summary report was presented in June in Jerusalem at the meeting of the EUREKA High-Level Group and National Project Coordinators. The report presented results of the impact assessment initiative, as well as a toolbox to measure the positive impact of its action in terms of economic and employment growth.

## EUREKA continues its successful partnership at the 2011 European Business Summit

EUREKA continued its important partnership at the European Business Summit for 2011. It was present with a stand showcasing two

projects: E!4031 RECONOMAD, dedicated to data acquisition and handwriting recognition technology and the ITEA2 ESNA for networking based on low-cost wireless sensors. Most importantly, EUREKA also contributed to the opening panel debate. Luuk Borg, Head of the EUREKA Secretariat was present in 'Entrepreneurship and SMEs: from declaration to implementation', alongside other high profile panellists: Zsolt Becsey State, Secretary of the Economy of Hungary, Daniel Calleja Crespo, SME Envoy and Deputy Director General for Enterprise and Industry; Hugh Morgan-Williams, President of the SME Committee of BUSINESSEUROPE. Borg presented the successful Eurostars joint programme, dedicated to high-tech SMEs and added that 'the way to success is to boost those SMEs - particularly in the technology sector - which, if successful, will then promote growth.'

## EUREKA's response to the Green Paper

EUREKA welcomes the public consultation process initiated by the European Commission (EC) and presented the views of all EUREKA member countries and instru-

ments in its formal response to the Green Paper: From Challenges to Opportunities: Towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation Funding (CSFRI). 'EUREKA expects CSFRI to improve the efficiency of R&D support schemes, encourage the commercialisation of knowledge, provide access to new sources of financing innovation, and facilitate international cooperation'. Read the response at [www.eurekanetwork.org](http://www.eurekanetwork.org).

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### DID YOU KNOW?

Following the Competitiveness Council conclusions on the 'Small Business Act' for Europe on 30 May 2011, the start-up time for new enterprises should be reduced to 3 working days and the cost to 100 euro by 2012. The time needed to get licences and permits to start and perform a specific activity should reduce to 3 months by the end of 2013.

[www.consilium.europa.eu](http://www.consilium.europa.eu)

**304** applicant companies

**72%** of applicants are SMEs