

Partenariat '95: Internationalising SMEs in the Context of the Global Economy



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PARTENARIAT '95, the annual conference on cooperation between small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) was held at Stockholm on 8 & 9 June 1995 with the theme 'Internationalising SMEs in the Context of the Global Economy'. More than 400 private and public bodies from 45 countries participated in this third annual Conference.

The PARTENARIAT '95 Conference, which was actively supported by the Swedish Ministry of Industry and by NUTEK (National Office for Industrial and Technical Development), was opened by Mr ANTONAKOPOULOS, *chef de cabinet* for Mr PAPOUTSIS, European Commissioner in charge of Enterprise Policy, by Mr HECKSCHER, Swedish Minister of Industry and Trade, and by Mr VERDIN, who represented Mr URBAIN, Belgian Minister of Foreign Trade and European Affairs.

The goal of PARTENARIAT '95 was to unite all the members of the networks and the participants in programmes created by the European Commission within the framework of its efforts to promote cross-border cooperation between SMEs and the European Union. Two such networks currently assist in the search for partners: the BCC (Business Cooperation Centre) and the BC-NET (European Network for cooperation and establishing links between enterprises). These networks operate through members established throughout Europe and in a growing number of third countries, mainly in Asia, Latin America and the Mediterranean Basin, but also in Canada and Australia.

The Commission has also created the **EUROPARTENARIAT** and **THE INTERPRISE** programmes to encourage direct meetings, on the one hand, between entrepreneurs from the various regions of the European Union, and on the other, between enterprises from the European Union and third countries (mainly Central and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean region and Latin America).

Finally, the actions developed by the European Commission in favour of **subcontracting** allows this sector to benefit from significant cooperation opportunities. One such example is the Programme SCAN (Subcontracting Assistance Network) whose promising results demonstrates the interest in extending to new partners the interconnection between the banks and databases of subcontracting principals based on a common terminology. Inverted

trade shows (see page 8) are another effective means of establishing contacts between the 'purchasing' function of the principals and the subcontractors.

The members of these networks and programmes are the main economic, financial and consultative organisations of the European Union which are also made up of numerous public bodies such as chambers of commerce, professional organisations and regional development agencies as well as private consultants and financial institutions. In addition to important figures from the European institutions, some 400 representatives from these organisations participated in Partenariat '95 which was the first important Conference organised by the European Union in Sweden since this country's full accession to the EU. This conference will be followed up by the EUROPARTENARIAT NORTHERN SCANDINAVIA event which will take place in LULEA (Sweden) on 13 & 14 June 1996.

In forthcoming editions, EURO-INFO will offer details of the conclusions from the three seminars ('Internationalising SMEs in the Context of the Global Economy' — 'The Information Society at the Service of SMEs' — 'The Best Practices in the Field of Transnational Cooperation') which formed the substance of this Conference and will give an overview of the most significant aspects of specific meetings of BC NET/BCC-EUROPARTENARIAT-INTERPRISE/Subcontracting which gave their members a chance to reflect on the future role of their respective networks.

INTEGRATED PROGRAMME: Concerted Action no. 2 'SUPPORT MEASURES FOR ENTERPRISES'

The Integrated Programme in Favour of SMEs and the Craft Sector¹, adopted by the European Commission on 25 May 1994 is aimed at uniting into a single coherent framework the various initiatives in favour of SMEs and the Craft Sector which are already in operation and to propose new actions to be implemented in cooperation with the Member States and all other parties concerned with the development of enterprises at the national, local and Community level. In addition to identifying the support measures to be implemented or to be pursued by the Commission, the Integrated Programme proposes to launch a new type of actions known as **the concerted actions with the Member States**. In order to avoid a dispersal of efforts and to unite all forces around a set of common goals and objectives, these concerted actions aim, on the one hand, to improve and simplify the legal, administrative and fiscal environment in which enterprises must operate (concerted actions no. 1) and, on the other hand, to reinforce and improve the effectiveness of support measures for enterprises established in the various Member States (concerted action no. 2). These concerted actions are designed to achieve these goals by disseminating the 'best practices' — selected at the national, regional or local level — which aim to support SMEs during the three phases of their development: creation, growth and transfer. A third concerted action is also envisaged which will be designed to identify the best practices in actively promoting the services offered to enterprises.

As for concerted action no. 2 entitled 'Support Measures for Enterprises', the priority topic of **'creating and assisting young enterprises'** will be the theme of a Forum which will take place in MADRID under the Spanish presidency at the **beginning of October 1995**. This Forum will provide participants with a full analysis of the measures currently supporting the creation and start-up of enterprises in the Member States and is aimed at universalising the use of selected best practices.

In order to do this, a **pilot group**, composed of representatives from the Member States and SME organisations, has been set up. Its main goal is, in conjunction with the European Commission, to analyse the different support measures for enterprises which have been developed at the national, regional or local level and to choose the best practices to be presented at the Madrid Forum.

In conjunction with the Forum, a **Guide** will be presented detailing the principle measures aimed at supporting the creation and assistance of young enterprises already in existence in the Member States, as well a **summary** of the best practices as determined by the Pilot Group. Following the Forum, the conclusions drawn from the debates will be presented in a report to the Council.

For further information: EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Concerted Action no. 2

DG XXIII/B2 — Dominique RISTORI / Paola TARDIOLI

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¹ M(94) 207 Final and Council Resolution of 10 October 1994

MEDPARTENARIAT ISRAEL: 23 and 24 October 1995 in Jerusalem

Anxious to improve the position of European enterprises in their international dealings and aware of the needs and aspirations of many Mediterranean countries in questions of cooperation, the European Commission has set up the organisation of MEDPARTENARIAT events under the auspices of the MEDINVEST programme (programme for cooperation between SMEs from the EU and Mediterranean third countries). Following the events held in Turkey in April 1994 and in Morocco in May 1995, Israel will be the third Mediterranean to benefit from this Community cooperation programme between EU SMEs and those of Mediterranean countries.

MEDPARTENARIAT ISRAEL has been prepared by the 'ISRAEL EXPORT INSTITUTE' in close collaboration with the European Commission. It will be held in Jerusalem on 23 & 24 October 1995 and will take place in four phases:

1. **Selection of Israeli Enterprises**, based on the according to reliability, the dynamism and the cooperation project of each SME. The event has been publicised in Israel at the local and regional levels by distributing registration forms.
2. **Publication of a Catalogue**. This catalogue contains the profile of the 292 selected Israeli enterprises and their offers and demands for cooperation. The sectors concerned are electronics (56 enterprises), computer software and hardware ((60 enterprises), pharmaceutical products, medical equipment and biotechnology (24 enterprises), electric and electro-mechanical apparatuses (13 enterprises), metallurgy and machining (34 enterprises), environmental technology, advisory services and engineering (21 enterprises), plastics and chemical products (32 enterprises), food and processing (24 enterprises), agricultural technology (10 enterprises), textiles and fashion (18 enterprises).
3. **Publicising the event, distribution of the catalogue and search for partners** in the Member States of the European Union by means of a network of **specialised national consultants** (see list below).
4. **Organisation of appointments** arranged between the selected Israeli SMEs and the visiting European enterprises on 23 and 24 October at the International Conference Centre in Jerusalem. Each Israeli enterprise will have a stand to greet and carry on discussions with European enterprises according to the pre-arranged meetings. Interpretation services will be provided for participants as necessary and the organisers and national consultants will orientate them not only over the course of the two-day event, but also during the follow-up to these in-depth discussions. Information seminars will be organised during the event to allow enterprises and their partners to become better acquainted with the support offered to SMEs and the exceptional opportunities found in Israel and the Israeli economy.

MEDPARTENARIAT ISRAEL 1995: List of the European Union's National Consultants

GERMANY

Herr Yiannis Neophytou — IHK-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Aussenwirtschaft und der Unternehmensführung GmbH — Schedestrasse 11 — D-53113 BONN — Tel: 49/228/104.236 — 49/228/104.165 -Fax: 49/228/104.238

Frau Katrin Ruh — IHK-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Aussenwirtschaft und der Unternehmensführung GmbH — Schönholzer Strasse 10-11 — D-13187 BERLIN — Tel: 49/304/48.806.130 — Fax: 49/304/48.806.103

AUSTRIA

Her Heinz Hundertpfund — Aussenwirtschaftsorganisation Wirtschaftskammer Österreich — Wiedner Hauptstrasse 63 — A-1045 WIEN — Tel: 43/1/501.05.43.08 — 43/1/501.05.43.05 — Fax: 43/1/502.06.255 — Telex: 111871

BELGIUM

Mr Jos Helsen / Mr Ivo Peeters — GOM Vlaams-Brabant — Toekomststraat 36-38 — B-1800 VILVOORDE — Tel 32/2/251.51.71 — Fax: 32/2/252.45.94

Mrs Corinne de Rycker — SOCRAN — Parc Scientifique du Sart-Tilman — Avenue Pré-Aily — B-4031 ANGLEUR — Tel: 32/41/67.83.33 — Fax: 32/41/67.83.00

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Mrs Elena Moreno Fernández de Heredia — IMPI, Instituto de la Pequeña y Mediana Empresa Industrial — Paseo de la Castellana, 141 — E-28046 MADRID — Tel: 34/1/582.93.46 — 34/1/582.93.45 — Fax: 34/1/582.93.99

FINLAND

Mr Timo Karisto — The Finnish Foreign Trade Association — Arkadiankatu 2 — PO box 908 — SF-00101 HELSINKI Tel: 358/0/695.93.88 — Fax 358/0/685.15.73

FRANCE

Mrs Anne Sibille — ACFCI, Assemblée des Chambres Françaises de Commerce et d'Industrie — 45, avenue d'Iéna — F-75116 PARIS — Tel: 33/1/40.69.37.96 — Fax: 33/1/40.69.38.08

GREECE

Mrs Katerina Katopis — Exporters' Association of Northern Greece — 1, Morihovou Square — GR-54625 THESSALONIKI — Tel: 30/31/535.333 — 30/31/547.312 — Fax: 30/31/543.232

IRELAND

Mr Charles Kelly — The Irish Trade Board (An Bord Tráchtála) — Merrion Hall, Strand Road, Sandymount — PO Box 203 — IRL-DUBLIN 4 — Tel: 353/1/269.50.11 — Fax: 353/1/269.58.20 — Telex: 93678 ctt ei

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Mr Flavio Burlizzi — Mondimpresa — Via di Porta Pinciana, 36 — I-00187 ROMA — Tel: 39/6/488.40.55 — 39/6/488.07.27 — 39/6/481.49.12 — Fax: 39/6/481.20.34

LUXEMBOURG

Mr A.J. Brands — EMDA Institute — Nordhornsestraat — L-7591 DENEKAMP — Tel: 352/54/135.50.00 — Fax: 352/54/135.49.73

THE NETHERLANDS

Mrs Henriette D. van de Polder — NCH, Netherlands' Council for Trade Promotion — Bezuidenhoutseweg 181 — PO Box 10 — NL — CA 2501 DEN HAAG — Tel: 31/70/344.15.44 — Fax: 31/70/385.35.31

PORTUGAL

Mr Mariano Dos Santos / Mr Manuel Lino — IAPMEI — Banco de Fomento e Exterior — Rua Rodrigo da Fonseca, 73 — P-1297 LISBOA CODEX — Tel: 351/1/386.43.33 — Fax: 351/1/386.31.61

UNITED KINGDOM

Mrs Denise S. Arden / Mr Moshe Maor — British-Israel Chamber of Commerce — 14/15 Rodmarton St — UK-LONDON W1H 3FW — Tel: 44/171/486.23.71 — Fax: 44/171/224.17.83

Scotland

Mrs Agnes Barclay — Scottish Innovation — Unit A1, Building 1, Templeton Business Centre — 62 Templeton St — UK-GLASGOW G40 1DA — Tel: 44/41/554.59.95 — Fax: 44/41/556.63.20

Northern Ireland

Mr Arthur K. Bell — Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry — 22 Great Victoria St — UK-BELFAST BT2 7R1 — Tel: 44/232/24.41.13 — Fax: 44/232/24.70.24

SWEDEN

Mrs Brigitta Svensson — NUTEK, Swedish National Board for Industrial and Technological Development — S-11786 STOCKHOLM — Tel: 46/8/681.94.66 — Fax: 46/8/744.40.45

For further information: MEDPARTENARIAT ISRAEL 1995

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To obtain the catalogue: see list of national consultants.

INTERPRISE:

Encouraging Partnerships between Industries and/or Services in Europe

The INTERPRISE programme is designed to support local, regional and national actions aimed at stimulating direct contacts (ie personalised meetings) between heads of enterprises with a view towards establishing cooperation agreements between small and medium-sized enterprises. The projects must include at least three regions from three European Union countries and may, in certain instances, also be extended to regions from non-member countries. A specific action — MED-INTERPRISE — has been set up within the framework of MED-INVEST for third countries from the Mediterranean basin.

Each project originates from a local initiative sponsored by such organisations as chambers of commerce and industry, local, regional or national development agencies, European Business and Innovation Centres (EBIC), Euro-Info Centres, BC-Net/BCC, research centres, or private consultants. Each project must be submitted to the Commission at least nine months before the date of the event and must involve at least 15 to 20 enterprises from each region. The European Commission can provide as much as 50% of the event's total budget, up to a maximum of 50,000 ECU.

The following INTERPRISE events will take place during the next few months:

FIST 95

Meetings: 20 to 22 September 1995 at Strasbourg (France)

Countries involved: France, Belgium, Germany, Spain

Sectors: metal processing, plastics and rubber

Organisation: CRCT Bourgogne / EIC — Mr Denis Pleux — 68, rue Chevreul — BP 209 — F-21006 DIJON CEDEX — Tel: +33.80.63.52.52 — Fax: +33.80.63.52.53

SOUTHERN FINLAND INTERPRISE 95

Meetings: 5 and 6 October 1995 at Kotka (Finland)

Countries involved: Finland, Belgium, Germany, United Kingdom and the Netherlands

Sectors: transport, logistics, port infrastructures

Organisation: KYMEN LAASKO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE — Mr Yyri Hakamies — Keskuskato 7 — PO Box 83 — SF-48101 KOTKA — Tel: +358-52-18.42.77 — Fax: +358-52-21.30.07

INTERPRISE NORTH WEST 95

Meetings: 13 and 14 October 1995 at Cheshire (United Kingdom)

Countries involved: United Kingdom, Spain, Ireland and Portugal

Sectors: industrial chemicals, plastics and pharmaceuticals; textiles and clothing

Organisation: SOUTH AND EAST CHESHIRE TRAINING AND ENTERPRISE COUNCIL — Mr Mike Collins — PO box 37 — Dalton Way — Middlewich — GB — CW10 0HU CHESHIRE — Tel: +44-606.73.70.09 — Fax: +44-606.73.70.22

EUROLINKS

Meetings: 24 and 25 October 1995, at London (United Kingdom)

Countries involved: United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Italy and Ireland

Sectors: electronics, electric and mechanical sector

Organisation:

- SOUTH LONDON TEC — Mrs Jenny Tooth — 7 Elmfield Road — GB-BR1 1LT BROMLEY — Tel: +44-181-670.58.18 — Fax: +44-181-670.58.18

- WEST LONDON TEC — Mr Collin Gilfillan -Sovereign Court — 15-21 Staines Road — GBTW3 3HA HOUNSLOW — Tel: +44-181-814.32.37 — Fax: +44-181-570.99.69
- EIC THE LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY — Mrs Beth Rayney Cucala — 33 Queen Street — GB-EC4R 1AP LONDON — Tel: +44-171-489.19.92 — Fax: +44-171-489.03.91

CENTRE D'AFFAIRES EUROPEEN D'ECHANGES TECHNOLOGIQUES

Meetings: 25 to 27 October 1995 at Toulouse (France)

Countries involved: France, Germany, Italy

Sectors: environmental technologies and advanced materials

Organisation: CRCI BLAGNAC (EIC) — Mr Jean MESSEANT — 5, rue Dieudonné Costes — BP 12 — F-31701 BLAGNAC — Tel: +33-62.74.20.00 — Fax: +33-62.74.20.20

NORTH WALES CONTACT INTERPRISE '95

Meetings: 9 and 10 November 1995 at Wrexham (United Kingdom)

Countries involved: United Kingdom, Belgium, Spain and Ireland

Sectors: agri-foodstuffs, plastics, packaging, electronics, environment

Organisation: ALYN AND DEESIDE DISTRICT COUNCIL — Mr Coraham MC William — Civics Offices — St David's Park — Ewloe — Deesides — GB-CH5 3PN CLWYD — Tel: +44-244.52.52.06 — Fax: +44-244.52.51.96

- For further information about a particular INTERPRISE event please contact the organiser.
- For further information about the INTERPRISE programme:
European Commission
DG XXIII — INTERPRISE
rue de la Loi, 200 (AN80)
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EC INVESTMENT PARTNERS:

Encouraging the Creation of Joint Ventures between European SMEs and SMEs in Asia, the Mediterranean and South Africa

On 22 May 1995 the Council of Ministers of the European Union adopted its common position on the regulation concerning the implementation of the financial instrument 'EC Investment Partners' (ECIP) aimed at countries of Latin America, Asia, the Mediterranean and South Africa.

A three-year pilot project under this financial instrument was launched in 1988 which was later continued for a further three years starting on 1 January 1992. It is now foreseen that the Community will implement special cooperation schemes for the period 1995/1999 within the framework of economic cooperation with the countries of Latin America, Asia, the Mediterranean and South Africa. These cooperation schemes will be aimed at **encouraging investments of mutual interest** for operators of the Community, particularly under the form of common enterprises with local operators in eligible countries, including three-way actions with other developing countries in order to promote regional integration. Special attention will be paid to small and medium-sized enterprises. The ECIP financial instrument will offer different types of financing facilities aimed at encouraging the creation of joint ventures between European firms and companies from certain developing countries.

The common position also envisages the financial reference sum for implementing the present programme for the period 1995/1999 amounts to **250 million ECU**. The common position will be sent to the European Parliament under the cooperation procedure.

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ADAPT: Meeting the Challenge of Industrial Changes

The European Commission approved on 24 May 1995 the operational programmes presented by the national authorities under the auspices of the new community initiative ADAPT (Adaptation of the Labour Force to Meet Industrial Changes). All Member States are included in these programmes except Austria, Sweden and Finland where these programmes will probably be adopted in September. ADAPT is an initiative of the Commission which, within the framework of the Structural Funds, **aims specifically to encourage the adoption of a preemptive approach to improve the flexibility of the labour force in foreseeing the new requirements in skills and qualifications spawned by industrial changes.** This initiative is directed toward workers at risk of losing their jobs due to industrial changes, at those who have been given notice because of imminent restructuring, or at those who have been made temporarily redundant. **Nearly 600,000 people stand to benefit from this initiative.**

The ADAPT initiative, with a budget of 1,400 million ECU, is pursuing four closely linked objectives. First, it is concerned with preventing unemployment by improving professional qualifications, thus maintaining existing jobs by helping them evolve. This implies — second objective — helping workers adapt to the technological changes by foreseeing these changes to the maximum extent possible. The third objective endeavours to improve the competitiveness of industry, trade and services in the European Union by using new techniques which allow the reduction of costs while improving quality. Finally, ADAPT promises to contribute to the creation of new jobs and new areas of activity, especially within the SME sector.

National authorities must now submit specific projects to the Commission by 15 September 1995 which are both transnational and innovative in character. In principle these projects will start up in November. Each of these projects are expected to supply solutions which can later be used on a larger scale and in other countries of the European Union.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

EURO-CONTRACT '95

International Platform for Industrial Meetings, 5 and 6 October 1995 in Brussels

EURO-CONTRACT '95 provides an opportunity to meet the principle economic decision-makers for surrounding markets (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands) under the guise of inverted trade show where the principals and the buyers receive the subcontractors. The pre-arranged meetings are organised in terms of the specific requests of the principals and the capacity of the subcontractors as determined through a questionnaire. The sectors involved in these meetings are electrotechnical and electronics, plastics processing, metal and mechanical manufacturing, chemical, and industrial equipment.

For further information:

- Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Bruxelles
Kamer voor Handel en Nijverheid Brussel
Avenue Louise — Louizalaan 500, B-1050 BRUSSELS
Tel: + 32-2/648.50.02 (ext 251-278)
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- Association des Chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie de Wallonie
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- Vereniging van Vlaamse Kamers voor Handel en Nijverheid
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