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## Editorial

*Mattia Crosetto*

Dear readers,

At the international level, the Zlín Region considers China as a fundamental partner for attracting investments and develop joint projects and initiatives.

Well, it is good to know then that also the relations between Europe and China are getting closer and closer.

This week, Mr. Vladimír Špidla, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, is in China for a three-day visit to strengthen cooperation on employment and social affairs issues. He is going to sign an EU-China agreement to promote policy dialogue on issues of common interest and on long-term challenges in employment and social policy, such as demographic ageing.

The agreement – or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) – sets up a structured dialogue with China's top think tank – the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. It will launch a policy discussion which is "prospective" in nature, with a focus on long-term trends and challenges.

On the occasion of his visit, Commissioner Špidla will also hold a series of bilateral meetings with the Chinese Government, the Business Community and the Shanghai authorities.

The organisation of this mission in Asia comes immediately after the launch of a new financial instrument – the SWITCH programme – that the European Commission has approved exactly to strengthen the cooperation between European and Asian countries. We present you this new initiative in the pages of the present Newsletter and we will add more details about in a Special Report devoted to this topic. We are also examining with our EU partners the possibilities of preparing a project proposal targeting the cooperation with China.

We will let you informed about the perspectives of the relations with China, and Asia in general, in our next editions.

Sincerely,

Mattia Crosetto  
The Head of Office  
Zlín Region in Brussels

## WHAT'S NEW IN BRUSSELS?



*"LGTT is a significant new instrument for financing European infrastructure. Not only are we making this innovative instrument available to the market today, but we also reiterate that private participation in the financing of transport infrastructure of European interest is welcome and needed", said Commission Vice-President in charge of transport Jacques Barrot when signing the agreement.*

### European Commission and European Investment Bank launch a new facility

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2008, the European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) signed a Cooperation Agreement establishing the Loan Guarantee Instrument for trans-European transport network projects (LGTT).

This new instrument will facilitate greater participation of the private sector in the financing of transport infrastructure of European significance, especially for investments in TENs projects where there is a high level of revenue risk in the early operational period of a project. The LGTT, which forms part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) programme and the EIB's Action for Growth initiative, will partially cover this risk and thereby significantly improve the financial viability of TENs investments.

The capital contribution of €1 billion (€500 million each from the Commission and the EIB) is intended to support up to €20 billion of total capital investment.

The LGTT will provide significant additional risk capital that should facilitate and accelerate private sector investment in TENs. It is in addition to the TENs Budgetary Resources from the Commission and existing loans from EIB.

### Information about the financing of Trans-European Networks

The investment required to complete and modernise the Trans-European Network, a precondition for the achievement of a true single market and regional integration, exceeds the capabilities of public funding. For the period 2007-2013 alone, the investment needs in TEN infrastructures are expected at some €300 billion in total. A significant financial gap in public sector resources is anticipated and it will only be overcome by mobilising private investment in large infrastructure projects. The LGTT – an EIB guarantee for subordinated debt in form of a stand-by liquidity facility to be provided by commercial banks – counters this problem by providing security for the initial traffic revenue risk over the first 5-7 years of a project's operation. The LGTT assists the project to cope with the initial risk while relying on the long-term perspective of the project being financially viable.

The design of LGTT, by improving the ability of borrower to service senior debt, enhances the overall credit quality and thereby encourages a reduction of risk margins applied to senior loans to the project. These savings should surpass the cost to the borrower of the guarantee, resulting in added financial value for the project. The incorporation of LGTT, by rendering private sector investment into a project more attractive and therefore less costly, will thus provide benefits to the society as a whole.

The LGTT will complement two other financial instruments of the European Commission tailored for TEN-T projects and aimed at increasing the participation of private capital. The Risk Capital Facility offers risk capital to investment funds focused on providing equity for TEN projects, whereas availability payment schemes can benefit from a construction cost based grant during the operational, post-construction phase of the project.

For some projects, a partnership between the public and the private sector can prove to be the most efficient way forward. The new guarantee instrument, unlocking billions of new investment for TEN-T, is a powerful tool to facilitate such partnerships.

For operational information on the new European Instrument for the Trans-European Network projects in the field of transport:

#### AGI – EIB

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[http://ec.europa.eu/ten/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/ten/index_en.html)

[www.eib.org](http://www.eib.org)

## Cooperation between Europe and Asian Countries Launched the new SWITCH Programme

**On the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2007, the European Commission has presented its new Cooperation Programme with Asia: SWITCH.**

The programme aims at promoting the uptake of sustainable production and consumption by Small and Medium Enterprises to make their business processes more environmentally friendly and efficient. This is done through grants for projects involving EU/Asia partnerships of non-profit making organizations. Typically, the target beneficiaries are represented by business intermediary organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce, organizations of professional categories, cluster secretariats.

### SWITCH Programme: eligible countries

ASIA	EUROPE
Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Buthan, Cambodia, China, DPR Korea, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Swede, UK.

#### Note

Organisations from Hong Kong, Macau, Chinese Taipei, Brunei Darussalam and Singapore can participate as associates.

### SWITCH Programme: main topics

Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) is an attempt to reconcile the increased demand for goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimizing the use of natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, in order not to jeopardize the needs of future generations. Materials, Water and Energy are the three key elements.

Sustainable Production concerns the supply side, focusing on the economic, social and environmental impacts of production processes; while Sustainable Consumption addresses the demand side, focusing on consumers' behavior and choices in use of goods and services, i.e. demand for products that environmentally friendly both in their production and in their use, as well as by promoting a sensible consumption behavior, avoiding spillage and waste.

In Asia, major challenges also concern the region's increasing energy consumption leading to rising greenhouse gas emissions. Increased adoption of SCP will lead to improved energy efficiency in the life-cycle of our products preventing Climate Change.

The SWITCH programme with its particular focus on SMEs contributes directly and indirectly to poverty alleviation by improving the living conditions of poor households in the surroundings and down-stream of sub-urban SMEs by reducing water pollution (particularly improving conditions of women who traditionally have to source drinking water), solid waste, and air pollution. SWITCH also contributes to increased employment and incomes by increased production that meets international environmental standards and higher competitiveness, e.g. through resource savings and better access to supply chains of international companies. In addition, adoption of SCP will help improving the conditions of both female and male workers promoting reasonable salaries, decent working conditions and protection of children rights (social corporate responsibility).

The SWITCH programme seeks to enhance the uptake of SCP by working simultaneously on the production and consumption sides, employing a multi-stakeholder approach with strong and intensive working relationships with SMEs, building upon existing structures and networks, and by scaling up results achieved in earlier projects. Projects will have to actively disseminate their results and facilitate exchange of good practices, and will be supported in this task by the SWITCH programme Network Facility.

The Zlin Region in Brussels is preparing a Special report to present this new European Initiative.

The Report will be made available in abstract also on the website of the Office, at:

[www.zlinregioninbrussels.eu](http://www.zlinregioninbrussels.eu)

## FOCUS ON EU PROGRAMMS



### Special Section on Innovation

Within this section, you can find some examples of successful projects realized in the field of innovation. A good source of inspiration for new initiatives in the Region.

#### CASE 4 Beyond tourism towards innovation

*Excessively dependent on coastal tourism, the Algarve plans to set its sights on innovation by enlisting the help of researchers and entrepreneurs to form a common front in facing the challenges of competition. The regional centre is the answer.*

Between 1995 and 2002, the Algarve's annual growth rate (4.9 %) was the highest in Portugal, significantly above the national average (3.1 %).

Nevertheless, the region's development is being held back by a lack of motivation for innovation that is reflected in the limited number of projects of firms and research bodies. Hence the decision to set up, in 2003 at the Algarve University, the Algarve Regional Centre for Innovation (CRIA), one of the projects under the INOAlgarve regional programme of innovative actions.

The aim of CRIA is to promote innovation, transfer technologies, vitalise networks and support initiatives as a means of creating an 'innovation culture' that will encourage closer contacts and two-way transfers between entrepreneurs and researchers or students. The project is being promoted by four partners: Algarve University (UALG), the Algarve Coordination & Regional Development Committee (CCDR), responsible for public investments, and two private sector bodies, the Regional Young Entrepreneurs Association (and the Algarve Entrepreneurial Association (NERA).



*The cases presented in this special section, have been selected among those published by the EC in "Regions for Economic Change". The first sheet has been published in the edition of 31 of October 2007.*

At the end of phase one (2003–04), the CRIA can take credit for a number of initiatives that are already having a leverage effect on regional competitiveness.

The first Algarve innovation fair, in March 2004, provided a showcase for the university and other research centres and an opportunity to make the university and businesses aware of the prospects offered by cooperating within consortiums on innovation projects relating to eighty research subjects.

An ideas competition for enterprise creation resulted in the selection of 12 projects, three for agrifood stuffs, one for advanced information technology services, two for health technologies, four for the environment and two for ocean sciences. The creation of a Support Officer for the Promotion of Industrial Ownership (GAPI) within the Algarve University and its research departments has provided the region with a vital tool for the development and legal protection of innovation.

Two enterprise centres for the incubation of SMEs have also been set up on campus, one for service activities and the other for industry.

Finally, the plan to create a technology centre at the UALG site to welcome both research bodies and companies will provide the necessary logistics functions and stimulate innovation in four fields — biotechnologies, biomedicine, marine resources and intelligent systems — while creating between 300 and 400 jobs.

Beyond the INOAlgarve programme, a second stage of the CRIA project (2004–07) is to further develop the results achieved and anchor them in a lasting framework.

#### Details of the project

**Project:** Algarve Regional Center for Innovation

**Programme:** Objective 1

Finland 2000–06

**Total cost:** EUR 545.100

**EU contribution:** EUR 436.080

**Fund:** EU Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

#### Contact

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## SHORTS FROM BRUSSELS



*Ex-Beatles Sir Paul Mc Cartney and Ringo Starr have accepted to borrow their images for Liverpool 2008. The link „Beatles-Liverpool“ has made the town famous all over the world, similarly to what happens for the Zlin Region with the connection Zlin-Bata.*

### **After Luxembourg and Sibiu (Romania), Liverpool (UK) and Stavanger (Norway) are this year's European capitals of culture**

There is little overlap between musical Liverpool and partying Stavanger, except perhaps the quality of events they have lined up to mark their stint as European capital of culture.

Stavanger's ambitious "open port" programme offers architecture, literature, music and the visual arts, bringing together artists of all types, both home-grown and from further afield. With the watchwords openness and freedom of expression, Stavanger 2008 intends to cater for all tastes.

Liverpool is organising some 350 events, most of them free - a mix of art, architecture, dance, cinema, cuisine and theatre. Liverpool 2008 hopes to draw a million visitors from sixty countries worldwide.

Both cities are planning colourful launch events for 12 January. Liverpool will kick off with Liverpool - The Musical, featuring former Beatle Ringo Starr and Dave Stewart of the Eurythmics. The event will double as the official opening of the new Liverpool Arena, located in Merseyside. Stavanger is inviting every local council in the Rogaland region to display its creativity around a number of themes.

The European capital of culture project was launched in 1985 to bring together the peoples of Europe. It is of particular significance in this European year of intercultural dialogue.

### **European Parliament launches the new Charlemagne Prize for EU projects promoted by young people**

Organised by the European Parliament and the Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen, the prize provides funding of €2.000 - €5.000 for existing projects that foster a shared sense of European identity and cooperation.

The winning projects will serve as role models for young people living in Europe. In particular the organisers are looking for practical examples of Europeans living together.

All citizens or residents aged 16-30, of the 27 EU member states can apply, individually or in groups, provided that the project submitted is up and running.

Applications can be made in all official EU languages.

The projects can focus on the organisation of various youth events, youth exchanges or internet projects with a European dimension.

The three best projects will be selected in two steps.

First phase, national juries consisting of at least two MEPs and one representative of a youth organisation will select a national winner from each of 27 Member States by 14 March. Then, on 4 April, the European jury, consisting of three MEP's, the President of the European Parliament and four representatives of the Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize, will select the winner from the 27 projects submitted by national juries.

The €2.000, €3.000 and €5.000 prizes for the three best projects will be presented by the President of the EP and a representative of Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize. The award event will occur at Aachen Germany, on the 29 of April 2008. The three laureates will also be invited to a ceremony at the EP in May 2008.

Application forms are available on the European Parliament's national Information Office web sites and the Charlemagne website.

Further information can be found at the Prize official website, at:

[http://www.e-adagio.eu/CYP/CYPintro\\_cs.html](http://www.e-adagio.eu/CYP/CYPintro_cs.html)

# Calls for proposals

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<b>Education</b>	Erasmus Mundus - External Cooperation Window, Academic Year 2008-09 Deadline: <b>15. 02. 2008</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_291/c_29120071205en00120013.pdf">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_291/c_29120071205en00120013.pdf</a>
<b>Media 2007</b>	Development of interactive works on all platforms both online and off line Deadline: <b>15. 04. 2007 / 15. 04. 2008</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_204/c_20420070901en00090009.pdf">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_204/c_20420070901en00090009.pdf</a>
<b>Media 2007</b>	Initiative i2i - Development of EU films - Insurance for audiovisual production Deadline: <b>14. 01. 2008 / 07. 07. 2008</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_277/c_27720071120en00130014.pdf">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_277/c_27720071120en00130014.pdf</a>
<b>Media 2007</b>	Support for the transnational distribution of EU films and the networking of distributors - The 'selective' scheme Deadline: <b>01. 04. 2008 / 01. 07. 2008</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_311/c_31120071221en00200020.pdf">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_311/c_31120071221en00200020.pdf</a>
<b>Culture Program</b>	Support for bodies and cultural actions, cooperation and networks Deadline: <b>01. 04. 2008</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/cs/oj/2007/c_184/c_18420070807cs00090010.pdf">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/cs/oj/2007/c_184/c_18420070807cs00090010.pdf</a>
<b>CIP</b>	Competitive & Innovation Program - Services for Business Innovation Deadline: <b>February 2008 (indicative)</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_227/c_22720070927en00100015.pdf">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_227/c_22720070927en00100015.pdf</a>
<b>FP7 – People</b>	VII Framework Programme – People Programme Deadline: <b>13. 03. 2008</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_275/c_27520071116en00170017.pdf">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_275/c_27520071116en00170017.pdf</a>
<b>FP7 – Capacity</b>	Capacities Program – Development of research policies (OMC-NET) Deadline: <b>06. 03. 2008</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_245/c_24520071019en00200020.pdf">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2007/c_245/c_24520071019en00200020.pdf</a>
<b>COST</b>	European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research Deadline: <b>28. 03. 2008</b> <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/cs/oj/2007/c_289/c_28920071201cs00190020.pdf">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/cs/oj/2007/c_289/c_28920071201cs00190020.pdf</a>

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## CALENDAR

### JANUARY

#### 28. 01. 2008

European conference on Local Energy Actions – 7<sup>th</sup> ManagEnergy Annual Conference  
European Commission  
Brussels, Belgium

### FEBRUARY

#### 04-05. 02. 2008

iLearning Forum 2008  
Designing strategies for learning organisations  
European Commission  
Paris, France

#### 06-08. 02. 2008

73<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions CoR and European Parliament  
Brussels, Belgium

#### 26-27. 02. 2008

4<sup>th</sup> Annual Brussels Climate Change Conference  
European Commission  
Brussels, Belgium

## Vacancies in Europe

### European Centre for Vocational Training

#### • Senior Experts

Policy analysis and reporting

Vacancy notice: CEDEFOP/2008/2/AD

Grade: Temporary agents

Place of work: Thessaloniki, Greece

Deadline: 03. 03. 2008

Info: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/index.asp?section=3&sub=4>

### European Centre for Vocational Training

#### • Senior Experts

Evaluation Unit – Exam of project proposals

Vacancy notice: CEDEFOP/2008/3/AD

Grade: Temporary agents

Place of work: Thessaloniki, Greece

Deadline: 14. 03. 2008

Info: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/index.asp?section=3&sub=4>

### European Centre for Vocational Training

#### • Assistant Procurement Service

Administration

Vacancy notice: CEDEFOP/2008/4/AST

Grade: Temporary agents

Place of work: Thessaloniki, Greece

Deadline: 22. 02. 2008

Info: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/index.asp?section=3&sub=4>



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