One of our core aims is to help UK SMEs to commercialise new innovative technologies and we are confident that Eurostars can provide them with experience of participating in European-wide R&D projects.

Iain Gray, CEO
Technology Strategy Board United Kingdom
INTERVIEW

Malcolm Harbour MEP

“The Commission has made some very important new proposals for encouraging SME participation in the full range of research and innovation instruments proposed for Horizon 2020. Parliament has, in successive Framework programmes, been a strong advocate of SME-friendly innovation policy. There will be no exception this time! However, with more experience available from research-based SMEs, Parliament will be looking closely at excessively heavy application conditions and projects with high administrative complexity. These actively discourage SME participation.

The Eurostars Programme, because of its dedication to SME research support and translation of research into commercial deployment, will have a very important role to play. Experiences from Eurostars need to be fed into the Horizon 2020 operating frameworks.

Regional collaborations between firms and research institutes will be a very important driver of economic growth. This collaboration should embrace public procurement, which should be a major driver of innovation. There are big opportunities, for example, for urban regions to establish partnerships in sustainable transport or active ageing. The European Institute of Technology is establishing Knowledge and Innovation Communities which will have an important regional component to encourage innovative companies to cross borders.”

Malcolm Harbour was elected to the European Parliament in June 1999. He is Chairman of the Internal Market and Consumer protection Committee and is a Member of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group. He is Vice-Chairman of the parliament’s Science and Technology options Assessment panel (STOA) and a Member of the inter-parliamentary Delegation to Japan.

Malcolm Harbour takes a special interest in the EU single market, industry, science and technology policy. He is Chairman of the Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee and is a Member of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group. He is Vice-Chairman of the Parliament’s Science and Technology Options Assessment Panel (STOA) and a Member of the Inter-Parliamentary Delegation to Japan.

Malcolm Harbour was born in February 1947. He was educated at Bedford School and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated in Engineering, and at the University of Aston where he gained a Diploma in Management Studies. He received an Honorary doctorate from Aston in 2008.

A word from our Chairman...

“I am honoured to have chaired EUREKA for the last year. It’s not an elite club, but an ambition to be the leading platform in its field, fuelled by a group of people of many cultures, languages and nationalities with the kind of vision that has brought to the world innovative technologies that are changing our daily lives for the better. Last June, my Hungarian team announced its objectives for its Chairmanship: influencing and exploiting EU regional policy; internationalisation; new instruments for the financing of innovation; better cooperation with European Technology Platforms primarily in the field of food technologies – and, of course, the role of the Eurostars Programme in the EU’s Horizon2020. I am proud of the contributions of our Chairmanship team to achieving these objectives, and firmly believe that my Turkish colleagues, who assume the Chairmanship in July will have a similarly challenging and exciting year ahead of them.”

www.eurekanetwork.org
EUREKA is a European network for market-oriented R&D. Its aim is to strengthen European competitiveness by promoting market-driven collaborative research and technological development. EUREKA enables industry, universities and research institutes from 40 member countries and the EU to collaborate in a ‘bottom-up’ approach to developing and exploiting innovative technologies. EUREKA NEWS is published two times a year.

An online version is available on www.eurekanetwork.org.
EUREKA at European Parliament dinner debate: Cohesion Policy and Horizon 2020 – Synergies and complementarities

The recent dinner debate organised by Knowledge4Innovation (K4i) Forum and hosted by Lambert van Nistelrooij MEP at the European Parliament highlighted the huge potential of the innovation components of the future cohesion policy proposal put forward by the European Commission at the end of 2011 and its complementarity with Horizon 2020 proposal.

The event included interventions by parliamentarians including Alexander Alvaro, Vice-President of the European Parliament; Pilar Del Castillo, Member of ITRE Committee and Danuta Hübner, Member of REGIO Committee; also Friedhelm Schmieder, K4i’s new Chairman.

As stated by Michel Andrieu, European Commission advisor to the head of the EUREKA Secretariat, EUREKA, with its solid field experience and wide network of 39 member countries, can easily outreach locally innovative actors. EUREKA seems therefore a natural partner for both the design and implementation of a number of aspects of the innovation components of the future cohesion policy instruments.

Moreover, especially in times of austerity, it is auspicious to explore alternative funding sources such as structural funds, the potential of which is untapped.

Commission will continue to support the Eurostars Programme in Horizon 2020

On 23 January 2012, Director General Robert-Jan Smits (DG Research) presented the Commission’s proposal on Horizon 2020 and the associated budget at the European Parliament’s ITRE Committee meeting chaired by its newly-elected chair Amalia Sartori MEP. Smits highlighted the substantial increase proposed for the new programme (i.e. 46%) as a proof of commitment to increase growth and competitiveness in Europe and outlined the three priorities of Horizon 2020 (Excellence in science; Industrial leadership; Societal challenges).

Smits explicitly referred to Eurostars by saying that “the Commission will continue to support the Eurostars Programme for R&D SMEs which is implemented jointly by EUREKA and the European Commission”. Highlighting the Commission’s commitment to increase participation of SMEs in the programme, Smits explained that the new programme aims to be more “SME-friendly” building on the SBIR programme implemented in the USA and in some EU Member States.

He added that equity for SMEs will be available under the new programme following the successful RSFF instrument under FP7.
Funding results of the seventh Eurostars application deadline

The funding synchronisation phase of the seventh Eurostars application deadline has been recently concluded, with 71 project applications funded from the 115 applications ranked above the quality threshold. The R&D-performing SMEs and SMEs targeted by the programme continue to benefit, representing around 70% of the participants, proving that the programme truly responds to this crucial sector’s needs and expectations.

The funded projects include participants from 21 Eurostars member countries as well as collaboration with the USA.

Eurostars has a bottom-up approach and is open to all technologies with a civilian goal. Main technologies represented in the pool of funded projects are Biological sciences and technologies (32%); electronics, IT and telecoms technologies (25%) and Industrial manufacturing, material and transport (10%).

Total public funding estimates amount to 36.2 million euros from the participating countries, with a further 12 million euros from the European Community.

The commitment of the member countries to the programme continues to be assured, with national public funds earmarked to the programme being increased substantially in order to better support the innovations being carried out by SME-led project consortia under the auspices of Eurostars.

To support those projects from the first seven Eurostars deadline applications, the 33 participating Eurostars member countries and the European Community have dedicated a funding estimated to 370 million euro.

Application results

Eurostars eighth application deadline

On 1 March 2012, Eurostars eighth application deadline closed with a grand total of 363 applications submitted. 1,236 organisations from 33 countries are involved, 73% of which are SMEs. Total costs of applications submitted amount to 512 million euro, of which 79% are borne by SMEs.

The interest in Eurostars is also extending beyond Europe with European-led projects including partners from South Korea.

Main technologies represented in the pool of submitted projects are Electronics, IT and Telecoms technologies (33%); biological sciences and technologies (24%); and industrial manufacturing, material and transport (14%).

Find more information about the Eurostars Programme and information on how to apply at www.eurostars-eureka.eu.
CONFESSIONS OF A EUROSTARS PARTICIPANT

Vice President of Primekey Solutions AB Amir Abdurahmanovic shares his experience and explains how the Eurostars Programme helped his company grow even before the project had finished.

With secure communications becoming a necessity, the Eurostars CESeCoRE project aims to develop an open source security core product to secure a wide range of applications and services in the security technology field. The project handles all aspects of security, allowing certification to be easily extended to products and services for authentication and integrity protection.

A consortium of four IT security companies is promoting the project: Primekey (main partner, Sweden), MULTICERT (Portugal), El-imza (Turkey) and Commfides (Norway) are working on simplifying development of secure software.

Opting for the Eurostars solution

‘We chose Eurostars to develop our project for two reasons: the first and most important one is its special focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the second one is the recommendation from VINNOVA, our national authority for research and technology in Sweden,’ highlights Abdurahmanovic. ‘It is very important for a participant to have a national contact point to help him deal with questions at the beginning of the project, as well as throughout the development procedure. The easy and simple application process makes Eurostars very attractive for participants.’

‘Eurostars provides a total framework for SMEs to collaborate and is a very helpful programme for SMEs who want to innovate. What we found particularly instructive was the website, where applicants can find all the information they need to set up a successful project. Also, the periodic reports created by the Eurostars team that are participant-focused.’

The advantage of international partners

In 2010, Commfides received ISO certification for their Trust Center, allowing them to compete with much larger players in the field - and decreasing their dependence on mainly US-based service providers. In 2010, the company signed a contract to provide Norwegian biometric ePassports and project participant Multicert is today offering end-to-end solutions for the implementation of electronic IDs, with a customer list expanding across Europe and worldwide.

‘Working with common criteria helped us bring better results to the market,’ says Abdurahmanovic. ‘Our customers seem to appreciate our product already, even before the product is certified.’

‘What we found essential was to have a risk management plan from the start of the project. It provides an important safeguard for participants against those may fail to commit to what has been agreed,’ explains Abdurahmanovic. ‘The declaration of our common goals from the outset is what attracts customers in our experience.’

The project, at a cost of two million euro, will be completed by end 2011. Primekey Solutions, the Swedish company and project leader, has doubled its workforce to 23 employees since the Eurostars project began. Furthermore, it has seen a growth of up to 30%. ‘Our engineers benefited from the international cooperation and increased their knowledge,’ says Abdurahmanovic. ‘We are also confident that there will be a return on investment and we are proud that, despite the economic crisis, our company continues to grow.’

PrimeKey is now a globally-known player within its technology area and intends to reach new markets. The Eurostars project has so far been presented at international conferences on eID-ePassport technologies.

A Eurostars company provides strategic services to the aviation industry

Through the Eurostars project Hi-MoCo, High-Integrity Model Compiler, the French SME AdaCore aims to critically improve and speed up the design of the software used in aircrafts.

The conception of software for the aviation industry is based on graphical models that are later translated into computer programmes. AdaCore is developing an automatic code generator that will allow going from model to software while skipping the costly verification phase of the programme. This solution will have a significant impact for aircraft manufactures and airline companies.

The Eurostars Hi-MoCo project is a two years effort, carried out by Adacore together with the Estonian SME iB Krates and the Institute of Informatics Research of Toulouse, France.
On 8 December 2011, the EUREKA Umbrella Surface Engineering for Sustainable Production and Products EISURF held its first annual progress meeting at the EUREKA Secretariat. The Umbrella now features 27 partners from 11 countries.

All 2011 performance indicators in terms of projects and partners have been achieved, explains the Belgian NPC Robert Verbruggen: in its one year existence, 27 R&I proposals initiated through E!-SURF network activities have been submitted, six of which are running today.

2011 highlights included the first E!-SURF Summer School at University of Minho, Portugal, and the Surface Engineering Seminar annex matchmaking event at the EUROFINISH trade fair in Ghent, Belgium. The B2B Match webtool developed under the Umbrella ProFactory has been extended towards E!-SURF, to facilitate industrial R&I project generation for partners.

During the meeting, the 2011 chairman Lars-Pleth Nielsen (DTI, Denmark), showcased his recently-published book Advanced Surface Technology (www.atv-semapp.dk/arr2011/111102_OT_aarhus/E/pg_OT_E_111102_aarhus.html), which will be used to advance the education and training targets of E!-SURF.

Together with representatives from the Turkish and Spanish funding agencies, and also with strong support from Denmark, the meeting discussed funding opportunities and explored future ways for collaborations.

Last but not least, E!-SURF wishes to contribute effectively to the priorities set out by Turkey, the incoming EUREKA Chair country (July 2012-June 2013). The Umbrella will already be present at the TurkKey Enabling Technologies 2012 event on 25 May 2012, the international brokerage event in biotech, advanced materials, space, manufacturing and processing technologies.

Actions for 2012 will, under the chairmanship of Amaya Igartua (Fundacion Tekniker, Spain), enforce collaboration with EUREKA Umbrellas and Clusters like ProFactory+ and EuroAgri FoodChain, and other networks such as Enterprise Europe Network (EEN). There will be also an enforced involvement in the Hungarian Chair initiative for closer collaboration with European Technology Platforms, as evidenced by a prominent presence at the Research and Innovation Collaboration in the Food sector EUREKACADEMY workshop on 19 January 2012.

Furthermore, E!-SURF plans to attract project consultant companies in the network to facilitate project generation, research brokerage events are already announced at the May i-SUP2012, the June LUBMAT 2012 Conference and September Plasma Surface Engineering conferences. The E!-SURF Tribology (during LUBMAT) and surface engineering school series will be continued as well.

As a matter of course, new member countries and partners are invited to join us in making the EUREKA Umbrella a success!

More information on the EUREKA E!-SURF Umbrella network, including guidance for participation, is available at www.eurekasurf.eu
The Technology Strategy Board is a business-led government body which works to create economic growth by ensuring that the UK is a global leader in innovation. Sponsored by the UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Technology Strategy Board brings together business, research and the public sector, supporting and accelerating the development of innovative products and services to meet market needs, tackle major societal challenges and help build the future economy.

Here we take a look at the role of the Technology Strategy Board in the UK and Europe with CEO Iain Gray.

Tell us about the mandate of the Technology Strategy Board, in particular regarding European cooperation.

The Technology Strategy Board is the UK’s innovation agency and works to create economic growth by ensuring that the UK is a global leader in innovation. Cooperation with partners from around the world can often help UK companies to be globally competitive so we support innovative businesses who wish to collaborate with like-minded European companies.

Eurostars is an essential part of our European innovation agenda as it stimulates and encourages innovative UK SMEs to collaborate with leading innovators from around Europe.

The European Commission has recently announced that in the Horizon 2020 programme, the successor of the Seventh Framework Programme, it will continue to support Eurostars, the SME funding and support joint programme, which is managed by EUREKA. The UK participates in Eurostars; how do you see its participation developing in this follow-on programme?

We would like the Eurostars programme in Horizon 2020 to achieve a wide range of benefits for UK businesses. One of the Technology Strategy Board’s core aims is to help UK SMEs to commercialise new innovative technologies and we are confident that Eurostars can provide SMEs with experience of participating in European-wide research and development projects.

How, in your view, can the UK best exploit its innovative and entrepreneurial capacity, to get itself out of economic difficulties?

Failure to innovate for business growth now will result in missed opportunities for the UK in the future, as businesses need to be ready to compete in global markets as new opportunities arise. We need to harness the UK’s innovative and entrepreneurial spirit by focusing on our strengths and by exploiting and commercialising opportunities generated by new and emerging technologies. One of our criteria when
working with businesses is looking at those sectors where we believe UK companies have the opportunity to become global leaders. We seek to build capability in areas that address key challenges and span both technologies and markets.

We treat the challenges facing society and the economy, such as climate change and an ageing population, as opportunities and support businesses to develop innovative and competitive solutions that address these challenges.

**What is the Technology Strategy Board doing in terms of supporting young entrepreneurs and new companies?**

We work with businesses of all sizes, including start-up and spin-out companies. All of our programmes are open to them, and some are designed specifically with micro businesses and SMEs in mind, including new companies. In addition to offering them funding opportunities, we support entrepreneurs and new companies in a number of ways – through meetings with our technologists, networking events, briefing events and via our Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and Knowledge Transfer Networks.

We are proud of our programme of SME and entrepreneur engagement which includes:

**Knowledge Transfer Partnerships**– where we work with businesses, academia and a recently qualified graduate to overcome a specific business problem or challenge

**Feasibility studies**: a single-company or collaborative grant scheme that allows businesses the opportunity to test an innovative idea

**Smart Awards** this single-company R&D grant scheme is open to applications at any time for pre start-ups, start-ups, micro businesses and SMEs

**Collaborative R&D**: open to applications from business-led consortia for innovative projects in specific technology areas or to meet particular challenges

**Launchpads**: to support the growth phase of existing clusters (a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions in a particular field). These clusters often provide advantages in speed and knowledge transfer which we encourage.

**Knowledge Transfer Networks** – our online community with more than 30,000 members to encourage new collaborations and partnerships

**Mission Visits** - held in conjunction with UK Trade & Investment – inviting some of the UK’s most innovative companies to meet potential investors and partners overseas

**SBRI** - enabling innovative private sector companies to access Government procurement opportunities by providing product and technology development contracts

In addition to this existing business support tool kit, we are also planning to launch a special package of measures targeted at small businesses later this year. We believe these will further increase access to funding and support.

What would you say are some of the main barriers to innovation in the UK today – and how are you trying to overcome them?

The major barriers are around investment and risk. For highly innovative SMEs, investment is often too little, too late because ultimately investors feel that the financial return will be too long. While innovative SMEs need support to become globally competitive, they also need to de-risk their technical and financial exposure. Companies can often be in danger of failing between the concept and commercialisation stages – sometimes referred to as the ‘valley of death’ - see www.investopedia.com/terms/d/death-valley-curve.asp#axzz1r4AyHTFX

The Technology Strategy Board aims to help companies through this critical stage by providing funding in the form of research and development grants, enabling them to take their ideas from incubation through to product development, getting them ready to be commercialised.

We are also focusing on market opportunities, application areas and technologies where we know that the UK has the capability to be globally competitive. It is this focus that underlines the launch of our Catapult Centres - an elite network of technology and innovation centres designed to create critical mass for business and research innovation. Our Catapults will focus on specific business areas where the UK has established expertise or where there is an opportunity for the UK to become a world leader. For more information about Catapults please see page 10.

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Aurora Medical developed the first ceramic-ceramic hip resurfacing system as part of a Knowledge Transfer Partnership – a key programme for businesses and universities managed by the Technology Strategy Board in the UK.

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"Following on from this idea of bringing interested parties together, we have launched our Catapult Centres where we are creating an elite network of technology and innovation centres."
HOW CATAPULTS WILL CONTRIBUTE TO INNOVATION IN THE UK

Since the announcement by the UK Government at the end of 2010 that it would invest more than £200m in a series of technology and innovation centres, the Technology Strategy Board has been working to co-ordinate the collaboration needed among the key stakeholders to deliver this important platform for taking innovation forward in the UK.

These officially named ‘Catapult Centres’ will provide an elite network with the aim of supporting business in areas that will be economically significant for the UK. They will create a critical mass for business and research innovation by focusing on a specific technology and will be an integral part of the UK’s innovation system, making a major long-term contribution to UK economic growth.

Catapults will allow businesses to access equipment and expertise that would otherwise be out of reach, as well as conducting their own in-house R&D. They will also help businesses access new funding streams and point them towards the potential of emerging technologies.

The areas confirmed for Catapults and a summary of their aims and objectives are:

**High Value Manufacturing** – already open for business, the HVM Catapult will support the UK manufacturing sector to innovate across a wide variety of industries including pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, food, healthcare, aerospace and automotive.

**Cell Therapy** – this Catapult will focus on the commercial development of the use of living cells as therapies, for applications such as regenerating tissues or replacing organs, as delivery mechanisms for repair factors, and to modulate the immune system to treat diseases such as cancer or infections.

**Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult** - using the vast knowledge gained from the UK’s experience in North Sea engineering to focus on commercial innovations in wind, tidal and wave technology. Initially the centre will focus on identifying ways of harnessing wind energy more cost effectively.

**Satellite Applications** – aiming to remove the barriers to innovation for companies looking to harness the power of satellite technology. Also aiming to shorten the time UK businesses will have to wait to achieve a first flight demonstration for new equipment and technologies in space.

**Connected Digital Economy** - this centre will help businesses that have yet to fully explore the opportunities of the digital market place, such as health, retail and education, by transferring knowledge and experience from industries such as the media and creative sectors who have already made the transition.

**Future Cities** – this Catapult will support UK businesses to create products and services to meet the needs of the world’s cities as they adapt to future demands. This includes a city’s health, energy, water, waste, ICT, buildings and transport.

**Transport Systems** - this will focus on efficient and sustainable ways to move people and goods (freight) across national transport systems including road, rail, sea and air. The underlying thinking is that integrated transport systems will ease congestion and prepare for a future with rising populations and growing volumes of goods shipped across the world.

The confirmed Catapults will complement and link with other programmes that the Technology Strategy Board already manages to promote collaboration between universities and business, and to drive innovation and find commercial opportunities for new technology and ideas. The Technology Strategy Board is confident that establishing these new critical mass centres will also serve to bring added structure and increased collaboration across a range of interested partners.

For further information about Catapult Centres visit: www.innovateuk.org/deliveringinnovation/catapults.ashx

The National Composites Centre in Bristol and the Advanced Forming Research Centre near Glasgow are two of the seven members of the UK’s High Value Manufacturing Catapult.
British entrepreneur Ed Bell from SME Crown Bio Technology Ltd and runner-up in last year’s EUREKA Innovation Award, talks to EUREKA about innovation, future opportunities and challenges - and proudly shares his company’s next developments.

How it all began

The seed for the project coming together was planted back in 2001, at a high-level conference organised by the British government in Copenhagen, Denmark, aimed at introducing British companies to potential overseas partners. Participants were intrigued by the innovation presented by Ed Bell’s team. With the backing of EUREKA’s UK office, Bell felt encouraged to work with some of these European partners. ‘It was also a case of having the right idea, at the right time,’ says Bell. The project was awarded one million pounds (1.2 million euro) in funding. ‘We got quite a large, one-off grant from EUREKA and had to raise 40% of the costs ourselves. The success of the project was totally down to EUREKA and the British government. They encouraged us to work with researchers from other EU countries,’ says Bell.

Over three and a half years, the company produced the first soil tester. ‘It’s a very clever system that we developed with a team of 36 people involved (at some stage) in this project,’ says Bell. ‘The team was so strong that, within a year, we were convinced that we could deliver a really innovative product.’

‘Business drivers are essential to a company, and from this point of view we have been very lucky. The real challenge, however, was to get the product out to the market and also to sell licences. Now the challenge is to carefully manage our growth via the careful appointment of distributors globally.’

Within two years of the project starting, the company doubled its turnover. But it was not all plain sailing: ‘Trying to find a licensee was extremely difficult wherever we went, even in Japan,’ says Bell. All the same, by the end of 2007, Crown Bio did an over one hundred thousand pound business in the UK. ‘This is partly thanks to one of our biggest clients, EDF Energy, a UK electrical distribution company which was one of the initial EUREKA project beta-testers.’

EUREKA also helped link the company with an important EU verification programme. In 2009, the device was among the first to be approved under the new EU Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) programme, at the Swedish Environmental Research Institute.

The next steps

Confronting the economic slow-down, rather than succumbing to it, Bell’s company has been busy travelling overseas with a series of visits to Canada, focusing on the SST technology to address the problem of oil contamination and site toxicity testing. ‘We have already been doing some product testing in Canada and we are hopeful that agreements to access the Canadian market will soon be finalised. There are also plans to get the SST verified in Canada by Alberta Innovates,’ says Bell. Crown Bio is currently developing other bio-detectors with partners from Europe, Canada/ USA, Brazil and the ex-USSR countries.

The company has also signed a commercial collaboration agreement with the UK Government Health Protection Agency (HPA) to develop biological biosensors that could pick up highly dangerous pathogens, such as anthrax, plague and botulism. Crown Bio Technology plans to continue investing in research and is not about to stop at testing soil for carcinogens. The technology it developed under the EUREKA SS TESTER project could be developed to detect other pollutants such as heavy metals, pesticides and disease pathogens.

Read more on the project at www.eurekanetwork.org
A priority of the Hungarian EUREKA Chairmanship is to explore the regional dimension of EUREKA. In times of austerity, alternative sources of funding need to be investigated more than ever. Regional funds, particularly the EU Cohesion Policy instruments, are a major source of financing that can complement other schemes.

These instruments represent one-third of the total European Commission budget and, of that, 25% is dedicated to research, development and innovation activities. Last October, the European Commission put forward a new Cohesion Policy proposal to the Council and the Parliament for the 2014-2020 period.

A EUREKA Academy Conference on “EUREKA and the regional dimension of innovation” was held on 18 January in Brussels under the auspices of the EUREKA Hungarian Chairmanship. The event gathered more than 100 participants.

Presentations given by no less than 14 speakers focused on:
- Raising awareness of EU and non-EU regional funding opportunities;
- Learning from practitioners in the field, including those already exploiting regional funds;
- Developing practical conclusions that might contribute to a EUREKA position on the regional dimension of innovation.

They proved to be very tutorial, reflecting the views of a range of experts from the European Commission, Ministries, Regional Agencies, Structural Funds Managing Authorities, Associations, regional R&D practitioners. Opportunities that can be offered by the structural funds were explained. New perspectives were also pointed out, as a result of the new cohesion policy legislative package proposal shaping the future 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy, just put forward by the Commission to the European Parliament and Council in October 2011. The event highlighted the huge potential of the structural funds as a source of funding for EUREKA.

EUREKA has a long and well-established field experience. Its wide network can easily outreach locally innovative actors. As research and innovation are most effectively addressed at the regional level, EUREKA clearly appears as one of the natural partners not only for the design of the Cohesion Policy but also for its implementation.

The discussions on the new legislative proposal have started. Years 2012 and 2013 allow enough time for EUREKA to be a partner in these discussions and prepare itself for best shaping the future operational programmes which will be designed by Member States relevant national and regional authorities under period 2013-2014.

In summary, this conference was a first step paving the way for EUREKA:
- to become an active partner for the design and implementation of the innovation components of the future Cohesion policy (2014-2020).
- to take stock of experience and best practice and explore possible future options for funding EUREKA projects.
Realising the smart connected world

On 22-23 February 2012, the EUREKA Cluster for telecommunications, CELTiC+, held its annual event in Stockholm, Sweden. Under the theme “Realising the smart connected world”, the event informed participants of the successful results of CELTiC+ projects and discussed new concepts to intensify research towards a Smart Connected World. Experts and decision-makers who attended the conferences debated on the new challenges for the telecommunications world and the competitiveness of Europe’s telecommunications industry. A project exhibition showcased the Cluster’s achievements and discussed their results with interested experts. At the EUREKA stand, attendants also had the opportunity to be informed of the latest innovation activities.

In his presentation, EUREKA Chairman Sándor Erdő highlighted the key role that Clusters, through their industrial participation, play in bringing innovation to the market, while addressing the grand challenges and generating growth and jobs.

“As research and innovation are most effectively addressed at the regional level, EUREKA and its solutions clearly appear as one of the natural partners not only for the design of the Cohesion Policy, but also for its implementation. With telecommunications being a key sector in the region, CELTiC+, with its great experience and number of R&D companies involved, could bring a lot of added value in the debate,” said the Chairman.

EUROGIA+ gives boost to marine renewables

The EUREKA Cluster for energy EUROGIA+ organised a marine renewable information day in March, at the premises of GdF Suez, Paris. Over 100 people attended the event and four interesting project ideas were showcased throughout the brokerage session. The event highlighted the importance of international collaboration in marine renewables sector and identified the main challenges the ocean energy is facing as the lack of international guidelines and the standards and the R&D aiming at cost reduction.

‘By 2020, offshore wind energy will meet 4.2% of the total EU electricity demand. The EU is a leader in the offshore wind energy market with 4,000 MW already installed capacity; however, it should prepare stable post-2020 legislative frameworks to let energy companies optimally allocate their investments.’ said Anne Benedicte Genachte, Regulatory Affairs advisor at EWEA.

EUROGIA+ Chairman and the director of wind and marine renewables at Acciona, Raul Manzanas explained the importance of using both international and national funding mechanisms to bolster marine renewable energies.

More information at www.eurogia.com

Next CELTiC+ Proposers’ Day: 3 July 2012, Berlin

The next CELTiC Proposers’ Day will be held on 3 July 2012 at Hotel Estrel in Berlin in collocation with the Future Network and Mobile Summit (FuNeMS). The Proposers’ Day provides an important platform to present and discuss new project ideas targeted for submission to the CELTiC autumn call (15 October 2012). More information at www.celticplus.eu
VIEWPOINT
Teresa Riera Madurell MEP

In an exclusive interview with EUREKA News, Teresa Riera Madurell MEP rapporteur on the Horizon 2020 Establishing Regulation outlines the challenges of the new framework programme for research and innovation and welcomes the continuation of the Eurostars Programme to strengthen bottom-up projects in Europe.

Higher participation of SMEs

“The integration of the whole chain of innovation, i.e. from fundamental research to the market, in one single programme for the first time, is something definitively positive for SMEs. But, certainly, mechanisms for the participation of SMEs should be further encouraged and reinforced in the new Framework Programme Horizon 2020.

We have to think about increasing the participation of SMEs in R&D projects by allowing for sufficient smaller and less prescriptive projects and for more flexibility in project management; by simplifying the administrative regime - something that should also be discussed in the Rules for Participation - and also by organising the appropriate innovation support at local level. On this last point, more synergies with the Cohesion Policy should be established.

The new instrument proposed by the Commission to increase the level of innovation in SMEs covering their different innovation needs is welcomed but its implementation will need further clarification.

In order to be successful, it is very important to support innovative and advanced training programmes, which are coherent with the highly competitive and interdisciplinary needs of research and innovation, as well as to promote mobility among universities, research centers and the business sector to learn how to develop new skills, technology transfer and cooperation between research centers and industry. Extending the Marie Curie actions is also important to address this issue. That is one more reason why we believe that more budget allocations are needed for these specific actions.

If we manage this, the new Horizon 2020 will be more SME-friendly than the previous framework programme. Well, this is our challenge.

“Eurostars fits even better in the new framework programme”

Before being an MEP, I had been a member of the Spanish Parliament and as such I attended the EUREKA Inter-parliamentary Conferences. I have followed for many years the successful results of the EUREKA bottom-up projects that clearly played a complementary role in relation to the projects financed by the Framework Programme. This is why in 2008 I welcomed the launch of the Eurostars Programme created on the basis of EUREKA’s experience and backed by both national funding and the European Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). Since then, the programme has yielded satisfactory results on promoting market-oriented innovation for R&D-performing SMEs and has also had an adequate geographical distribution. That is why I think we have to continue to support the Eurostars Programme in Horizon 2020.

As Eurostars projects are market-driven, I dare to say that they fit even better in the new Framework Programme in which innovation and market orientation have been strengthened and where, I am convinced, there should be more room for bottom-up projects.

Synergies with the cohesion funds

Given the current economic context, it is more important than ever to establish synergies and complementarities between Horizon 2020 and other EU programmes, especially those related to the Cohesion Policy.

Cohesion Funds, with the new regulations proposed, should play an important role on building capacities for SMEs to participate in Horizon 2020 projects and also on disseminating and introducing the results coming from Horizon 2020 projects into the market by enhancing the technology transfer capabilities and an innovation-friendly environment for SMEs.

The best way to approach these issues is by enhancing the cooperation between both Cohesion Funds and Horizon 2020 managing authorities by elaborating a joint strategic plan.”
The EUREKA Innovation Award, introduced by the Portuguese Chairmanship of EUREKA in 2009, focuses this year on outstanding projects in the area of food technologies. With this award, EUREKA gives recognition to a project on the basis of its outstanding technological and commercial achievement and societal impact. It aims to ensure long-lasting visibility for the project’s achievements and its participants and gives a clear and strong message on the critical role EUREKA has to play in maintaining Europe’s competitive edge and technological advantage in the global market.

The EUREKA Innovation Award is exploited by each Chairmanship in a different way, focusing on one or more of its priorities for the Chairmanship year. During the Ministerial Conference it hosts in Budapest in June this year, the Hungarian EUREKA Chairmanship will award this prestigious prize to a project that has shown excellence in the Hungarian priority area of biofood.

The three finalists, selected by an international jury of independent experts from a number of nominations, are:

**EUROAGRI+ OLEA**
EI 3566 - EUROAGRI+ OLEA

To yield optimal quality extra virgin olive oil through innovative processing and the development of a prototype malaxing machine for technological oil mills. The malaxing procedure is critical for both oil yield and quality, helping to produce a superior product for food use.

**BLACKSPOT**
EI 3805 - BLACKSPOT

Blackspot seabream is a prized fish on many Spanish tables but it grows slowly at sea, is heavily overfished and is difficult to farm. A Galician company teamed up with a local partner and Norwegian nutritionists to develop a method in this project.

**HP READY MEAL**
EI 4491 - HP READY MEAL

Development of a new range of prepared plates based on grilled meats (veal, pork, chicken) together with a sauce and/or vegetables, of cold canal conservation, based on high pressure technologies.
The growing level of resources and political commitments to RTD lies in the value of the contribution that public and private research makes to Europe’s economic, social and environmental goals.

EUREKA has followed this approach, and all its strategic initiatives have been focused on areas of ‘grand challenges’. Nowadays, when this is even more at the heart of European innovation strategy, EUREKA increasingly contributes to addressing challenges Europe is facing today by using and adapting its own instruments.

Following the approach of the previous EUREKA chairs, the Hungarian chair will put the collaborations with the European Technology Platforms into the focus for addressing grand challenges and generating new projects.

Objectives of this activities:
- Retain the pro-active approach of EUREKA;
- Focus on technological areas of ‘grand challenges’ related to food in multidisciplinary areas;
- Methodological development of project generation;
- Keep the EUREKA Clusters and Umbrellas in the forefront.

In November and January EUREKA hosted two major conferences aiming at fostering interdisciplinary research projects in the food sector. A survey has also been undertaken to evaluate the R&D funding capabilities of EUREKA member countries available for this industry.

The final conference “Food of future - future of food” was held on 2-3 April 2012 in Budapest.

The programme of the conference focused on the policy aspects of the grand challenges related to the food sector through an Industry panel and a Business promotion and financial panel.

Korea EUREKA Day proved to be a success for European & Korean entrepreneurs

Over 200 participants representing national governments, funding agencies, industry and academia attended the Korea EUREKA Day event, which took place in Brussels this year. The event was organised by the Korean Ministry of Knowledge Economy (MKE) and the EUREKA Hungarian Chairmanship.

Under the theme of ‘Bringing Korean and European Innovation Together’, the conference held on 21 March aimed to provide a platform where technology and innovation experts from Europe and Korea can share project concepts for the generation of new proposals and establish new connections. Ministerial representatives from Korea and European countries, the European Commission, members of the EUREKA Network discussed on how to further the Korean-European cooperation. Furthermore, the match-making sessions provided the opportunity for companies to identify potential partners.

As a side event to the Korea EUREKA Day 2012, a training on EUREKA programmes was given to a delegation of 50 entrepreneurs from South Korea. The training, entitled “How to present a successful project proposal”, included presentations by representatives of national funding agencies and the European Commission part of the EUREKA Network and other EUREKA staff and project participants. EUREKA’s partner in the event, the European Patent Office, also offered insights into the functioning of the Intellectual Property Rights system in Europe.

Some of the participants had the opportunity to develop business contacts during the training, which will lead to new international EUREKA projects in the future. So far, 25 collaborative EUREKA projects between European and Korean innovators have been completed.