



November 2005

Euro Info Centres:

Examples of activities in the field of energy

The Network

The Euro Info Centres (EICs) have been created by the European Commission to support Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

The EIC network, which was established in 1987, is active in 46 countries. These include the candidate countries, the EU's most remote regions, the European Economic Area and the Mediterranean basin. Today the network comprises 270 centres.

In addition, the EIC network has 26 Associate Members, 14 Euro Info Correspondence Centres (EICCcs) and 337 relay points which significantly extend its geographical coverage. EICs are hosted by regional or national business support organisations.

EICs have a fourfold mission:

- To **inform** enterprises on Community matters
- To **advise** SMEs on the application of Community legislation, regulations etc.
- To **assist** SMEs in positioning themselves in the European market
- To provide **feedback** to the European Commission about Community matters affecting SMEs.

Over the years, the EICs have acquired considerable expertise and a solid reputation in the field of EU affairs.

A culture of quality and professionalism is continuously promoted throughout the network. This includes formal audit procedures.

The EIC-services in the field of Energy

One of the main tasks of EICs is to help SMEs keep abreast of European issues. Most EICs produce newsletters and websites and some run information watch services, enabling clients to be informed about new developments in their specific areas of interest. Many services, such as the monitoring of EU calls for proposals, cover a range of topics including the environment. Among the main activities carried out by EICs are the promotion of energy issues.

EICs also carry out the following activities:

- Identification of EU regulations on the subject, tracking of norms and verification of national legislation in force
- Information on EU activities and support programmes in the field of energy efficiency, new and renewable energies.
- Promotion and Awareness raising among SMEs of energy efficiency issues
- Publication of documents and detailed guidelines

A further important activity of the EICs is dealing with SMEs' daily questions. They are regularly confronted with complex issues to resolve.

EICs committed to the promotion of eco-design towards SMEs

In April 2005 DG Enterprise & Industry launched an "Awareness-Raising Campaign for SMEs in Electrical & Electronic Industry".

The Council and European Parliament together adopted a Commission proposal for a Directive on establishing a framework for setting eco-design requirements (such as energy efficiency requirements) for all energy-using products in the residential, tertiary and industrial sectors.

Organized in this framework, the Awareness-raising campaign is being co-ordinated by the Fraunhofer IZM Institute in Berlin, Germany. 28 workshops are being offered by the Fraunhofer Institute and partners on behalf of the European Commission.

These events are taking place in 20 countries all over Europe.

Among the numerous workshop organized during the campaign, 3 were held by the EICs of Sofia (Bulgaria), Thessaloniki (Greece) and Bucharest (Romania).

As an example, the workshop organized in Bucharest on 16 September counted with 57 participants among which 32 were SMEs.

Furthermore, at the time of the Spring International Plovdiv Fair (Bulgaria) a seminar on Eco Design in Plovdiv with local lectures was held. 30 SMEs had the benefit to discuss and learn new approaches in the topic of Eco Design.

The workshops organized by the EICs have given very

good results.

More information?

The central Eco-Design Project website:

<http://www.ecodesignarc.info/servlet/is/154/>

Or contact the EICs:

EIC Sofia:
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IEE: EICs organised information Days

EICs organise national Information Days on Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE).

The EICs of Odense (DK052) and Ravenna (IT369) are involved in the organisation of two national information days.

These information days are organised in the framework of the current IEE call for proposals 2005.

The EIC Ravenna organised a national information day, the 17 October. The EIC of

Odense will organise an information day the 29th November (place to be confirmed).

For more information on these National Information Days organised by EICs (together with the complete list of other Info Days), please consult the IEE page on DG Transport and Energy Website at:

http://www.europa.eu.int/com/m/energy/intelligent/events/info_days_en.htm

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EIC Odense campaign associate of "Sustainable Energy Europe 2005-2008"!

This summer, EIC DK052 Odense together with its host Fyn Enterprise & Business Development Centre and the regional department of the Danish Engineers' Association, started discussing the possibility of playing a central role in identifying regional competencies with regard to new renewable energy sources and energy-efficient methods.

Focusing on identifying business development possibilities, job creation and educational aspects - and under the working title "Fyn's engagement in future energy production, supply and consumption" - the organisations started defining these competencies and drawing up the first draft document to be distributed amongst the relevant contacts in the area of regional energy. This was done firstly to hear about these contacts' interest in

creating a regional energy cluster or network and secondly, to offer the organisations' assistance in setting up



a secretariat for this purpose.

EIC DK052 Odense therefore applied to become an SEE Campaign Associate only a few weeks after Mr. Pedro Ballesteros Torres, DG TREN, European Commission, invited the EIC network to do so during a workshop at the EIC Conference in Malta in October 2005. EIC DK052 Odense was accepted as associate a few days after and sees this association with

the Commission as a good opportunity to start getting in touch with relevant regional energy players.

"I'm sure that providing information about EU energy policies and objectives, relevant financing facilities and promoting SEE partnerships in a structured way can contribute to an important part of our objectives, i.e. assistance to enterprising SMEs' development and internationalization within the sector", says Mr. Anders Skeem, Information Officer.

Contact

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E I C M o n s (Belgium) organizes a seminar on renewable energies

The seminar "renewable energies: a promising sector" will take place in Mons the 17th November 2005 at 13.30.

The event will insist on the fact that many of the economic or environmental problems faced by the Hainaut region (where EIC Mons is located) could be solved by the development of renewable energies.

The organizers invite all the participants to contribute to this effort by committing themselves in a clustering process.

The organizers invited a representative of DG TREN (Transport and Energy) who will present a state of play of the activities of the European Commission in the field of renewable energies.

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Or visit <http://eic.cec.eu.int> for more information on the EIC network