

ETI – EASIER



Increase the research activity and strengthen the competitiveness of SMEs within ICT sector in Europe through participation in European research networks and research programmes



SUPER-SME Study visit
Thessaloniki 24th of April 2007

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Key facts



- ETI (call2)/ FP6 - INNOV5, SSA
- Start: 1 October 2005
- Duration: 30 months
- Coordinator: Agder ICT Centre / Sørlandets Teknologisenter (NOR)



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Project Partners

- AF (NOR)
- RR&CO (SLO)
- SEPVE (GR)
- COTEC (POR)
- VIP (CZ)
- FIB (SP)
- FEV (CY)
- NHRF (GR)
- AAK (DEN)
- TUBITAK (TU)
- TAGES (TU)
- TBV (TU)
- PAED (POL)
- CUE (UK)
- MZES (CRO)



Objectives 1/2

- To engage SMEs within ICT through regional networks (primary existing ones, secondary by creating new networks). In this way the EASIER project will also have impact beyond it's own duration and potentially beyond the immediate reach of the consortium partners.
- To produce a database of potential ICT SME candidates for involvement in European research projects.
- To assess, develop and describe methods (tools) for engaging the SMEs through these regional networks. These tools could be any method valuable for the engaging process like organisational models for regional, and trans- regional, RTD cooperation through networks, to provide model strategies for motivating SMEs, to provide methods, e.g. check lists, for mobilising (preparing) the SMEs for participation in EU research, etc



Objectives 2/2

- To provide new methods that are tested in two pilot regions: the Minho region in northern Portugal, and in the West Midlands in the UK.
- To identify opportunities for involvement of ICT SMEs in within FP6 and FP7, as well as the National R&D funding programmes of the partners' countries and other non-FP R&D funding opportunities such as EUREKA/Celtic
- To exploit the identified opportunities by coupling them with the SMEs in the project database, and by assisting the SMEs through the process from idea to engagement in European RTD activities.



Aims 1/2

- to enrich the successful projects of the current FP6 and the future FP7 with the participation of SMEs
- to support the successful participation of SMEs in the ICT sector proposals / projects in the last Call of Proposals under FP6 and mainly in the relevant first Call of proposals under FP7. The training sessions which will take place within the framework of the workshops (WP6) will focus on the preparation of proposals, the rules, and the submission and evaluation procedure within the framework of current FP6 and mainly of the forthcoming FP7
- to support networking and find partners through exchange of project ideas and "physical meetings" through the brokerage events which will take place according to the WP7
- to introduce the SMEs to the EU researchers teams, private and public organisations and research institutes, and



Aims 2/2

- to improve and encourage the collaboration between SMEs and researchers, key players and stakeholders of innovative organisations from across Europe in the field of ICT in the current FP6 but also in the forthcoming 7th Framework Programme
- to focus on two specific regional experiences (pilot regions), contributing to a focused-oriented approach, linking: innovation, competitiveness and regional development. Enhancing the development of more effective and value-adding tools and methodologies.
- to support the SMEs of the ICT sector in specific geographic areas. In the EASIER project some of the regions have been characterized as LFR (Less Favoured Regions: such as Epirus/Greece).



Activities

The project's wide and varied dissemination activities including the six-monthly e-newsletter as well as the great number of regional and international events (at least 50 regional events and the 2 international brokerage events) will enhance the reach and impact of the project's activities by disseminating project results, informing stakeholders (whether they be SMEs, associations, local / regional / national authorities, academic / research institutions, large companies etc.) about the possibilities offered through EU RTD programmes and the support opportunities offered through both this specific project (EASIER) and through the network of other ETI actions. Access to the project results and the consortium's support will be easily identifiable and visible through a number of channels (printed material, e-newsletter, project web-site, dissemination and other project events) so as to ensure that any party that desires or needs support from EASIER will both know that EASIER exists and how to contact the local EASIER partner for support.



Benefits

It is envisaged that the successful implementation of the proposed EASIER project will impact the European research area in the following ways:

- By capitalising on the results of the mapping activities regarding SMEs, their achievements and skills and ICT fields of interest and so be in a position to develop their collaboration and synergies between them, as well as, with the researchers, and key players of private/industrial and public domain.
- It is envisaged that the European Investment Bank as well as key players and stakeholders from the EU's industrial sector will be invited in the brokerage events and in few workshops in order to "cultivate" the ground for further collaboration with SMEs and furthermore to support by the relevant finance, in addition to the finance offered by the European Commission through ICT in Framework Programmes (FP6 and the forthcoming FP7) large-scale and ambitious projects which could be realised with the collaboration of SMEs.