



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. The EUREKA Initiative enables industry, universities and research institutes from 37 member countries and the EU to collaborate in a 'bottom-up' approach to developing and exploiting innovative technologies.

EUREKA News is published four times a year in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish. An online version is available on www.eureka.be

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Printed by Vanden Broele

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Photography: with thanks to EUREKA project and Cluster participants for any assistance and material provided in the production of this issue.

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Small but influential

German-born British economist E.F. Schumacher coined the phrase 'small is beautiful' with a series of influential books in the aftermath of the 1973 oil crisis. A key element of his argument was that our natural resources are finite and not renewable. Energy, climate change and sustainability are now even greater forces in the global economy as the whole world is waking up to the need to change attitudes and take positive steps to rectify the situation.

EUREKA is helping drive the changes needed with a bigger emphasis on green technologies close to the market – as reflected in this issue of EUREKA News – and by focusing increasingly on the small. The latter is highlighted by the endorsement of the new Cluster for Application and Technology Research in Europe on NanoElectronics (CATRENE) that takes over from the MEDEA+ microelectronics Cluster at the beginning of 2008.

CATRENE will build on the success of MEDEA+ and the previous EUREKA Cluster programmes JESSI and MEDEA in fostering the continued development of a dynamic European ecosystem able to compete at a global level. Like MEDEA+, it embraces all key actors in the value chain as well as involving industrial companies of all sizes, universities and other research institutions, supported by the public authorities. Recognising the increasing convergence of technology and applications, CATRENE will focus on the very small technologies required for large identified application markets.

In fact change is a consistent theme of EUREKA activities, with regular expansion in membership – our latest national information point is in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), no limitations in the type of technology supported and ever greater assistance to small and medium-sized companies (SMEs). We have high hopes for the success of the recently launched Eurostars Programme, which for the first time enables EUREKA to fund research directly in high-technology SMEs.

All this is being driven by a particularly close relationship between the EUREKA Secretariat in Brussels and the current EUREKA Chair held by Slovenia – a new, small and highly ambitious country with few natural resources apart from its people. Slovenia is also holding the EU presidency for the first half of 2008. And we welcome the appointment of Mojca Kucler Dolinar as the Slovenian Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology. Her ministry is responsible for the Slovenian EUREKA Chair and I was delighted to recently learn that she will introduce the next edition of EUREKA News.

Despite more than 20 years of existence, the EUREKA name has tended to be hidden behind the success of our labelled projects. We are intending to change this by moving closer to our target audiences and communicating much more directly about the everyday benefits of our projects and the need for technical entrepreneurship to the citizens of our member countries.

For example, Portugal – the next EUREKA Chair – is keen to promote entrepreneurship in schools. The intention is to communicate the importance of enterprise to school-children and the role of technology in building business. A similar approach is being taken in the UK.

As our emphasis is on building business through technology, we are participating actively in the European Business Summit (EBS) in Brussels on 21 and 22 February 2008. The theme of this sixth edition is particularly relevant: 'Greening the Economy: new Energy for Business'. The event will focus on how Europe can turn the 'carbon challenge' into a business opportunity, giving new energy to growth and jobs.

In our recent position statement on the European Commission Green Paper on the new perspectives for the European Research Area (ERA), we also re-emphasised EUREKA's role as a key driver of ERA, especially in those technological fields where greater intergovernmental coordination and cooperation is needed. We look forward to more exchanges of ideas on those specific issues of the Green Paper that require special attention and warrant our direct involvement – especially the stronger role needed for business.

Moreover, EUREKA is not limited to ERA alone. We see an increasing need to widen our discussions and activities. Our Slovenian Chair is committed to further expansion and entrepreneurship drives in the new economies of eastern Europe. And we believe strongly that EUREKA should be seeking opportunities even further afield – we should not limit ourselves to Europe. We should go wherever new technologies take us.



Luuk Borg



Luuk Borg
Head of the EUREKA Secretariat

In EUREKA's position statement on the Commission Green Paper, we re-emphasised our role as a key driver of the ERA, where greater intergovernmental coordination and cooperation is needed.