



Capacity Building for Local Partnerships – a threefold approach

Foreword from the Co-ordinator of the OECD LEED Trento Centre for Local Development

In recent years, the number of local partnerships in OECD member and non-member countries has increased. Local partnerships contribute to improving governance and helping to strengthen participatory approaches to the design and implementation of local development strategies. Increased transparency and consultation in relation to policy design and implementation, together with the modernisation of public administration, are supportive factors in the integration of local development resources and activities from the government, the business community and civil society.

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Local partnerships find themselves with a steadily growing number of tasks. To accomplish such tasks effectively, a number of different contextual factors are important: a supportive local community and enabling institutional framework, dedicated partners aware of the costs and benefits of partnership working; and an effective core partnership structure.

Hence, building capacities for local partnerships requires a threefold approach. Establishing a supportive institutional framework requires building the capacity of local government representatives to participate in and coordinate partnership activities, and raising awareness amongst such representatives as to the importance of both decentralisation and strong local participative governance. Secondly, training and support is needed for wider participants in partnerships (for example representatives from civil society and the private sector) to build their capacity to contribute effectively to partnership working and make their voices heard. Thirdly, strengthening communication structures amongst partners will help to settle conflicts of interest and contribute to maintaining effective management and operational structures within partnerships. Although differences exist between these three different approaches, effective partnerships will only be built when they are taken forward in synergy.

Within the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance, we commit to following this threefold approach. The Forum is a communication platform where both policy-makers and practitioners can engage in a dialogue on policy approaches and practical aspects of partnership building. Through the Forum's mentorship system, we offer emerging partnerships the opportunity to be assisted in their development by well-established partnerships who act as mentors. Furthermore, within the context of the initiatives undertaken by the OECD LEED Trento Centre for Local Development, we foster a capacity building process in Central, East and South-East Europe, supporting newly established partnerships and government initiatives that envisage partnership as a key tool for both coordination and implementation.

"Capacity Building for Local Partnerships" will be one of the themes for discussion during the International Partnership Fair from 13-15 February 2006 in Vienna, Austria. In addition, this unique event will offer more than 200 expected visitors a wide range of opportunities to "learn from each other" and to "learn together" on local partnerships and their capacities for local development.



Peter Tatarko
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Learning Practices for Knowledge Exchange



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Forum partnerships increasingly use a variety of management tools. This article features examples of knowledge exchange, outlines effective methods and tools, and identifies ways of building interest and capacity amongst partners to participate in learning through the exchange of knowledge.

>> **Learning is a permanent condition** The most valuable asset in our knowledge based society is human and social capital. Knowledge and creativity are the key factors. Generally, our “intellectual foundation” expands through either accumulating our own experiences or through sharing and learning from the knowledge of others. Both methods improve knowledge, skills and competence and are therefore defined as “learning”. Learning is a necessary, permanent condition for the progress of individuals, organisations and institutions, such as partnerships.

To improve their performance, partnerships increasingly use a variety of management tools, such as, for instance, the European Commission’s Logframe tool and the Balanced Score Card. This is especially important as many partnerships are based on agreements between partners who do not necessarily have the same intentions, approaches or goals. The work of partnerships therefore involves the constant balancing of interests, and partnerships can sometimes become one-sided. This can limit the achievement of joint targets, effect results and - ultimately - lead to questions about legitimacy. In order to improve their ways of working, partnerships have to learn by carefully analysing and understanding their own situation and also looking externally, at the approaches and solutions adopted by other partnerships.

‘Looking across someone’s shoulder’ can be a helpful exercise for partnerships, allowing them to learn from the successes of others and avoid costly failures. Forum partnerships use several learning techniques to exchange knowledge, and to benefit from practices already developed and applied in other regions and nations. are an important mechanism for reflecting on performance.

A method used is **Peer Review**. The Peer Review Quality Statement tool which has been used in the United Kingdom (and outlined below), illustrates the potential of this instrument. While many learning exchanges focus on ‘best practice’, the **Open Reflection Cycle** process (applied by the Austrian Territorial Pacts and outlined below) involves the exchange and analysis of ‘worst practice’, as a means of helping partnerships to avoid similar mistakes in the future. Examples are also included below of other types of international knowledge exchange, including **Mentoring** (by the Irish OAK Partnership and NEP Partnership in Kosovo) and **Partnerships Study Visits** (between Flemish and Austrian regions).

- _ Peer Review
- _ Open Reflection Cycle
- _ Mentoring
- _ Study Visit

If you need additional information beyond the following articles, please contact us (office@forum.zsi.at). We are pleased to provide the corresponding contacts. Thank you.<<

Peer Review Quality Statements



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Partnership self-assessment tool The 'Peer Review Quality Statements' were developed for the Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) in United Kingdom. At the core of this efficient self-assessment tool are quality indicators on what makes a good partnership.

>> **Moving partnerships forward** The Local Strategic Partnerships Research Group at the Warwick University Local Authorities Research Consortium developed quality indicators, which are used to conduct peer reviews. The peer review tool is based on the principles of action research and was established to help partnerships undertake self-assessment, together with peers, in a constructive, mutually supportive environment.

Assess strengths
and weaknesses of
partnerships

The peer reviews were conducted by teams of people drawn from a number of LSPs in United Kingdom. Each peer review lasted one day. The process works by bringing LSP members, such as local authority members and officers, public, private voluntary and community sector stakeholders together in a panel, which visit a particular partnership in order to explore how they are performing. In other words, people from a number of partnerships are looking at a particular partnership as "critical friends". They use the quality statements as a guide to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership. The process is not only valuable for the partnership which is being reviewed but is an excellent learning opportunity for those on the review team as they are able to compare practice with their own partnership. The process can also develop some excellent informal networks between partnerships.

The quality statements are clear indications of characteristics of a well functioning, high impact partnership. They are the sorts of evidence needed to demonstrate that the characteristics are in place. All quality statements reflect an ideal case, as shown in the example of the quality statement "Leadership" below:

Example of Quality statement for 'Leadership'

(Source: Warwick University Local Authorities Research Consortium, January 2003)

The Local Strategic Partnership is well led and well supported. It has a culture of performance and improvement and conflict is well managed.

- The leadership style actively encourages and values collaboration and participation between all partners.
- Representatives from partner organisations are able to speak for their organisations at LSP meetings.
- Decisions are made openly and communicated clearly across the Partnership and to the wider community.

The Coventry Partnership invited a team of reviewers to "inspect" its partnership arrangements in March 2004 as part of its annual self assessment programme. The visiting team was able to speak to about 15 people from the Partnership individually and in pairs and asked for their views on progress along with evidence as to how the Partnership "measured up" to the Quality Statements. After concluding the peer review the Coventry Partnership was given a report identifying its strengths and areas that need improvement as seen by the review team. David Galliers, Coventry Partnership Development Manager says, "My colleagues and I found the process very helpful in moving our partnership forward. It helped us to pinpoint practical areas for improvements as well as those items which are working well. Both, those that visited us and

those that we sent to review other partnerships felt that they learned a lot about other peoples' practice, which they took home to their own partnership."



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As already stated above, the quality statements are grouped in characteristics, which are: "strategic", "inclusive", "action-focused", "performance managed", "efficient" and "learning and development". They are further divided into sub-themes with their corresponding quality statements (see overview below).

Overview of 'Peer Review Quality Statements'

(Source: Warwick University Local Authorities Research Consortium, January 2003; adapted by the Forum Office)

STRATEGIC	Planning	<i>The partnership has a clear vision that is shared and communicated</i>
	Innovation	<i>The partnership has a positive impact on the way that services are delivered</i>
	Leadership	<i>The partnership is well led and well supported. It has a culture of performance and improvement and conflict is well managed</i>
	Accountability	<i>The partnership organises itself in a systematic and accountable way</i>
INCLUSIVE	Community/Elected Member Role	<i>All sections of the local community have opportunities to be involved in decision-making and partnership activities</i>
	Black and minority ethnic groups / Minorities	<i>There is evidence of direct involvement of under-represented groups, particularly Black and minority ethnic communities and young people in strategy and service development</i>
	Processes	<i>The partnership's processes are efficient, transparent and inclusive</i>
ACTION-FOCUSED	Mainstreaming	<i>Local service providers are committed to changing service delivery as a result of their participation in the partnership activities</i>
	Plausibility	<i>There is a clear link between partnership activities and what it wants to achieve</i>
PERFORMANCE MANAGED	Systems	<i>The partnership has robust systems in place to manage performance</i>
	Added value	<i>The partnership is making a difference to residents and businesses in the area</i>
EFFICIENT	Cross-cutting	<i>The partnership is making the best use of its collective resources and knowledge of what works to prioritise and tackle cross-cutting issues and problems that cannot be solved by one agency alone</i>
	Evidence-based	<i>The partnership's priorities and strategies are supported by accurate information, in-depth analysis of local problems and evidence of what works</i>
	Pooled budgets and resources	<i>There are examples of joint funding and pooling resources by mainstream partners in order to meet shared priorities and add value</i>
	Rationalisation of plans/partnerships	<i>The partnership is working to streamline partnerships</i>
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT	Developing skills and knowledge	<i>The partnership is aware of the skills and knowledge needed to deliver its strategies</i>
	Improvement Planning	<i>The partnership has an improvement plan in place</i>

Up until spring 2005, five peer reviews involving the Warwick Consortium - a partnership between the Warwick Business School and around 20 local authorities of United Kingdom - have been undertaken in piloting the methodology. A research report comparing, contrasting and drawing common lessons from the peer reviews has been produced. To make the process accessible to all LSPs, a partnership is being formed to market and manage peer review widely (to be known as "LSP Peer Challenge"). The partnership, IDeA, describes the tool as follows: "This constructive and mutually supportive process helps LSPs look at how they are performing, at their strengths and areas for improvement". <<

Sources: <http://www.warwick.ac.uk>, <http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk>, <http://www.wbs.ac.uk/>
Coventry Partnership, Notes of Self Assessment Workshop 23.03.04
Warwick University Local Authorities Research Consortium, Local Strategic Partnerships Research Group, Annual Report for Consortium AGM, 20 January 2003
Davies, Jonathan S and Rust, Maggie, Warwick University Local Authorities Research Consortium, Report of Peer Review Visit on Coventry LSP on 9 March 2004



Open Reflection Cycle – A worst practice workshop

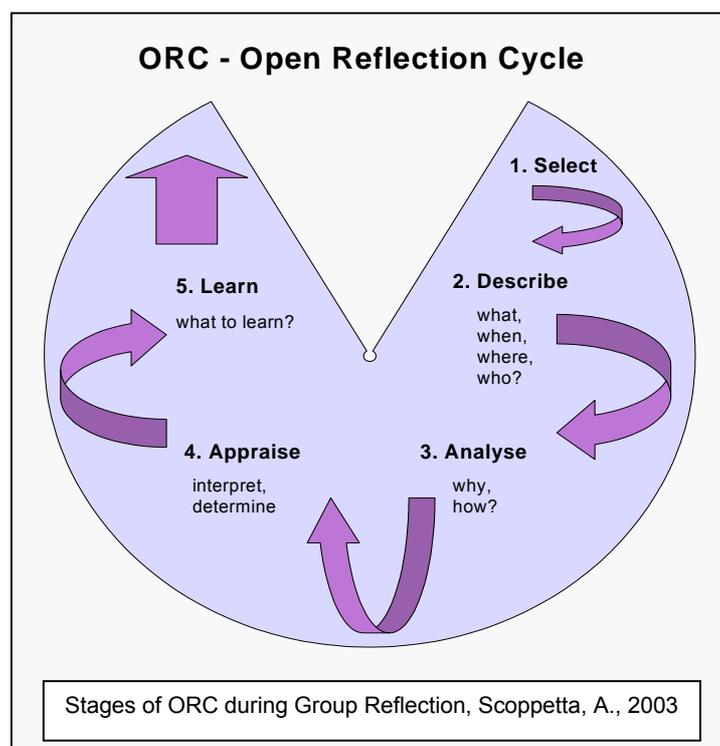
Knowledge management method supporting reflective learning **The Open Reflection Cycle was developed for the Austrian Territorial Employment Pacts (TEPs) in order to learn from bad experiences and prevent similar failures from happening again.**

>> **Learning from 'worst practice'** The Open Reflection Cycle (ORC) was initiated during a workshop organised for the Austrian Territorial Employment Pacts in 2003. The Cycle is based on the After Action Review (AAR), a method developed and implemented by the US Army.

The Austrian TEPs often experience similar challenges when building and implementing activities at the level of partnerships, programmes and projects. As part of the ORC, TEPs are encouraged to learn from each other's failures at each of the three levels, so that knowledge gained from the evaluation of 'worst' practice can be transferred to other TEPs, along with mechanisms for improvement.

Knowledge on 'worst-practice' is transferred to support improvement

During the ORC-process, the participants pass through three phases, the "Individual Selection and Formation of the Groups", "The ORC - Group Reflection", and, finally, the "Joint Review". The Group reflection process itself involves five stages, including selecting the worst-practice case, describing, analysing, appraising and learning (see figure below). Finally, each group should come up with a common understanding of the process, which is presented to all participants in the Joint Review.



Other participants who have not participated in the group discussion can therefore learn from the group analysis and apply the knowledge to their own environment. Within each of the presentations, the emphasis is placed on learning experiences. Pre-defined questions help to lead the discussion during the Joint Review, in order to maximise learning. Examples include:



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- _ “Have any of the other groups identified a similar example of ‘worst practice’?”
- _ “What is the learning experience from this example? How would you do things differently in the future?”
- _ “How would circumstances have to be different?” and
- _ “Which recommendations would you pass on to others?”

The ORC-method was tested with nearly 25 participants, covering all province-wide TEPs. Participants knew each other prior to the workshop, though they came from diverse organisational backgrounds. In order to secure trust within the group, external individuals were not allowed to participate in the workshop.

Lessons learnt

During the whole process, the presentations and discussions were extraordinarily open-minded. Participants seemed to pass through the process without any emotional stress, pointing out problems directly, identifying solutions, helping each other to analyse situations and provide motivating statements. Some participants offered solutions that had been developed within their own TEPs, and discussions focused in particular on such problem solving ideas. Trust was displayed during the whole process. The TEPs feedback of the ORC-method in use was extremely positive. The participants of the workshop praised the method for its innovative approach and efficiency.

Open Reflection
Cycle (ORC)
facilitates learning
within a network

The ORC and AAR (After Action Review) methods share many similarities. They involve reflection and learning management methods, assist in establishing a common perception of actions/events, provide practice for communication and for conflict resolution between group members, are used in groups, and require preparatory work and certain steps to be followed. The most important distinguishing feature of ORC in comparison with AAR is that the ORC emphasizes not only reflection and learning, but also the transfer of

practices. Due to this, ORC is designed as an ‘open cycle’. Experiences are shared with other participants after the reflection.

ORC is a knowledge management tool, which has been developed to facilitate learning within a network of representatives of public sector/not-for-profit organisations participants in the project. The organizer, the Austrian TEP Co-ordination Unit, has taken on the challenge of reviewing a complex body of knowledge on reflection, learning and knowledge management. As a result, a new, efficient and promising knowledge management tool was developed and implemented. The success of ORC is an example of how theoretical knowledge can have a practical application and bring measurable positive results. <<

Sources: <http://www.pakte.at/>
After Action Review (AAR), Mission Centred Solutions, Inc. 1997-2002
Scoppetta, A. and Fazlagic, A. (2005): Open Reflection Cycle – a knowledge management method supporting reflective learning. To be published in ZSI-Discussion papers. Nr.1, Vienna.

Mentoring

International know-how transfer **The Irish OAK Partnership and the NEP Partnership in Kosovo agreed upon a twinning aimed at the sharing of information and expertise, as well as assisting in the development of economic development and employment projects.**



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>> International Twinning Agreement In November 2004 OAK Partnership (the North West Kildare / North Offaly Partnership Company Ltd.) from Ireland and NEP Partnership from Kamenica, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro signed an international twinning agreement. The agreement builds on international contacts developed under the LEEDAK Project 2003/2004, which is funded by the European Training Foundation and the Italian Government.

The partners agreed to engage in a twinning arrangement for an initial period of 2 years up to the end of 2006. The activities envisaged centre around building respective capacities to engage in local economic, employment and social development within their geographic areas. The partnerships have also committed to undertake joint activities to improve networking among local development partnerships from the European Union, Western Balkans and OECD countries. The partners will jointly seek funding and other non-financial support to develop this twinning agreement, which aims to enhance local development capacities in both partnership areas. Additionally, it is hoped that mutual understanding will be built between Ireland and Kosovo, in terms of their respective social, economic and cultural diversity, and this will help in the development of successful, inclusive and integrated local development partnerships involving all local stakeholders.

Both partnerships will provide opportunities for staff and Board members to undertake exchange visits. The visits to Ireland aim to engage NEP Partnership staff in work experience in local development settings, while OAK Partnership staff will benefit from the cultural exchange, which will be particularly relevant now that Ireland welcomes many new workers from Balkan countries. The Irish partnership will provide advice and technical assistance to the NEP Partnership, on, for example, attracting international donors, writing proposals, references and testimonials and preparing joint applications. Staff of NEP Partnership will help in developing pilot local development partnerships in the Western Balkan region and will advise the OAK Partnership on how to address the needs of asylum seekers, migrant workers, refugees in Ireland, and on issues affecting ethnic minorities. The partnerships have also agreed to undertake joint public relations work; joint training programmes, and prepare joint applications for funding programmes aimed at improving networking, local economic and employment regeneration, social inclusion and cultural diversity. In March 2005, the OAK Partnership hosted a visit from partnership representatives from Kosovo. Reflecting on their visit, the delegation noted the tremendous voluntary activity undertaken by local communities and the impact of OAK Partnership in their locality, where they work with both state agencies and disadvantaged groups. International partnership twinning, such as the Irish - Kosovo practice, is an effective knowledge transfer tool that helps partnerships to develop efficient partnership structures, good human resources and strong management skills. <<

Sources: International Twinning Agreement "OAK Partnership" and NEP Partnership, 2005
Planet, Partnerships making a difference – 12 April 2005

OECD LEED Forum Mentorship System

One of the Forum's key activities is the creation of a mentorship system to provide assistance for countries interested in building partnerships. Emerging partnerships will be supported by relevant well-established partnerships who will act as mentors. The Forum will assist in the matching of mentors with appropriate recipients. For further information please visit the following website:
<http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/forum/partnerships>

Partnership Study Visit

International exchange practice **‘Study visits’ are widely used as tool for exchanging know-how.** The **‘Flemish - Austrian Partnership Study Visit’** serves as example for the many encounters arranged between partnerships at the international level.



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>> Successful and non-successful practice exchange The major objective of study visits is to encourage exchange and discussion among participants on subjects of common interest. Study visits aim to promote mutual understanding between participating bodies, through an understanding of their structures and general conditions. Mostly, study visits are considered as non-decision-making forums. During the short visits (3-5 days) the participants are on the move in small groups visiting key places of interest. Being in the situation of a visitor in a 'foreign' country allow participants to develop a way of looking at things, and encourages a degree of objectivity. By sharing their perspectives with the host organisation, they can provide valuable feed-back, which can be directed towards making improvements. In addition, ideas and practices can be transferred to other policy contexts.

During the Flemish-Austrian study visit (Brussels, October 2003), the Flemish Sub-regional Employment Committees and the Austrian Territorial Employment Pacts exchanged information on successful and less successful partnership practices. Discussion covered both practical issues as well as strategic developments. The experts reviewed the partnership's national and regional frameworks, compared their political and financial contexts and identified pros and cons. Similarities and differences between the policy approaches to partnerships within the two regions were explored, future challenges discussed and transferable items identified. As a major result of the study visit, good practice on developing "Flemish Diversity Plans" was adapted to the Austrian context and is now being implemented in the form of "Plans for the Elderly". <<

Sources: <http://www.pakte.at>, <http://studyvisits.cedefop.eu.int/>
Co-ordination Unit of Austrian TEPs, Austria and the employment policy department of the Ministry of the Flemish Community, Belgium, Flemish / Austrian Study visit "Learning from each other": International knowledge exchange between employment partnerships, 2003

Conclusion

Learning is the basis for any improvement and one important success factor for partnerships in our knowledge based society. The OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance seeks ways to assist partnerships in their exchange of knowledge, experience and practices on the international level. Altogether, progress is easier to achieve if partnerships reflect, analyse, innovate and then, finally, share their knowledge. The network has been established to promote interactions between the Forum partnerships with the expected result that the partnerships gain know-how and develop further in order to contribute to local governance and the effectiveness of policies. <<

Exchange and Learning practices help to improve the effectiveness of partnerships

If you have experienced particular learning practices for exchanging knowledge across your country, as well as on international level, please inform us (office@forum.zsi.at). Thank you. <<

Conference Highlights

Conference on local development and governance in
Central and Eastern Europe (Trento, 6-8 June 2005)



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>> **Local development is a complex issue.** Effective local development strategies pursue long-term objectives. Such strategies frequently involve integrated, holistic objectives ranging from economic development to social development and environmental protection. They feature innovative institutional mechanisms that ensure that the main stakeholders take an active part in both their design and implementation. They build on synergy between the initiatives led by the various actors. And they influence the implementation of national and regional policy, contributing to policy co-ordination and adaptation to local needs.

In countries of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, considerable efforts are being devoted to supporting the local development approach. In June 2005, among the best experts, policy-makers and practitioners in the field gathered in Trento, Italy, to discuss the state of the art and make progress on ways to enhance local development and governance, bringing with them the lessons from 30 countries and 15 international organisations. The conference was organised by the OECD LEED Programme and its LEED Trento Centre for Local Development.

The conference addressed the key governance issues. "Local Development Strategies – From Planning to Implementation". Local development strategies flourish today, but they are not all implemented. Why? Case studies from Poland, Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia revealed that a plethora of strategies existed, but that they were sometimes not giving due attention to the management and accountability framework of each policy area involved. They were also sometimes in conflict with each other. As the session, "Tools for Better Governance" showed, each of the employment, regional development and social inclusion policy areas has complex governance contexts, but each has a crucial contribution to make to enhance local prosperity. Institutional reforms that do not allow for greater flexibility in policy management are likely to fail.

Preserving full accountability in partnership working is a critical aspect of the effectiveness of local development strategies. The session, "Fostering Participative and Representative Democracy" examined cases from Poland, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania and highlighted ways to stimulate the participation of civil society and business without undermining the role of public service actors. The seminar examined a lack of financial resources for local development, in addition to flaws within devolution reforms and shed light on promising ways of putting together resources from various sources. Effective local development can be compared with a system of cogwheel mechanisms, integrating different structures and actors in the local political arena, to combine their efforts for a local betterment. Defining and putting together an integrated system requires local development strategies which do not reinvent the wheel, but in the first place make better use of what already exists. This requires innovative institutional thinking and the design of meaningful projects by "civic entrepreneurs". The conference demonstrated that such "entrepreneurs" are not lacking in Central and Eastern Europe.

Further conference material and the conference programme can be downloaded at www.trento/oecd.org. The conference proceedings are integrated in a forthcoming (2006) OECD LEED publication. <<



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International Partnership Fair

>> We are pleased to announce the **2nd Meeting of the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance, the International Partnership Fair:**

13 – 15 February 2006
Parkhotel Schönbrunn, Vienna, AUSTRIA
www.partnershipfair.zsi.at (launch on 6 October 2005)

The conference design allows for an effective exchange of practical experiences in small groups of up to 6 persons. Up to 35 selected partnerships covering countries of the European Union, America and Asia Pacific will share basic information about their partnerships, focusing on strategies, aims, partners, instruments and initiatives, as well as experiences of best practice, at exhibition stands. The conference agenda includes both partnership meetings and discussion groups. 300 participants from OECD members and non-members countries are expected.

To register for the Fair,
please visit

www.partnershipfair.zsi.at
(launch on 6 October 2005)

Deadline for registration is
23rd December 2005.

Aims of the Fair:

- to exchange knowledge and best practice examples in relation to core aspects of partnership working (including defining aims and objectives, drawing up strategies, bringing on board partners and developing tools and instruments);
- to build-up co-operations between partnerships; and
- to establish professional networks and personal contacts.

Would you like to participate at the International Partnership Fair?

The website <http://www.partnershipfair.zsi.at> (launch on 6 October 2005) provides up to date information on the Fair. Registration for this event is open until **Friday, 23 December 2005**.

The Conference is organised by the Centre for Social Innovation (responsible for the implementation is the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance and the Austrian TEP Co-ordination Unit, co-financed by ESF). The OECD LEED is Conference partner. The Conference financiers are the Austrian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour and the European Social Fund. <<

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News & Events

4th Forum Newsletter December 2005 The fourth Forum Newsletter will be published in December 2005. If you did not receive the third newsletter directly from us, please send an email to rubik@forum.zsi.at indicating "Add to mailing list for Forum Newsletters". Thank you.

International Symposium on "Religion and European Integration - Religions as a Factor of Stability and Development in South Eastern Europe" 6 – 8 October 2005, Maribor, Slovenia The symposium will contribute to academic discourse on the role of religions and religious communities in social and economic processes and structures, both in general and with respect to European integration processes. Special attention is being devoted to the current situation in countries within South-Eastern Europe. The symposium will contribute to increased analytical understanding and to good governance at the local, regional and European level, through maximising the positive contribution which religious communities can make to socioeconomic development and to the building of peaceful multicultural European societies.

For further information please visit <http://www.aso.zsi.at/>

"OPEN DAYS 2005 – European Week of Regions and Cities" 10 - 13 October 2005, Brussels, Belgium The European Week of Regions and Cities is an event for up to 2,000 regional policy experts organised by the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions and 16 groups representing 105 European regions. The theme of this event will be "Working together for Regional Growth and Jobs", and it will aim to help Member States and regions to facilitate their preparations for the new generation of Structural Funds' programmes and instruments for 2007-2013. In this sense, the OPEN DAYS will be instructive and exchange-oriented at the same time. It will mainly involve national and regional players in Europe.

For further information please visit http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/opendays/

OECD International Conference on "Sustainable Cities: Linking Competitiveness with Social Cohesion" 13-14 October 2005, Montreal, Quebec, Canada By bringing together international experts, public officials and politicians, the conference will be a key opportunity to further the ongoing work of the OECD Working Party on Territorial Policy in Urban Areas (WPUA) and Territorial Development Policy Committee (TDPC) on identifying effective policy strategies for metropolitan areas.



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The agenda, details concerning registration and documentation will be available online very shortly. Should you require further enquiries about the conference please send an e-mail to the OECD Secretariat at: montreal-conference@oecd.org.

Seminar on "Promoting SME Innovation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other South-East European Countries" 19 October 2005, Brčko, Bosnia and Herzegovina In 2005, The OECD LEED Trento Centre is organising a series of capacity building seminars in South-East Europe to assess how to face key challenges in the area of entrepreneurship policy development. This seminar in Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue the work on the case studies identified during the Trento seminar (held in December 2004) and will further explore the theme of Promoting SME Innovation. It is part of the activities of the joint OECD-Central European Initiative Local Development Network (LDN). This event is organised in collaboration with Sub-department for Strategy and Economy in Government District Brčko and in co-operation with the Central European Initiative.

It aims to:

- analyse barriers to SME innovation and the policy instruments that can be used to overcome these barriers, using evidence from OECD countries.
- analyse what are the instruments and approaches available to promote the introduction of new and upgraded products and services offered by SMEs to their clients and the potential for introduction of such initiatives in South East Europe.
- analyse what policy initiatives can be developed to promote the introduction of new and upgraded production methods, marketing approaches, distribution arrangements, management practices and work organisation.

For further information, please contact alessandra.proto@oecd.org from the OECD LEED Secretariat based in Trento.

CEI Summit Economic Forum on "Reforms: Key to Competitiveness" 23-24 November 2005, Bratislava, Slovakia The Forum will be a platform to make business contacts and establish co-operation on investment projects and development programmes. It also provides a key opportunity to discuss structural reforms for improving business environment, development strategies for raising competitiveness, with a special focus on energy, infrastructure, and human resources.

For general information and registration, please contact: info.sef@cei-es.org
For further projects and match-making, please contact: projects.sef@cei-es.org

To receive the programme and list of speakers, please contact:
programme.sef@cei-es.org

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Forum in brief



Creation of the OECD LEED Forum The OECD LEED Forum on partnerships and local governance is a network to exchange information and experiences between partnerships.

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>> Forum mission The Forum mission of the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance is to enhance the contribution of partnership structures to local development and local governance and the effectiveness of policies.

>> Forum partnerships The area-based partnership is a tool to improve governance. It seeks to improve policy co-ordination and adaptation to local conditions, lead to better utilisation and targeting of programmes, integrate civil society's concerns into strategic planning exercises, stimulate corporate involvement in local projects, and promote greater satisfaction with public policy (OECD, Local Partnerships for Better Governance, 2001). Forum partnerships focus on employment, social issues and economic development and are characterised by a multi-level, multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional approach.

>> Objectives of the Forum The objectives of the Forum are:

- to improve capacity for dissemination and facilitate the transfer of expertise and exchange of experiences;
- to create synergies;
- to assess and develop co-operation models and
- to advise and support.

The Forum is a network of partnerships in order to exchange information and experiences between partnerships.

>> Forum Structure All institutions and organisations involved in the management of area-based partnerships may become members of the Forum. Delegates and national partnership co-ordinators interested in providing further advice on the implementation of tasks sit on the Forum Board. The Forum Co-ordination unit is the support structure which facilitates and develops the network.

The Forum is an activity of the OECD LEED Programme. All tasks are undertaken jointly by the ZSI (Centre for Social Innovation) and by the OECD LEED Trento Centre (Italy).

>> Tasks of the Forum

- Building the network (identification and networking of institutions)
- Building the data base (Documentary base, Guide on successful partnership)
- Forum meetings and international partnership fair
- Mentoring and Policy advice
- Information exchange (Annual Brochure, Electronic newsletter, Forum Website, Electronic discussion group). <<

OECD LEED **forum** on **partnerships and local governance** at the ZSI

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