

CO-OPERATION IN AN ENLARGED MARKET

The benefits of co-operation

Launching a new activity, penetrating new markets, cutting costs, establishing new technologies or tapping into know-how ...this is just a small sample of the many company-specific advantages of business cooperation.

Tailor-made co-operation

Each specific company's need calls for a different kind of co-operation: production agreement, joint venture, franchise, technology transfer, provision of services, partnerships developed as part of European projects... opportunities galore! The Euro Info Centres can help you to define your project and select the appropriate kind of cooperation.

Preparing for co-operation

Companies often need to know if their financial health is sound enough to contemplate operating on an international scale or if they are flexible enough to tailor their products to different markets.

The Euro Info Centres have developed a powerful diagnosis tool to help answer these and other questions.

Seeking a business partner

When a company has to look for a partner all by itself this can turn out to be a frustrating experience and, more importantly, can ultimately be a time-wasting exercise for business.

Here are two solutions that have been shown to be effective:

- Taking part in **'match-making' events** (events attended by companies seeking partners) during **international sectoral fairs**. The meetings may result in finding the partner you are looking for and, above all, extend your search opportunities by pointing to other types of partnership.
- Registration in a **database** that will help you find one or more potential partners on the basis of clearly defined criteria.

Pan-European Business Co-operation Schemes

The European Commission has earmarked Euro 6 million for 6 projects aimed at boosting co-operation between SMEs in the enlarged Europe whilst promoting economic relations with cross-border regions.

The six consortiums involved are each focused on one or two industrial sectors and are in the process of organising at least three "match-making" events each during international trade fairs in Europe from 2004 to 2006.

Visit <http://eic.cec.eu.int/PES> for details about the various projects and the procedures for taking part in the "match-making" events.

The Euro Info Centre requires you to complete an exclusive profile form that presents your company and defines your request or offer of co-operation, as this information will help to ensure the success of one or the other option. Entered into a high-performance database that is used by over 600 centres (EICs and their relays), the file will also enable your profile to be forwarded to organisers of inter-business meetings.

The Euro Info Centres' Business Co-operation database

The EIC network has its own database available for consultation by over 600 partners.

In light of the Euro Info Centres aim of offering the best service possible to businesses, a new version of the database was ushered in, featuring all the changes recommended by our field experts.

More user-friendly, more detailed, this new version is made-to-measure to cater for the requirements of SMEs.

The 3,100 profiles so far entered in the database are subjected to an exacting quality control process.

Get in touch with your nearest EIC for further details.