



Quarterly NEWSLETTER

Find new customers for your ICT business through eBusiness



As of 1st December 2008, the European Commission and PIN-SME announce the offering of a new service for SMEs.

If your company is an ICT provider, you can register at a new on-line database of the European Commission called –eBusiness Guide for SMEs. All ICT

suppliers listed in the database will have specific information about their company and services available on-line in the database.

The European Commission will publicize this service and invite SMEs from 27 European countries to find their ICT suppliers through the database. SMEs that need an ICT supplier will be able to search through the database the ICT company which responds better to their demands.

In the intentions of PIN-SME and the Commission this service will help SMEs to find their ICT providers and benefit from eBusiness and ICT solutions.

On-line registration is available on the PIN-SME website www.pin-sme.eu until 31 January 2009.

Click here to access the registration form: <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/e-bsn/ebusiness-solutions->

PIN-SME discusses access to the Internet with the European Commission

As approved by its General Assembly on 2nd December 2009, PIN-SME sent to the European Commission its reaction on the recent Commission's [Communication on future networks and the internet](#). PIN-SME believes that Europe's small businesses need open and affordable access to the Internet in the race for international competitiveness.

ICT-SMEs endorse the Communication's approach to openness, recognizing that the challenges lie not just in telecommunications policy but also as regards open standards and copyright policy. A new balance among these elements should be searched and PIN-SME has developed a set of recommendations for the Commission.

To download the Commission's Communication on future networks and the internet please click on:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/eeurope/i2010/docs/future_internet/act_future_networks_internet_en.pdf

To download the PIN-SME position paper on Commission's Communication on future networks and the internet please click on: http://www.pin-sme.eu/images/downloads/future_internet.pdf



ICT Event 2008 Lyon 25/27 November: Europe's biggest research event for information and communication technologies



The biennial ICT Event of the European Commission took place in Lyon from 25th to 27th of November. This is considered the most important forum for discussing research and public policy in Information and Communication Technologies at European level.

This year the event included several activities focused on SMEs. The conference session "[ICT SMEs, Bridging the Investment Gap in Europe](#)" analyzed the issue of access to finance for high growth innovative ICT SMEs in Europe. The session included contributions from business angels, venture capital firms, SMEs and policy makers and tried to identify practical means to attract further investments into ICT SMEs and support their growth. Mr Sebastiano Toffaletti, Secretary General of PIN-SME was invited to present the point of view of the ICT SMEs. In his intervention he explained that, despite venture capitalists being a valuable source of equity for those companies or start ups that need investments to plan a fast development on the global scale, they may not be a good solution for all ICT small businesses. He stressed that Europe's strength are thousands of ICT SMEs that need investment to innovate and grow but are invisible to venture capital because do not guarantee fast return on investment. PIN-SME opinion is that for innovative ICT SMEs should be possible to choose among a range of

finance products that combine elements of equity and debt and that suit better their needs.

SME networking sessions complemented the conferences and contributed to a better understanding of different topics related to SMEs. The session entitled "[ICT-SMEs: Your Innovation Partners](#)" was organised by PIN-SME, it was focused on the role of small ICT-based businesses as agents of change in the innovation process. From manufacturing to services and the public sector, innovation is more and more ICT related. Increasingly, therefore, the quality of innovation depends on the quality of ICT support. ICT-SMEs have an important contribution to make in helping to close Europe's innovation gap. They have direct contact with SME clients and broad skill sets, and so are a key channel for delivering added-value and change. Mainly, according to PIN-SME: ICT-SMEs can contribute to innovation processes within the wider SME community and the issues and obstacles they face. The session participants exchanged ideas on opportunities for improving the innovation performance of SMEs through ICT (e.g. in areas such as RFID, e-procurement and e-invoicing); and identified forms of support needed to enable ICT SMEs to realize their full potential as change agents.

Besides the efforts of PIN-SME, other networking sessions focused on ICT SMEs with different approaches. This joint session entitled "The Great Beyond: Advancing Ongoing SME Collaboration in EU Research". tried to identify the type of integrated support services needed to make a qualitative improvement in SME participation in EU research. "SME International Development: Research as a business development tool" emphasized on how SMEs bring to the table creativity and innovation, ability to adapt quickly and entrepreneurial mindset. "Getting High-tech SMEs on-board for Future and Emerging Technologies" focused on ways to unlock the innovation potential of high-tech SMEs. Finally, this year the Commission experimented new activities related to SMEs, such as the SME village —with information stands about ICT-SMEs-related activities— as well as the "SME forum" with interactive sessions for the attendees.

To find out more about the ICT Event 2008 visit the official website at

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/ict/2008/index_en.htm

[iTEC08 – Your Technology Hotspot](#)



On November 6th and 7th, 2008, Hessen-IT presented the latest international trends in information and communication technologies as well as the most important trends made in the ICT-Hotspot Hessen to an international audience. Johann Steszgal, PIN-SME President, was asked to moderate a discussion panel on « Success for smaller SMEs ». If you want to have more information on iTEC 2008 please visit:

<http://www.hessen-it.eu/dynasite.cfm?dsmid=8048>

In this session particular result was given to Ms Paula Swatman, Professor of Information Systems at University of South Australia, who developed the subject of eBusiness Strategies for SMEs. Read her full presentation at: <http://www.pin-sme.eu/images/downloads/itec2008.ppt>

Picture from left to right: Sarianne Reinkkala, Yvonne Zapf, Johann Steszgal, Paula Swatman

[PIN-SME warns the Commission that SMEs need innovation rather than research](#)

Brussels, November 2009. PIN-SME has elaborated a response to the European Commission's consultation on "A Strategy for ICT R&D and Innovation in Europe". PIN-SME considers that Europe's ICT R&D and innovation agenda is skewed too heavily towards research.

A rebalancing is needed. While Europe must continue to develop new technologies, it should devote greater efforts to innovation to ensure research results find a market.

This, in turn, requires a more refined characterisation of the SME sector and better differentiation in the policies used so that all ICT SMEs, from the most innovative to the mainstream, play to their strengths.

If you wish to download the PIN-SME response to the European Commission's consultation on "A Strategy for ICT R&D and Innovation in Europe" look at:

http://www.pin-sme.eu/images/downloads/ict_r_d_innovation_2.pdf

[PIN-SME introduces policy declaration at e-Skills Thessaloniki Conference](#)

On 9-10 October 2008 at the European Conference on e-Skills in Thessaloniki, Johann Steszgal, PIN-SME President, presented the ICT SMEs' perspectives on the eSkills policy debate in Europe.

Mr Steszgal also introduced a [PIN-SME's policy declaration on e-Skills](#) and conveyed the message that the deployment of e-Skills among European citizens and businesses is a key factor for productivity growth, competitiveness and employment in Europe and the overall success of the Lisbon strategy. In particular PIN-SME submitted concrete recommendations on e-Skills on behalf of ICT small businesses.

To download the 2008 PIN-SME Declaration on e-Skills please go to: http://www.pin-sme.eu/images/downloads/declaration_on_eskills.pdf



Mr. Johann Steszgal (the first one from left to right) at the European Conference on e-Skills in Thessaloniki on 9-10 October 2008: http://www.pin-sme.eu/images/downloads/eskills2008_018.jpg

PIN-SME intervenes on the role of ICT SMEs' associations at the CEI Summit in Chisinau

At the 11th Summit Economic Forum of Central European Initiative (CEI) hosted by Moldova, PIN-SME participated on a conference session together with the European Commission. The session was entitled "SMEs and ICT in the CEI Region: Entrepreneurial associations' role in fostering growth and competitiveness" and PIN-SME was represented by the Secretary General Mr Sebastiano Toffaletti. Moreover, Martin Prager and George Brashnarov - Austrian and Bulgarian PIN-SME members - intervened on behalf of their national organizations.



As elaborated during the session, SMEs in the ICT market are strategic to guarantee prosperity and sustainable development to the overall society. Due to this variety and interdependency among different dedicated areas, companies need to operate in networks and clusters in order to be more effective and benefit from each other. Externalisation and sub-contracting are, among others, typical forms of cooperation that characterise the business behaviour of ICT operators. These enterprises need to find business partners in other countries in order to establish cross-border alliances and access new markets. Trans-national federations of associations should serve as bridges among SMEs from different countries and enable the establishments of cross border business partnerships. Thus, participation of national associations to European umbrella organizations are important to establish strategic alliances, to benefit from best practices exchange and activities in an international environment.

To download the presentation of Mr. Martin Prager please go to: http://www.pin-sme.eu/images/downloads/chisnau_martin_prager.ppt

To download the presentation of Mr. George Brashnarov please go to: http://www.pin-sme.eu/images/downloads/basscom_sef08.ppt

Next events and conferences

- ✦ **1st European Conference on Software Services and SOKU technologies.** 13-14 January 2009 - Diamant Conference Center, Brussels, Belgium. <http://www.eu-ecss.eu/conference>
- ✦ **Living Labs Information Event.** Brussels. Wednesday, 14 January 2009. This event will provide opportunities to exchange Living Labs related information, potentially relevant in the context of the FP7 ICT 4th and 5th Calls for Proposals, and for the CIP ICT-PSP 3rd Call, all foreseen for 2009. http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/livinglabs/events/index_en.htm
- ✦ **International Conference Computers, Privacy and Data Protection.** January 16th- 17th 2009. Further information at: <http://www.cpdpconferences.org>
- ✦ **FP7 - ICT Proposers' Day 2009.** 22 January 2009. Budapest. Further information at: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/budapest_2009/index_en.htm
- ✦ **Information Day for Call 3 of ICT Policy Support Programme.** Monday 26 January 2009 (from 11:00 to 17:30). Brussels. Further information at: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/ict_psp/index_en.htm
- ✦ **III EU Forum of ICT-SME.** Organized by PIN-SME on March 5th at CeBIT of Hannover. Information will be soon available at www.pin-sme.eu