

The Euro Info Centres offer you:

SYNERGY Supported by the European Commission, the Euro Info Centres represent a network of over 300 business support centres located in all European countries and even further afield. These 300 centres communicate with each other, use the same language and even the very same tools. Create your profile with the help of experts at your nearest Euro Info Centre and it will soon be viewed by agents all over Europe !

COMPETENCE The Euro Info Centre network boasts over 15 years of experience in serving the business community. Our experts are well-versed in the business world and have knowledge of European issues.

FOLLOW-UP The Euro Info Centres offer you a three-stage comprehensive approach : providing you with support in preparing, implementing and following up your internationalisation projects.

QUALITY The EIC Network is also a network of competencies identified by type of services offered, to ensure that EICs provide an increasingly better quality business service. The European Commission offers the EICs specific training courses several times a year in order to guarantee they remain up-to-date on important issues and to provide them with new skills.

In practice:

A German SME specialising in designing and programming webpages was anxious to create a partnership with a company from one of the European countries leading the way in information technology in Europe. The aim was to harness foreign know-how so as to improve the services on offer.

After getting in touch with its local EIC, in Trier (Germany), the company was asked to take part in a pan-European match-making event organised by a Swedish EIC. The SME immediately seized the opportunity to meet as many companies as possible in the shortest time possible, fixing appointments with 10 potential partners.

The Trier EIC helped the company in the work involved in preparing and assessing the cooperation and lent its support during the event. Once the German company had signalled its interest in cooperating with an Estonian company, the EIC also provided basic information about the administrative procedures and the legal conditions that have to be fulfilled prior to establishing a branch in Estonia.

As a result of all these activities, a branch was opened in Estonia, providing employment for over 20 people. The German company's new Estonian partner will also be distributing its products in Germany soon.

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Business Co-operation and Partner search



**Enterprises: get
cooperating in an enlarged
Europe!**

**Diagnosis, information, back-up: the
Euro Info Centre can help you in your
business co-operation**



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.