

**INVITATION TO THE 1<sup>ST</sup> WORKSHOP ON 'RESEARCH FUNDING AND STRUCTURAL FUNDS'  
IMPLEMENTATION IN SWEDEN AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

**BRUSSELS, THE 22<sup>ND</sup> OF JUNE 2009**

*Swedish Permanent Representation to the European Union, Square de Meeûs 30*

The Competitiveness Council conclusions 25 June 2007 on “*More efficient support to research and innovation: Coordinating the use of the Research Framework Programme and the Structural Funds - Response to the CREST report<sup>1</sup>*” underlined the particular importance of further discussion and follow-up activities on the development of RDTI strategies and the strengthening of governance and the development of RDTI excellence.

In August 2007, the European Commission published a Communication entitled “*Competitive European regions through research and innovation: A contribution to more growth and more and better jobs*”<sup>2</sup>. This Communication underlines the importance of, and synergies between, the instruments supporting Community research, innovation and cohesion policies. These instruments are the 7<sup>th</sup> Research Framework Programme (FP7), the Framework Programme on Competitiveness and Innovation (CIP) and the Structural Funds (SF). The Communication calls for measures to stimulate the use of these Community funding instruments and their co-ordinated use. Also, it asks the Commission to bring together relevant stakeholders to facilitate this process.

In the context of the EU's cohesion policy, within the national and regional operational programmes, Europe's regions have earmarked some €86 billion Euros for research and innovation (including entrepreneurship) during 2007-2013 to be funded by the EU Structural Funds. Structural Funds allocated to research and innovation, in the narrow sense, amounts to nearly € 50 billion, which equals roughly what is going to be spent on FP7 and is a very significant increase on what was invested during 2000-2006 through the Structural Funds.

Obviously, the organisation of regional policy issues at the central (national) level, the management of national and regional operational programmes funded by the Structural Funds, the way the RTDI dimension has been taken into consideration at the national level and in the regional operational programmes, the role of Managing Authorities, the level of regional funds, beneficiaries, thematic allocations, dissemination/information vectors, etc. varies from one Member State to another. Exchange of experience and information between Member States on synergies between the three instruments as well as on good practices regarding the efficient and effective use of these funds for RTDI purposes, would be very useful in view of the amounts involved.

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<sup>1</sup> CREST 1203/07 of 01.07.2007

<sup>2</sup> COM 474 (2007) of 16.08.2007

The Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovations Systems (VINNOVA) in close cooperation with the Permanent Representations of Sweden and the Czech Republic to the European Union and the European Commission invite you to the 1<sup>st</sup> workshop on “*Research Funding and Structural Funds*”. The 1<sup>st</sup> workshop will focus on the situation in Sweden and the Czech Republic. Further workshops in this series will follow during the Swedish Presidency and each workshop would involve two different member states.

The objective of this series of workshops is that national and regional authorities and other relevant stakeholders at the different levels (central, intermediaries & beneficiaries) would translate the synergies of design of the instruments into synergies of action. The results emanating from the workshops would provide input to guidelines and eventually also input to the Community programmes under the next programming period (2014-2020). The Swedish Presidency also might wish to address the issue in their Council conclusions in December 2009.

Kindly confirm your attendance **before 12<sup>th</sup> of June** on email [maths.persson@vinnova.se](mailto:maths.persson@vinnova.se) or on telephone: +32 2545 5011. Please note that the number of seats available is limited.