



European Commission

Enterprise and Industry DG

Innovation in Textiles and Clothing - European Commission Approach

ACTE Conference
InTextT - Innovation in Textile Territories
17 May 2008, Łódź, Poland

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Innovative or not?

The textile & clothing sector is often regarded as less innovative than others.

Why?

Traditional ways of measuring innovation are not suitable (e.g. patents).

Technical textiles often excluded from NACE 17/18 as fall within statistical categories of other manufacturing sectors (automotive, medical products).

Non-technological innovation accounts for a large part of the sector's innovativeness & competitiveness but is difficult to define and thus to measure.

Textile regions

Traditional textile regions are still leading innovation in the sector on the basis of own research and human resources with a substantial infusion of knowledge from other sectors and regions through collaborative projects.



Europe INNOVA

NetFinTex (2006-2008): tools for textile SMEs to better connect investors/providers of funding with textile & clothing companies, incl. on-line tool 'One Stop Shop' available at www.textile-finance.eu.

INNOTEX: 3 textile clusters from Spain, UK, Estonia and a Danish maritime cluster networked extensively to develop a cross-cluster best practice platform for entrepreneurial innovation for the European technical textile sector.

Sectoral Innovation Panel for Textiles (2006-2008): identified sector-specific priorities for action. Formulated questions, issues and recommendations to be tackled by policymakers and stakeholders. Final report soon available at the website of Europe INNOVA.

<http://www.europe-innova.org>



Lead Market Initiative for Europe

New actions under Europe INNOVA will be designed to support the implementation of the so called **Lead Market Initiative**.

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/leadmarket/leadmarket.htm>



Why this initiative?

Developing an innovation-driven economy is **crucial for competitiveness**.

Europe must seek to develop **innovation-friendly markets** in a more targeted way, decisively facilitating the **marketing of innovations**.

In December 2006, the Member States invited the Commission to “present during 2007 an **initiative on lead markets**, based on a broad stakeholder consultation for defining a valid approach for fostering emergence of markets with high economic and societal value.”

On 21 December 2007, the Commission adopted a **Communication launching a lead market initiative** (COM(2007)860).



Six markets

eHealth

renewable energies

sustainable construction

recycling

bio-based products

protective textiles

(Clothing & other textile-based systems whose main function is to protect the users from hazards and dangers in the conditions in which they operate such as civil and military emergency interventions or in hospitals and manufacturing environments that require insulation from bacterial and viral contamination.)

Why these markets?

- (1) highly innovative
- (2) respond to customers' needs and societal/public interest
- (3) strong technological and industrial base in Europe
- (4) depend more than others on the creation of favourable framework conditions through public policy actions.



Action plans

Set of policy instruments boosting the competitiveness of the lead markets:

Improve legislation to foster innovation and avoid imposing burdens on innovative business and facilitate an integrated approach along the value chain.

Encourage public procurement for innovative goods and services.

Standardisation, labelling and certification to encourage standards that facilitate the operation of products and business processes with each other and raise the recognition and confidence of users.

Complementary instruments such as business and innovation support services, training, communication, financial support and incentives.



Some issues for protective textiles

Swifter development and use of **European standards** in the global market, combined with appropriate measures for the **protection of intellectual property**, would accelerate the increase in demand for protective textiles.

Public procurement has an important role to play, but there is a lack of knowledge on how public procurement could be used for purchasing innovative solutions while respecting the legal framework.



A shared responsibility

Commission

to formulate the necessary legislative proposals
to launch calls for proposals to implement supporting actions.

Member States

to implement the actions that they are best placed to lead
to encourage relevant national and regional actors to participate in the coordination mechanisms.

Business and other private stakeholders

to follow up the actions for which the action plans indicate them as important actors
to interact with relevant authorities for issues falling under their respective competence.

Example: Public procurement networks

DG ENTR intends to launch a call for proposals in 2008 to provide support for the **establishment of a thematic public procurement networks** in the Lead Market areas.

This would provide grant funding for the activities of the selected networks for approximately three years.

A consultation is being launched to seek views on how such thematic public procurement networks should be best supported.

All interested stakeholders, and particularly those organisations that are active public procuring authorities in the lead market areas, are invited to submit comments.

Consultation document to be available at
<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/leadmarket/leadmarket.htm>



Textiles & clothing and RTD

Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development:

EU's main instrument for funding research in Europe. The current programme, **FP7**, will run in 2007-2013 with a budget of €50.5 billion.

FP7 areas NMP (nanotechnology, materials & production technologies) and ICT (information & communication technologies) include specific textiles & clothing related topics.

First projects addressing textile & clothing research priorities started in early 2008. Target in particular SMEs, EU funding around €45 million.

2nd round of calls under evaluation, one call includes a topic on advanced personal protective equipment, directly linked to the Lead Market area.

Further opportunities will be available in future calls for proposals.

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/>



European Technology Platforms

Over 30 Technology Platforms – led by industry – provide expertise on research priorities, define medium to long-term research and technological development objectives and lay down markers for achieving them.

European Technology Platform for the Future of Textile and Clothing (ETP-FTC)

Stakeholder forum that brings together over 400 participants from the industry, research and education community as well as public authorities.

Participation possible at technical level through different working groups.

Textile Project Information Exchange and Partner Search System for preparing proposals to be submitted under FP7. To bring together research organisations involved in a particular theme and to involve manufacturers and thus to facilitate the practical exploitation of results.



Strategic Research Agenda - 3 priorities

In 2006, the ETP-FTC prepared a Strategic Research Agenda with three priority areas for development:

- From commodity to specialty products (new fibres, functionalities and sustainable production technologies).
- Expansion of textiles as the material of choice in new applications (e.g. architecture, medicine,...).
- Transformation of mass production into customisation (production of customised goods).

3rd Annual Public Conference of the Textile Platform in Brussels on
28-29 May 2008.

<http://www.euratex.org>



Promoting innovation at the local level: Enterprise Europe Network (1)

Close to **600** partner organisations in more than **40** countries, promoting competitiveness and innovation at the local level in Europe and beyond.

Services specifically designed for small and medium enterprises but also available to all businesses, research centres and universities across Europe.

One-stop shop/no wrong door

- SMEs and other organisations seeking advice will receive expert assistance and advice from the network partner closest to them.
Partner in Łódź: Foundation for Promotion of Entrepreneurship –
Fundacja Rozwoju Przedsiębiorczości

<http://www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu>



Enterprise Europe Network (2)

Information and practical advice on market opportunities, European legislation and policies relevant to a company or sector.

Help with finding suitable business partners, information on tender opportunities and international networking.

Developing the research and innovation capacities of SMEs by helping to create synergies with other research actors, foster technological cooperation and holding brokerage events.

Helping SMEs to share research results, participate in research programmes and apply for funding, particularly from the EU's 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7).

Involving SMEs and business actors in the policy-making process, by transmitting feedback to the Commission and monitoring the implementation of EU policies in the field of competitiveness and innovation.