

Kick off meeting organised by ERRIN, the main R&D&I European network

## **Launch of a new Working Group focusing on R&Di in Tourism and Sport**

- **Juan Manuel Revuelta, Chair of ERRIN's Executive Committee and Director General of the Valencian Regional Office in Brussels stressed " the importance of strengthening European regions' research and innovation capacity by identifying possible co-financing opportunities in tourism and sport fields"**
- **The meeting was organised by the Tampere regional office in Brussels with the collaboration of the region of Valencia, leader and co-leader of the Tourism Working Group.**

**(28 January 2011, Brussels)** Tourism is a key sector in the European economy which generates more than 5% of the EU GDP (indirectly more than 10%) with about 1,8 million enterprises employing around 5,2% of the total labour force (approximately 9,7 million direct jobs that raises up to 24 million jobs if we include related sectors).

Moreover, after the Lisbon Treaty came into effect in December 2009, sport and tourism have gained a new real European dimension and, in particular by promoting the competitiveness of Union undertakings in those.

As a result of these factors, ERRIN, the European Regions Research and Innovation Network has launched a Working Group on Innovation in the Tourism & Sports. This group was presented to members of the European Commission during the meeting jointly organised by Tampere and Valencian regional offices.

This working group will aim at maximizing the funding opportunities for its members, exploring direct and cross-cutting issues in the tourism field, monitoring relevant policies as well as identifying and dynamizing common interests and objectives for new cooperation initiatives among stakeholders in the member regions.

The Chair of ERRIN's Management Board and Director General of the Valencian Regional Office in Brussels, Mr. Juan Manuel Revuelta, stressed 'the importance of launching this group

to strength European region's research and innovation capacity by identifying possible co-financing opportunities in tourism and sport'.

During the event, representatives of the network of European regions for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism (NECSTouR) presented possible actions to collaborate through two case studies of regional best practices.

'It was an excellent opportunity to get some extra input from the European Commission and to discuss with them new ideas to contribute to the outlining of the EU tourism policy in the horizon 2020' underlined Mr. Revuelta.

During this meeting, more than 40 regional representatives worked together and discussed the working methodology developed by experts of Tampere University of Applied Sciences as well as the goals and working plans for 2011.

ERRIN is a Brussels-based network whose aim is to improve regional capacities in research and innovation by exploiting European funding opportunities in research and innovation, developing projects amongst member regions, shaping research and innovation policy at the European level and raising the profile of regions in Europe.

Founded in 2001 as an informal network, ERRIN is now a dynamic and respected subscription based network comprising over 90 regions most having a representational office in Brussels. ERRIN members collaborate on a regular basis via nine thematic working groups led by regions and two working groups dealing with policy and projects.

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