



## Creation of OECD LEED Forum on partnerships and local governance

### Foreword from the Chairman of the Forum Board

Local Partnerships are today widely accepted to contribute both effectively and efficiently to the reduction of unemployment and the creation of jobs. Through their design they reflect new forms of governance, i.e. non-hierarchical ways of co-operation between a wide variety of institutions (state, region, community, social partners, entrepreneurs, NGOs) and offer mechanisms to find solutions for complex problems of our societies at regional and/or local level. According to the legal framework of the respective country, the key interest groups involved and of course the main targets they pursue there exists a wide range of rather different partnership models throughout the OECD member and non-member countries. However, the valuable know-how partnerships gain on local development practices is not adequately exploited due to weak linkages between partnerships themselves and partnerships and government administrations.

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Within the Austrian strategy of Territorial Employment Pacts strong emphasis has been given to networking of partnerships and their activities. This has proven to be extremely helpful for the process of information exchange, sharing of best practice experience and – no lesser important – avoidance of duplication of bad practice.

Following discussions between national and regional representatives and partnerships respectively that have shown high interest in the creation of a similar network at an international level, the Austrian Minister of Economic Affairs and Labour, Dr. Martin Bartenstein, proposed the establishment of an international network of partnerships within the overall framework of the OECD-LEED Programme: “It shall act as a service unit to the LEED programme as well as to partnerships in all OECD countries and give advice to the Directing Committee. The Forum shall contribute to the work of the new OECD Trento Centre on Local Development and support its tasks in the field of local governance, partnership creation and networking.” The activities of the Forum are co-ordinated by the Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) in Vienna jointly with the OECD Trento Centre. This should make the best use of both the know-how of the Austrian Co-ordination Office for Territorial Employment Pacts, which is also hosted by the CSI, and the OECD expertise on governance and partnerships.

The results of the network will depend largely on the input given by the participating institutions. I would like you therefore to join the Forum and contribute actively to its programme of work. The role of partnerships in the design and implementation of policies in our countries will undoubtedly increase over the coming years. The better we understand and support their development and their work, the more we will all benefit from them.

Yours sincerely,

**Michael Förschner**  
Chairman of the Forum Board

# The partnership network: OECD LEED Forum



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**Why was the OECD LEED Forum created?** The Forum will promote an integrated approach to local development and support area-based partnerships in optimising their contribution to local governance and the effectiveness of policies.

>> **Forum mission** Through their design and implementation of area-based development strategies, partnerships gain helpful know-how on local development practices. However, this knowledge is not adequately exploited due to the weak linkages between partnerships themselves and between partnerships and government administration. The OECD Study on Local Partnership highlighted a potential for broader exchanges at international level. To respond to this need and stimulate the exchange of know-how between relevant organisations in OECD member and non-member countries, the OECD LEED Programme together with the Austrian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour created the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance. The goal of the Forum is to ensure that:

A network of partnerships is established to exchange information and experience between partnerships

- partnerships learn effectively from each other and that
- local development practitioners and policy makers at all levels learn the lessons from the partnership experience. <<

**Are you interested in participating in an information exchange at international level? If so, read more about the types of partnerships networked by the OECD LEED Forum.**

**What kind of partnerships are members of the Forum?** OECD LEED Forum partnerships are primarily focusing on employment and social issues, regional and/or entrepreneurship development and follow a multi-level, multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional approach.

>> **Forum Partnership's definition** The area-based partnership is a tool to improve governance. It seeks to 'improve policy co-ordination and adaptation to local conditions, lead to better utilisation and targeting of programmes, integrate civil society's concerns into strategic planning exercises through more widespread participatory democracy, stimulate corporate involvement in local projects and promote greater satisfaction with public policy' (OECD, Local Partnerships for Better Governance, 2001).



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The partnership's agenda is:

- to pursue a policy goal, such as stimulating economic development, promoting social cohesion, improving the quality of life;
- to attain this goal mainly through increasing the degree of co-ordination between policies and programmes across government services and levels, and adapting them to local conditions;
- where better co-ordination is not enough, to set up new projects and services;
- to work at local level to involve local actors, including the civil society, in the definition of priorities and the development of projects, and to draw on local resources and skills (OECD, Local Partnerships for Better Governance, 2001).

Forum partnerships are:

- **MULTI-LEVEL:** Partnerships decision-making involves stakeholders from supranational, national, regional and local levels.
- **MULTI-SECTORAL:** Multi-sectoral (or cross-sectoral) partnerships involve stakeholders representing various economic sectors/branches, governmental and non-governmental actors seeking to improve the co-ordination between labour market, education, economic and social policies at local and regional level.
- **MULTI-DIMENSIONAL:** Partnerships apply integrated approaches to multi-dimensional problems.

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A typical partnership member structure consists on the following actors:

- national, regional and local authorities;
- the private sector, including large firms;
- representatives of small businesses, socio-economic organisations, financial institutions, and so forth;
- the Chairs of the Committees responsible for monitoring European Union structural assistance;
- associations for the development or redevelopment of the territory in question;
- both sides of industry;
- the non-profit-making and co-operative sector;
- community groups;
- professional organisations, chambers of commerce;
- training, research and technological institutions.

(source: European Commission, Guide to Territorial Employment Pacts 2000-2006) <<

**Are you involved in a partnership operating as mentioned above? If so, you are the expert to join the OECD LEED Forum on partnerships and local governance!**

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**What are the objectives of the Forum?** The Forum network aims to give guidance in the establishment and further developments of partnerships.

**>> Forum objectives:**

- improving the dissemination capacity of the partnership experience in designing and implementing local development strategies and facilitating the transfer of expertise and exchange of experiences within and between OECD Member and non-member countries.
- creating synergies between partnership programmes of different countries and supporting the development of cross-border partnership co-operation.
- assessing and developing co-operation models between partnerships, clusters and local innovative systems.
- advising and supporting the LEED Directing Committee, partnership organisations and other stakeholders on the ways to promote an integrated approach and improve the co-ordination between labour market, education, economic and social policies at local and regional level. <<

**How to approach South Eastern European Countries?** Partnerships in the South Eastern European (SEE) countries are a crucial instrument to introduce “participation” in developing, implementing and assessing policies. They play an important role in the Forum.

**>> Forum’s approach to SEE countries** The Forum will enhance and strengthen the networking between partnerships in OECD countries and those in non-member countries, especially SEE countries. The Forum Guide on Partnerships and the Mentorship System as well as other activities of the Forum will serve this purpose. <<

**What is the Forum structure?** All interested area-based partnerships and co-ordinating bodies are invited to become members of the Forum. The Forum also welcomes participation of organisations planning to establish area-based partnerships. A Forum Board, composed of partnership co-ordinators in selected countries, advises and supports the Forum in the implementation of its activities. A Forum Co-ordination Team implements the activities of the Forum under the supervision of the OECD LEED Programme.

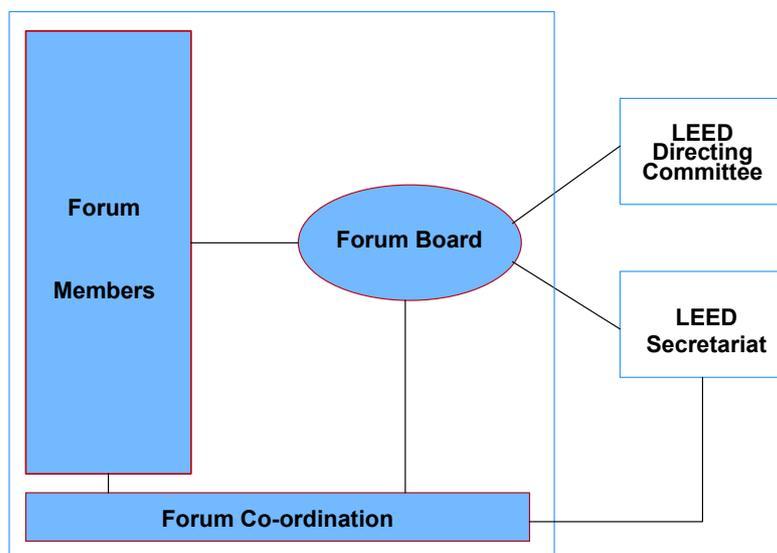
**>> Forum structure** Partnerships are the main actors of the Forum. All institutions and organisations involved in the management of area-based partnerships may become members of the Forum. Examples of the Forum members:

- government offices working in partnership at various levels;
- agencies and non-government organisations involved in the networking of partnerships at national or regional level,
- research organisations and other bodies supporting partnerships and clusters.



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## Forum Structure



The Forum Board comprises selected delegates and national partnership co-ordinators interested in providing advice on the implementation of tasks. Current members of the Board are e.g. Belgium (Ministry of the Flemish Region), Ireland (Area Development Management Ltd.), and Austria (Co-ordination Unit of Territorial Employment Pacts).

The Chairman of the Forum Board, a LEED Delegate, reports to the LEED Directing Committee once a year on the progress in carrying out the Forum tasks. The Forum Co-ordination Team is composed of experts working in the OECD LEED Trento Centre for Local Development (Italy) and the Centre for Social Innovation (Austria). <<

**Do you want to become a member of the Forum? Please contact us: [office@forum.zsi.at](mailto:office@forum.zsi.at) !**

## Forum activities



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**Forums activities** The core of the OECD LEED Forum activities is the establishment of the network of partnerships. Other activities include: building Forum data base, information exchange, Forum meetings & partnership fair and policy advice through mentorship system.

### >> Building the network

*Identification and networking of institutions.* The Forum will further develop the partnership networks built by the OECD Study on Local Partnerships and the Austrian Co-ordination Office for Territorial Employment Pacts. This network will include partnership organisations and national partnership co-ordination bodies in OECD Member countries and countries of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe.

### >> Building the data base

*Documentary base.* The Forum will collect data on partnership initiatives in OECD Member and non-member countries (list of partners, management structure, strategy, objectives, target groups and evaluation results) and gather research reports, thematic reviews and studies carried out on partnership issues.

*Guide to successful partnership building and operation.* The Forum will produce a guide to successful partnership building and operation in order to assist partnerships in their further development and help countries learn from existing experience. The topics will include the implementation of effective communication structures and implementation of horizontal projects, e.g. gender mainstreaming within partnerships.

- \_ building the network & the data base
- \_ information exchange
- \_ forum meetings & partnership fair
- \_ policy advice

### >> Information exchange

*Annual brochure.* The Forum will prepare an annual brochure providing information on national partnership programmes and strategies (partners, timeframe, budget allocation, objectives, target groups) and relevant national policies.

*Electronic newsletter.* Four thematic e-newsletters will be issued and circulated to Forum members and all interested institutions. The topics will cover cross-border partnerships co-operation activities, development of synergies between different programmes, partnerships instruments and examples of successful experiences.

*Forum website.* The Forum data base will be made accessible through the Forum website, which will be an integral part of the LEED Programme website (<http://www.oecd.org/cfe>).

*Electronic discussion group.* An electronic discussion group will be set up in order to facilitate the dialogue on strategic partnership issues and the exchange of good practices between the Forum members.

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## >> Forum meetings and international partnership fair

*Forum Board meetings.* A first Forum Board meeting took place in the Trento Centre in October 2004. The objective of the meeting was to get advice on the elaboration and implementation of the activities of the Forum.

*Forum meetings.* The first Forum meeting will be organised on 26-27 April 2005 in Vienna to exchange views and experiences on operational activities, implementation of national strategies, use of policy recommendations and evaluation methodologies. The second one will be held in 2005 in Vienna, back-to-back with the international partnership fair.

*International partnership fair.* An international partnership fair will be organised in Vienna in December 2005 gathering national and local policy makers, partnership practitioners and representatives of other interested organisations (approximately 300 participants) in order to overview the existing national partnership policies and initiatives and share best practices. Best-practice examples, selected in the preparation phase, will be presented on exhibition stands and via bi-lateral meetings.

## >> Policy advice through mentorship

*Mentorship system.* The Forum will build a mentorship system for partnerships of various countries involved. Emerging partnerships will be accompanied by relevant well-established partnerships who can act as mentors. Building on the successful experience of the partnership study visits organised between Belgium (Flanders) and Austria in 2003, and at the request of interested countries and/or partnerships, the Forum will prepare study visits and bi-lateral workshops to explore and share policy approaches and practical aspects of partnership building. <<

**Are you interested in one of the activities listed above? Please, contact us: [office@forum.zsi.at](mailto:office@forum.zsi.at) !**

# The partnership behind the OECD LEED Forum



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**>> OECD Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Programme** In 1982, 13 countries created the ILE (Local Employment Initiatives) Programme at OECD, which became in 1994 the LEED (Local Economic and Employment Development) Programme. LEED has grown ever since and today counts 33 member countries and international organisations.

The LEED Programme offers its members a uniquely active approach by providing: i) continuous monitoring and assessment of current local development practices and the diffusion of related findings; ii) analysis of initiatives, strategies and partnerships between government, business and civil society with the aim of complementing public policy and supporting local economic and social development; iii) elaboration of common methodologies and analytical frameworks for carrying out reviews and studies; and iv) a critical link both between sub-national institutions, and between the OECD and sub-national bodies.

The Forum is implemented by OECD LEED Forum Co-ordination Vienna and OECD LEED Trento Centre under the auspices of LEED Directing Committee.

Building on the capacity provided by its members, the Programme draws on the additional resources and expertise of a Partners' Club of more than 100 members (sub-national organisations, foundations, research institutes). The Partners are grouped in four fora: the Forum on Cities and Regions, the Forum on Entrepreneurship, the Forum on Social Innovation and the new Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance.

The LEED Programme organises its work along six axes which comprise the main components of integrated and endogenous area-based development strategies:

- Local governance and employment;
- Entrepreneurship ;
- Social inclusion ;
- Local authorities and development agencies;
- Evaluation, Exchange and Outreach.<<

**>> Centre for Social Innovation, Austria** The Centre for Social Innovation - CSI is a scientific institute founded as an association under the Austrian law by private investors in 1990. Social innovation is directed towards an initiation, adoption, improvement and extended applications of new forms of social processes and conducts, which effect developments in public administration, political institutions, social partners and the business world. Due to systematic interactions between scientific research and application the CSI is performing as an interface between disciplines and social spheres.

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Based upon its competence and performance the CSI is contributing to socio-economical goals and research priorities:

- supporting the social, ecological and economical advancement of today's society
- enhancing European integration by building up scientific competencies and knowledge based applications
- upgrading of infrastructure, efficiency and internationalisation of social sciences in the European Research Area (ERA)

The CSI projects top priority is to develop innovative solutions to socially important questions. Since 1999 the CSI hosts the Co-ordination Unit of Territorial Employment Pacts in Austria on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour. <<

>> **OECD LEED Trento Centre for Local Development** In 2003, the OECD Council decided to establish, in co-operation with the Italian Government and the Autonomous Province of Trento, an OECD LEED Centre for Local Development in Trento, Italy.

The mission of the Centre is to build capacities in local development in OECD member and non-member countries, with a focus on central and eastern European countries. The Centre builds on the LEED Programme's longstanding commitment to providing assistance in the design, implementation and assessment of local development strategies and its expertise on local governance, entrepreneurship and social inclusion.

The main objectives of the Centre are:

- to improve the dissemination capacity of best practices in the design and implementation of local development strategies and facilitate the transfer of expertise and exchange of experience between OECD member and non-member countries;
- to strengthen the relationship between policy makers, local development practitioners and the scientific community;
- to reinforce participative and representative democracy at sub-national level by initiating and supporting a dialogue between national and sub-national legislatures on local development issues.<<



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# News & Events

**1<sup>st</sup> Forum meeting** 26-27 April 2005, Vienna The First Forum Meeting will bring together Forum members to exchange views and experiences on operational activities, implementation of national strategies, use of policy recommendations and evaluation methodologies partnerships. For further information please contact us!

**2<sup>nd</sup> Forum Newsletter** April 2005 The second Forum Newsletter will be published in April 2005. If you did not receive the first newsletter directly from us please send an email to [rubik@forum.zsi.at](mailto:rubik@forum.zsi.at) indicating "Add to mailing list for Forum Newsletters". Thanks!

**CEI-LEED Local Development Network (LDN)** At the 7th Summit Economic Forum of the Central European Initiative in Portoroz, Slovenia, November 2004, a new initiative for the countries of Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe was launched: the CEI-LEED Local Development Network (LDN). The proposal of the CEI to create a network of local policy advisors to support economic development in its member countries coincides with the objectives of the OECD LEED Programme to foster local governance, entrepreneurship and social cohesion in Central and Eastern Europe through capacity building for local development, a mission for which OECD has just established a Centre for Local Development in Trento, Italy. The network of local advisors has been conceived as a tool to access local expertise in the target countries, foster co-operation among national and sub-national local development practitioners, identify capacity building needs and advise the activities of the Trento Centre. The network shall feed the work of the OECD, whose strength lies in the highly qualified economic analyses and the framing of criteria for development, while enhancing its impact in CEI countries (contact: [paola.babos@oecd.org](mailto:paola.babos@oecd.org) or [foerschner@forum.zsi.at](mailto:foerschner@forum.zsi.at)).

**Call for Proposals: Research Cooperation and Networking between Austria, Slovenia, Bulgaria and South-Eastern Europe** The Austrian Science and Research Liaison Offices Ljubljana/Slovenia and Sofia/Bulgaria (ASOs) announce a Call for proposals for projects in Research Cooperation and Networking between institutions in Austria, Slovenia and Bulgaria and South-Eastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro). The call wants to intensify the short-term cooperation in the scientific field of "Governance – Civil Society" with the aim to support the development of long-term scientific collaboration. Funding is provided by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture (bm:bwk) in the framework of its South-Eastern European science cooperation initiative. For further information please visit <http://www.aso.zsi.at/ausschreibung/list>



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**Seminar on "Entrepreneurship and SME Development"** 13-18 December 2004, LEED Trento Centre, Italy This one-week seminar has been especially designed for local policy-makers and practitioners from South, Central, and Eastern Europe responsible for job creation and SME promotion. For further information please visit <http://www.oecd.org/cfe>

**Conference on "Employment, Economic Development and Local Governance in Latvia"** 18 January 2005, Riga, Latvia The seminar will be a unique opportunity to debate the results of recent local governance developments in Latvia in the light of experience from other countries, analyse the main obstacles met and identify ways to progress further. For further information please visit <http://www.oecd.org/cfe>

**CALL FOR PAPERS: International conference on Local Development and Governance in Central, East and South-East Europe** 1-2 June 2005, LEED Trento Centre for Local Development, Italy Papers are invited on the following themes:

1. Design and Implementation of Local Development Strategies in Central, East and South-East Europe
2. Local Development in Central, East and South-East Europe: a Multilevel Governance Issue
3. Tools for Better Governance in Central, East and South-East Europe
4. Financing Local Development in Central, East and South-East Europe
5. Fostering Participative and Representative Democracy in Central, East and South-East Europe

For further information please visit <http://www.trento.oecd.org/>



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