



## **REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ERENET NETWORK for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting**

by  
**Dr. Antal Szabó**  
Scientific Director of ERENET  
UN retired Regional Adviser on Entrepreneurship and SMEs

**Dear Members of the ERENET Network, Dear Colleagues and friends,**

It is my great honour to welcome you at the third Annual Meeting of the ERENET. After having organized the 2<sup>nd</sup> one at the University of Kosice in the beautiful and second largest Central-European city in Eastern Slovakia, this event we decided to convene again at the Corvinus University of Budapest.

It is my great honour to welcome the Executive Board members of the European Small Business Alliance headed by Tina Sommer, President of the ESBA. I also welcome Colin Wilman, Chairman for Education and Business Support in the Federation of Small Business, UK.

Special welcome to Dipl. Kfm. Dieter Ibielski, Presidential Counsellor of the Union of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UMU) in Germany and the Chairman of the International Relation Committee of the European Union of Small and Medium Enterprises (EUSME). For his outstanding long year of international commitment we appointed him as Honorary Members of the ERENET. Wishing you Mr. Ibielski a very good health, happiness and success in your personal life we look forward to meeting and cooperating with you in the future.

For the ERENET it is very important to organize such kind of meeting within the premises of our Members' institution in order to feel, that ERENET is a common treasure and everybody could and should benefit from it.

The Entrepreneurship Education and Research Network among the Universities of Central and Eastern Europe ERENET, consists of university academicians, government representatives, experts from business services providers and responsible entrepreneurs, aiming at contribution to the promotion of entrepreneurship at the university curricula, harmonisation and development of entrepreneurial education, evaluation and development of government's SME national policies, promotion of communication and dissemination of best practices in SME promotion related issues. As you are aware, this network is an open-ended one, we are welcome anyone to member or observer status, who can fulfil the criteria. Allow me to remind you to our aims:

- (i) Creation of a network of professors, lecturers, scientists from CEE to work together in order to create common Central European set of values,
- (ii) Exchange of university curriculum, lecturers and later students,

- (iii) Launching joint research projects
- (iv) Organizing workshops, seminars on entrepreneurship
- (v) Preparing joint Internet periodical.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

It is my privilege to inform you that our ERENET Network becomes strong. As you are aware, in 2006 we had 36 Members from 16 countries representing 29 institutions. At the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ERENET Annual Meeting our Membership consisted of have 55 Members from 23 countries. Today we have 88 Members representing 43 universities, 3 ministerial authorities, 20 business service providers and 3 international organizations. We have also 3 individual experts, 1 social responsible entrepreneur and 3 PhD Students. While preparing the Annual Meeting we carried our revision of the membership. Only one member from Norway expressed the desire to discontinue his membership due to other commitment. We could also not contact our Member from the Uzhgorod National University neither by post, not by verbal connection. [In a separate document see the list of our Members.](#)

It is my deep sorrow and grief to inform you, that Miroslav Glas, Full Professor for Economics and Entrepreneurship and Head of Center for Entrepreneurship Development of the University of Ljubljana, and one of the ERENET Founders passed away. In the April issue of the ERENET PROFILE I informed you, that Professor Glas is seriously ill. I noticed that time, that [“His situation fills our heart with sorrow. We are all in the hand of our Lord and still close to the message of Easter. We wish him courage, belief, persistence and a happy recovery!”](#) Today he perhaps chairs the entrepreneurial department amongst the Angels. I kindly ask you to stand up and with one minute silence commemorate him.

We welcome our new Members. It is a long list to mention everybody. This is why I would like to welcome only our last few ones:

Prof. Dr. Hans-Jürgen Weißbach	Professor and Director of Institute of Entrepreneurship of Fachhochschule Frankfurt am Main, University of Applied Sciences (Germany)
Ana Žegarac	Executive Director, Republic Agency for the Development of SMEs and Entrepreneurship (Republic of Serbia)
Dr. Sybille Heilbrunn	Senior Lecturer, Department of Business Administration and Institute for Immigration and Integration, Academic Center Ruppin (Israel)
Alla Borodulya	Lawer & Lecturer of Philosophy and Law, PhD in Social Philosophy, Belarussian State Technological University, Department of Philosophy and Law (Belarus) and
Irina Alexeeva	External Communication Officer, Russian SME Resource Centre, Moscow (Russian Federation)

It is my honour to inform you that the Small Business Development Centre at the Budapest Corvinus University serves as Headquarters for ERENET. We are grateful to Prof. Tamás Mészáros, Rector of the University and Prof. Péter Szirmai, Head of the Small Business Development Centre, for providing us the facilities and the secretariat. On behalf of the ERENET Network I would like to

thank for their support. It is also my privilege to mention the young and enthusiastic doctorandus maintaining the secretariat work, first of all *Attila Pethoe*, Secretary of the ERENET, who also maintain the web-site,

## **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

### **1. Project on Strategies of the Development of Entrepreneurship and SME Sector in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Region**

This project was launched within the framework of the Permanent International Secretary of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PERMIS BSEC) with financial assistance of the Turkish Representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the technical assistance of the ERENET.

Since the launch of the initiative of the BSEC in 1992, it has evolved into a full-fledged regional organization in 1999 with the Permanent International Secretariat based in Istanbul and supported by the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank based in Thessalonica. Now it has 12 members - Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Ukraine and Turkey. The core element of the political and economic transformation of any country in transition is the creation of a sound private sector and further development of SME & entrepreneurship. These are considered as the principal driving forces in economic development. In order to assist to analyse the SME sector development in the BSEC region, especially in the transition economies as well as in the new or associated EU countries, the PERMIS BSEC and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung decided to organize a high-level policy meeting on achievement and task in the entrepreneurship and SME development policies to be held at the end of 2007 at the BSEC Headquarters in Istanbul. This project aims at elaboration of the background document for this meeting.

The Project was oriented towards the Development of Entrepreneurship and SME Sector Policies in the BSEC Region and by elaborating a background and discussion paper supporting a High-level Meeting of the National SME Focal Points and representatives of invited national donor institutions and international organizations for setting the direction and tasks for entrepreneurship policies, especially in the transition economies of the BSEC region, including support within the framework of the Good Neighbouring Policies of the EU and other donor support programmes.

ERENET Experts prepared and presented a report on the current SME sector in the BSEC countries following a methodology agreed with BSEC PERMIS and KAS. Country presentations included the following:

- (i) Presentation of the SME sector development;
- (ii) Legislation and steps of doing business;
- (iii) SME Support Infrastructure;
- (iv) Financing SMEs;
- (v) Tasks for improvement and further development of the SME sector; and
- (vi) SWOT analysis of the SME sector presenting the Strength-Weakness-Opportunities-Threats.

Country presentations were prepared by the following ERENET Experts:

- Prof. Dr. Dejan ERIC, School of Economics at the University of Belgrade and the Belgrade Banking Academy, General Manager of Institute of Economic Science, the Republic of Serbia;
- Dr. Dilek ÇETINDAMER, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Management, Sabancı University, Istanbul, Turkey;
- Mr. Umut Yılmaz CETINKAYA, Ph.D. Candidate, Anchora Consultancy, Science and Technology Policies Research Center, Middle East Technical University (METU), the Republic of Turkey;
- Dr. Irina NAOUMOVA, Associated Professor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA and at the State University–Higher School of Economics within the EMBA Program, Moscow.
- Mrs. Anna PETROSYAN, Ph.D. in Economics, Chief Specialist, Department of Small and Medium Entrepreneurship (SME) Development, Ministry of Trade and Economic Development, the Republic of Armenia;
- Prof. Alakbar MAMMADOV, President of the National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers) Organizations, the Republic of Azerbaijan; and
- Dr. Antal SZABO, UN ret. Regional Adviser, Scientific Director of ERENET, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary.

The Workshop on “Strategies of the Development of Entrepreneurship and SME Sector in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Region” was held in Istanbul on 22-24 November 2007.

The Konrad Adenauer Foundation published the material prepared by the ERENET team titled “Strategies for the Development of Entrepreneurship and the SME sector in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation region”, Ankara, 2008, ISBN: 978-975-7968-74-0.

## **2. Project on Benchmarking of Entrepreneurship Education in Selected EU and North-American Countries**

The purpose of the project was to collect current practice in entrepreneurship education at the Romanian universities as well as collect best practices and curriculums in entrepreneurship education in the old, new and associated EU countries as well as in North-America in order to develop and establish an advance similar education in the country too. The objectives of the present project were elaborated by the academic staff of Management-Economics Department of Petru Maior University of Targu-Mures. The project wishes to gather information in the field of investigation and implementation of the entrepreneurial education in the Romanian universities, specialised institutions of Romania and European Union to create an international research network and to elaborate a project within the Programme Framework 7.

This project was coordinated by As. Prof. Zsuzsanna Katalin Szabó, Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Juridical and Administrative Sciences at the Petru Maior University of Targu-Muresh (Romania) in cooperation with Dr. Antal Szabó, Scientific Director of ERENET.

As part of the Project, the findings and national country studies were presented and discussed within the framework of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Economics, Law and Management Conference - ICELM - held on 4-7 June 2008 at the Petru Maior University. The following ERENET members prepared presentation to this Conference:

**Education for Entrepreneurship from Kindergarten to Adult Learning**

Dr. Antal Szabó, UN ret. Regional Adviser, Scientific Director of ERENET,  
Budapest/Hungary

**Student's Entrepreneurial Attitudes and Entrepreneurship Education in 14 Countries**

Dr. László Szerb, Associate Professor, University of Pécs, Faculty of Business and Economics, Hungary

**Entrepreneurship Education in Croatia**

Dr. Sc. Sania Pfeifer, Associate Professor of Management, Faculty of Economics, J.J. Strossmayer University, Osijek, Croatia –

**Entrepreneurship Education at the Hungarian Universities from Bachelor via entrepreneurial incubating to Ph.Degree**

Prof. Péter Szirmai, Head of Small Business Development Centre, and Katalin Szakács, PhD Student, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary

**Teaching Entrepreneurship in Hungary**

Krisztián Csapó, Assistant Professor, and Attila Pethoe, Assistant Professor, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary

**Entrepreneurship Education in Poland**

Professor Dr. Krzysztof Wach, Cracow University of Economics, Poland

**Entrepreneurship Education in Slovakia**

Dr. Vincent Šoltés, Associated Professor, Faculty of Economics, Technical University of Košice, Slovakia

**Canadian Entrepreneurial Education**

Dr. Laurence Hewick, Hewick Research Inc., Burlington, Canada

**Entrepreneurship Education in France**

Dr. Million Jean-Claude \*, I.U.T Louis Pasteur 67300 Schiltigheim, France

**Entrepreneurship Education in Germany**

Dr. Hans-Jürgen Weissbach, Professor Fachhochschule, University of Applied Sciences Institute for Entrepreneurship, Frankfurt am Main, Germany

**Entrepreneurship and Social Responsibility**

Madi Sharma \*, Chief Executive, MADI Group, The Ethnic Trail, UK, and European Economic & Social Committee, Brussels, Belgium

**Can Business Education Alter Cultural Norms?**

Jim Lavon Finlay \*, Lebanese American University, Lebanon

**Developing Entrepreneurship in Romanian Tourism Business**

Cristina R. Coloisteanu \*, Academy of Economics Studies Bucharest, Romania

*Remarks:* Experts marked by \* are not ERENET Members

The main papers of the Conference, conclusions and recommendations of the Round Table held as part of the ICELM3 see at ERENET PROFILE Vo.III. No.11. (see at <http://www.erenet.org/publications/profile11.pdf>). Further papers will be published in the ERENET PROFILE Vo.IV.No.13 to be issued in January 2009.

## ERENET PROFILE

## ERENET PROFILE

It is my great honour to inform you, that we successfully launched our Internet periodical **ERENET PROFIL**. One of our strategies was to launch an Internet-based periodical ERENET PROFIL. The aim and purpose of the periodical is to enhance local and regional understanding of the possibilities offered by small and medium enterprise. It is equally directed to encouraging cooperation among experts who are concerned with entrepreneurship, small and medium enterprise research and the necessary education and training required to encourage economic development across Europe.

For the ERENET Annual Meeting we decided to issue a special publication devoted to our first jubilee celebrating the tenth issue of ERENET PROFILE. In the meanwhile we issued also our 11<sup>th</sup> publication devoted to entrepreneurship education. Some 700 pages on entrepreneurship development, education, the SME sector, business services providers, institutions, events and expert profiles and more have been explored. Unfortunately this compilation due to its size could not be complete. However, all our papers, contributions, and news you could find at our web-site at <http://www.erenet.org>

In the meanwhile we issued also our 11<sup>th</sup> publication devoted to entrepreneurship education.

Let me also mention that ERENET PROFILE has been received an international recognition through obtaining an ISSN code 1789-624X. This has been registered in Paris. In addition to this I would like to inform you, that we got a compliment for the US Congress Library that “this periodical is one of the best sources of information on entrepreneurship development in Central and Eastern Europe”.

I would like to express my gratitude to *Mr. Tamás Tóth*, Student of the Budapest Technical University, for designing the logo of the ERENET as well as ERENET PROFILE. I also thank *Ms. Szilvia Nagy*, a young Hungarian promising artist, who provided her fantasy drawing decorating our last periodicals.

## COOPERATION WITH OTHER NETWORKS

International organizations and initiatives have been discovered ERENET. Discussions have been started in order to create synergy among few initiatives in CEE.

1. **European Small Business Alliance (ESBA)**  
<http://www.esba-europe.org/>

ESBA is a non-party political group which cares for entrepreneurs and the self-employed and represents them through targeted advocacy and profiling activities. ESBA also works towards the development of strong, independent advocacy and benefits groups in all EU countries. ESBA is

welcomed the Entrepreneurship and Research and Education Network of Central European Universities (ERENET) as a new Pan-European Member.

The European Commission has been launched its proposal for a Small Business Act for Europe demonstrating the recent improvement in the attention paid to the needs of small businesses by EU and national policy makers. Many challenges lay ahead, however, in order for entrepreneurs feel the tangible benefits of the EU's SME policy. Therefore, ESBA look forward to sharing our experiences of the key topics of entrepreneurship education and business services providers and to learning from the significant expertise of ERENET's members in September.

ESBA inaugurated its 10<sup>th</sup> years anniversary in Brussels. ERENET was invited too. Since 1998, ESBA has become one of the major SME organizations in Europe, representing almost 1 million small businesses in 36 European countries. However, due to lack of financial resources we could not attend in this important event.

ESBA and ERENET agreed to exchange information and send to each other all relevant information. We highly appreciate the issue of the ESBA Bulletin with ESBA views on EU news and views on entrepreneurship.

2. **idisc - infoDev Incubator Support Center**  
<http://www.ecabit.org>

**ECAbit** incubators and technology parks network aims to add value to its members' activities by fostering and strengthening innovation and entrepreneurship support, exchanging information and knowledge, collaborating among incubators and entrepreneurs in the ECA region and on global level, and disseminating knowledge about national SME and innovation development policies and programs. See ERENET became a Member of the **ECAbit**, which stands for **Eastern European and Central Asian Business Incubators and Technology Parks Network**. At time being, ECAbit counts 30 full members from 15 countries, including associations from Russia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz Republic and the Ukraine representing about 180 incubators.

## **PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

Since the date of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ERENET Annual Meeting, the Scientific Director of the ERENET was invited and participated in the following international events:

1. The ERENET Scientific Director assisted in organizing and moderating the Workshop on "SMEs in the Tourism Sector" was held in Athens, the Hellenic Republic, on 25-27 April 2007.
2. International Conference on "The Role of Business Incubators in the Development of Competitiveness" organized on 12-14 September 2007 in Osijek. Paper was presented on "University Business Incubation in Nurturing Spin-Off – the Experience of the Corvinus University". Dr. Laurence Hewick, ERENET Member from Canada, also attended this workshop. While staying in Osijek, Mr. Szabó visited Prof. Slavica Singer, UNESCO Chair on Entrepreneurship at the Faculty of Economics at the J.J. Strossmayer University.

3. World Entrepreneurship Summit WES8, Panelist in Youth Entrepreneurship, held on 10-11 January 2008 at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London. Prof. Zsuzsanna Szabó, Dean of the Economic Faculty of the Petru Maior University also attended this Summit.
4. Tina Sommer, Chairman of European and International Affairs of the Federation of Small Businesses (UK) invited ERENET to the next FSB Annual Meeting held on 13-15 March 2008 in London.
5. The ERENET Scientific Director assisted in organizing and moderating the Workshop on “Social Responsible Entrepreneurship for SMEs” held in Moscow, the Russian Federation, on 18-20 June 2008. It was jointly organized by the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS) and the Representation of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (Foundation) (KAS) for Turkey. Prof. Irina Naoumova, Associate Professor at the State University-Higher School of Economics, Department of General and Strategic Management, EMBA Program, Moscow, and Visiting Associate Professor, Department of Management, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Contact was established with the Russian SME Research Centre, the highest and prestigious SME information source in the Russian Federation. Its External Communication Director, Irina Alexeeva, later became a Member of the ERENET.