

## Adoption of the pre-commercial procurement communication

Dear ETP members,

It is our pleasure to inform you that end of last year, Friday 14 December, the EU Commission adopted a Communication (COM/2007/799) and Staff Working Document (SEC/2007/1668) on pre-commercial procurement.

In 2006 the Aho report called for actions that would stimulate competitive demand, such as public procurement and standards, to facilitate the development of new lead markets for innovative products and services in Europe. A few months later an ad-hoc working group of the NAT IST Directors Forum started investigating in more detail how concretely public procurement could stimulate research and development more intensively. Out of the group's work a new procurement concept was born, called pre-commercial procurement. During the course of 2007 this concept was refined based on continuing feedback from some members of the National IST Directors Forum, ISTAG, ETPs etc. Many thanks to all the people that have contributed to this effort!

Pre-commercial procurement concerns the purchase of R&D of new solutions for mid-to-long term challenges faced by the public sector for which there are no solutions available on the market yet. Such challenges include for example ensuring high quality affordable health care to cope with the impacts of an ageing population, the fight against climate change, improving energy efficiency, ensuring higher quality and better access to education, more effective dealing with security threats etc.

By acting as technologically demanding first buyers, public procurers can drive innovation from the demand side. This enables public authorities to innovate the provision of public services faster and creates opportunities for European companies to take international leadership in new markets.

The aim of the Communication is to draw the attention of Member States to the underutilised opportunity of pre-commercial procurement and to launch a debate on the application of pre-commercial procurement in strategic areas of public interest such as Health, Energy, Transport, Environment etc. The Associated Staff Working Paper provides, by way of example, one implementation of pre-commercial procurement in line with the existing legal framework. The pre-commercial procurement approach presented enables public authorities to procure R&D services while sharing development risks and benefits with suppliers and does not constitute State aid.

We are looking forward to the debate on the pre-commercial procurement communication in the European Parliament and European Council in the coming months in the context of the wider debate on demand driven innovation and lead markets.

The Communication can be found on our website at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/research/priv\\_invest/pcp/documents/commpcp.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/research/priv_invest/pcp/documents/commpcp.pdf)

It is available in all Community languages on Eur-lex (search via the document nr COM/2007/799):

[http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/RECH\\_naturel.do](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/RECH_naturel.do)

The Associated Staff Working Paper can be found at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/research/priv\\_invest/pcp/documents/sec\\_2007\\_1668.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/research/priv_invest/pcp/documents/sec_2007_1668.pdf)

For the moment this document is only available in English.

The presentation of the press briefing can be found at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/research/priv\\_invest/pcp/documents/pcp/pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/research/priv_invest/pcp/documents/pcp/pdf)

In case you require further information don't hesitate to contact the Commission Services:

[lieve.bos@ec.europa.eu](mailto:lieve.bos@ec.europa.eu).

Kind Regards and Best Wishes for the New Year,  
Lieve Bos  
European Commission -DG Information Society