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Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs” to boost creation of small enterprises

Are you thinking about setting up your own business or are you already a successful entrepreneur? The Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs exchange scheme offers an excellent opportunity for new entrepreneurs to acquire relevant skills for managing a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME). The new entrepreneurs will learn how to manage an SME as well as getting familiar with the business environment in another EU country by working with an experienced entrepreneur. “Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs” was launched by the European Commission in February 2009.

European Commission Vice President Antonio Tajani, responsible for enterprise and industry policy, said: “During these difficult economic times we need to unlock the huge potential of start-up entrepreneurs and stimulate them to take the final step and set up a new enterprise. They gain a unique opportunity to learn from experienced colleagues so that their business ideas can become a reality. We need more SMEs to get out of the current crisis. They are creating most new jobs and are the driving force of our economy.”

New entrepreneurs can choose to stay between 1 to 6 months with an experienced entrepreneur. During that period, they are expected to acquire relevant start-up and SME management knowledge in areas like financial and operational management, development of innovative products and services, successful sales and marketing practices, European commercial law and the single European market.

Host entrepreneurs are experienced entrepreneurs who own or manage an SME in the EU. They will also benefit from the scheme through enhancing their market access and identifying potential partners in other EU countries. The scheme will facilitate networking between entrepreneurs by building upon cross-border knowledge and experience within the EU.

Tajani underlined that the level of internationalisation of SMEs needs to be improved, given that only few SMEs exporting their goods and services within or outside the EU.

So far more than 50 exchanges have taken place while 100 are currently carried out. There are more than 1800 applications with Italy and Spain accounting for more than 45% of the total applications.

“Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs” is financed by the European Commission and operates across EU Member States with the help of more than 160 intermediary organisations which have prominent business support background, such as Chambers of Commerce, business support organisations or start-up centres.

Information on how to apply can be found at www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu
[Case studies of visits can be found here](#)