



CISTRANA news - workshop report published: National Policy Priorities and RTD Programmes in the Field of ICT

CISTRANA's first workshop offers insights into national approaches to research funding for ICT with an outlook towards the future of programme coordination in the European Research Area

On 8 October 2005 the CISTRANA project held its first event in a series of workshops that aim to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices between actors involved in national research programmes in the area of information and communication technologies (ICT). The workshops build on findings of the extensive survey of National Public Funding for Research in Information and Communications Technologies in 32 European Member and Associated States and contribute to the analysis on national priorities, RTD programmes, procedures and actors due to be published by CISTRANA later in 2006.

To deepen the understanding of national approaches to financing ICT research in Europe, the series was launched with the workshop on National Policy Priorities and RTD Programmes in the Field of ICT. To set the context to the variety and depth of the European ICT RTD landscape the speakers highlighted challenges such as arriving at a common definition of what is considered an ICT RTD programme - both in terms of the meaning of the word "programme" and in national views on what constitutes ICT research.

The latter of these leads to yet another challenge: how to compare these programmes, and in particular, their strategic focus areas. Both the study and the discussion reiterate the need for a European ICT taxonomy as a basis for enhanced information exchange and the formulation of initiatives for the coordination of European ICT research (a topic addressed in detail in upcoming CISTRANA workshop).

The speakers offered a brief outlook on further issues addressed by the survey - such as key actors involved in policy making and RTD programmes, and the three typical phases programme initiation, implementation and evaluation (topics addressed in detail in upcoming CISTRANA workshops)

Representatives of national research funding organisations followed, presenting the rationales behind national strategies for RTD funding in the ICT areas, with discussions exploring issues such as the types of programmes and other funding instruments, bottom-up approaches with wide ICT coverage vs. focused top-down schemes targeting particular ICT topics, technological vs. application area focus, etc., as well as strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats (SWOT) concerning the national systems. Participants followed with reflections on deepening cooperation within the European Research Area at a programme level - a discussion also summarized in the workshop report in the frame of a SWOT analysis.

Further information and workshop material available at:

<http://www.cistrana.org>