

The Global Forum 2012

Any crisis gives opportunity. The globalization also!

So we should turn our efforts to propose a new sustainable economy. Our economy suffers of short term financing priority. The concentration of financial power in some hands has been studied. Five dealers seem to be so rich that they are able to manipulate the stock exchange. We think that innovation policy is essential for Europe and innovation means long term investment, social and environmental responsibility are important for the society, the territories and enterprises.

Innovation policy has been a political priority in many countries.

The European commission, in 2008, published a guidebook on Regional policy impact (Assessment and benchmarking). About 50 regions participated and developed some indicators and recommendations, but with a relatively low success. The indicators and conclusions seem too general and difficult to be operational.

My presentation concerns a Think Tank created by the Sophia Antipolis Foundation (including entrepreneurs, scientists, business angels, JCE, ...) in order to:

A – Develop a set of **innovation criteria** devoted to entrepreneurship activity (from early stage start up and to marketing product of SMEs) and a **network of experts** in the corresponding field of competence.

B – Take part in the study of new legal entities (multipurpose societies devoted not only on earning money but also to the sustainability, long term connexion with the territory, long life education for the personal, openness to environmental skills, etc.).

A – We decided to create a subgroup under the leadership of a successful entrepreneur (Georges Kayanankis).

This group decided to be pragmatic and have direct interviews (2 or 3 hours) with entrepreneurs. Fifty of them have been made in the Region PACA, most of them in Sophia Antipolis.

This direct bottom up approach gave a lot of interesting information. Some new ideas and conclusions appeared which, of course, need confirmation.

First point. Early stage money is available. (Love money and Business Angels money).

Second. Innovation action has to be put in contact with the market. Different potential clients may suggest some modification. The flexibility in the use of innovation should be accepted by the entrepreneurs. This process could be named flexible product marketing. A long life education system should be developed on this topic which seems to be very rare in Europe (and very extended in USA).

A third point. The importance and availability of a "parrainage". Seniors in the field, men or women, able to give a rapid advice like: *"Phone to X and to Y, using my name. Your offer or your problem will be of interest for them. They know your field of interest and the difficulties. They know what your future market needs"*.

Such indications save time. They are often more helpful than a lot of money.

Many seniors are available and this means we must think to facilitate this connexion between generations for the benefit of all.

Point four. Never use the extra-money you have if possible. Be flexible and think that your clients and subcontractors are your best marketing help.

Many others conclusions appear after six months of work by this small Think Tank using the bottom up approaches.

B – Legal entity.

In California, a new type of society has been promoted. The **multi purpose society** have social or environmental objectives. A system of certification exists (B Labs). This develops rapidly in many parts of the US and Canada.

A PhD student of Professor Hatchuel (Mines Paristech), studies the B Labs certification systems.

Other experiences, on different level of development exist already in France.

A French rating agency, named VIGEO, uses some social and environmental criteria which could give way to social oriented societies.

A group initiated by the Region Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur promotes social oriented societies with regional help (chaired by Philippe Chereau). The French Senate has created a Commission on the subject.

A group in connexion with our Think Tank and ParisTech, the *Collège des Bernardins*, which includes many social entrepreneurs and past presidents of big corporations, works on the same lines. Cooperation with the French German association of Science and Technology and the Franco-German juridical association should be involved.

The Global Forum, this convivial community thanks to the continuous action of Sylviane Toporkoff is, on my opinion, the best place to talk of these changes which could if successful be a changing of paradigm of our social capitalist economy, open to innovation with societal and environmental interest.

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