

GENERAL PRACTICAL INFORMATION

On the Conference

"Microfinance: a tool for growth and employment in Europe"

(Nice/France, 8-10 September 2008)

From 8 to 10 September 2008, the European Microfinance Network (EMN) is organising its 5th Annual Conference at the Acropolis in Nice, France. As the leading professional network in Europe, the EMN will welcome between 300 and 400 participants to this event, including bankers, researchers, practitioners, investors, regional or national government and European Commission representatives, policy makers, the private sector and the media.

The conference is being co-organised by the *Adie* (French Association for the right to economic initiative) and has received funding from the European Commission, *Crédit Coopératif*, *BNP Paribas*, *MicroBank la Caixa*, *Fondation Levi Strauss*, *Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations*, *Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region* and *City of Nice*. This fifth annual conference is also the fifth anniversary of EMN.

1/ Status and purpose

► **Status:** The European Microfinance Network (EMN) is a Non-Governmental Organisation ("Association loi 1901", under the French legislation) which was officially registered in Paris on 23 May 2003. It was created with financial support from the European Union and the French *Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations* (CDC). Its founding members are *Adie*, *Nef* and *Evers&Jung*.

► **Purpose:** EMN's mission is to promote microfinance by assisting the fight against unemployment and social exclusion through self-employment. This will be achieved by supporting the development of microfinance organisations through the dissemination of good practices and by improving the regulatory frameworks at the European Union and Member State levels.

EMN's 5th Annual Conference is particularly important as it will be an opportunity to analyse and emphasise the recent "European Initiative for the Development of Microcredit in Support of Growth and Employment" of the European Commission, which should help support the development of the sector in Europe in the coming years. The Conference is also the fifth anniversary of EMN.

2/ Dates and Venue

▶ **Date:** Monday 8 to Wednesday 10 September 2008 (inclusive)

▶ **Venue:** The Conference will be held in the "Acropolis" Congress Centre in Nice.

Address:

Acropolis
1 Esplanade du Président John Fitzgerald Kennedy
06300 Nice

Located right in Nice city centre and 15 minutes from the airport, the Acropolis-Congress and Acropolis-Exhibition Complex has 5 auditoriums with 250 to 2,500 seats, 50 meeting rooms with 20 to 800 seats and 26,000 m² of exhibition space.

3/ Participants

▶ **States and institutions represented:**

The EMN Conference will welcome bankers, researchers, practitioners, investors, regional or national government and European Commission representatives, policy makers, the private sector and the media. Speeches will be given by representatives of the European Commission (Directorates-General for Employment, Regional Policy and Enterprise and Industry), microfinance organisations in various European countries (France, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, etc.), banks (KfW, BNP Paribas) and Eurofi.

▶ **Level:** European/international

▶ **Total number of participants:** between 300 and 400

4/ Programme

▶ **Start and end:** Opening ceremony with a cocktail/buffet on 8 September from 5.30pm to 7pm and closing ceremony on 10 September from 5.30pm to 6pm (attended by Danuta Hübne – Commissioner for Regional Policy (?), Catherine Guy-Quint – MEP, Michel Vauzelle- President of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region, Daniel Lebègue – Co-President of Eurofi and Maria Nowak – President of EMN).

► **Programme:**

Sept. 8	<p>Possibility of registration in the afternoon <i>Opening ceremony from 5.30pm to 7pm with a cocktail/buffet</i></p>
Sept. 9	<p>EMN Conference: <i>9am to 9.30am Registration, welcome of participants</i> 9.30am to 11am Plenary session 11am to 11.30am Coffee break 11.30am to 12.30pm Networking – European Café <i>12.30am to 2pm Lunch - buffet</i> 2pm to 4pm Five simultaneous workshops <i>4pm to 4.30pm Coffee break</i> 4.30pm to 6pm EMN General Assembly <i>8pm Dinner/buffet with Social Event</i></p>
Sept 10	<p>EMN Conference: 9am to 10.30am Simultaneous workshops – Fringe meetings <i>10.30am to 11am Coffee break</i> 11am to 11.30am Presidential debate 11.30am to 1pm Celebrating 5 years of EMN activities <i>1pm to 2.30pm Lunch</i></p> <p>EMN and Eurofi Conference: 2.30pm to 4pm Plenary session 4pm to 4.30pm Coffee break 4.30pm to 5.30pm Plenary session 5.30pm to 6pm Closing ceremony</p>

5/ Interpreting service

- ▶ **Working languages:** English and French

Interpreting into Russian, Spanish and Romanian will be provided as requested. These services will be available for the plenary sessions and for some of the workshops.

6/ Press information

- ▶ **Press centre:** A press stand will be set up in the entrance hall of the Acropolis throughout the Conference.

- ▶ **Press contacts:** Maria Franco; +33 (0)1 56 03 59 68; m.franco@european-microfinance.org