



**INNOVATION APPLIED TO THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF RETAIL TRADE IN THE EU**

# Best Practices in the Retail Trade Sector



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I have accepted with pleasure to contribute to the publication, within the Innocommerce project, of this "Catalogue of Best Practices" on SMEs belonging to the retail trade sector.

In the vast majority of the Member States, small trade is constantly pushed to turn to innovation in the broad sense. This if it intends to oppose the power of large trade businesses and their localisation often outside urban areas, a fact which implies the loss of the purchasing power of traditional trade.

Retail trade and handicraft have the duty to give value to their strengths in order to promote customer loyalty and extend their business. A miraculous solution does not exist, also because challenges are very different, depending on the place where the business is located: urban areas or rural regions. To accept such challenges, tradesmen and craftsmen are obliged to place themselves considering the competitors and to try to improve their own competitiveness.

Best practices presented in this catalogue offer a wide margin of possibility.

Some practices regard the business manager and his/her staff. Among other things, they take into account the knowledge of a second language; a better knowledge and respect of European and national regulations with the help of an improved training; learning techniques to improve the quality of welcoming and customer service; some market analysis.

Other practices are the result of a common effort of regenerating urban areas on behalf of Authorities, Chambers of Crafts, of Commerce and Industry, of architects and traders in order to give a new image to old town centres. The rehabilitation of old town areas allows new businesses and restaurants to open, making these areas more attractive for citizens in general.

Furthermore, the exchange of best practices in cross border regions represents an excellent initiative to bring traders closer to citizens.

The project about children crèches with flexible working hours has also attracted my attention. It allows businesswomen and their female employees to ensure their presence in shops even late.

All these projects have the merit to contribute to the research of better competitiveness of the small trade and European handicraft, in order to get the advantages of the yearly growth of the volume of retail trade sales in Europe.

Françoise LE BAIL  
Deputy Director General,  
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Special representative of SMEs at the European Commission

## INDEX

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>p. 5</b>
<b>1. Situation of retail trade in the EU and in the countries of the project's partners</b>	<b>p. 6</b>
<b>2. Identification of best practices: objectives and methodology</b>	<b>p. 13</b>
<b>3. Best Practices in the retail trade sector: reading grid and information sheets</b>	<b>p. 17</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>p. 43</b>

*Innocommerce* is a project funded within the framework of the Community programme Interreg IIIC South whose objective is to develop strategies and action plans to introduce innovation in European retail small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

Different institutions of four European countries are involved in this project; these have decided to study the strategies which allow defining and putting into practice actual actions so that innovation can find the space it deserves in the sector of small businesses.

The project especially pivots on innovation applied on trade training and territorial economic research.

The commercial sector faces great challenges. Training and research are two crucial vectors for development, which today are only partially taken into consideration within the retail trade sector. This sector needs to innovate in order to support its activity, which is endangered by large scale retail trade.

The needs for adaptation are imperatives in order to avoid serious consequences. It should not be forgotten that trade is a fundamental integral element of urban areas. The city does not exist without trade. In this context, the project aims at identifying and developing the necessary tools for small businesses to boost their commercial activity and to increase their competitiveness. The sector of retail trade needs specific proposals. The current situation is quite serious since this is a key sector in the creation of long-term work positions.

Activities carried out within the framework of *Innocommerce* have been focused on:

1. the definition of the current framework of vocational training for the trade sector – from the point of view of both demand and supply – in order to outline the action plans at local level so that they can allow an effective correspondence between the two components.
2. the survey on the need of innovation in the trade sector in order to outline a proposal of action which allows enterprises to hold their competitiveness.

Finally, the review of successful cases at European level regarding the management of retail trade, extending the field of reference and taking into consideration initiatives related to activities of assistance provided for operators of the sector, has led to the realization of this "Catalogue of Best Practices in the retail trade sector" which is available for consultation in order to replicate positive experiences at local level.

For more information, please visit the project's website at:  
[www.innocommerce.net](http://www.innocommerce.net)



EU

## Retail trade at Community level

The sector-object of our study has a significant impact on the community economy. Recent Eurostat data (February 2006) indicate that within the European Union, active businesses in retail trade were 3.3 million in 2002. They generated a turnover of about 2,000 billion Euro, provided work for 15.5 million people and produced an added value of about 400 billion Euro.

As far as employment with regard to the dimensions of businesses is concerned, in retail trade, micro businesses (1-9 employees) were those employing the larger number of people with about 6.5 million workers (43% of the EU total).

Large businesses (250 or more employees) were in second place, with about 5.3 million employed people (35%), while small and medium businesses (10-249 employees) provided work for about 3.3 million people (22%).

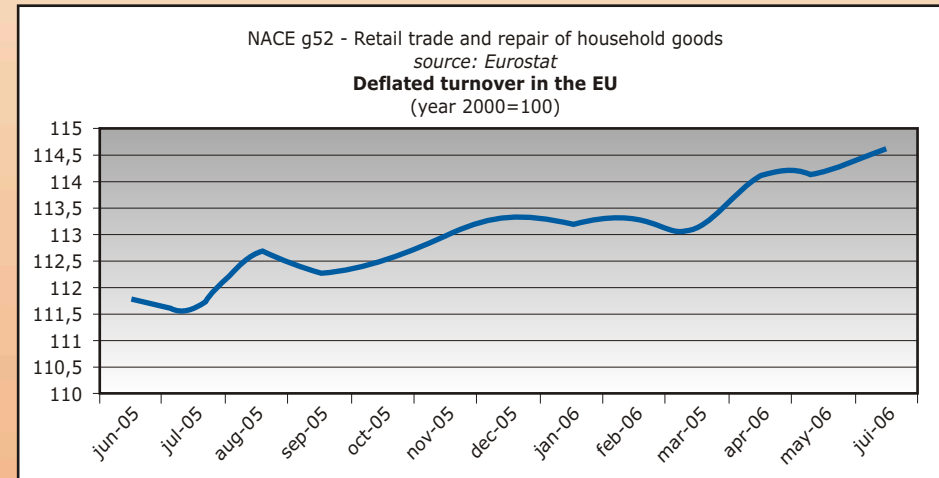
The importance of micro businesses is also confirmed by observing the number of shops compared to the areas of sale. The smallest units of sale (up to 200 m<sup>2</sup>) represent the majority of the total of retail trade businesses.

The composition of the workforce shows that more women rather than men are employed in retail trade which is characterized by a high presence of part-time workers (about 30% of the total).

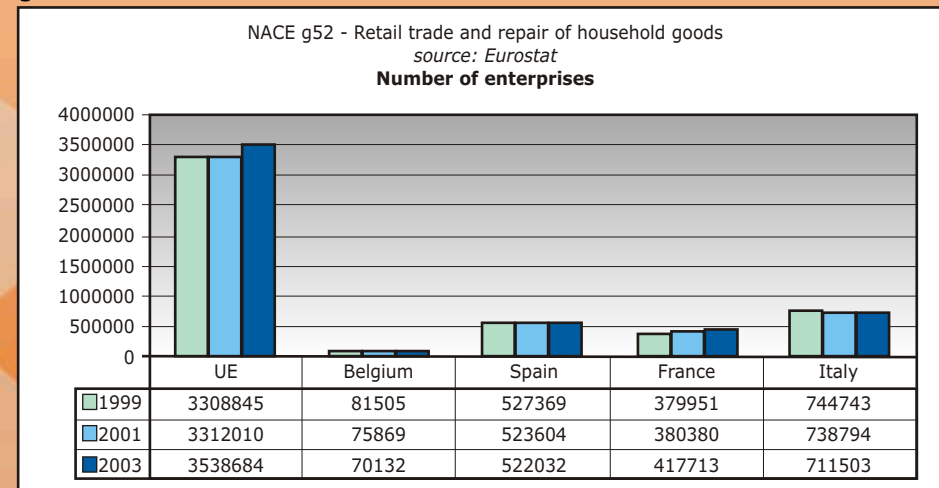
## The evolution of the sector

According to Eurostat data, in June 2006 the volume of sale in retail trade experienced an increase of 2.7% in the EU compared to the data related to the same month in 2005, while the increase recorded in the Euro zone was of 1.5%.

In relation to data of May 2006, the index of sale has grown of 0.4% in the EU and 0.5% in the Euro zone.



The main economic indicators of the structural statistics about businesses (number of businesses, volume of turnover, value added at factor cost, number of employed people) which we have decided to examine for the retail trade sector on both EU level and the one of countries that are partners of the project, show that in the last years, this sector has been characterized by a positive trend with significant signs of growth.





## BELGIUM

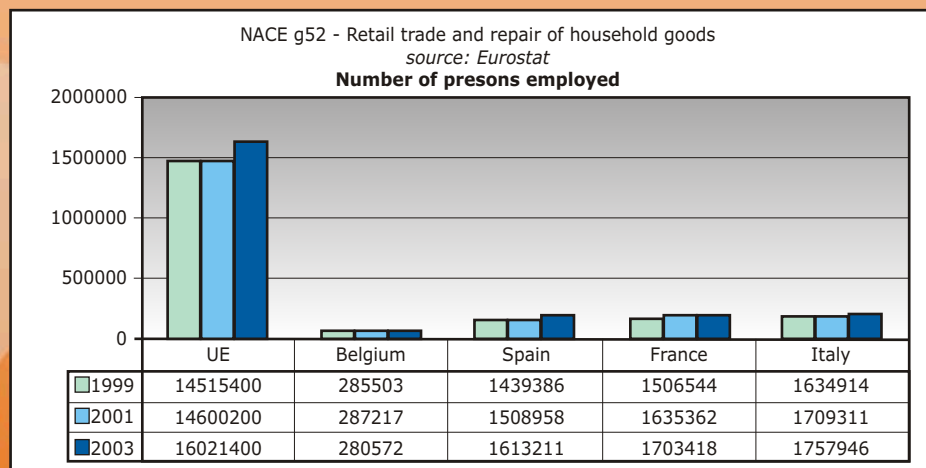
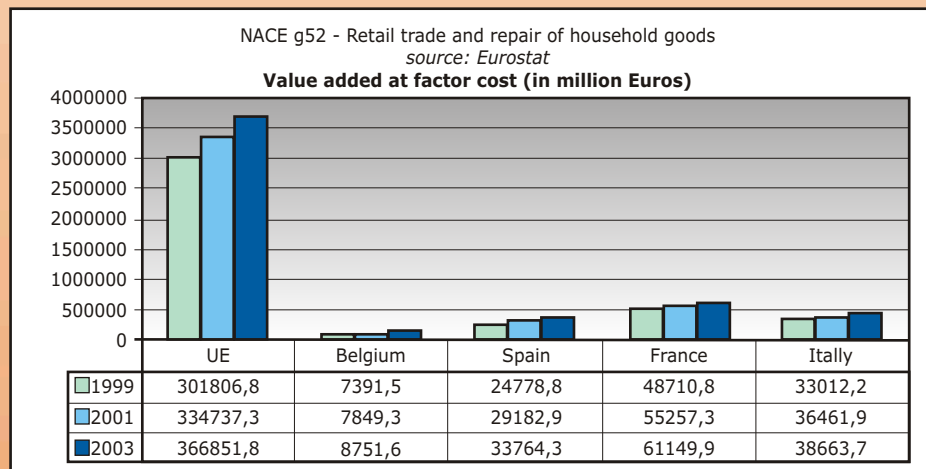
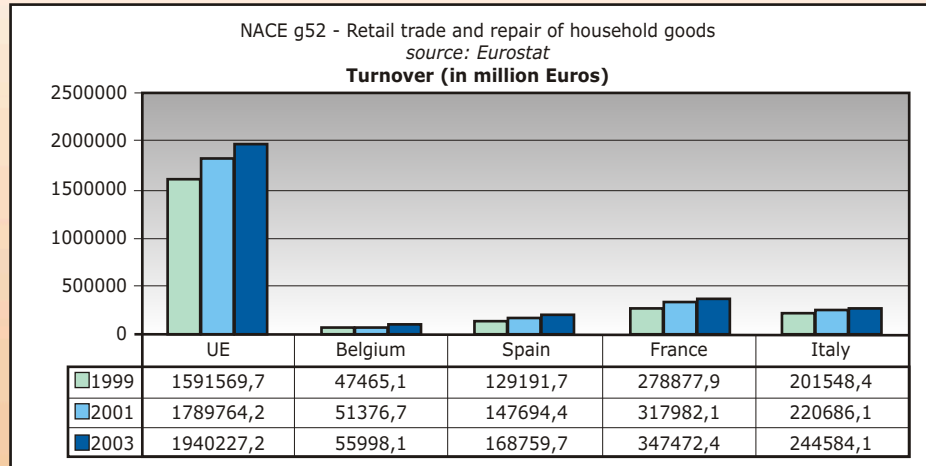
As for the other European countries, 2005 was a difficult year for Belgium too on both economic and financial levels. This was mainly due to, above all, the sharp increase in prices for energy products. Such increase has had a hard impact on both costs of production and on family expenses.

Limited increase of consumption (1.9% versus 2.8% in 2004) is due to the less satisfactory pace of the general activity and to high oil price. They both have had a negative influence on the purchasing power of families whose rate of increase has not exceeded 0.9%.

Substantial recovery coming from a trend drop in the single currency, which is recently showing in relation to the dollar, is expected in 2006. This drop will improve, to some extent, competitiveness in export. Forecasts from official sources (BNB) indicate a possible increase of the GDP in 2006 equal to 2.2%. This increase will be particularly supported by an internal demand growing at the GDP rate, which is anyway affected by the extreme instability of energy prices.

Signs of significant recovery are also recorded in the trade sector and in particular with regard to the volume of retail sales. Belgium is in the group of countries of the European Union which record the most significant increase of this production activity with positive growth in both the "food" and "non food" sectors.

*Source: Federal Public Economy Service*





## SPAIN

In 2005, Spanish trade activities contributed 11.35% to the national Gross Value Added (GVA). Within this sector, retail trade represented 5.23% of the national GVA.

In 2005, 550,379 businesses made up the retail trade sector. In the last ten years (1996-2005), the number of small Spanish businesses has experienced a fall of 0.92% caused by the reorganization of the sector which was characterized by a trend of concentrating businesses.

In this context, the creation of businesses in the period 1999-2005 has experienced a fall of 5.71% and contribution of the commercial sector to new businesses has gone from representing 18.4% of the total of new businesses on a national level in 1999 to 15.79% in 2005.

The Spanish trade sector significantly contributes to the creation of subordinate work: the employment rate has gradually increased in the last ten years (1996-2005), especially among women whose rate has increased by 13% during the same period of time.

In Spain, retail trade activities have provided work for 1.7 million people, 18.3% of which are part-time workers. This type of employment is more common among women (24.4%).

*Source: INE*



## FRANCE

Trade plays a central role in the French economy. It represents about 10% of the added value together with economy and provides employment for 14% of French workers. The total turnover of this sector was 1,100 billion euros in 2004.

In the first six months of 2005, French growth recorded moderate values (+ 0.4% in the first three months, + 0.1% in the second three months).

However, trade can benefit from families' consumption that grows at about 2% per year.

In retail trade, sales were in any case eroded during the first six months. In the third three-month period, sales remain invariable within large-scale retail food trade, but they grow in specialised non food trade.

The general perspectives of activities, in decline from the beginning of the year, recovered in October 2005 restoring their long-term average. Employment perspectives are growing as well.

*Source: INSEE*



From the analysis of the trend of commercial distribution over the course of 2005, a critical sector scenario emerges for Italy, caused by the delicate phase of economic stagnation. The strong context of competitiveness which characterizes the sector risks to amplify the weaknesses typical of the small businesses of the sector such as family run businesses, difficulty in penetrating the network of enterprises, the weak bargaining power with respect to suppliers, relation with the credit system and high tax pressure.

In 2005, retail trade recorded an increase of 1.2% compared to 2004. In 2005, the network of sale in retail trade with registered office was made up of more than 761 thousand businesses with an increase of 3.5% compared to 2002. Overall, business terminations recorded in trade were high: nearly 100,000 units. In Italy, trade represents more than 15% of total employment. Larger businesses have developed significantly and, although they represent just 0.5% of businesses of this sector, they provide 50% of employment and contribute for about 40% of the total turnover.

The weak pace of demand from families has strongly influenced businesses' activity. This has encouraged businesses to implement a series of changes such as for example, adopting more aggressive price policies, more flexibility with regard to supply and internal strengthening of the reference market. Substantial improvement with regard to demand for family consumption is expected in 2006.

*Source: Study Centre CONFCOMMERCIO on ISTAT and MOVIMPRESE data*

## Identification of best practices: objectives and methodology

### Objectives

This catalogue aims at identifying projects and/or services which can be defined as best practices and realized within the community territory in order to boost retail trade activities in terms of:

- support and enhancement of human resources;
- growth of promotional abilities and sale techniques;
- effectiveness of the management system.

The main goal of this review is to obtain a significant number of actions which can be used as a model of reference from other economic subjects active in the sector to realize similar initiatives.

### Methodology

Within the partnership of the *Innocommerce* project, Unioncamere Liguria is in charge of coordinating the realization of the present catalogue, taking care of the stages that are presented below, but closely co-operating with the project's partners with regard to the realization of the poll. Thus, it has been possible to boost the collection of cases on regional basis.

To identify best practices, the following stages have been followed:

1. definition of the concept of "best practice";
2. identification of criteria to be applied to select best practices;
3. definition of the research field;
4. organization of the format for the data collection;
5. definition of best practices according to their sector of reference .

#### 1. Definition of the concept of "best practice"

The most widespread concept in literature has been adopted. This can be briefly summarised as follows:

"a particularly significant process with regard to results obtained within a precise past experience and which can be adapted to strengthen effectiveness, efficiency and innovation in other situations".

#### 2. Identification of criteria to be applied to select best practices

Criteria which should be used to select best practices have been identified in the following parameters, in accordance with the concept of best practice stated above:

- innovativeness, to be considered in terms:
  - of process
  - of product
  - with regard to territory of application
- usefulness for the final user on the basis of documentation related to monitoring, assessment and follow-up of the action;
- transferability;

- availability of information necessary for repeating the action;
- visibility;
- result of network action.

#### 3. Definition of the research field

To realise the survey, the target has been defined on the basis at the following organisations:

- territoriality: the field of reference identified is the territory of the European Union
- typology of institution: the questionnaire was directed at the following organs:
  - Public Administrations
  - Chambers of Commerce
  - Professional Categories of the sector
  - Training Institutions


#### 4. Organization of the format for the collection of data collection

The survey was realized on the basis of an application that was filled in directly by the receiver collecting all types of information necessary for identifying and selecting best practices.

The ways of realization of the survey were different taking into consideration the field of reference:

- application for data collection sent via electronic mail;
- telephone interviews;
- "door to door" interviews for institutions residing in the territory of the project partners.

An example of application used for data collection is provided below:

<small>Nord Est Sud Ouest</small> <b>INTERREG IIIC</b>			
<b>Form - Best Practices in the commercial sector</b>			
<b>Title</b>			
<b>Promoting organisation</b>			
contact person : e-mail address : website : Type of action*			
<b>Duration</b>			
<b>Reference context**</b>			
<b>Geographical area of impact</b>			
<b>Partnership</b>			
<b>Description of the action</b>			
<b>Expected/obtained outcome</b>			
<b>Costs of the action</b>			
<b>Innovative points***</b>			
<b>Limits to the realisation****</b>			

\* The field « type of action » refers to :

- supply of vocational training
- services of marketing/promotion
- services for the internationalisation
- projects concerning the distribution of commercial units, the types of enterprise association or clustering
- other (specify)

\*\* The field « reference context » refers to the main programme (regional, national or community) in whose framework the action is carried out

\*\*\* To be innovative the action should lead to new solutions and/or introduce innovation elements in the retail trade management in terms of :

- products and/or
- process and/or
- services

\*\*\*\* It is important to underline the limits relating to the duplication of similar actions in other regions in terms of realisation costs, specific commercial situation, etc.

### 5. Structure of best practices for the sector of reference

The survey was realized for a period of six months (March-August 2006) and has allowed us to collect information about various initiatives related to the object of the catalogue.

Out of these, 23 have been taken into account because they answered the criteria taken as reference for identifying good practice in the management of retail trade activities.

In the following pages, information sheets for each selected best practice are presented.






To make identification easier, a "reading grid" has been prepared which classifies the best practices into four large sectors of competence:

- vocational training;
- promotional and marketing actions;
- shops distribution and association;
- internationalization.

A further heading "other" has been added, in which are included the activities that do not belong to the above-mentioned categories.

## Best Practices in the retail trade sector: reading grid and information sheets

## Reading grid of Best Practices

Legend for typology:	
	Promotion / marketing services
	Vocational training
	Shops distribution and association
	Services for internationalization
	Other

	Best Practice	Description	Page
1	<b>Title</b> <i>Titulacion de "comercio al por menor y distribucion"</i> <b>Area</b> Belgium, France, Switzerland, Canada <b>Organizer</b> HEC Montréal (Canada), HEC Montréal Europe Office (Paris)	Brief university education to acquire the certificate of "retail trade and distribution". Reserved to French speakers of the 4 countries.	20
2	<b>Title</b> <i>Curso de Escaparatismo y Decoracion de los Comercios de la Zona Centro</i> <b>Area</b> Alicante, Spain <b>Organizer</b> Alicante Town Council	A group of traders of a central area have learnt how to make Christmas decorations for marketing their image and make their trade more attractive.	21
3	<b>Title</b> <i>Curso de Gestion y Marketing de Centros Urbanos</i> <b>Area</b> Valencia, Spain <b>Organizer</b> Generalitat Valenciana, Oficina Pateco, Fundacion Universidad-Empresa	Specific training for traders to acquire abilities of strategic management and marketing in the town centre.	22
4	<b>Title</b> <i>Formacion Comercial Itinerante</i> <b>Area</b> Autonomous Community of Catalunya, Spain <b>Organizer</b> ESCODI, COVACO, Hepta	Training for street traders to bring them closer to traders and helping them in their training course.	23
5	<b>Title</b> <i>Lack of information on training of retail traders in the food sector</i> <b>Area</b> Budapest, Hungary <b>Organizer</b> CCI of Budapest	Retail trades of the food sector were trained about the new Hungarian trade regulations.	24
6	<b>Title</b> <i>Les étincelles de la qualité</i> <b>Area</b> Brussels, Belgium <b>Organizer</b> Atrium	Traning for trade operators in order to increase quality of service and competitiveness with regard to large-scale trade.	25
7	<b>Title</b> <i>Master en Gestion y Administracion de la Empresa Comercial</i> <b>Area</b> Valencia, Spain <b>Organizer</b> Chamber of Commerce of Valencia, Université Paris I (Panthéon-Sorbonne)	Specialised training course on: commercial trade / creation of enterprise / trend of international trade market.	26
8	<b>Title</b> <i>Nederlands in de winkelstraten</i> <b>Area</b> Bruxelles Capitale region, Belgium <b>Organizer</b> La maison du néerlandais	Dutch Language Courses for French traders in the region of Bruxelles Capitale.	27
9	<b>Title</b> <i>Programa de Autodiagnostico</i> <b>Area</b> Basque Country, Spain <b>Organizer</b> Federación Mercantil de Guipozkoa	Interactive programme for self-diagnosis of weaknesses in the management of trade activity which also detects training needs.	28
10	<b>Title</b> <i>Grenzoffensive</i> <b>Area</b> Border regions: Austria/Germany/ Czech Republic <b>Organizer</b> Economic Chamber for Upper Austria	Support to SMEs to improve turnover and customers for neighbouring regions and increase competitiveness.	29

	Best Practice	Description	Page
11	<b>Title</b> <i>AchatVille.com</i> <b>Area</b> France <b>Organizer</b> CCI of Grenoble and ACFCI	Diffusion of internet use by retail trade SMEs, by means of a tutoring tool targeted to retail traders and managed by CCI officers.	30
12	<b>Title</b> <i>Challenge Rénovation</i> <b>Area</b> Toulouse, France <b>Organizer</b> CCI of Toulouse, local public and private institutions	Redevelopment of commercial premises and shops in order to improve their image.	31
13	<b>Title</b> <i>Made in Liguria</i> <b>Area</b> Liguria, Italy <b>Organizer</b> Chamber of Commerce of Genoa	Website available to enterprises that want to promote their e-shopping services and find new business partners online.	32
14	<b>Title</b> <i>Opération ABC : Accueil - Bien-être - Conseil</i> <b>Area</b> Midi-Pyrénées region, France <b>Organizer</b> CCIs of Toulouse, of l'Ariège, of Hautes-Pyrénées and of Tarbes	Developing systems used for assessing the customer's level of satisfaction in order to improve quality of service and trade performance.	33
15	<b>Title</b> <i>AGORA'</i> <b>Area</b> United Kingdom <b>Organizer</b> Retail Academy	Initiative for new development of urban trade districts that are in decline involving active participants and local communities.	34
16	<b>Title</b> <i>Gestion centre -ville</i> <b>Area</b> Wallonie, Belgium <b>Organizer</b> AMCV - Town Centre Management Association	Creation of public/private partnerships and synergies amongst all active participants in order to implement the winning formula of large trade centres to town centres.	35
17	<b>Title</b> <i>Progetto integrato CIV "San Bernardo" - Comune di Genova</i> <b>Area</b> Genoa, Italy <b>Organizer</b> Genoa Town Council, CIV "San Bernardo"	Intelligent distribution of goods in the old town centre in order to improve logistics and impact on environment.	36
18	<b>Title</b> <i>Vivere Santa Brigida</i> <b>Area</b> Genoa, Italy <b>Organizer</b> ASCOM Genova, Genoa Town Council	Restoration of a run-down building situated in an area in the old town centre to be used as a space for new trade activities to regenerate the area.	37
19	<b>Title</b> <i>Baby parking</i> <b>Area</b> Genoa, Italy <b>Organizer</b> C.I.V. Nervi, Province of Genoa	Support provided to female employees of trade businesses. In the future, service will be extended to female customers of businesses.	38
20	<b>Title</b> <i>Encuentros nacionales de Ciudades Comerciales</i> <b>Area</b> Spain <b>Organizer</b> Alicante Town Council	Meetings gathering different participants of the trade sector of large cities on a national level to elaborate common strategies.	39
21	<b>Title</b> <i>Incubatore Imprese Centro Storico</i> <b>Area</b> Genoa, Italy <b>Organizer</b> Genoa Town Council, Development Italy Liguria	Support to the creation of new businesses within the trade sector of the town centre.	40
22	<b>Title</b> <i>Tienda experimental</i> <b>Area</b> Valencia, Spain <b>Organizer</b> Generalitat Valenciana, COVACO, Hepta	Centre operating analysis, study, research and development of new technologies applicable to the trade sector.	41
23	<b>Title</b> <i>Town/City enlivenment</i> <b>Area</b> Austria <b>Organizer</b> Ecoplus GmbH	Future development of trade cities has to take into consideration the acquired experience from trade centres and no longer the contrary.	42

## Certificat en Commerce de détail et de la distribution

**Reference context** University training programme organized by "HEC MONTREAL"

**Geographical zone** Belgium, France, Switzerland, Canada

**Duration** Yearly  
**Partners** HEC MONTREAL, Canada  
 HEC MONTREAL - Bureau international-Europe, Paris

**Promoting organisation** HEC MONTREAL - École des Hautes Études Commerciales de Montréal

**Contact e-mail** HEC MONTREAL - Bureau international-Europe, Paris  
 hecmontreal.europe@hec.ca  
**web site** www.hec.ca/europe

### Description of the action

Specific training on commerce, which can be attended by holders of university degree or equivalent one, or people who have at least three years of specific experience on the work market.

### Expected/obtained results

The course issues a "Retail trade and distribution" certificate accepted by the employers of this sector.

### Innovative parts

The organisation of this and other courses aims at eliminating the lack of professional training in the commerce sector. Such courses favour an interdisciplinary approach.

### Limits to realisation

No special limits to such initiative

## Curso de Escaparatismo y Decoración de los comercios de la Zona Centro

**Reference context** Local fundings

**Geographical zone** Alicante, Spain

**Duration** 2005 Christmas period  
**Partners** Alicante Municipality - Commerce Department  
 Local Agency for Economic and Social Development

**Promoting organisation** Alicante Municipality

**Contact** Servicio de Coordinación de Proyectos de l'Ayuntamiento de Alicante

### Description of the action

Since 2003 the Municipality of Alicante has adopted a total rehabilitation plan of the traditional center of the town, having the general purpose to revitalise the Centre and recover the activities existing therein. As this is an area of strong commercial concentration, the Municipality has implemented a training activity focused on the elements of attraction of the commercial activity of this area during the Christmas period. Thus, the course was focused on the shop decoration techniques by choosing a very practical and technical approach.

### Expected/obtained results

This course was attended by 15 people representing commercial enterprises of this area and allowed to perform an homogeneous windows decoration, characterizing some roads in the ancient town.

### Innovative parts

This initiative led economical advantages both in terms of greater attractiveness and animation of the old town centre. All decorations used for the windows have been made during such course.

### Limits to the realisation

No special limits to such initiative.

## Curso de Gestión y Marketing de Centros Urbanos

**Reference context** European Social Fund

**Geographical zone** Valencia, Spain

**Duration** From 1999 to 2005. 6 editions have been realized  
**Partners** University of Valencia  
 ADEIT Foundation University-Enterprise  
 Valencian Community Chamber of Commerce

**Promoting organisation** University of Valencia - Commerce and Market research Dept.

**Contact e-mail** Carmen Hernandez Samper  
 carmenh@camarascv.org  
**web site** www.pateco.camarascv.org

### Description of the action

The training on "Management and Marketing" of Urban Centres is addressed to professionals active in such centres. The training programme was originated from the evaluation that the town centres need new professionals oriented to strategic management, incentivization and focusing of the different economic and social elements active in such domain. The training stage will generate the skills able to dinamize the potential of the town centre in a context of always increasing competition.

### Innovative Parts

Through the use of a platform supporting its development and operation. The training includes a great variety of subjects and elements through an interdisciplinary approach.

### Expected/obtained results

The training activity must generate the profile of a professional suitable to produce strategies of management, promotion and dynamization, contrasting the decline suffered by some town centres and to favour the promotion and development of such territories.

### Limits to realisation

No special limits for such initiative.

## Formación Comercial Itinerante

**Reference context** National fundings

**Geographical zone** Autonomous Community of Catalunya, Spain

**Duration** 1 year  
**Partners** Municipality of Terrassa - Generalitat Catalana,  
 Chamber of Commerce of Terrassa - "La Caixa" - ESCODI

**Promoting organisation** ESCODI High School for Commerce and distribution of Terrasa

**Contact e-mail** escodi@escodi.com  
**web site** www.escodi.com

### Description of the action

These training courses for traders are based on practical training periods, to be performed within a timetable compatible with the duties of the trainees. Training starts from the real experience of the trainees to favour the assimilation of contents and the solution of frequent problems of the sector under consideration.

### Innovative Parts

These training periods have been organised for full time working traders, needing to acquire new immediately applicable strategies. These training periods are very practical and made almost always during the lunch time or on Monday.

### Expected/Obtained results

The course aims at supporting companies and trade professionals in increasing their technical and innovation capabilities, also keeping such capabilities updated through a quality training allowing to trigger their business. The courses also aim at the formation of future professionals in this sector.

### Limits to realisation

No special limits to such initiative.

## Lack of information on training of retail traders in the food sector

<b>Reference context</b>	Local fundings
<b>Geographical zone</b>	Budapest, Hungary
<b>Duration</b>	No preset duration for this action
<b>Partners</b>	Budapest Chamber of Commerce various training institutes
<b>Promoting organisation</b>	Budapest Chamber of Commerce
<b>Contact e-mail</b>	Erzsebet Gyuro zso@bkik.hu
<b>web site</b>	www.bkik.hu

### Description of the action

The new prescriptions for commerce, in Hungary, require the presence of qualified personnel in shops selling food. The Budapest Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in cooperation with the training institutes, intends to promote the acquisition of professional qualifications by the traders.

### Expected/obtained results

Companies may meet their obligations with the national laws: traders give their client a more qualified service.

### Innovative parts

The project allows the companies to benefit from an important service, useful for their growth.

### Limits to realisation

Due to the scarce funds available for this project, only the existing resources shall be considered.

## Les étincelles de la qualité

<b>Reference context</b>	Local fundings
<b>Geographical zone</b>	Bruxelles-Capitale region, Belgium
<b>Duration</b>	No preset duration for this action
<b>Partners</b>	Union des Classes Moyennes Bruxelles - CCIB - Atrium - Unizo Fédération "les Vitrines de Bruxelles" - Fédération Horeca-Bruxelles Agence Bruxelloise pour l'Entreprise - Bruxelles-Capitale region
<b>Promoting organisation</b>	Union des Classes Moyennes Bruxelles
<b>Contact e-mail</b>	Francine Werth francine.werth@bruxelles.ucm.be
<b>web site</b>	www.ucm.be www.atrium.irisnet.be

### Description of the action

UCM and "Vitrines de Bruxelles" organised a training programme allowing to transfer to the retail shops in Bruxelles the best techniques and practices for perfecting the quality of welcoming and service for their clients.

### Expected/Obtained results

The programme allows to strengthen the welcoming and the quality of offer of the Brussels districts compared to the suburban commercial centres. It also permits to reinforce the specificity of the traditional town commerce, to increase the professionalism of independent traders and to give them quality tools to face the competition by the commercial centres.

### Innovative parts

The project contains a training part (DVD and some group sessions) and also the setting of a personal training percourse. A further innovation element is that the course is free of charge.

### Limits to realisation

No special limits for such initiative.

## Master en Gestión y Administración de la Empresa Comercial

<b>Reference context</b>	European Social Fund
<b>Geographical zone</b>	Community of Valencia, Spain
<b>Duration Partners</b>	The Master lasts for 6 months and its present edition is the 9th Chamber of Commerce of Valencia - Generalitat Valenciana Escuela de Negocios "Luis Vives" Université Panthéon-Sorbonne (Paris 1)
<b>Promoting organisation</b>	Valencia Chamber of Commerce
<b>Contact e-mail web site</b>	Escuela de Negocios "Luis Vives" escuelanegocios@camaravalencia.com www.camaravalencia.com/formacion

### Description of the action

The Master is for students under 30 years of age, living in the Community of Valencia and unemployed. Its duration is of 500 lesson hours at both the "Luis Vives" school and at the Enterprise Administration Institute of the Paris1 University. Attendance of at least 85% of the courses is mandatory to obtain the title.

### Expected/Obtained results

The Master aims at creating professionals specialised in commercial distribution and experts in the analysis of the commercial structures in the international markets.

### Innovative parts

The innovative element is the qualification given by the Master in a sector where the authorised forms of post-University professional training are scarce.

### Limits to realisation

No special limits to such initiative.

## Nederlands in de winkelstraten

<b>Reference context</b>	Axis 3 of the action plan of "Maison du Néerlandais" dealing with the promotion of the Netherland language in Brusseles
<b>Geographical zone</b>	Bruxelles-Capitale region, Belgium
<b>Duration Partners</b>	December 2005 / June 2006 "Huis van het Nederlands" or "Maison du Néerlandais" Atrium Union des Entreprises de Bruxelles
<b>Promoting organisation</b>	Maison du Néerlandais
<b>Contact e-mail web site</b>	Geralda De Vos geralda.devos@huisnederlandsbrussel.be www.huisnederlandbrussel.be

### Description of the action

The initiative named "Nederlands in de winkelstraten" implies the setting of a Flemish language course for the traders of the 19 municipalities in the Brussels region. Through such course they can improve their understanding and oral expression, to deal more efficiently and rapidly with their Flemish speaking clients.

### Expected/obtained results

The course intends to grant the traders the possibility to deal in a professional but friendly way with their Flemish speaking clients. This will allow them to attract clients from Flanders and to maintain their commuting clients.

### Innovative parts

The course is free and meets a specific need. In fact, Flemish is spoken by more than 200,000 people, going daily from Flanders to Bruxelles for work.

### Limits to realisation

A maximum of 5 persons per each company may attend the course. Lesson time may correspond with the ones of the shops.

## Programma de Autodiagnostico

**Reference context** Actions complementary to continuous training funded by INEM European Social Fund

**Geographical zone** Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, Spain

**Duration** 1 year

**Promoting organisation** Federación Mercantil de Gipuzkoa

**Contact e-mail** rosa@fmg.es  
**web site** www.fmg.es

### Description of the action

CD ROM programme available on-line for the traders, to diagnose the weak points and the possibility for improvement in relation to the excellence model EFQM, and to identify the best training itinerary.

### Expected / obtained results

Programme for the self-diagnosis of the weak points and of the possibility of improvement with the EFQM excellence model and identification of the best training itinerary.

### Innovative parts

The programme has an administrative interface allowing the management unit to amend the self-diagnostic model and to issue collective statistics for the constant monitoring of the training needs of the sector.

### Limits to realisation

No special limits to such initiative.

## Grenzoffensive

**Reference context** PIC Interreg III A

**Geographical zone** Border regions of Austria, Germany, Czech Republic

**Duration** 2002-2004 and 2005-2007  
**Cost** EUR 382,000

**Partners** Chamber of Economy of Upper Austria  
Chamber of professions of Lower Bavaria/Oberpfalz

**Promoting organisation** Chamber of Economy of Upper Austria

**Contact e-mail** robert.leitner@wkoee.at  
**web site** www.grenzoffensive.org

### Description of the action

The Grenzoffensive project offers support to SMEs of Upper Austria and Bavaria which are interested in cooperating with enterprises of the Czech Republic in order to encourage cooperation amongst regions through the countries partners of the project. Enterprises that are interested can receive information about investment opportunities, national regulations as well as about other sectors boosted by the use of European Structural Funds.

### Expected / obtained results

More than 2,000 enterprises have stated their desire of being involved in the project. Dialogue with the European Commission has been encouraged to overcome some obstacles regarding cooperation amongst regions. New business opportunities have been created for the participants.

### Innovative parts

The support of a strong partnership and the knowledge of national and regional regulations encourage SMEs to foreign cooperation.

### Limits to realisation

To optimize the results of the project, it will be necessary to extend the network of the partnership to other countries that are interested in cooperating with Upper Austria, Bavaria and Czech Republic.

## AchatVille.com

<b>Reference context</b>	National programme
<b>Geographical zone</b>	France
<b>Duration</b>	No preset duration for this action
<b>Cost</b>	EUR 200,000
<b>Partners</b>	CCI of Grenoble - French National CCI - Kelkoo - Eolas Ministry of Economy and Finances - Caisse d'Epargne
<b>Promoting organisation</b>	CCI of Grenoble and French National CCI
<b>Contact e-mail</b>	Cédric Zanon c.zanon@acfc.cci.fr
<b>web site</b>	www.achatville.com

### Description of the action

The project envisages a technical assistance to small and medium sized retail companies when approaching Internet tools and provides training to CCI's officials in order to be able:

- to guide retail companies when willing to use Internet in their activities,
- to have access to a complete technological platform,
- to benefit of a national brand,
- to benefit of a kit to assist retail companies when going on the net.

### Innovative issues

New services to both companies and clients have been put in place, thus increasing the usage of e-commerce and decreasing time-consuming actions.

### Expected/achieved results

The project aims at promoting and making more accessible the web to very small companies.

In 2006 the following results have been achieved: a total of 1158 online shops have been created, 114.180 retail companies have been registered and promoted.

### Limits to the realisation of the action

The action requires at least:

- the access of retail companies to informatic tools,
- the access to the ADSL network,
- a good asset in human resources within the Chamber of Commerce.

## Challenge Rénovation

<b>Reference context</b>	Will of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Toulouse to promote renovation of shops in its territory
<b>Geographical zone</b>	Toulouse and Haute-Garonne department, France
<b>Duration</b>	Project started in 1991 and still running (May 2006)
<b>Cost</b>	EUR 35,000
<b>Partners</b>	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Toulouse local institutions (Town councils, Chamber of professions) private bodies (banks, architect associations, trade unions)
<b>Promoting organisation</b>	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Toulouse (CCIT)
<b>Contact e-mail</b>	Jaques Delporto j.delporto@toulouse.cci.fr
<b>web site</b>	www.toulouse.cci.fr

### Description of the action

The project has been created for SMEs in retail trade, for services for the public and handicraft of the department of Haute Garonne. The project was set up thanks to the will of the Trade Commission of the CCIT to encourage the use of new technologies in the trade sector and to support collective initiatives. Challenge Rénovation proposes to promote the renovation of trade businesses in the territory.

### Innovative parts

It is the first action of this kind in France. CCIT is the only institution to promote renovation of shops.

### Expected/obtained results

Preserving a contemporary or traditional architectural heritage having vocation for trade. Improving the image of trade and contribute to its ability to face new challenges (evolution of economic structures, competitiveness).

### Limits to realisation

Technical limits: file processing (at present, 60 files are processed every year).

## Made in Liguria

<b>Reference context</b>	Local fundings
<b>Geographical zone</b>	Ligurian Region, Italy
<b>Duration</b>	No preset duration for this action
<b>Promoting organisation</b>	Chamber of Commerce of Genoa
<b>Contact e-mail web site</b>	Alessandra Repetto alessandra.repetto@ge.camcom.it www.made-in-liguria.it

### Description of the action

"Made in Liguria" is the portal of the Chamber of Commerce of Genoa for spreading the knowledge about "net economy" and for the promotion of Ligurian territory. The portal enables Ligurian small and medium sized enterprises to:

- Activate a link to their website of e-commerce in the area B2C;
- Give their own presentation about their activity and products in the area B2B.

### Innovative parts

The portal "Made in Liguria" has encouraged the spread of new technologies and their application to business management amongst Ligurian enterprises. For many of them, it has represented the beginning of on-line sale activity innovating their related sale channels.

### Expected / obtained results

Since there is no predetermined duration, results are periodically assessed and updated. At present, 35 enterprises are registered in the area B2B and 15 in the e-commerce sites in the area B2C.

### Limits to realisation

There are no particular limits to the realisation of the initiative. The gateway can be potentially reproduced in any territorial reality where there are businesses interested in activating an alternative sale channel.

## Opération ABC: Accueil - Bien-être - Conseil

<b>Reference context</b>	Regional programme
<b>Geographical zone</b>	Departments of Ariège, Hautes-Pyrénées, Haute-Garonne, France
<b>Duration Cost Partners</b>	Several years EUR 350 / file of which EUR 135 chargeable to enterprises Chambers of Commerce and Industry of: Toulouse, Ariège, Hautes-Pyrénées, Tarbes
<b>Promoting organisation</b>	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Toulouse (CCIT)
<b>Contact e-mail web site</b>	Florence Bellondrade f.bellondrade@toulouse.cci.fr www.toulouse.cci.fr

### Description of the action

Collective awareness for a request of development in management techniques and promotion of trade businesses. Commitment from the business manager to complete an improvement course. Visit from an advisor of the CCIT to analyse the company on the basis of about a hundred criteria (categories: welcome, outlet, trade policy, management). Issue of a certificate stating that predetermined objectives have been fulfilled.

### Innovative parts

Quite straightforward methods of certification which are scarcely adaptable for the TPE.

### Expected / obtained results

Improving the activity of retail trade. Start base for a possible action of certification.

### Limits to realisation

Concrete limits due to the personalised procedure for each trade enterprise which aims at implementing a system certificating quality.

## Agora'

<b>Reference context</b>	European Social Fund - Equal Programme
<b>Geographical zone</b>	England, United Kingdom
<b>Duration</b>	2 years
<b>Cost</b>	EUR 4,000,000
<b>Partners</b>	Manchester Metropolitan University Business School Association of Town Centre Management Retail Academy Ltd.
<b>Promoting organisation</b>	Retail Enterprise Network
<b>Contact e-mail</b>	Eve Davies e.davies@mmu.ac.uk
<b>web site</b>	www.retail-network.org

### Description of the action

AGORA' aims at inverting the trend of decline which is taking place in different town centres ideal for trade in order that the town centre is managed and meets the needs of all local players. The project will provide the necessary tools to the local community to manage their town centre according to the management schemes which are considered to be effective and winning for local enterprises. Therefore, innovative models can be developed in order that people can play an active and vital role in the rejuvenation of town centres.

### Innovative parts

Local community is directly involved in the management of the town centre and, in particular, trade districts thanks to training interventions and specific tools in order to create a cooperative spirit on the model of the social enterprise.

### Expected / obtained results

Creating a control body to monitor and to strengthen understanding of local management. Developing 8 AGORA' pilot communities which will test management approaches typical of local enterprises. Increasing the offer of specific training for all those people involved in local management. Building a European network which links all different players who are responsible for sustainable development of town centres.

### Limits to realisation

Difficulty consists in promoting and supporting appropriately the cooperative spirit amongst all players of the local community which has to be come the heart of the new management of the town centre.

## Gestion centre-ville

<b>Reference context</b>	Local fundings
<b>Geographical zone</b>	Wallonie, Belgium
<b>Duration</b>	No preset duration for this action
<b>Cost</b>	EUR 190,800 / created structure, excluding operational expenses
<b>Partners</b>	different public and private bodies gathered under an independent judicial structure: the Association du Management de centre-ville
<b>Promoting organisation</b>	Association du Management de centre-ville - AMCV
<b>Contact e-mail</b>	Pierre Francis pierre.francis@amcv.be
<b>web site</b>	www.amcv.be

### Description of the action

The action aims at supporting town centres and increase value of trade activities thanks to a multidisciplinary approach. The integrated management of the town centre allows: to encourage cooperation and exchange for better and effective communication amongst partners; to define a strategy that is common to all partners; to ensure active participation of every partner for the realization of the actions; to encourage regeneration and viability in the town centre through management, promotion, development and investment.

### Innovative parts

Facilitating development of businesses with the help of relocation, assistance to solve problems of routine administration and improving environment conditions which make businesses more attractive.

### Expected / obtained results

Increasing the attractive side of the town centre by working on key aspects such as: trade offers, accessibility, urban environment, improvement of public spaces, restoration of empty spaces above trade spaces, increased safety and hygiene standards.

### Limits to realisation

The initiative does not have any particular limits because it has already been employed in other situations. The delicate stage to take into account is to understand and master the tool that is at the base of the local partnership.

## Progetto integrato CIV "San Bernardo" - Comune di Genova

**Reference context** Programme agreed between CIV "San Bernardo" and Genoa Town Council

**Geographical zone** Old town centre of Genoa, Italy

**Partners** Genoa Town Council  
Centro Integrato di Via (CIV) "San Bernardo"

**Promoting organisation** Genoa Town Council

**Contact e-mail** Andrea Dameri  
andrea.dameri@conesercenti-ge.it

### Description of the action

The integrated project of the CIV "San Bernardo" - Genoa town Council is part of a vast programme of renovation and upgrading of the old town centre. Some interventions have been planned for a better use of the consortium area for customers such as disguising refuse containers, installation of information boards about the activities of the consortium and above all the restoration of a council warehouse for stocking goods supplied with two electric trolleys for the transport of goods.

### Innovative parts

A light and electric transport system allows to move goods within the consortium area.

### Expected / obtained results

The modernisation of services offered by the CIV, an appropriate promotional campaign and improvement of the situation of the traffic generated by the independent transport of goods should make the trade area more attractive and useful for customers.

### Limits to realisation

The consortium is situated in a very run-down urban area with a low level of safety. It will be necessary to invest in appropriate surveillance of the warehouse used for storing goods as well as their transport.

## Vivere Santa Brigida

**Reference context** National fundings (Law 266/97, year 2001)  
PIC Urban

**Geographical zone** Old town centre of Genoa, Italy

**Duration Cost** No preset duration for this action  
EUR 762,973

**Partners** ASCOM Confcommercio - Genova  
Genoa Town Council

**Promoting organisation** ASCOM Confcommercio - Genova

**Contact e-mail** confcommercio@ascom.ge.it

### Description of the action

Initiative combined of installation and economic regeneration of a square in the old town centre of Genoa by new businesses and /or new local units of existing businesses. The project foresees the commercial, cultural and social restoration of the square through the installation of 8 different enterprises in the buildings provided by Genoa town council.

### Innovative parts

A new trade centre in an area which has almost been forgotten over a long period of time represents one of the stages of a redeveloping and regenerating process of the whole Genoa old town centre. This way, trade can encourage new tourism and cultural initiatives.

### Expected / obtained results

The project aims at realizing a trade distribution which is based on criteria of pleasantness not merely aesthetic, and indoor/outdoor spaces which can be used by citizens and tourists. Make the area more attractive for citizens of the area and citizens of neighbouring areas; reducing risks of vandalism thanks to increased regeneration of the area and improving employment opportunities.

### Limits to realisation

Results obtained up until today require safeguard and control actions to improve viability of the territory which is often subjected to cases of petty-crimes and vandalism.

## Baby parking

**Reference context** European Social Fund  
Operational Regional Programme (POR) Objective 3 - 2000/2006

**Geographical zone** Genoa, Italy

**Duration** 6 months  
**Cost** EUR 45,000

**Partners** Centro Integrato di Via (CIV) "Nervi 2005"  
Social Cooperative "Lanza del Vasto"  
Province of Genoa

**Promoting organisation** CIV "Nervi 2005"

**Contact e-mail** Giuseppe Gentiloni  
info@civnervi2005.org  
**web site** www.civnervi2005.org

### Description of the action

The project presents a care and entertainment service for children (from 3 years of age to primary school age) over the period of time which coincides with working hours of mothers employed by businesses present within the CIV.

### Expected / obtained results

The project supports female workers of the trade sector who have small children. The aim is to qualify the CIV as a pleasant area where to shop as well as an area on a man scale ideal for trade thanks to the presence of useful services for traders.

### Innovative parts

Facilitating working times for women committed to both work and family. In future, this service may be also extended to children of female customers of CIV for the time needed to shop.

### Limits to realisation

There are no particular limits to the realisation of the initiative.

## Encuentros nacionales de Ciudades Comerciales

**Reference context** Local fundings

**Geographical zone** Spain

**Duration** Yearly  
**Partners** Alicante Town Council  
Directorate-General of Commerce of Generalitat Valenciana

**Promoting organisation** Promotion Trade Department - Alicante Town Council

**Contact e-mail** comercio@alicante-ayto.es  
**web site** www.ciudadescomerciales.com

### Description of the action

The initiative "National meetings of commercial cities" proposed by the Trade Association of the city of Alicante presents as main objective of the initiative to set up a participation and debate forum for projects regarding urban trade development for all local involved players both public and private and by working on local development, activities of territory regeneration and marketing.

### Expected / obtained results

Meetings, gathering local players active on the territory, generate a process of knowledge and interrelationship between the managers of the trade sector and all players on the territory in a context of exchange of information, assistance and participation to decisions making about the trade sector.

### Innovative parts

At the beginning, the project of initiatives and meetings was launched on a local level, but in 1999 it started to be on a national level. Good practices of policies coordinated amongst economic and social players have been extended to similar territories.

### Limits to realisation

There are no particular limits to the realisation of the initiative.

## Incubatore di Imprese Centro Storico

**Reference context** National fundings (Law 266/97, year 2001)  
PIC Urban

**Geographical zone** Genoa, Italy

**Duration** From 1999 to present (May 2006)  
**Cost** EUR 2,313,802

**Partners** Genoa Town Council - Job Centre - Sviluppo Italia Liguria  
FILSE: financing company of Regione Liguria  
ARRED: property company of Regione Liguria

**Promoting organisation** Genoa Town Council - Office for Enterprise Promotion Policies

**Contact e-mail** Roberto Marini  
rmarini@comune.genova.it  
**web site** www.comune.genova.it

### Description of the action

The Incubator of the Enterprises of Old Town Centre promotes the creation of new trades in the poor and run-down areas of the Old Town Centre of Genoa through economic concessions. Concession funds, as well as rent allowances for the first three years are granted to selected projects. The incubator also offers services of technical, economic and management assistance as well as information on possible professional training thanks to the cooperation of the Associations of Category.

### Innovative parts

Social research as opportunity of listening and dialogue with local enterprises. Promotion of synergies in trade, social and cultural worlds. Economic boost to prompt enterprises to cooperate with other subjects of the territory.

### Expected / obtained results

With the first 4 intervention programmes, the beginning of 64 new trades was planned. In May 2006, the results are: 67 new enterprises which have been set up, 24 will be set up in the near future, 20 already existing enterprises that require support by investing in modernization and renovation.

### Limits to realisation

Difficulty to coordinate support for enterprises and economic boost with actions of rehabilitation, public order, cleanliness and lighting of roads and other interventions of urban regeneration. The cooperation of private owners is not given for granted.

## Tienda experimental

**Reference context** European Social Fund

**Geographical zone** Valencia, Spain

**Duration** From 1999 to 2003  
**Cost** EUR 500,000

**Partners** Valencia Confederation for Commerce (COVACO)  
HEPTA - Consulting agency

**Promoting organisation** Valencia Confederation for Commerce

**Contact e-mail** Valencia Confederation for Commerce  
covaco@covaco.org  
**web site** www.covaco.org

### Description of the action

The experimental shop (Tienda experimental) is characterized by a space under the shape of a conventional trade structure, which will be equipped with all infrastructures and resources necessary to satisfy the new needs of the sector. It is a family friendly environment and attractive for small traders where competences, strategies and management techniques can be acquired and later used in one's own shop.

### Innovative parts

Support and evolution tool for the retail trade sector and for its potentialities of update and technology innovation which all traders should have and integrate.

### Expected / obtained results

The experimental shop aims at the creation of a functional centre to encourage research, analysis and development of new technologies applicable to small trade with the purpose of encouraging the progress of the sector in future evolution of the economic and social fabric.

### Limits to realisation

There are no particular limits to the realisation of the initiative.

## Town/City enlivenment

**Reference context** Local fundings

**Geographical zone** Federal State of Lower Austria, Austria

**Duration** 2 years

**Cost** EUR 6,000 for analysis, EUR 14,000 for advice

**Partners** Ecoplus GmbH - Economic Agency for Lower Austria town associations

**Promoting organisation** Ecoplus GmbH - Economic Agency for Lower Austria

**Contact e-mail** Michael Franzl  
M.Franzl@ecoplus.at

**web site** www.ecoplus.at

### Description of the action

The project promotes in-depth researches on the territory in order to assess the causes of failure for many trades of urban area. Some advisors are available to those people who would like to set up their own business.

### Expected / obtained results

In-depth study of the territory and its needs; promotion of new enterprises; creation of a network for exchanging good practices; transfer of competences.

### Innovative parts

In the past, trade centres learnt from cities, today cities must learn from trade centres.

### Limits to realisation

The success of the project depends on the community's will to change the starting situation.

## Conclusions

The trade sector plays a very important role in the European economy, representing the link between the productive sector and over 450 million consumers of the 25 Member States of the European Union.

However, the trade sector, and retail trade in particular, does not benefit from a distinctive Community policy and often this sector is associated with other economic sectors under the generic “umbrella” of services and service sector.

This implies some difficulties for both institutions and operators of the sector. Institutions tend to not differentiate their own programme but generally talking about “entrepreneurship” and they also underestimate the importance of the peculiarity of the sector for reaching full and effective economic competitiveness. Consequently, the operators find it hard to recognize themselves in the measures in force and to identify existing opportunities.

Furthermore, the European economic tradition - where industry and manufacturing have always had a predominant role influencing businesses' policies too - leads institutions to connote according to a productive meaning, the concepts (today imperative) of research and innovation and neglecting different interpretations which are better applied to the needs for development of the trade sector.

The activity carried out within the context of the *Innocommerce* project has therefore led us to a better understanding of the current situation of retail trade and the problems related to this sector, to attempt to plan some positive actions to boost the sector and to identify the ways to set up a dialogue with local authorities.

The realization of this catalogue has also given us the opportunity to know initiatives aiming at developing trade activities not only inside the regions partners of the project, but also in other European realities including new Member States of the EU. This has been carried out with a double aim:

- on one hand, identifying actual answers for problems which can be taken from other realities- even if adequately adapted;
- on the other hand, drawing the attention of competent authorities onto critical areas where problems have not been yet solved and propose possible alternative solutions.

By using the typology of selected successful examples, some

considerations can be proposed:

- the need of developing vocational training for this sector, following innovative schemes which better reflect the particular structure of the sector and its needs;
- the importance of structuring new forms of management of trade activities such as aggregation or road association so to make the most of synergies and scale economies in order to reduce costs but increase competitiveness;
- the importance of introducing new technologies to traders in order to improve their activity and reduce time and costs of realization.

From these concise considerations, some conclusions can be drawn:

1. the main themes which are the object of the *Innocommerce* project - training, innovation and exchange of experiences - are currently important with regard to both strategies for development of trade businesses and objectives of the Lisbon Strategy and consequent operational programmes. The “Programme for Innovation and Competitiveness” - in force from 2007 to 2013 - will represent a tool for implementing some actions which could give impetus to retail trade, in particular for what concerns administrative simplification, professional training, generational change, transmission of business and access to credit;
2. the new Community programmes 2007-2013 about regional policy can represent an excellent tool to increase value and provide support to the trade sector. Since it represents a new organization of the Structural Funds, spaces for “innovating” the use of the European Social Fund could be possible and desirable within the field of continuous training and creation of businesses which would take into account the characteristics of the retail trade;
3. a simplified administrative language can bring the administrative sector considerably closer to the world of Public Administration and make the use of opportunities offered by it easier. Moreover, in a single European market that is constantly growing, an attempt to overcome the non-technical barriers (language knowledge, administrative procedures...) is the key to success for real economic and social integration;

4. repeating examples of success such as those collected here can contribute to improve quality of services currently offered on the territory to the sector;
5. the network of Innovative Agents which will be activated by the *Innocommerce* project, can represent a good way of implementing action plans and/or pilot projects which will make real the needs manifested by the trade sector.