



5th Annual Forum Meeting

Building Strong Partnerships with the Private Sector for Better Jobs and Inclusion

9 – 10 February 2009, Vienna, Austria

The 5th Annual Meeting of the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance will be addressing an issue of central importance to most partnerships today: how can collaboration with the private sector be strengthened to deliver better and more sustainable outcomes on the labour market? Excellent examples exist of partnerships that have established strong collaboration between business and the public sector/local community, and which have managed to contribute significantly to a more inclusive local economy. In many of them business representatives play a leading role in the collaboration process or actively support local initiatives designed in partnership.

However, partnerships often fail to bring business on board in a fruitful way. There can be many reasons for this: lack of knowledge of the local industry and of business imperatives; little acquaintance with the local labour market, skills base and skills gaps; and a focus on implementation of government-funded programmes. Whatever the reason, partnerships with little involvement from the private sector may mean missed opportunities for their community.

Government and non-profit organisations alike increasingly understand the necessity of working with business at the local level. They are devoting their efforts to the identification of future employment needs, and the assessment of gaps to ensure that local people have the right training to succeed in the local economy. At the same time, some localities are also looking at upgrading local demand, working with business to improve local productivity and promote good work organisation, thus improving the availability of sustainable and good quality employment for local people. This approach is especially valuable in times of economic perturbations when increasingly-vulnerable firms must reinforce their competitiveness to be in a position to secure employment. Clearly, there are mutual benefits from working in partnerships locally. How can this win-win situation, where business, government and local community interact together to set up the most appropriate strategies and actions together, be translated in practice?



OECD LEED **forum** on **partnerships and local governance** at the ZSI

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The OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance has been established to support area based partnerships in their mission, by gathering knowledge and providing advice on the most effective mechanisms for organisations to work together, adapt policies to local needs and set up appropriate initiatives. The 5th Annual Meeting will examine some of the most advanced partnership innovations in connecting business with other stakeholders locally to generate better jobs and inclusion. It will review a wide array of initiatives, from the US' pioneering approach with the Workforce Investment Boards to Denmark's new Regional Growth Fora and the UK's Regional Skills Partnerships and brand new Training and Employment Boards. It will work to extract from these approaches, and the experience of several other countries, the lessons to apply by both policymakers and practitioners for providing a collective response from industry, government, educational institutions and community that improves economic sustainability and growth.

To achieve this result, the Forum Meeting this year will bring together leading representatives of business community, partnership practitioners, trade unions, government and community organisations from all over the world. The 5th Annual Forum meeting will also provide networking opportunities for partnership practitioners to exchange knowledge and best practice examples in relation to core aspects of partnership working.

The 5th Annual Meeting of the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance is organised with the support of the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs & Equal Opportunities and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour, Austria.

Agenda

Monday - 9 February 2009

Afternoon	13.00 - 14.00 Welcome coffee and registration of participants	
	OPENING SESSION Chair: Michael Förschner, Chairman of the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance	
	14.00 - 14.30	Opening Remarks <i>High level representative of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour, Austria</i> <i>Sylvain Giguère, Head of Division, Local Economic and Employment Development, OECD</i> <i>Robert Strauss, Head of Unit, Employment Strategy, CSR & Local Development, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission</i>
	14.30 - 16.00	Business round table BUSINESS AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR: WHY DO WE NEED TO PARTNER? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Charles Fadel, Global Lead for Education and Cisco Systems, Cisco Board Member of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, USA – Deian Hopkin, Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive, London South Bank University, Chair of the UK Skills Task Force Group, UK – Sally Sinclair, CEO of the National Employment Services Association, Australia – Business and private sector led partnership representatives Chair: Sylvain Giguère, Head of Division, Local Economic and Employment Development, OECD
	16.00 - 16.30 Coffee break	
	16.30 - 18.00 INTERACTIVE PARALLEL WORKING SESSIONS	
	Thematic workshops Each workshop will start with the presentation of a partnership initiative. A virtual partnership composed of representatives from business, trade unions, government and community/non-government organisation, will share their views using the initiative presented as a basis for discussion.	Avant-garde thinking: partnerships' experience in working with private sector The Annual Meeting of the Forum provides a unique networking opportunity for partnership practitioners. This Avant-garde thinking space is open to all Forum members to present their work, exchange knowledge with peers in relation to core aspects of partnership working, and establish professional networks and contacts. A series of short interactive sessions will be organised featuring discussions around presentations of innovative partnership experience.
	Workshop 1: Establishing a workforce development strategy How can businesses better signal their skills and labour needs to the public sector? How can public sector get businesses to think more in the long term? What could be the role of technological solutions e.g. internet networking and databases? What is the role of local communities?	
	Workshop 2: Reducing poverty at work This workshop will focus on ways to re-integrate the low-skilled workers into the labour market and provide them with up-skilling opportunities. The discussion will focus on: how to "make work pay" for low-skilled and low-wage workers (with respect to welfare assistance benefits)? How to tackle the obstacles to job retention and progression for the disadvantaged workers?	

	Workshop 3: Adapting training and education provision to local business needs What are the mechanisms that connect industry and education successfully? New skills for new jobs: What jobs will be available in about 10 years? Is the training provided now useful to find a job tomorrow? How can the public sector raise the local knowledge base through e.g. formal training, promoting discussion fora, supporting growth in consultancy services, and knowledge intensive business activities? How to improve access to training in SMEs?	
	18.00 End of first day	
	19.00 Cocktail reception	

Tuesday - 10 February 2009

Morning	8.30 - 9.00 Welcome coffee	
	9.00 - 10.30	Plenary session BETTER JOBS AND SOCIAL INCLUSION: WHAT VALUE ADDED FROM AREA-BASED PARTNERSHIPS DURING AN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Randall W. Eberts, Executive Director, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, United States</i> – <i>Monsignor David Cappel, Vice-Chair, Social Inclusion Board, Australia</i> – <i>Trade Unions Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC)</i> Chair: <i>Robert Strauss, Head of Unit, Employment Strategy, CSR & Local Development, DG Employment, Social Affairs & Equal Opportunities, European Commission</i>
	10.30 - 11.00 Coffee break	
	11.00 - 13.00 INTERACTIVE PARALLEL WORKING SESSIONS	
	Thematic workshops Each workshop will start with the presentation of a partnership initiative. A virtual partnership composed of representatives from business, trade unions, government and community/non-government organisation, will share their views using the initiative presented as a basis for discussion.	Avant-garde thinking: partnerships' experience in working with private sector The Annual Meeting of the Forum provides a unique networking opportunity for partnership practitioners. This Avant-garde thinking space is open to all Forum members to present their work, exchange knowledge with peers in relation to core aspects of partnership working, and establish professional networks and contacts. A series of short interactive sessions will be organised featuring discussions around presentations of innovative partnership experience.
	Workshop 4: Business and regional economic regeneration How can local stakeholders prepare a regional economic regeneration and diversification programme, and draw meaningful implications for the conduct of labour market policy, vocational training and social policy?	
	Workshop 5: Dealing with low skill equilibrium and skills mismatch What can be done if the local skills base does not match business requirements? How to improve workforce development provisions to retain and attract competitive industries? What are the possible answers in rural areas and those with declining and ageing population? What can be done when low skills in the population are matched by low skills utilisation by employers, leading to low wages and low productivity?	

	Workshop 6: Limits to labour market integration: dealing with the hard-to-reach, hard-to-place How can businesses, government and community groups partner together to provide opportunities for the people at maximum disadvantage, such as the disabled, ex-offenders, ex drug-addicts?		
13.00 - 14.00 Lunch			
Afternoon	FINAL PLENARY: LESSONS LEARNT <i>Chair: Michael Förschner, Chairman of the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance</i>		
	14.00 – 16.00	In this last plenary, it is the partnership practitioners themselves who will draw conclusions and further reflect on what government, business, community, and Trade Unions can do to provide better jobs and inclusion at local level and how local partnerships can best contribute to this objective.	
	16.00	Closing remarks, farewell coffee	
16.00 End of Conference			