



## Press release

### SEE-IFA Network discusses future challenges for Innovation Agencies in Venice

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011 the Veneto Region (IT) hosted a “Thematic Seminar on Innovation and Financial Agencies for IPA countries” in Venice.

The event was organized in the framework of the [SEE-IFA](#) Network project, which aims at strengthening the IPA project partners capacity for effective provision of innovation and technology support to Micro and Small and Medium Size Enterprises (MSME) through the establishment of a platform for know-how-transfer and by concrete joint action.

Several partners from the SEE-IFA “South-East European Co-Operation of Innovation & Finance Agencies” project attended the seminar, in particular: the Innovation and Financial Agency **Austria Wirtschaftsservice** (AT), the **Varazdin County Development Agency** AZRA (HR), the **Regional Agency for Socio Economic Development – Banat** (SRB), the **Slovene Export and Development Bank** SID (SI), the **Euro Perspectives Foundation** (BG), the NGO **Georama** (GR), **UESFICDI** (RO) and **Finlombarda** (IT).

The participants discussed over the importance of involving stakeholders at European level on the idea of establishing a Cross Border Patent Fund. In particular, the **European Investment Fund** is already working on this issue as it set up a Working Group regarding the EU IP Investment Fund establishment and the collaboration between the two projects is going to be fostered in the near future.

Discussion was also raised concerning the Innovation and Financial Agencies in IPA countries, their organisational framework and the services portfolio suitable to each partner. Future trends and challenges for IFAs in Europe and possible scenarios for IPA partners (AZRA, RDA Banat and FYROM) were presented by **Veneto Innovazione**, the Innovation Agency of the Veneto Region. The main challenges for IFAs in IPA countries arisen during the discussion relate to the improvement of coordination between the different regional and national actors, the attraction and exploitation of the human capital and the development of tailored services for customers. Finally, the increasing need to deal with lack of resources and a complex stakeholders scenario entails greater involvement from the private sector as a key issue to future IFAs.

More information on SEE-IFA project is available at: [www.see-ifa.eu](http://www.see-ifa.eu)