



## Lisbon failing EU businesses

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Reform of the strategic aims behind the Lisbon agenda is required to ensure European businesses do not continue to lag behind the US and the Far East. A new report by the leading think tank, The Stockholm Network, recommends that a 2007 Lisbon Directive is established to monitor progress and provide more measurable goals and timelines.

In the report, titled 'Beyond Lisbon - Reviewing EU Policies on IP, Competition and Innovation', Author Dr. Meir Pugatch, Director of Research at the Stockholm Network, said:

"Innovation is being stifled due to a sluggish EU while other economies take the lead. The Lisbon Agenda is quite simply failing. The whole approach of the Lisbon Agenda has been too big and instead it needs a more strategic goal and a concrete timeline to ensure those goals are achieved.

"Our companies are missing out because innovation is not being supported and encouraged in the same way as other countries. With growing competition from places like India and China, European companies need to be best placed to perform.

"Companies already have to contend with burdensome regulation in their country of origin. The EU should be developing policies and approaches which help companies, not provide further hurdles. Let's support the amazing talent and innovation that European companies have to offer. We must strengthen EU levels of protection of European ideas.

"Finally, the EU should be brave enough to understand that although the sentiment was right, they got it wrong with the Lisbon Agenda. It needs to be more focused in order to achieve its goals and changing it now to ensure it is successful should be the priority, not saving face for those that put it together."

### **The Key Recommendations:**

- Lisbon Agenda 2007 Directive - redefine the strategic objective of the Lisbon Strategy.

The EU should make it a strategic goal to be better prepared to compete in the global knowledge economy by fundamentally strengthening key areas that currently impinge on its innovative output. Directive should narrow the scope of the Lisbon Agenda, focusing on areas of strategic importance with a feasible chance to be accepted politically by the Member states. The Directive should provide concrete timelines for completion.

- European Research Area - make the investment a political objective

Seriously consider promoting new pan-European legislation that seeks to level the playing field among EU-members as well as creating a more supportive environment for knowledge exploitation and technology transfer activities. Continue to place greater emphasis on public-private collaboration in the ERA, especially under Article 171 of the EC Treaty.

- Ensure that EU competition policies - particularly with regard to the application of Article 82 - are synchronised with the other objectives of the Lisbon Agenda. Continue to strengthen the use of economic tools as part of the process of reviewing competition cases in the EU.
- Harmonise the EU patent system by adopting and (unilaterally) implementing the London Agreement and the European Patent Litigation Agreement. Make the use of IPRs by SMEs a strategic objective. Strengthen the EU level of IP protection. Continue and even strengthen the strategy underlined by the Global Europe initiative with regard to the negotiation and implementation of International IP agreements as well as the enforcement of IPRs.

**ENDS**

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#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

- Beyond Lisbon - Reviewing EU Policies on IP, Competition and Innovation is created and published by the Stockholm Network.
- Its author is Dr. Meir P. Pugatch, senior lecturer at the University of Haifa Israel, and Director of Research of the Stockholm Network.
- For further details about the Stockholm Network's programmes and activities visit [www.stockholm-network.org](http://www.stockholm-network.org)
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