

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**On eve of Lisbon Forum, EU still failing to hit Lisbon Agenda targets –
Leading pan-EU think tank recommends urgent change of policy**

On the eve of the Lisbon Forum taking place in Brussels tomorrow¹, leading pan-EU think tank the Stockholm Network, today releases the *Lisbon Barometer* – an authoritative statistical overview of the EU's progress in reaching its Lisbon Agenda's goals and targets.

It has long been clear that EU Member States cannot reach the EU's two headline targets of (a) a total (public and private) investment rate of 3% of Europe's GDP in R&D, and (b) an employment rate of 70% for the working population by 2010. But the *Barometer* shows that the Commission's insistence on using them is actually distorting the progress that Member States are making individually in various areas. The centralised focus of the Lisbon Agenda is now adversely affecting Europe's chances of becoming the leading knowledge economy, it concludes.

The Stockholm Network therefore urges the Commission to:

- Abandon EU-wide goals and focus more on specific national achievements, aspirations and requirements
- Encourage national specialisation

Helen Disney, Chief Executive of the Stockholm Network commented:

“Especially in light of the current economic crisis, as the eurozone enters a recession, it is imperative that Europe does everything it can to increase our competitiveness and prospects for a sustainable economic recovery. The Lisbon Agenda goals are laudable, but the means of getting there must now be changed.”

– ENDS –

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For further information on the Stockholm Network, please visit: www.stockholm-network.org

¹ www.knowledge4innovation.eu, 1-2 December, Brussels

To access the *Barometer*, please see:

<http://www.stockholm-network.org/downloads/publications/Barometer.pdf>

To access the discussion paper, please see:

http://www.stockholm-network.org/downloads/publications/Lisbon_Agenda_White_Paper.pdf

To access the executive summary, please see:

http://www.stockholm-network.org/downloads/publications/Executive_Summary_5.pdf

Notes to Editors:

The Stockholm Network is the leading pan-European think tank and market-oriented network. It conducts research in the fields of health and welfare, energy and environment, intellectual property and competition. It also offers a unique network of 130+ market-oriented think tanks across Europe providing access to the best European policy thinking.