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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST TO IDENTIFY RESEARCH ACTIONS READY FOR SPECIFIC PROGRAMME TOPICS AS A BASIS FOR THE PREPARATION OF WORK PROGRAMMES FOR THE 6TH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME FOR RESEARCH

EoI n°:

(for Commission use only)

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Name of organisation submitting the EoI								
Contact person details	*Title (Dr, Prof …)*	Mr.				*Gender*	F ☐	M ☒
	Family Name	Badiali			*First Name*	Luigi		
Address	8. Avenue Milcamps B-1030, Bruxelles belgique							
Telephone No.	-32027344841			*Fax No.*	-32027438491			
E-mail	badiali@bicnet.it							
Title of the expression of interest (up to 10 words)	Governance Instruments for Sustainable Development in Europe							
Acronym (up to 20 Characters)	GISDE							

This EoI refers to an Integrated Project	☒	*This EoI refers to a Network of Excellence*		☐
Sub-Thematic Priority[1] most relevant to your topic		1.1.7 ii		
Other relevant Sub-Thematic Priorities[2]		1.1.7 i		

Abstract (max. 10 lines)

New forms of governance can strive for Sustainable Development (SD), dealing with the complexity of the knowledge-society and the local-global interdependencies. GISDE will enquire three fundamental issues: how to reinterpret and shape subsidiarity, how to cope with diversity and how to understand and ensure equity. Capitalising on two decades of research on SD, using the latest generation of evaluation and decision support tools, GISDE will operate on three levels (management of SD processes, SD practice research and SD theory research) through interlaced EU networks of local communities, experts in different policy fields and sectors, researchers and acadamics of diverse disciplines. It will ensure a coherent integration of large-scale demonstration (methods and tools) and research (application-oriented and theoretical) for a EU "sustainability governance".

I request that the information given in this form is not published [3]	YES ☐

*This form **must** be accompanied by the short document (maximum 5 pages) referred to in Section 3 of the Guide for Submitters.*

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[1] Indicate only one sub-thematic priority number given in Annex 1, eg. 1.1.6.1.i or 1.1.1.ii.b or 2.3
[2] If appropriate, indicate one or more sub-thematic priority numbers given in Annex 1.
[3] Unless you tick the YES box the information included in the Annex 3 form will be published by the Commission Services. The **5 Pages EoI short document will not be published.**

GISDE

Governance Instruments for Sustainable Development in Europe

EUROIDEES , euroidees@euroidees.org , Avenue Milcamps, 8 B - 1030 Bruxelles

1   The Rationale

Striving for Sustainable Development – including the societal objectives of social and territorial cohesion and improved quality of life – requires new forms of governance and corresponding methods and tools. Developing a new understanding and perspective could hopefully lead to new win-win solutions. However, there remains a necessity to find new approaches for conflict resolution appropriate to the growing complexity of global – local interdependencies.

A triple challenge calls for **new forms of multi-level governance in Europe**:

- the increasing interdependencies and the growing policy integration between very diverse regions and member states in the EU

- the integration of new member countries which will increase even more the diversity of backgrounds that have to be taken into account

- the growing acknowledgement that it is urgent to substitute one-dimensional maximisation approaches by the integrated multi-dimensional concept of Sustainable Development

Across all territorial levels and different backgrounds, public and private structures, representative institutions and civil society organisations need to **improve their co-operation** developing new patterns, approaches and methods which allow:

- to set up and review a transparent multi-level system of nested development objectives

- to respect different backgrounds and preferences across Europe while exchanging experiences and opinions using a common language

- to share responsibility assigning transparent roles for the pursuit of common objectives

- to evaluate progress and difficulties in an spirit of collective of learning

- to ensure transparency, also for the large public, concerning objectives, procedures, responsibilities, actions and results

On this background, GISDE draws the consequences of a converging worldwide debate. It proposes:

- to carry out a large-scale multi-level implementation and experimentation of a coherent set of concepts and instruments for the transparent "management" of public policies, resulting in a broad and innovative capitalisation of the large debate concerning Sustainable Development in the last decade

- to enquire on this basis three fundamental issues which are of outstanding importance in the discussion concerning a European constitution: how to reinterpret and shape subsidiarity, how to cope with diversity and how to understand and ensure equity.

2   The Objectives

In the context of a multi-level governance system in a dynamically developing European Union showing a rich diversity of cultural, political, economic and ecological backgrounds, GISDE aims at capitalising two decades of debate concerning Sustainable Development (SD) and to open new perspectives for the governance debate in Europe. For this purpose **GISDE will operate on three levels** for which more specific objectives can be formulated.

1. *management of SD processes* (actors and consultants)

2. *SD practice research* (researchers)

3. *SD theory research* (researchers)

The objectives for the **Management of SD processes** (first level) are:

- to demonstrate the feasibility of the large-scale implementation of a coherent system for the design, management and evaluation of sustainable development processes in a series of pilot communities (regions, cities etc.)

- to involve a large number of local actors in a learning process aimed at developing widespread knowledge and skills for coordinated policies in the sense of SD, using a common conceptual framework

The objectives for the **SD practice research** (second level) are:

- to nourish the above mentioned implementation process (guidance, monitoring, evaluation, facilitation of networks),

- to improve the above mentioned management system

- to improve the approaches for large-scale implementation and diffusion

- to provide an empirical basis for the SD theory research

The objectives for the **SD theory research** (third level) are:

- to provide an input to the general debate on governance in Europe focusing on the issues of subsidiarity, equity and diversity

- to open new perspectives making use of the wealth of empirical results of the SD practice research comparing it with non-European cultures and their experiences

- to nourish the other two levels of GISDE providing more precise concepts and knowledge to SD practice research

3 The General Approach

GISDE does not start form scratch, nor does it propose to combine all kinds of approaches that have been proposed to date in this context. GISDE will start using the system "**SQM – Sustainable Quality Management ®**", a complete but open system of concepts, methods and tools (see www.sqm-praxis.net) developed in the course of several EU research and pilot demonstration projects (e.g. NSURED, PACTE, D2MiP, POSSUM, INNESTO) and very appreciated by evaluators. As further explained in section 5, SQM is a process-oriented approach which takes into account context-related social interactions.

GISDE will develop the integrative SQM system to deal at local, regional, national and European levels with:

- the diversity of cultures, developing a common language on Sustainable Development (*multi-cultural integration*)

- the diversity of issues, problems and solutions, organising learning processes based on the combination of theoretical and empirical knowledge, know-how and skills (*multi-disciplinary integration*)

- the diversity of strategies, plans and practices in current sectoral activities, offering methods and tools that enhance the capacity of politicians, administrators and practitioners to work together (*multi-sectoral integration*)

- the diversity of stakeholders' interests, offering methods and tools for finding win-win solutions based on individual and collective responsibility (*multi-interest integration*)

- the diversity of decision making processes and scales, developing institutional and organisational methods based on the principle of subsidiarity in view of transparent and efficient multi-level governance (*multi-level integration*)

For this purpose, **four kinds of networks** will be established:

1. *Local communities* (involving local actors and experts and SD practice research)

2. *Networks of local communities and sectoral networks* (involving local actors and experts and SD practice research)

3. *Multi-level networks* (involving actors and experts at different scales and SD practice research)

4. *Theory networks* (involving SD theory research, SD practice research and selected actors)

4 Need and Relevance

Since the Rio Declaration (1992) strategic orientation was given to promote Sustainable Development in a worldwide dimension with the active participation of governments and citizens at every territorial level. Since the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) and more specifically in the Strategy for Sustainable Development (2001), the EU explicitly requires that all policies and programmes help to improve the quality of life regarding the environmental, the economic, the social and the cultural dimension. The vision of a European knowledge-based society has been created in order to facilitate the transition from the present to a more sustainable civilisation – for the Europeans themselves and at a worldwide level. In fact Sustainable Development requires the capacity to cope simultaneously with global and local dmensions of space (territories and decision making levels) and time (the present and the future). This capacity allows to be at the same time competitive and cohesive.

For these reasons, GISDE will address the FP6 research priorities of "**Articulation of areas of responsibility and new forms of governance**" (1.1.7.ii), providing:

- approaches and tools for the *transparent design and management of policies* in dfferent countries with different backgrounds

- *improved patterns of sharing responsibilities* between various territorial levels, between public and private sectors, between specialised institutions.

- *approaches and tools for sharing and developing information and knowledge* in the triangle constituted by politics, research and the civil society

- *basic options for coordinating all kinds of policies and actions* in view of a dynamic and multi-dimensional system of nested objectives

GISDE will address also the FP6 research priorities of "**Knowledge-based Society and social cohesion**" (1.1.7.i), providing:

- a *coherent system of concepts, methodologies and tools* for designing, implementing and evaluating public policies in the pursuit of Sustainable Development at all levels and in different contexts

- European wide powerful and lasting *networks of researchers and actors* at all levels of politics and administration

GISDE will tackle the combination of the above-mentioned research priorities mobilising resources on a large scale. Drawing on a wide variety of European research and pilot projects, it will establish a **coherent platform for developing advanced approaches** combining the large-scale *demonstration* of previously developed integrated methods and tools, further development in *application-oriented research* and more fundamental *theoretical research* on a broad and coherent empirical basis.

5 Scale of Ambition & Critical Mass

Compared to more conventional SD approaches, which concentrate on the integration of the economic, environmental and socio-cultural dimensions, GISDE will widen the perspective in order to facilitate the implementation of SD in our complex societies. In fact, the SQM system proposes seven additional dimensions: equity between individuals, equity between territories and equity between generations (4, 5, 6) as well as the systemic principles of diversity, subsidiarity, networking / partnership and participation (7, 8, 9, 10). The structure of GISDE has been designed to cover all these aspects. All activities will treat the issues of environmental, economic and socio-cultural development (1, 2, 3) as well as the issues of inter-generational equity (7) and of diversity (8). The three kinds of networks which will monitor the practical implementation (level 1) guided by SD practice research (level 2) will address the other dimensions more specifically:

1. *local communities*: equity between individuals (4), partnership/cooperation (9) between sectoral institutions, citizens participation (10)

2. *networks of local communities and sectoral networks*: equity between territories (5), networking (9)

3. *multi-level networks*: equity between territories (5), coping with diversity (7), subsidiarity (8)

GISDE will last six years involving local, regional and national governments, research groups and universities. The **expected results** consist in an overarching advancement in terms of scientific knowledge, technological and social innovation, through the recursive circuit between the different "project levels".

- As a demonstration project, GISDE is expected to have a direct impact on the sustainable management of development processes in a large number of local and regional communities. The introduction of methods and Internet-based tools for the design, the implementation, the monitoring and the

evaluation of sustainable development programmes in several sectors (covering the whole spectrum of interventions of EU Structural Funds) and at several levels, will directly involve several thousand decision makers and administrators. Appropriate dissemination activities based on different kinds of networks will guarantee the accessibility of the gained experiences to a wider audience in Europe.

- As an application-oriented research and development project, GISDE is expected to contribute to the technical development of Internet-based and other software tools and to the development of methodological guidelines in all areas concerned – in view of practically improving sustainable governance. At the end of the project, thoroughly tested, highly pertinent operational tools and procedures will be available for managing public policies and programmes as well as single projects in the sense of a multi-dimensional concept of Sustainable Development. Adaptability and scalability of the tools will be most important with regard to the growing diversity in an enlarged Europe. The integration into most of the national administrative cultures in Europe will be a major asset. Tools for the context-sensitive exchange of experiences, for inter-cultural comparisons and for cross-cultural reporting and synthesis will be available for ensuring transparency at a European level while respecting diversity.

- As a theoretical research project, GISDE is expected to provide insights and concepts which will be useful in the great debate concerning the future of European institutions. Fundamental considerations and more practical suggestions will be elaborated by revisiting the concepts of diversity, equity and subsidiarity in the light of the experiences gathered by the other two project levels in the course of an interdisciplinary debate between several research groups in different countries. Particular attention will be given to traduce these insights into a language that is easily accessible to the interested public and political actors at all levels.

The envisaged overall budget of GISDE is around 30 million EURO.

6 Integration

As already stated, integration is a core issue in this proposal. The interaction between the different "levels" of the project (see section 2) and the cooperation in several overlapping networks (see section 3) as well as the integrative character of the SQM approach (see section 3 and 5) are the main means for tackling this central issue.

This will be reflected in the project management structure. The main responsibility for achieving the integration of all parts and aspects of GISDE will lie at level 2 in the coordination of "SD practice research". The developers of the SQM approach (SQM-praxis, EURES Institute, SRS) will play a central role in the coordination of methodologies. An appropriate steering committee, advisory boards and technical support will have to be set up.

The involvement of different kinds of actors (universities, independent research and consulting companies, local and regional governments, local actors) shall be managed in a way that ensures win-win relations: a challenging process of mutual learning during the whole project, as well as results at all levels which through the integration of different viewpoints and experiences acquire a new quality. The use of a common framework is essential for this endeavour.

First Participants in the Expression of Interest GISDE

GISDE will need a large network of participants. The tables below only lists some first institutions and persons who have agreed to participate in the Expression of Interest. The involved networks EUROIDEES and EUROCITIES and the involved renowned researchers stand for a much larger community of potentially interested partners. More details on participants and on further developments of the proposal will be available on the website www.sqm-praxis.net/gisde/.

Research

institution	contact person	comment
Centre for Urban & Regional Ecology, School of Planning & Landscape, Manchester University, United Kingdom	Ravetz, Joe, Prof.	http://www.art.man.ac.uk/PLANNING/cure/
Department of Environment, Technology and Social Studies, Roskilde University, Denmark	Drewes Nielsen, Lise, Prof.	http://www.teksam.ruc.dk/TSUK/index.htm

Department of Geography, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland	Jim Walsh, Prof.	http://www.may.ie/
EURES – Institute for Regional Studies in Europe, Freiburg i.Br., Germany	**Schleicher-Tappeser, Ruggero**	**www.eures.de**
Forschungsschwerpunkt Nachhaltigkeit und Umweltmanagement, Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien, Austria	Martinuzzi, Andre; Schubert, Uwe, Prof.	http://www.sustainability.at/
ID Consulting	**Aglietti Zanon, Marcello**	**http://www.idconsulting.be**
IEEP, Brussels, Belgium	Vonkeman, Gerrit, Prof.	
IGEAT, Institut Gestion, Environnement & Aménagement du Territoire, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium - Région Wallonie	Niarchos, Catherine ; Carlo Caldarini ; Dominique Paule Decoster	http://www.ulb.ac.be/rech/inventaire/unites/ULB569.html
NEA Transport research and training B. V., Netherlands	Rosenbrand, Ad	http://www.nea.nl/
IRS, Institut für Regionalentwicklung und Strukturplanung e.V., Erkner bei Berlin, Germany	Fichter, Heidi	http://www.irs-net.de/
Reverdy Associés, Consultants, Grenoble, France	Reverdy, Bernard	http://pro.wanadoo.fr/reverdy.associes/
SQM-praxis GmbH, Freiburg / Firenze	**Schleicher-Tappeser, Ruggero; Strati, Filippo**	**www.sqm-praxis.net**
SRS – Studio Ricerche Sociali, Firenze, Italy	**Strati, Filippo**	**www.srs-europa.it**
The Bartlett School of Planning, University College London, UK	Banister, David, Prof.	http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/planning/people/banister.htm
TIS, Lisbon, Portugal	Viegas, José, Prof.	http://www.tis.pt/default_en.htm
University of Pisa, Italy	Taliani, Emilio, Prof.	http://www.dss.unipi.it/

Territorial Communities

community	contact person	comment
Euro*IDEES European association for the promotion of Initiatives for Economic Development, Employment and Solidarity, Brussels	**Badiali, Luigi** **Cenacchi, Valeria**	Among the members: Regions: Emilia-Romagna (IT), Toscana (IT), County Council of Värmland (SE) … Provinces: Barelona (SP), Vercelli (IT), Livorno (IT), Rieti (IT) … Cities: Cordoba (SP), San Sebastian (SP), Carrara (IT) … Development Agencies: Heraclion (GR), Basc Countries (SP), BIC Toscana (IT), Lille (FR) … Territorial pacts for employment …
EUROCITIES European association of over 100 large cities from the EU member states and 10 other European countries, Brussels	**Van De Ven, Anthony**	www.eurocities.org
Regione Toscana / Italy	Sorbi, Simone	s.sorbi@mail.regione.toscana.it
Région Wallonie	Géron, Ghislain	Direction Générale de l'Aménagement du Territoire, du Logement et du Patrimoine (DGATLP)