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ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

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TRAVEL, TOURISM & AVIATION

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP



CALL: There has been a call to find partners for projects recently. AA photo

## Firms find help for R&D fund

TUTKU AYVAZ  
ANKARA - Referans

Projects aimed at benefiting small and medium-sized enterprises, or SMEs, under the European Union's Seventh Framework Program are helping those with lower research capabilities.

The projects addressing the needs of SMEs allow those with lower research and development, or R&D, capabilities to meet their technological needs with help from enterprises with a higher R&D capability, as well as other SMEs, research centers and universities.

Recently, there has been a call to find partners for 16 projects prepared within this scope. SMEs that can benefit from both new technologies and the EU fund will be able to be partners on several projects that aim to develop technology in various fields, including aviation, informatics and generating value from animal waste.

The deadline for the projects, which will be supported if they are successful, is Dec. 3, said authorities from the Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey, or TÜBİTAK.

A total of 136 million euros in support will be provided for the projects for 2010, they said.

# Textile group aims to defy rivals in olive oil

METE TAMER OMUR  
İZMİR - Referans

The 40-year-old textile company Kuloğlu Group has just entered the olive oil sector with its brand, Zeytin İskelesi.

The chance to compete against China, Pakistan and India, particularly in textiles, is gradually falling, said İsmail Kuloğlu, chairman of Kuloğlu Group, which has been operating in the Aegean city of İzmir. However, the Chinese do not constitute a threat in olive oil, he said, adding: "It is a chance for Turkey that China does not produce olive oil. We have decided to invest wholly in domestic production."

Zeytin İskelesi brand has emerged following a preparation period of around two years, said Fatih Cenikli, managing director of Kuloğlu. The firm has invested 5 million euros on

**Kuloğlu, an İzmir-based firm operating in textiles, becomes fed up with cheap products from China and India. Following a preparation period of two years, the company has launched olive oil production, which seems to be a safe haven against China**

22,000 square meters of land in the Tire Organized Industrial Zone. "The plant, which has a closed area of 5,500 sq m. and machines imported from Italy, has a capacity to process 15,000 tons of natural olive oil annually," he said. "Our aim is to present the most qualified olive oil to Turkish consumers." Noting that Kuloğlu set off with a goal to prioritize the domestic market and to present quality olive oil to Turkish consumers, he said that the firm wants to

specialize in just natural olive oil.

"Our product range consists of just extra-virgin olive oil, natural first olive oil and natural organic oils. We prefer to present our oils in glass or tinplates. The packages range between one to five liters. After collecting from Aegean producers, we have the product undergo a detailed control process in our laboratories."

Currently Zeytin İskelesi is available in market chains CarrefourSA and Real. The firm has also made an agreement with Kipa, a domestic Turkish supermarket chain that has a

partnership with U.K.-based supermarket chain Tesco, Cenikli said. The aim is to exist in the supermarkets with a boutique-quality product, he added.

After reaching a certain market at home, Kuloğlu is planning to expand in foreign countries. The firm aims to become an important player in the olive oil sector and then to present the olive oil to the world," he said.

### Plan to expand abroad

The top threats for olive oil include contact with heat, light and air, but Zeytin İskelesi carefully prevents this through a different system, Cenikli said. "While bottling olive oil, we prevent its contact with air via advanced technology. We remove air from the bottle when it's both empty and full. This way we protect the freshness and smell of olive oil for a long time. With the system called 'nitrogen cushioning,' our product keeps its freshness till its lid is open." Kuloğlu is one of the first company to implement this system in Turkey. "In order to cut contact with light, we prefer dark bottles, which are twice as expensive as other bottles. We buy it from Italian Saint Gobain, one of the world's oldest glass producers."



GOAL: Kuloğlu set off with a goal to prioritize the domestic market and to present quality olive oil to Turkish consumers, says İsmail Kuloğlu, chairman of Kuloğlu Group.



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## Start-up lessons from backpacking

Next time you're planning a trip to a faraway city, and you're feeling at a loss as you try to find the right hotel, consider this: You could sleep on someone's couch instead.

The practice is called "couchsurfing," and there's even a Web site for it, www.couchsurfing.org. A free service, CouchSurfing has quickly grown into the world's largest hospitality-exchange network. Its members offer their couches or spare beds to travelers from around the globe.

Here's how CouchSurfing got started: Founder Casey Fenton got the idea after finding a cheap flight from Boston to Iceland.

Rather than stay at a hostel, Fenton randomly emailed 1,500 University of Iceland students and asked if they would let him stay with them during the trip.

He received more than 50 offers of free accommodation. Later, on the return flight to Boston, he started to develop the idea that would eventually become the CouchSurfing project.

CouchSurfing has some things to teach us about entrepreneurship and life in general.

First, CouchSurfing reminds us to build our networks before we need them. Don't think you're just going to log on to the CouchSurfing Web site the night before your plane leaves for Caracas and quickly find a place to stay for free.

### CouchSurfing offers a model for entrepreneurship

CouchSurfing encourages its members to participate in the community before trying to find free places to stay in other cities. The Web site organizes casual get-togethers in cities around the world; new members typically start out by attending these gatherings, getting to know the community and letting the community get to know them.

The site also has an excellent system for evaluating its members, starting by verifying their identities and then allowing them to write references and "vouch" for each other.

I have a few friends who are actively traveling the world using this system, and they began participating in the community long before they embarked on their trips.

Whatever kind of entrepreneurial venture you have planned, start building a network around it at least a year before you will actually need it. This will be a great way to meet your potential customers and to do market research, too. What better way to get to know your customers and their needs than to practice serving them in some context for a whole year before you actually start your business?

### Creativity surpasses money accumulation

The second thing we can learn from CouchSurfing is that what you lack in money, you can make up for in creativity. Couchsurfers know that you don't have to spend tons of money on fancy hotels in order to travel the world. You just need people who are willing to let you stay in their homes for free.

And how do you do that? You remind the hosts of the richness that will come into their lives when they open their homes to the international community, and you remind the travelers of the benefits of trading impersonal hotel rooms for new friends and eye-opening life experiences.

Almost every start-up is short on cash, but imaginative ones figure out how to reach their customers even when money is tight. The end result is often a richer experience for both the start-up and its customers, because there is no room to cover up problems with money.

The third thing we can learn from CouchSurfing is that entrepreneurship is more than just starting a business. Entrepreneurship is a way of thinking, a way of living. Casey Fenton was flying back home after a weekend crashing on people's couches in Iceland, and he let one kernel of inspiration lead him to build a platform that would end up connecting millions of people around the world.

Entrepreneurship isn't about patents and venture capital and burn rates and market share. It is about seeing untapped potential and finding creative ways to bring that potential to life. As the founder of CouchSurfing discovered, you too will find that the person who helps the world unleash that potential will be surrounded by a large crowd of admiring people who happily owe him or her a debt of gratitude.

## Challenges in innovation policy

İSTANBUL  
Hürriyet Daily News

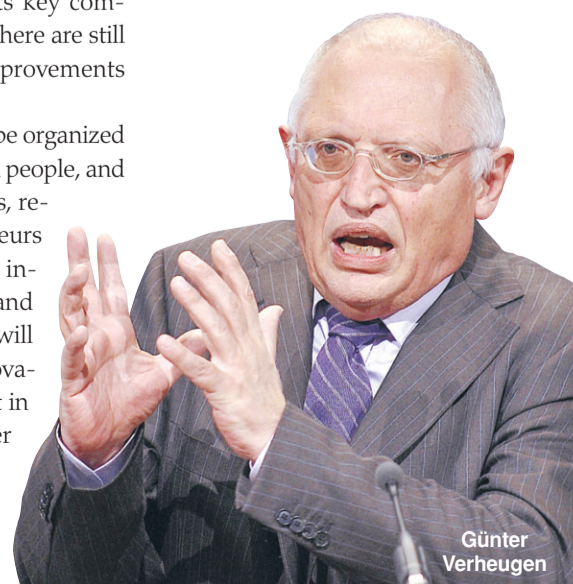
European Union member states have made significant progress in innovation since the re-launch of the Lisbon Partnership for growth and jobs, but there are still policy gaps, the European Commission has said.

The re-launched Lisbon Partnership for growth and jobs has put innovation and entrepreneurship at the center, the commission said Wednesday in a note on its online portal Europa. An ambitious European innovation policy was launched in 2006 and the Small Business Act, or SBA, was agreed on. Although almost all member states have improved their innovation performance, and the innovation gap between the EU and its key competitors has narrowed, there are still areas where further improvements are necessary, it read.

"Innovation cannot be organized by decree. It comes from people, and only people — scientists, researchers, entrepreneurs and their employees, investors, consumers and public authorities — will make Europe more innovative. But they do not act in a vacuum," said Günter Verheugen, vice president of the commission. "They act with a mindset and in a

framework that either discourages or incites them to enter unknown territories. The lessons presented will help us with the preparation of a modern EU reform agenda for the next decade that should have innovation at its heart."

Some progress has been achieved and notably the SBA aims at easing life for entrepreneurs. "New EU State Aid rules provide more effective public policy tools to support research and development and innovation." The commission will explore the feasibility of proposing a European innovation act aiming at strengthening the partnership approach in innovation as an integral part of the future European reform agenda beyond 2010, it said.



Günter Verheugen

\* The 'sectors' page of HürriyetDN is the venue of our weekly exploration of the deeper dynamics in Turkey's economy



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ARNAVUTKÖY: 260 sqm 4 bedrooms, full activities	\$6.500_
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EMİRGAN: 280 sqm attached Villa, 4 bedrooms, swimming pool, garden, Bosphorus view	\$ 8.400_
EMİRGAN: 350 sqm apartment, 4 bedrooms, spectacular Bosphorus view, terrace	\$6.500_
EMİRGAN: 250 sqm apartment, 5 bedrooms, swimming pool, amazing Bosphorus view, garden	\$7.000_
ETİLER: (San Konaklar Compound) apartments, with all activities	from \$3.000_ up to \$6.000_
GÜMÜŞSUYU: 210 sqm, 4 bedrooms, Bosphorus view	\$4.000_
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