



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
RESEARCH DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

The Director-General



Ref. ARES (20.10) 361484-23/06/20.10

Brussels, **23 JUN 2010**
DG RTD/B3/LS/edj

Prof. Ari Laptev,
President of the European Mathematical Society
Department of Mathematics
Imperial College London
180 Queen's Gate
UK - London SW7 2AZ

Dear Professor Laptev,

Thank you for your letter of 20 May 2010.

I agree with you on the very important role that Mathematics plays for European Industry and Innovation. Mathematics, while not targeted by any specific thematic priority, has received support under the various Research Framework Programmes, in particular through the horizontal programmes: People (Marie Curie actions) and Ideas. EU research programmes represent, however, only a small fraction of the R&I spending in Europe.

We take note of your call for a larger support and we will keep it into account while reflecting on the future EU actions for research and innovation. However, please note that these actions will most likely not be discipline oriented and will move beyond the thematic approach to focus on the major societal challenges facing Europe: climate change, energy security, food security, health or ageing population. I am firmly convinced that the Mathematics community will be able to give a vital contribution to many of these strategic initiatives.

I also look with interest at your idea of gathering the efforts of the Member States and the EC to create a virtual European Institute of Mathematics and Innovation. If you believe this idea would fit within the definition of a research infrastructure (see: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/esfri>), the upcoming FP7 call for Research Infrastructures (to be published at the end of July), covering Design Studies for new research infrastructures, could be useful in that respect. For further information, I encourage you to take contact with the concerned Commission services.

Contact:
Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË - Tel. +32 22991111
Office: 1/1131 Tel: +32 2 29 61232 Fax: +32 2 29 92102

Hervé.Pero@ec.europa.eu

In addition you could investigate if the model of your virtual Institute fits with the "Knowledge and Innovation Communities" (KICs) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, the EIT (<http://eit.europa.eu/>). The KICs bring together academic research teams and units from different countries in a context of industrial applications and technological innovation.

Yours sincerely,



José Manuel SILVA RODRIGUEZ

For the Director General absent
W. BURTSCHER
Deputy Director General