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**UNIVERSITY-ENTERPRISE COOPERATION: BUILDING ON NEW CHALLENGES
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*The statement of Dr. Lauri Tuomi, director, Research and Development Centre,
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***Challenges for University- Enterprise cooperation in the upcoming years given the Lisbon
agenda and the Bologna process.***

The main challenge of U-E cooperation is the implementation of the strategies. The numerous European, national and regional strategies provide the universities and enterprises with strong support for cooperation. However, these strategies need to be effectively implemented. This means active, innovative and long-term collaboration between universities and enterprises.

I would argue that the main challenge is the enhancement of entrepreneurship and the development of new and existing enterprises. Actually, these different perspectives can be integrated. Thus, there is a need for new collaboration models which combine entrepreneurship studies, incubators, development projects as well as other actions supporting the existing SMEs to grow and internationalise. This kind of innovative models call for innovative thinking from universities, enterprises and other actors supporting the entrepreneurship.

Thus, the strategies should be implemented in the enterprise level, too. This kind of collaboration can be of most rewarding for both parties. On enterprise level the above mentioned integrative models for collaboration are possible, too. For example, the students' work-placements can be integrated into R&D actions, or the collaboration may be deepened by expert exchanges between universities and enterprises. The collaboration may also mean the development of the competencies of current personnel by continuing education. In order to build partnerships with enterprises, the universities need to renew their cultures to become more flexible and more 'customer-oriented'. Also, some structural changes may be needed in order to be open with the environment and to ease the contacting from enterprises ('one-counter services') and, what is very important, to encourage the personnel of the universities to take the risk and contact entrepreneurs, HR-managers and company personnel.

Moreover, the universities need to be active players in the regional, national and international innovation environments. There are a number of possibilities to collaborate: e.g. the cluster development, the development of innovation centres as well as the development of innovative regions (i.e. the 'living labs'). Actually, the '*open innovation*' perspective challenges the traditional U-E collaboration. As open innovation models gather all the strategic parties to develop new innovative solutions, it must be kept in mind that *the end users of the products/services* as well as *the customers* are needed to be taken into account when the U-E collaboration is discussed. Actually, this kind of collaboration can be seen to be in the core of the *competitiveness of Europe*. Thus, the main question is how the innovative business environment is maintained and developed in Europe and how the competitiveness is kept sustained in international competition?

In sum, I would argue that the second phase of U-E collaboration should be started. On strategic level there is a common will to enhance collaboration. Thus, it is time for real actions. However, the collaboration can not be seen to mean separate and fragmented actions, but rather a coherent and integrated set of actions. Therefore, the new era of U-E collaboration consists of innovative models for collaboration which support the development of the competitiveness of individual companies and universities, their regions and, finally, Europe as a whole.