

Supporting innovation through learning The role of networking in Europe

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Taftie – In a Nutshell

- ▶ European Association of Leading National Innovation Agencies
- ▶ Set up in 1992
- ▶ 26 Members from 24 countries
- ▶ All making a major contribution to strengthening Europe's economic performance by supporting product, process and services innovation by implementing their countries' national and international Research, Development and Innovation Programmes
- ▶ UK is chairing Taftie in 2012 (co-presidency between TSB and Pera)



Taftie - Objective and scope

- ▶ A collaboration platform where take place:
 - ▶ Exchange of best practice through *Task Forces* and *Expert Sessions* (e.g. Pre-Commercial Procurement or State-Aid rules)
 - ▶ Dialogue with policy makers through *Policy Forum* and on-going dialogue on selected strategic themes
 - ▶ Dialogue with industry and other relevant players through the *Annual Conference* (June 2012 in Cambridge on Entrepreneurship and high growth firms)



Taftie: Learning Initiatives

- ▶ **Taftie Academy** created in 2010
 - ▶ Proposes 2 types of courses to members and other counterparts
 - ▶ 2012 courses included
 - ▶ Staff trainings
 - “Programme and Policy Evaluation - Advanced”
 - "International Collaboration - Are you puzzled with ERA?"
 - "RTDI Programme Management"
 - ▶ Networking workshops
 - "Monetary funding: project financing via loans / grants vs. tax schemes– actual developments in Europe“
 - "Performance measurement in funding agencies“
- ▶ Websites:
 - ▶ <http://taftie.org>
 - ▶ <http://www.taftie.org/content/academy>



Innovation – A Learnt Discipline?

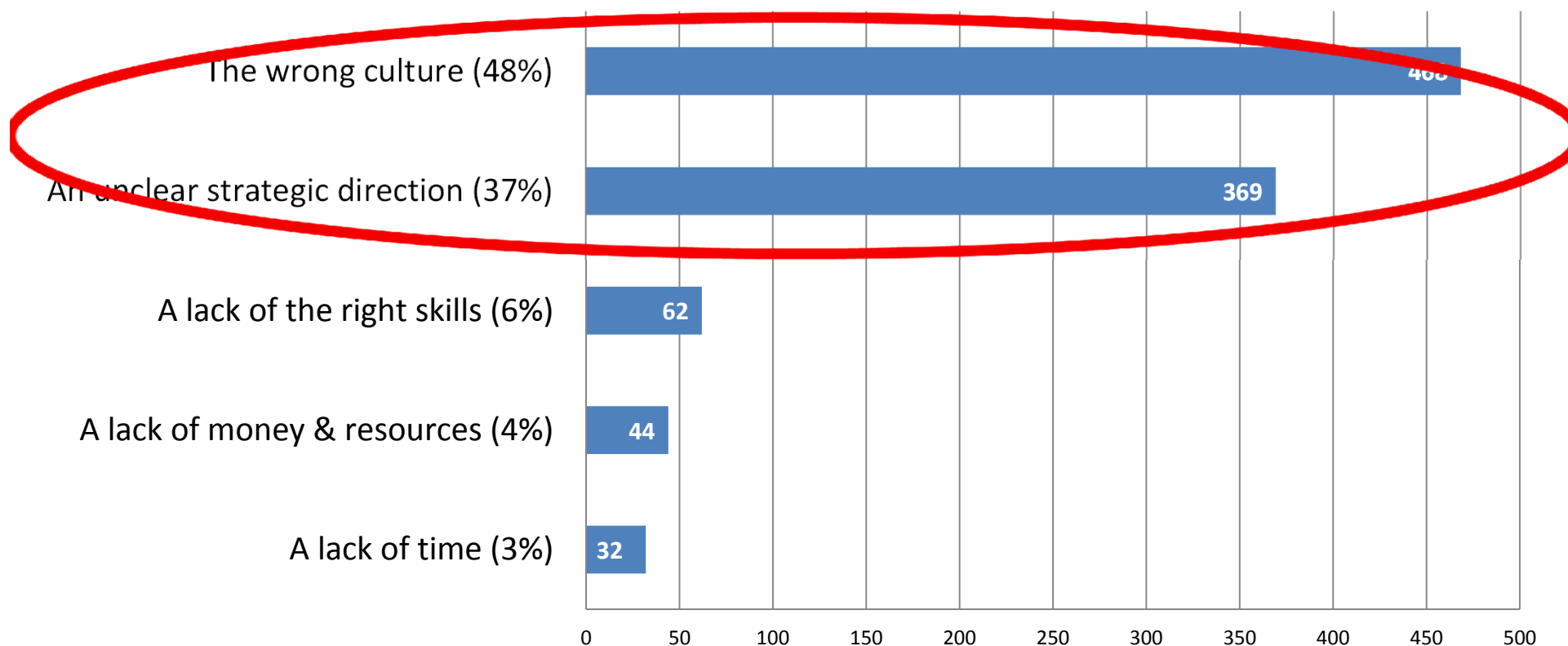
Context

- ▶ We identify the high levels of recognition of the importance of innovation and its promotion through learning
- ▶ There are numerous examples of this, I will present a few here
- ▶ However, is this capability - that is so important to the socio-economic future of the EU being effectively / consistently - embedded, at all levels, into our people and businesses?



Firstly, what are the barriers to innovation?

July 2012 Poll: 975 Respondents



Adult Learning to Support Innovation in the Workplace in Europe

- ▶ Most Taftie agency members support Adult Learning in the Workplace programmes aimed at developing skills to promote innovation in enterprises
- ▶ Programmes usually fall under one of these 3 categories:
 - ▶ (a) programmes directly investing in human capital – *knowledge, skills and competences of persons*, employed or unemployed
 - ▶ (b) programmes addressing structural capital – organisational structures and processes – with a focus on the workplace level, aiming at more learning-intensive forms of work organisations and, thereby, *higher intensities of workplace learning*
 - ▶ (c) programmes focusing on structural capital – organisational structures and processes – on a level regarding the whole organisation, *beyond the workplace level*, e.g. business development programmes



Examples of Programmes

(a) Human capital

Austria – Initiatives of the Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth

- ▶ **w-fORTE** - Economic impulses for women in research and innovation contributes to establishing equal opportunities in scientific and technological worlds of work by investing in human capital. It also contributes to understand the different types of culture that exist in research institutions and identify the resulting challenges faced by researchers working there.
- ▶ **The “Laura Bassi Centres of Expertise”** are learning centres for scientific personnel established in 2009. The centres have a lifespan of seven years. In the fourth year, there will be a mid-term evaluation with a stop-or-go decision. If the mid-term evaluation is positive, then the lifespan of the centre will be extended for a further three years.
- ▶ <http://www.ffg.at/laura-bassi-centres-expertise-0>
- ▶ <http://www.ffg.at/content/wirtschaftsimpulse-von-frauen-forschung-und-technologie>



Examples of Programmes

(b) Structural capital

Denmark

▶ **Knowledge Pilot Programme**

- ▶ Offers the possibility to SMEs to hire a highly educated person. The company must have between 2 and 100 employees
- ▶ A knowledge pilot is an academic employee with an education at a Master's Degree level or higher
- ▶ The subsidy must be used for paying part of the salary for a duration of 6-12 months
- ▶ The knowledge pilot has to implement a specific development task for the company - a project that will contribute to the company's innovation and growth potential
- ▶ The project must have a clear added value for the company and last at least 6 months
- ▶ <http://en.fi.dk/funding/funding-opportunities/knowledge-pilot>



Examples of Programmes

(c) Structural capital beyond the workplace

Norway

- ▶ **VRI Program** for the promotion of innovation, knowledge and value creation through regional cooperation and R&D initiatives
- ▶ 10 years operating period, 2007-2016
- ▶ National funding is about 8.8 mill Euro and is more than doubled by regional funding
- ▶ Work with clusters and networks of companies concerning innovation and cooperation with research institutions
- ▶ Offers mechanisms such as mobility schemes, mediation skills, action research in companies and networking, preliminary support for businesses etc.
- ▶ www.forskningsradet.no/vri



To Summarise

- ▶ Wonderful examples of individual organisations taking positive steps to improving innovation – cannot be spoken highly enough
- ▶ However the variety of approaches underlines that there is not a clear and macro view of what innovation, as a learnt discipline, is
- ▶ They are not yet addressing some of the critical barriers to innovation
 - ▶ Developing a culturally aligned workforce that understands innovation, what it means to their company and how do they play their part
 - ▶ A clear strategic focus on innovation
 - ▶ Leadership
 - ▶ Metrics
 - ▶ Market and customer focus
 - ▶ The development of people



So If Innovation is to be a Learnt Discipline

Because it is as important to competitiveness as: quality, operational excellence, customer service,...

Then it should be treated the same.

► It must be:

- Taught, put into practice and repeatable
- A formal framework, with learning outcomes meeting business need
- Practical application, not theoretical
- Associated with a process and culture that is inclusive
- Focused on its end-game: value creation, not a diversion



Then the Challenge is:

- ▶ To build a network of advocates that can develop a coherent view of innovation, that can be embedded in the socio-economic core of the EU
 - ▶ To define ways of making innovation a vocational competence as well as academic
 - ▶ To bring this learning into schools, so this competence should not be retrofitted to people in later years
 - ▶ And to do it **now**, because this approach is not being lost on nations that are competitive to us
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Thank you

Richard Grice

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Pera (Co-President of Taftie 2012)

