



# Intelligent furniture

## REPORT I

### Colleagues

9.5.2010



## Intelligent Furniture



Lifelong Learning Programme

**Dear colleagues** - welcome to our open dialogue to start Intelligent Furniture Project.

By using this interactive and anonymous method we will collect the basic information needed for "working package II" relating to training systems and activities in participating countries. Further on we'll ask you to describe what kind of business networks are already in use in each country. The main goals of the idea are:

1. Increase furniture sector sme's competitiveness by creation of efficient strategies, processes and contents for life- long-learning.
2. Creation of innovative tools and forums for local and transnational networking.

Through this process we are consulting and involving key furniture companies across EU, thus enabling the wisdom and insight within this community to be made visible and applied. This will help us to generate and share the best ideas for business growth, to select the optimal strategic actions and to find new opportunities.

We are targeting for new educational model for more competitive interior design and furniture sector. A couple weeks later you will have an opportunity to prioritise and assess the ideas and initiatives collected during this first round.

Please now press the PROCEED button.

Bera

PROCEED





## Participants

### 1. round 29.3 – 7.4

Finland	3
Germany	3
Italy	2
Spain	1
	-----
	9

### 2. round 23.4 – 30.4

5
2
1
1
-----
9

Total 120 ideas, opinions, claims about training issues in interior and furniture field companies

## Open questions in round 1

### Training and services

Describe what kind of training and training services you have had or you have been involved in furniture and interior sectors in your organization.

### Networking

Describe in which business areas the companies are collaborating in your country?

### Ideas

Please think of our target in Intelligent Furniture project.

**What are the main issues you want to highlight to make the existing systems and activities working better?**

### The future

We all have dreams for the future.

**CITIUS, ALTIUS, FORTIUS - or something else... if I only have the power and courage? How do you personally feel?**

### Let it burn

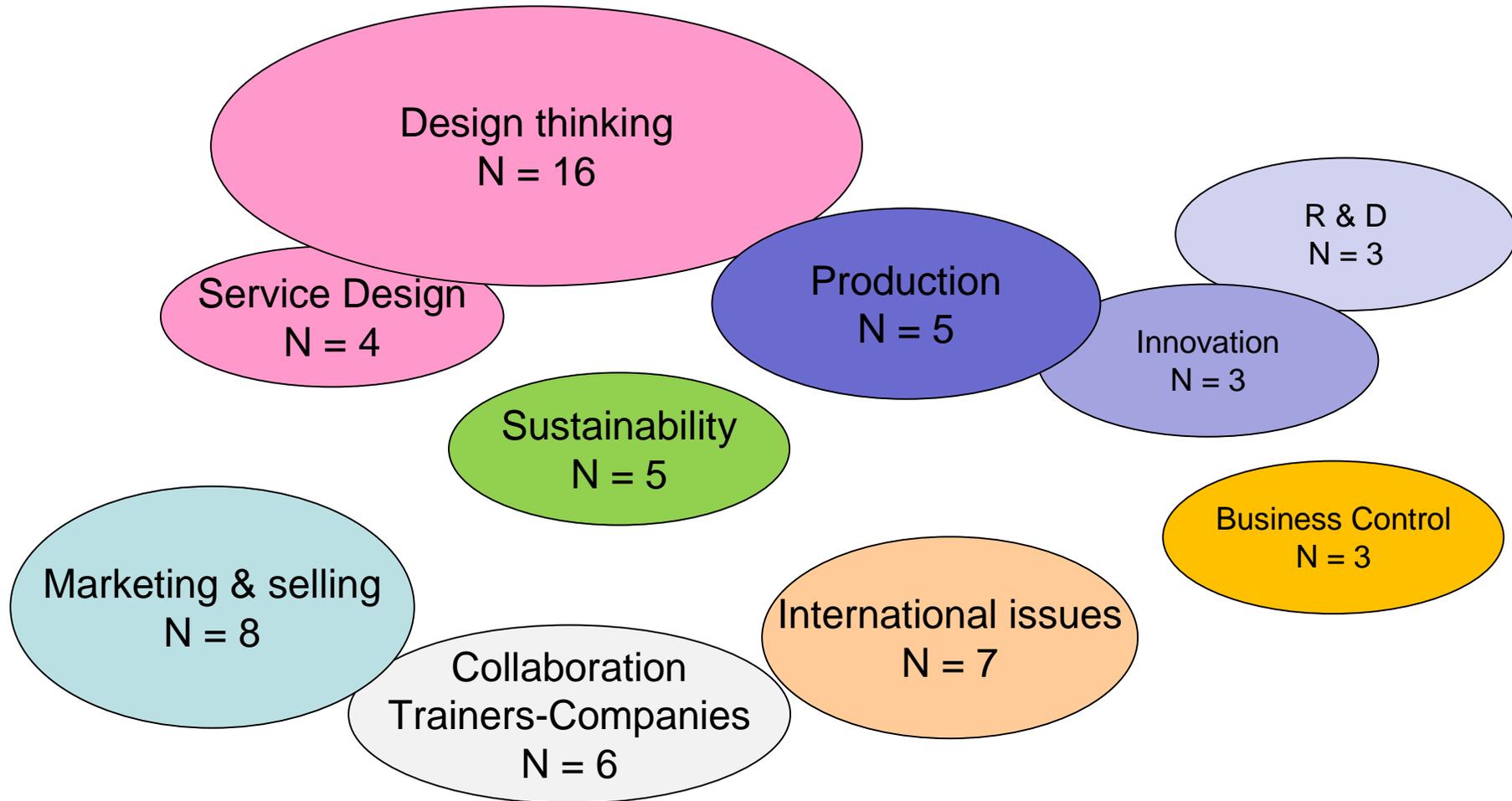
Finally, are there any other points that you wish to take this opportunity to lay before the EU financiers and business developers.

**Where we are good ? Where do we have challenges?**



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## The main themes analyzed from the open question answers





### **33704**

There is very few collaboration between enterprises. Some enterprises are working together in order to develop prototypes of new furniture and also in order to invite sellers (toscana furniture show).

### **33664**

To offer more training moduls to the topics: - Universal Design/Design for All - Global/local concepts - crossover from tradition and contemporary design to initiate cooperation between local and international companies.

### **33691**

Collaboration and communication between participant organizations and companies - Getting to know better the needs of companies in different countries, is helping to develop business services and professional education (basic studies and further education)

### **33749**

We want to put the attention on the selling exigence. In all the activities of training of the production sector we want to put in evidence that everything is made to be sold and so everything have to be sell oriented.



### 33649

All the market stakeholders, citizens, SME, etc. should work together to pursue a common target, supported by standards, willingness and administrations.

### 33715

Sustaining the strong enterprises, going in a clear direction, leaving useless strategies aside. So the motors of the sector might take force again. Just like cutting down a plant in order to make it more strong...

### 33730

Our dream for the future: 2015 the European network of SME's furniture and interior companies - INFU - has just exhibited the new INFU collection (naturally with ECO label). The "green string" of the INFU network is design thinking and sustainable development contrary to low-cost import and disposable consuming. 2020 INFU is the marketing leader (in its own marketing sector) in Europe and has also expanded globalized.

### 33716

We can develop new ways and means, important to - hear and consider the needs of the enterprises - to develop a CLEAR strategie - to carry it on with the only aim to enforce the economic sector in itself

## Fresh angles on networking and training and Know How

Networking

Are the SME companies willing to network? Describe.

Training

Are the existing training systems good enough to give answers to the needs of LLL in the sector? What could be done to match the business needs?

Our role

What are the best things we as an operators can do?

Feedback

How do we guarantee our understanding about company needs?

## Networking

### 33640

SME are inclined to avoid networking with each other mainly because they still consider other sector enterprises as competitors. They do it for instance for product development when they work jointly with providers or clients.

### 33665

It is not easy to move them towards networking, but if there are attractive offers for them, there is a chance.

### 33678

Yes, they are. But you ( Academy ) have to be thoughtful of others. The companies must trust you. If they have secrets, you have to believe them.

### 33692

Yes they are willing to network in some fields\_ - marketing (export) - fairs - subcontracting, but mostly only in its own sector



## Training

### 33751

We have to be more flexible in the organisation and ready to answer the questions!

### 33736

The training system is quite ok, because there are different possibilities and ways to improve the skills and competences. But the LLL is mostly not understood as a purpose on its own in modern times. Mostly it is set as a political business-improvement-machine. So there is often the same question of what will be the profit of a learning course. And this doesn't help very much in the beginning.

### 33708

I think this item is quite good regulated. The problem is not training itself, but how to define the necessary training activities and how to develop adequate training.

### 33655

For me it is not the training systems, but the accessibility in mind and sometimes just the information to training courses and learning opportunities - the day-to-day stress or feeling of such trying to find good access and attractive information for business and design process support (why don't you write what LLL means?)



## Our role

### 33694

-Try to be an proactive partner with the companies - Updating training and find new ways to market the training

### 33680

Be active. Be innovative. Be in good relations with the companies and their organisations. In education systems we have to have some contents of business thinking, projects wit companies.

### 33656

find me getting got into it

### 33642

analyse the market, foreseing the tendencies and adapt the training courses, contents and methodologies to them

### 33707

In our context it is difficult to stay in the proper role... there is no "we operators", there are different foles of operators. In our context often public bodies are the motors of initiatives, but it would be much more functional if the enterprises could stimulate more activities, helping the public bodies to be at the service of the production sector.

## Feedback

### 33643

continuously working with them, understanding their languages and knowing what happen around them and inside their organization.

### 33668

To meet and to talk with them and to make offen evaluations about the services, which we offer.

### 33724

The project should succeed to build the interactive chain from following elements: 1. real need of companies 2. strategies, processes and contents for LLL 3. tools (training systems) for practise activities.

### 33753

We have to have a continuos dialogue with companies and to be open to translate every signal!

### 33657

(... don't understand)

## Let your mind fly!



What is important in the future?



Your opinion.  
What could this figure describe?



How could we work better together?



How could we sharpen our own performance?



What should we give up doing?



## What is important in the future?

### 33696

Collaboration different business and training areas - Sustainable business - in it's large meaning from viewpoints of economic, ekologic, social and cultural aspects.

### 33683

If we take care of education and companies wellfair, the business is increasing. Also the reputation of our design is growing.

### 33725

Networking - finding the new target groups (ageing people, "green" people...) - new and innovative products and services - flexibilitly - specialization - sustainable development - design thinking.

### 33740

That there will still be a one we would be happy about



## Your opinion. What could this figure describe?

**33711**

inversion of the actual economic tendencies in the furniture sector!

**33741**

A green line out of square

**33645**

Increasing the ecological footprint overshoot increase the worker skills.

**33670**

the development of the buisness of a company or of the LLL sector



## How could we work better together?

### 33756

Doing every one what we are be able to do better!

### 33712

talking, discussing, exchanging ideas, working togethe

### 33727

Listening others and sharing experiencies and practisies

### 33684

To respect others. To be in contact with others, colleagues and companies.

### 33698

To get know "partners" better -  $1+1 > 2$  = meaning the exchange of know-how, cooperation..



## How could we sharpen our own performance?

### 33685

To take care better to information outside. To concentrate to what we can.

### 33713

putting together alle the needs, all the competencies and all the opportunities reachable by all the involved actors of the sector!

### 33728

Highlighting sustainable development and design thinking. Sniffing future trends and weak signals

### 33743

less mice races



## What should we give up doing?

### 33700

The companies must lead and be responsible of their product development and business; so we concentrate only to our competences and try to serve in that field us good as possible.

### 33714

Thinking only and exclusively on the own advantage. Economical sectors are like a boat: if it goes down, everyone will get wet.

### 33648

we should not give up doing anything but we should keep working toward all the possible directions matching all the SME direct and indirect needs.

### 33686

To try to have the whole world in our own hands.

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Dear Friends,

We now wish to present to you some of the themes and ideas from round 1 and to ask you for your further input and evaluation. Specifically we wish to ask your help in prioritising some of the areas for further actions.

All the ideas and comments originate from the answers you already have given to us on the first round.

The process now is even more simply than the first round and 100% anonymous. Read only the instructions from the each page and answer with good concentration.

Kind regards

Eija

Please now click the PROCEED button

PROCEED



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The stairs below have eleven theme titles on the right. Please move the mouse above the themes and you'll see the description of the idea.

Touch each title and move it to the stairs. Place the theme you regard the most important on the top of the stairs and the least important lowest - and the others in between. The Yellow dot shows the exact place of the valuation. Comment by clicking the pen button on the right of the idea. **Save only after having valued all the themes.**



Marketing and selling	
Sustainability	
Production	
Design thinking	
Innovation	
International issues	
Business control	
Service Design	
Research and development	
Logistics	
Education / Enterprise co...	



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# The answers



In the board:

The most supported in terms of importance is on left

Distribution between answers is shown on each column

So you can see on the left: "Design thinking" is the most valued issue having two persons placing it as the first, five as the second and one as the third and fourth.

## PRIORIZATION TOTAL IN THE ORDER OF IMPORTANCE

- 1. Design thinking 33490**  
Design from product design to strategic thinking.
- 2. Innovation 33491**  
Business oriented new ideas.
- 3. Marketing and selling 33487**  
Marketing and selling efforts nationally and internationally.
- 4. Research and development 33495**  
Product development, materials, heritage etc.
- 5. Education / Enterprise collaboration 33497**  
Collaboration between companies, regions, institutions, universities and research units.
- 6. Sustainability 33488**  
Ecological, economical, cultural and sociological issues.
- 7. Production 33489**  
Producing goods, developing production systems.
- 8. International issues 33492**  
All kind of international acts.
- 9. Service Design 33494**  
User-oriented methods to combine services and products.
- 10. Business control 33493**  
Business administration, finance, accounts etc.
- 11. Logistics 33498**  
Transporting, packages, delivery, locations etc.

## Some comments on prorized themes on stairs

### 1. Design thinking 33490

Design thinking is about establishing a strategy according to how to design, the design position inside the whole strategy and afterward applying into the product real design and development .

### 2. Innovation 33491

Innovation is the company's trigger for progress, development and improvements.

### 3. Marketing and selling 33487

Training in improvement advanced techniques of sale and marketing for entrepreneurs and employed people of furniture sector: market analysis and strategic objectives individuation; identification and analysis of the competition.

### 4. Research and development 33495

R&D is the vehicle to achieve innovation all over the company's application fields.

### 5. Education / Enterprise collaboration 33497

Improving the enterprises human resources knowledge, from a quality and quantity point of view-

### 6. Sustainability 33488

Sustainability is a transversal concept.

### 7. Production 33489

Training for the production engineers for development of methods of analysis of costs and time.

### 8. International issues 33492

The globalization is a fact, and the company has to think also in their strategies abroad

### 9. Service Design 33494

The consumer is looking for services that make them feel new experiences too.

### 10. Business control 33493

Business control and tracking / centers of economic responsibility.

### 11. Logistics 33496

Strong need for truck parking.

Develop ecological training for designers and the companies.

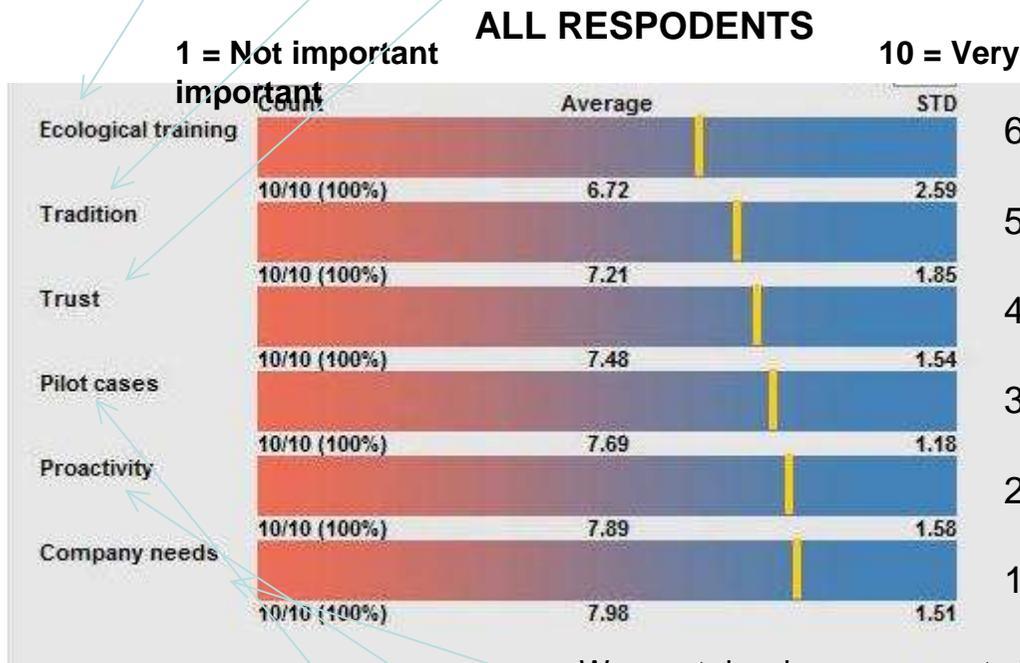
## Slider 1

To move from tradition to contemporary design.

The companies must trust you. You have to be capable to do what you promise.

### POSITIONS

	Finland	Germany	Spain	Italy
Ecological training			1	2
Tradition		1		3
Trust			3	
Pilot cases	3	3		
Proactivity	1		2	
Company needs	2	2		1



We must develop new ways to hear and understand the needs of the enterprises.

Training organizations have to be a proactive partner with the companies; sniffing future trends and weak signals

Spread pilot cases and best practices.



## Some comments on themes / slider 1

### **Tradition**

\*\*\* important to move forward but never forget the tradition that can give us a lot of knowledge \*\*\* moving forward looking at the past.

### **Pilot cases**

Pilot cases may be of interest in training on the interaction between the customer and the company in the design phase.

### **Company needs**

We must offset the needs they think they have and the needs we think they should have .

### **Ecological training**

Ecological issues are nowadays indispensable for the quality of life and the social impact of enterprises activities.

### **Proactivity**

Training organizations have to be always on alert and offering more than the enterprise expect to receive .

### **Trust**

\*\*\* of course \*\*\* the prevalence of micro enterprises includes offering safe results to win the trust.

Thinking only and exclusively on the own advantage.  
 Economical sectors are like a boat: if it goes down,  
 everyone will get wet.

Sustaining the strong enterprises, going in a clear  
 direction, leaving useless strategies aside.

The LLL is mostly not understood as a purpose on its own in modern  
 times. Mostly it is set as a political business-improvement-machine.

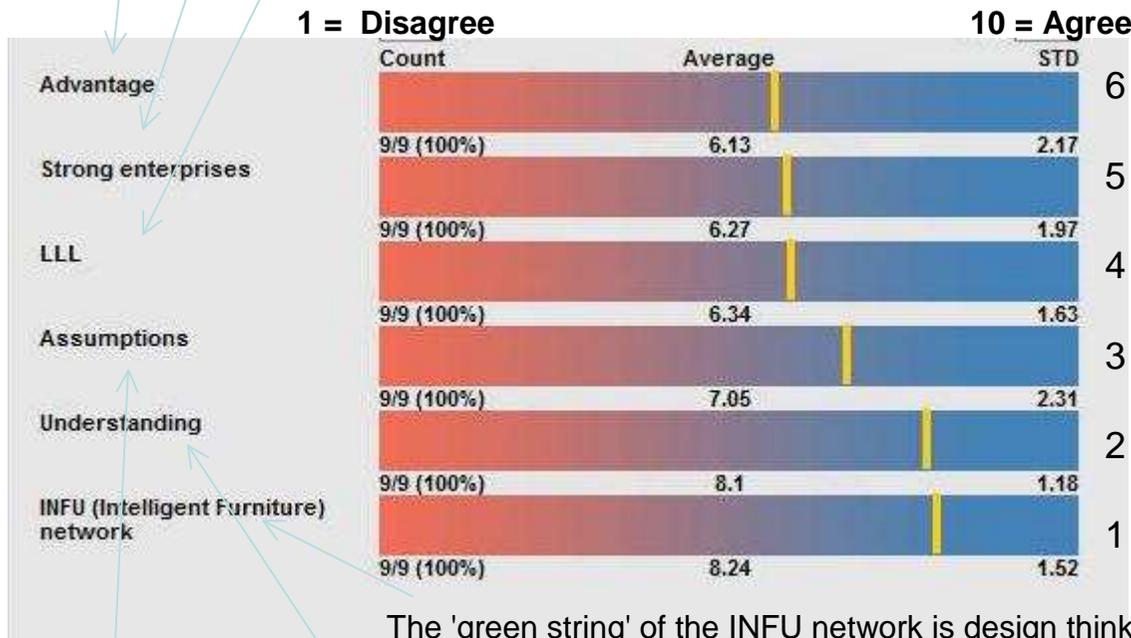
## Slider 2

### POSITIONS

	Finland	Germany	Spain	Italy
Advantage				1
Strong enterprises			3	
LLL		3		
Assumptions	2			2
Understanding	1	2	2	3
INFU (Intelligent Furniture) network	3	1	1	

Comment:

The advantage must to be not  
 just on the own advantage but  
 on the plural and social one.



The 'green string' of the INFU network is design thinking and  
 sustainable development contrary to low-cost import and  
 disposable consuming.

We have to get rid  
 of imitating others  
 and giving up  
 assumptions

We have challenges to understand companies every day life.  
 The challenge to this project is also, what would be the  
 system, that we could update our knowledge of that every  
 day life of companies.



## Last comments

Good questionnaire!

Activity, positivism, open mind, freedom of prejudice, sharing the experiences, innovation, design thinking..... And same from others...

Business cooperation could be boosted by undertaking actions which have influences with "common" (target groups) advantages. common advantages have to be considered the return of the action.

Video skype visualisation of processes and ideas to brightening different horizons

To offer and to develop the basics for networking. to give advises to the companies how to cooperate.

We can find the cooperation area and we can work to make it evident to the enterprises.



## Conclusions

## Decisions