Foreword

Dear reader,

As President of the European Council for Small Business (ECSB), I am pleased to welcome you to the latest volume in the series 'Frontiers in European Entrepreneurship Research'. The volume contains selected papers presented at the 25th Research on Entrepreneurship Conference (RENT XXV). The RENT, which is jointly organized by ECSB and the European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management (EIASM), represents the most important pan-European conference for entrepreneurship scholars and experts. The conference is also an ECSB signature event, a 'product' of which we are extremely proud.

The growth of the RENT conference in terms of its volume and quality of activities and outputs is such that I am very confident that the RENT anthology offers a representative overview of the latest and most cutting-edge developments in entrepreneurial and small business studies in Europe. The chapters are based on a selection of the best papers presented at the Conference. The chapters were drawn from nominations by the Conference Scientific Committee and the session chairs; they then went through a review process, of two or more stages, until they achieved the high quality standard that is required to be included in the volume.

In 2011 the RENT conference celebrated its 25th anniversary. We have asked Professor Dr David Smallbone, one of ECSB founding fathers and distinguished ECSB fellow, to offer his thoughts to celebrate this particularly important anniversary. You will find a reflection from David in this volume. We have also commemorated the anniversary by publishing a book containing the history of the conference, its main achievements and the many colleagues that have contributed to its success. The book is available on the ECSB website, www.ecsb.org.

ECSB has worked hard to make the RENT more and more attractive. Today the RENT conference is surrounded by several pre-conference events including the PhD and postdoctoral workshop, the policy forum, the case study workshop, special interest groups meetings and the ECSB mentoring programme in which young participating scholars have the opportunity to meet their mentors and network with their peers.

Luca Iandoli
President, ECSB

ix