

News on EU Research Policy and Programmes

Issue: EI 03:07 – 1 July 2003

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EU POLICY

Polish and Czech EU Referenda

The Polish electorate voted overwhelmingly in favour of joining the EU. In the referendum on 7 and 8 June, over 81 per cent of the voters endorsed Poland's entry into the EU. The second day of the referendum saw a much higher turnout than the first, meaning that enough votes were cast to validate the outcome of the referendum. Polish President, Aleksander Kwasniewski, said that the result of the referendum was a return to the European family for Poland. The EC congratulated the Polish people and welcomed Poland into the EU.

The EU referendum in the Czech Republic took place on 13 and 14 June. Preliminary results show that votes were approximately three-to-one in favour of membership of the EU. Estonia and Latvia, the remaining two of the nine countries holding EU membership referenda, will vote in September.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Details of the Polish results are available at:

<http://www.robert-schuman.org/anglais/oeo/pologne/referendum/default.htm>

Details of all the EU membership referenda are available at:

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/negotiations/accession_process.htm

Common Position on Science Statistics

The EP has given the green light to the Council's agreement ('common position') on the production and development of Community statistics on science and technology, following the Council's acceptance of all of the EP's amendments.

The aim of the proposed legislation is to develop a new generation of statistical variables to monitor science and technology activities and achievements in the EU. A previous Council decision on statistics expired in 1997 and, since then, a legal vacuum on the definition and clarification of statistics has existed.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

CORDIS Press Release No. 20453 of 20/06/03, available from:

<http://dbs.cordis.lu/news/en/home.html>

Council Position on Human Tissues and Cells

EU health ministers have reached political agreement on a new directive proposing quality and safety standards for dealing with human tissues and cells. The directive aims to establish standards for the donation, procurement, testing, processing, storage and distribution of human tissues and cells.

Several delegations expressed concerns over the ethical and health implications of the use of tissues and cells. However, the Presidency reminded Member States that they will be able to introduce more rigorous protective measures under the new directive than they could have under the original draft directive. In particular, Member States will be able to

set requirements for voluntary unpaid donation, and for the prohibition of tissues and cells from embryonic origin.

The legislation will introduce more stringent requirements on the suitability of donor and the screening of donated substances, as well as the traceability from donor to patient and *vice versa*. Rules for third-country imports will also be established in order to ensure equivalent standards of quality and safety. The common position will be formally adopted at a future Council meeting, after which the proposal will be forwarded to the EP for a second reading.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Council of the European Union Press Release, available at:

<http://ue.eu.int/pressData/en/lsa/75977.pdf>

G8 Action Plan for Sustainable Development

Leaders of G8 countries meeting in Evian, France, have approved a science and technology action plan aimed at promoting global sustainable development. The action plan focuses on three key areas where there is opportunity for progress: co-ordination of global observation strategies; cleaner, sustainable and more efficient energy use; and agricultural sustainability, productivity and biodiversity conservation.

The plan envisages a closer co-ordination of global observation strategies over the next ten years in order to minimise data gaps, and proposes measures to improve the reporting and archiving of observational data at a global level. In order to speed up the switch to cleaner energy technologies, the eight developed nations have pledged to stimulate fundamental research in renewable energies, such as solar power and biomass, to share research results and promote emerging technologies, to accelerate the development of fuel cell and hydrogen technology, and to increase international co-operation and exchange of information in pre-competitive research. Developing countries will receive help to improve their agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner through G8 support for the consultative group for international agricultural research, whose task it is to disseminate the results of the latest agricultural research.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Available from the G8 web site at:

http://www.g8.fr/evian/english/navigation/news/news_update/science_and_technology_for_sustainable_development_-_a_g8_action_plan.html

EESC Calls for Space Policy to be included in Constitution

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) has added its voice to calls for space to be included as a shared competence in the proposed European Constitution, i.e. an area where both the EU and the Member States have decision-making powers.

The report, by French representative Stéphane Buffetot, suggests that Europe's position in the space sector will depend on the strength of its political commitment and the clarity of its budget decisions.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

European Space Agency Press Release, available at:

http://www.esc.eu.int/pages/en/acs/press_rels/cp_eesc_46_2003_en.doc

Social Policy Agenda Reviewed

The EC has adopted its mid-term review of the Social Policy Agenda: the EU's road-map for the translation of the Lisbon strategy for economic and social renewal into concrete employment and social policy measures over the first half of the decade. The review places successful EU enlargement at the top of the social policy agenda, stressing the importance of achieving results through compliance with EU-agreed social standards in the existing and the new Member States.

A guiding principle of the Social Policy Agenda, launched by the EC in June 2000 and endorsed by the Nice European Council in December 2000, has been to strengthen the role of social policy as a productive factor. The key is the promotion of quality as the driving force of a thriving economy, geared up to producing more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. The EC has recently developed this rationale by analysing the costs of non-social policy as part of an approach encompassing better regulation. One of the innovative features of the Social Policy Agenda, which runs from 2000 to 2005, has been its ambition of establishing better forms of governance. This means involving the different actors more fully in shaping and implementing the Agenda and establishing an appropriate mix of policy instruments. The development of this approach will be pursued vigorously.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

EC Press Release number IP/03/799 of 04/06/03, available at:

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh>

Road Safety Action Programme

A European Road Safety Action Programme, was adopted by the EC in June. Each year over 40,000 people die, and 1,700,000 are injured, on Europe's roads. The direct and indirect costs of these accidents amount to €160 billion, or 2 per cent of GDP. Through the new programme, the EU aims to halve the number of road accidents by 2010.

Individual EU Member States have responsibility for road safety; consequently, the EC have not issued specific EU-wide legislation. However, it hopes that national and local authorities will sign up to a European Road Safety Charter.

The EC is proposing that the authorities take action in the following fields:

- encouraging road users to improve their behaviour (education campaigns, improvement of the system of driving licences and training)
- making use of technical improvements (safer vehicle design, new car assessment programme, better use of seatbelts, intelligent transport systems, roadworthiness testing)
- improving road infrastructure (road assessment programme)
- promoting safer commercial transport of goods and passengers (for heavy duty vehicles)
- better and quicker health care and emergency services in case of accidents
- better data collection, analysis and dissemination of information about accidents.

The EC will review the situation in 2005, and will propose regulatory measures if needed.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

European Road Safety Programme document available at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/road/library/rsap/rsap_en.pdf

EC Move to Reduce Diseases Linked to Environment

A recent report from the European Environmental Agency (EEA) shows that there is a strong link between poor health and environmental problems. As many as 60,000 deaths per year in large European cities are caused by long-term exposure to air pollution, with children more exposed to environmental risk than adults. One child in seven is affected by asthma: a dramatic increase on numbers from 30 years ago.

In order to reverse this alarming trend, the Commission has launched 'A European Environment and Health Strategy', which aims to achieve a better understanding of the complex relationship between environment and health, and identify and reduce diseases caused by environmental factors.

Prepared jointly by the Commissioners responsible for the Environment, Public Health and Research, the new strategy intends to strengthen EU capacity for policy making in this area, stressing the importance of bridging the gap between the environment and health.

The strategy, known as SCALE, relies on five key elements:

- it will be based on science to broaden our perspective on the often very complex link between environment and health
- it will focus on Children since they are particularly vulnerable to environmental hazards
- it will raise awareness of the environmental-health problems and how they can be solved
- the EU Legislation will complement national and international initiatives. It will be reviewed to reflect the special situation and needs of children
- all actions taken under the strategy will be evaluated continuously.

The European Environment and Health Strategy will be implemented in cycles. The first cycle, 2004-2010, will focus on four health effects:

- childhood respiratory diseases, asthma, allergies
- neurodevelopment disorders
- childhood cancer
- endocrine disrupting effects

The new strategy will be based on extensive consultation with experts and stakeholders from the environment, health, and research fields in all parts of the enlarged Europe. The first stakeholder meeting will take place on 11 July in Brussels, and working groups will convene regional conferences in autumn 2003 to discuss priority health effects and monitoring activities. The EC hopes to present an Action Plan for the period 2004-2010 prior to the Inter-Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Budapest in June 2004.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

'European Environment and Health Strategy' can be downloaded from:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/press_room/presspacks/health/pp_health_en.htm

RESEARCH NEWS

Environmental Impact of Antibiotics

Whilst there is no doubting the importance of antibiotics to modern human and veterinary medicine, it is generally accepted that these substances can find their way into the natural environment, with both harmful and worrying consequences. Until now, such speculation has been largely unfounded. However, the results of three European research projects (ERAVMIS, REMPHARMAWATER and POSEIDON) have established both the environmental impact of human and veterinary antibiotics, and potential solutions.

In the last ten years, 12,500 billion tons of antibiotics were taken each year. Prescription of the drugs continues to rise. Though the compounds are partly degraded by the body – whether animal or human – thousands of tons of residue enter the environment each year through excretion. Research confirms that antibiotics can be found in both municipal sewage waste water and agricultural waste, potentially allowing them to contaminate our water resources and soils.

In addition, the residues of other medicines, such as birth control pills, painkillers, and medicines drugs used to treat cardiovascular and heart diseases, have also been detected in sewage treatment plants and raw water resources in many European countries. The removal rates of individual compounds through the wastewater treatment vary, and some standard removal techniques are not capable of eliminating all of the compounds. As a consequence of this incomplete removal, rivers and even ground waters in some countries are also contaminated.

The three projects, ERAVMIS, REMPHARMAWATER and POSEIDON, approach different aspects of this problem since ERAVMIS addresses the behaviours and effects of veterinary antibiotics in the environment; REMPHARMAWATER considers the ecotoxicological assessment and removal technologies of antibiotics in wastewaters; and POSEIDON proposes that antibiotics can be eliminated during the treatment process in order to prevent their release into the environment.

It is hoped that the results of this research effort ‘will improve the efficiency and safety of water supply, bringing benefits to industry and consumers and to the protection of our environment’, said EU Commissioner for Research, Philippe Busquin.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Or see the project web sites at:

<http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/ecochemistry/eravmis> (ERAVMIS)

<http://www.unina.it/~rmarotta> (REMPHARMAWATER)

<http://www.eu-poseidon.com> (POSEIDON)

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Implementing the ERA in Social Sciences

A new EC report on the 'Implementation of the European Research Area in the Social and Human Sciences' is available. The report aims to map out national social science programmes in the EU member states, with some reference to other countries participating in the FPs.

The report concludes that the major challenge for the creation of the ERA in the social sciences will be to recruit and engage high-quality researchers from across the various national research communities, who have acquired skills and experience of research innovation (and management) at both national and European level. These diverse, national social science research communities constitute the real definition of national programmes, and hence an ERA guiding principle must be to place trust in researchers to develop critical and innovative approaches to tackle societal problems.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The report is available from:

ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/citizens/docs/study_era_shs_03.pdf

Report on the Barcelona Objective

The Greek General Secretariat for Research and Technology has highlighted the importance of increasing the number of research personnel and RTD investment, if the EU is to reach its research spending of 3 per cent of GDP by 2010. The report recommends that gross expenditure by industry needs to increase at an average annual rate of 7.5 per cent until 2010 – a figure significantly higher than the last decade's growth rate of two per cent. Public investment needs to rise by 3.5 per cent over the same period, compared to 0.8 per cent in the last decade.

The report highlights the fact that, while scientific equipment and maintenance can easily follow any increases in spending, research personnel may prove a serious constraint. The report claims that increasing investment in RTD, without increasing the number of research personnel, will lead to inflationary pressures – such as salary increases – with no corresponding increase in scientific output or innovation. The report also states that countries that invest in RTD increase their productivity growth, but that all countries benefit from these investments. However, those with lower investment still need to have the capacity to absorb the benefits. The report outlines ways in which this 'absorptive growth' can be developed within European regions. These include improving the science base, human capital, intellectual property rights, and the relationship between institutions involved in the knowledge transfer process. The report concludes by making recommendations for the role of the ERA in addressing these issues. In particular, the report calls for further analysis of the relationship between RTD and productivity growth, as well as the determinants of RTD spending.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The full report is available at:

ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/greece/docs/barcelona_gsrt_2003_en.pdf

Go-ahead for Defence Research

The Thessaloniki European Council has asked the appropriate bodies to begin creating an inter-governmental agency in the field of defence capabilities. The intention is that this agency will be responsible for carrying out defence research. The focus will be on

research aimed at leadership in strategic technologies for future defence and security capabilities, which is complementary to research carried out under the FPs.

The agency's remit will also cover a range of additional actions, aimed at strengthening Europe's industrial potential in terms of defence. These include developing crisis management capabilities, promoting European armaments co-operation, and creating a competitive European defence equipment market.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The conclusions of the Thessaloniki Council are available at:

<http://www.eu2003.gr/en/articles/2003/6/20/3121>

ESF Bemoans Under-funding of Space Science

While the European Space Agency (ESA) has suggested that space should not be tied to EU research policy but should be accepted as having a broader policy relevance, the European Science Foundation (ESF) has suggested that the involvement in first-class science is absolutely essential for the promotion of European interests and leadership, as it imparts a strong strategic drive to its technological and industrial system, as successfully demonstrated in the case of the USA.

ESF also calls for an end to reductions in space research budgets. Finally, ESF recommends that the EC must portray space as a long term strategy in the forthcoming White Paper. ESF states that the time required to acquire knowledge, improve technology and develop applications is substantial, and can obscure the link between research and process.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

http://www.esf.org/esf_pressarea_page.php?language=0§ion=6&newsrelease=65

Mars Express

Mars Express, the first European Space Agency (ESA) probe ever to head for another planet, has been successfully placed in a trajectory that should see it reach Mars before the end of the year. According to David Southwood, ESA's Director of Science, 'Europe is on its way to Mars to stake its claim'.

This is the first ESA mission to another planet. It will pave the way for other ESA-led planetary missions, such as the Venus Express, planned for 2005, and the BepiColombo mission to Mercury at the end of the decade. It is also a precursor for continuing Mars missions under Aurora, the programme of exploration of our solar system.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

http://www.esa.int/export/SPECIALS/Mars_Express/index.html

EU Funds Corrosion-Resistant Nanocomposite Coatings

Replacing hazardous chromium-based coating treatments for magnesium alloys (applicable specifically to the needs of the automotive, aeronautics and aerospace industries) is the main aim of a project being funded by FP5. Reducing the weight of motor vehicles is a primary means of decreasing their fuel consumption. Magnesium (Mg)

– which is one third lighter than aluminium and 80 per cent lighter than steel – has been used increasingly for this purpose since its first appearance in racing cars during the 1920s. However, Mg alloys are very prone to corrosion and staining in wet and salt-laden atmospheres, and current coating technologies are either highly polluting or very expensive.

The GROWTH NANOMAG project aims to provide an alternative by developing clean and environment-friendly nanocomposite coatings that will be more economical while also offering superior resistance to corrosion and abrasion. Co-ordinated by the Italian Centro Ricerche Fiat (CRF), the project brings together a team deploying the expertise and complementary skills of research institutes, industrial research centres and end users from seven European countries, including Switzerland and Israel. Achievement of the scientific targets of the project will have a major impact in improving the sustainability of transport, not only by reducing fuel consumption and emissions, but also because Mg parts require low energy for recycling. The quality of life for workers and European citizens in general will further be enhanced by the elimination of polluting substances and dangerous chemicals during the coating process. A positive effect on employment is also expected, as lower coating costs will lead to wider use of Mg alloys, increased competitiveness for Europe's transport industry and a demand for the construction of new coating equipment.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/industrial_technologies/03-06-03_pro-nanomag_en.html

Or:

<http://www.crfproject-eu.org/menu.asp?ind=nanomagfolder&nome=NANOMAG>

New Anti-discrimination Campaign

A new Eurobarometer survey has revealed that only one in three Europeans would know their rights if they were discriminated against. This is a key part of a new, five-year EU-wide campaign to raise awareness of rights, and to combat discrimination on racial, ethnic, religious, age, disability and sexual orientation grounds. The campaign, launched in June by the Employment and Social Affairs Commissioner, Anna Diamantopoulou, coincides with two new EU Directives on anti-discrimination: the Racial Equality Directive and the Employment Equality Directive.

This campaign reflects EC opinion that more should be done by Member States to ensure that EU anti-discrimination rules are properly enforced, known and understood. The Eurobarometer research indicates that most Europeans believe that a person's ethnic origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation or age can be obstacles in finding a job. Between 15 and 35 per cent of those questioned across the EU said they had witnessed ethnic discrimination.

The campaign will take the form of events, seminars and media activities at a national level, to be developed over the coming months by national advisory groups. Last January, an EU-level advisory group was set up to consult on the EU wide aspects of the campaign, including the use of posters, slogans and websites.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2003/jun/antidiscrim_en.html

Or:

<http://www.stop-discrimination.info>

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CULTURE

Universities Discuss Bologna Process

Around 600 higher education leaders from across Europe have met in Graz, Austria, to discuss the key role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in the creation of the European Higher Education Area. There are some 4000 HEIs in the EU and candidate countries, accepting an increasing number of students: over 12.5 million in 2000, compared with fewer than 9 million a decade earlier.

The main themes of the Graz Convention were: European higher education in a global world; higher education and research: revisiting the links; consolidating a quality culture in Europe's universities; and improving institutional governance and management. During the conference, the European Universities Association presented a draft version of a report on the implementation of the Bologna Process (the 'Trends III' report), based on the responses of nearly 800 higher education institutions across Europe to a recent survey.

The results of the conference will be submitted to the Conference of Ministers in charge of Higher Education, taking place in Berlin in September 2003.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

EC Press Release number SPEECH/03/270 of 29 May 2003, available at:

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh>

Or see:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/consultations/pdf/university_en.pdf

The 'Trends III' report is available at:

<http://eua.uni-graz.at/Trends3-Graz-draft.pdf>

Capital of Culture 2008

Liverpool, UK, has been named European Capital of Culture 2008. The city beat five other UK bids: Bristol, Birmingham, Cardiff, Newcastle-Gateshead and Oxford. The title is expected to attract more tourists, increase investment and create jobs, as well as boost the profile of the winning city.

The EU has designed the Capital of Culture programme to replace the City of Culture status which began with Athens in 1985. The first Capital will be Cork in the Republic of Ireland in 2005, followed by Patras in Greece in 2006 and Luxembourg a year later.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/arts/2959944.stm>

Women Still Under Represented in S&T

A recent Eurostat report indicates that science and technology (S&T) is still a male dominated area. Member States statistics have been used to assess the male to female ratios in both science and technology studies and employment. Despite increasing numbers of both male and female S&T graduates in all Member States since 1996, it

appears that women remain under represented. For example the ratio of male to female graduates in the Netherlands is five-to-one, and, in Germany, four-to-one.

In terms of share of the labour market, S&T based organisations have increased their uptake of science and technology staff. Figures for 2001, however, echo the graduate numbers, with only one in five S&T staff in Germany being female. Whilst the lowest ratios of women working as scientists or engineers were to be found in Austria and Italy, women were well represented in Finland, Ireland and Belgium. In fact, there were more women than men working as scientists in Finland in 2001.

The EC has allocated €80 million as part of FP6 towards tackling the under-representation and furthering integration of research and society. The Italian Presidency of the EU will also aim to address the problem as part of its agenda in the second half of 2003.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Eurostat publications are available at: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat>

EXTERNAL COLLABORATION

EU and US Boost Research into Fuel Cells

On June 16, the EC and the US administration signed a deal to boost joint research on fuel cells technology, a potential energy solution of the future. The deal will bring together researchers working on fuel cells from the EU and the US. US Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham said the agreement highlighted the importance of bilateral co-operation in the development of hydrogen as a clean form of energy.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/w25/5.htm

Russia Calls for Free Movement to EU

The recent EU-Russia Summit concluded with Russian President, Vladimir Putin, calling for visa-free travel for Russians to EU Member States. The 15 EU Member States and Russia signed a joint declaration, 'A single Europe for all Europeans' at the summit in St. Petersburg, Russia.

President Putin declared that the summit was an important step in bringing Russia and the EU closer together, and expressed hope that this partnership can now reach a new level. He stressed the need to ensure that the Schengen Agreement, which allows free movement between participating countries, does not become 'another Berlin Wall that separates Europe'. EC President Romano Prodi replied that the EU and Russia needed to work not only on the visa regime but also on all the connected problems, such as drugs trafficking and cross-border crime.

As well as the prospect of lifting visa requirements, the EU-Russia declaration called for stronger political representation for Russia, and the creation of common economic and security spaces. Further steps towards meeting these goals are expected to be made at the next EU-Russia Summit in November 2003.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://ue.eu.int/pressData/en/er/75969.pdf>

Latin American Research Networking

The EC has signed a €12.5 million contract with the non-profit organisation DANTE (Delivery of Advanced Network Technology to Europe) for the creation of a Latin American intra-regional research networking infrastructure and its interconnection to the pan-European research network, GÉANT. The project, within the framework of the @LIS programme, has the 80 per cent of the project financed by the EC, with the Latin American partners financing the balance. @LIS (Alliance for the Information Society) is a co-operation programme with Latin America which aims to promote the information society and fight the digital divide throughout Latin America.

The project, called ALICE (America Latina Interconectada Con Europa), will accelerate the development of the Information Society in Latin America, providing an advanced data communications infrastructure to allow Latin American researchers to collaborate more easily in international research projects. The objective is to foster research and education partnership and advancement within and between both regions. ALICE will involve the National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) of the 18 Latin American @LIS beneficiary countries, as well as of four European countries. ALICE will also be partnered by CLARA, the Latin American Co-operation of Advanced Networks, DANTE's counterpart organisation in the region.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

EC Press Release number IP/03/811 of 06/06/03, available at:

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh>

Or see:

<http://www.dante.net/geant>

Information on the @LIS programme is at:

<http://europa.eu.int/alis>

EVENTS and AWARDS

Networking for Excellence Conference

The European-Australian 'Networking for Excellence' conference will now take place on 13 and 14 November 2003 in Canberra, Australia: the event was originally planned for June.

Organised by FEAST, the forum for European-Australian science and technology co-operation, and supported under the International Co-operation programme of FP5, the event will focus on research activities, and the drivers influencing international research collaboration. Individual workshop topics will include information and communications technology (ICT), sustainable agriculture, biotechnology, and nanoscience. The audience for this conference is expected to comprise researchers, research managers and policy makers.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://www.feast.org/feast4.html>

Or:

E-mail: info@feast.org

Small Firms' Strategy Conference

An international conference on small firms' strategy for innovation and regional problems will be held on 4 and 5 December 2003 in Algarve, Portugal.

The event, organised by the Portuguese higher institute of technology, will bring together three major EU funded projects on this topic, with the projects' co-ordinators presenting their final results. The conference will address issues such as innovation in small firms and local development, the future of Europe's rural periphery, and regional adjustment strategies for technological advance. The organisers would welcome the submission of papers to be used as the basis for discussions during the event.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Bologna Conference: 'eChallenges

The region of Bologna, Italy, with support from the EC, has organised a conference to stimulate a rapid take-up in Europe of research and technology development results and to help open up the European Research Area to the rest of the world. Taking place from 22 to 24 October, the event, entitled 'eChallenges e2003', will present case studies, technical and policy papers. Workshops and plenary sessions will focus on the following areas: broadband and mobility; e-business; e-Europe; e-government; e-learning; e-work; knowledge management; media and entertainment applications; security; smart and virtual organisations and small and medium sized enterprise related issues.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Conference web site available at: <http://www.echallenges.org>.

Science and Society Interfaces Workshop

The EC's Joint Research Centre (JRC) will run a workshop covering the interfaces between science and society in Milan, Italy, from 27 to 28 November 2003.

In the last few years, science has begun to move away from being an isolated academic function toward the management of intellectual property in the business environment. Such a change has meant greater public involvement in both subject assessment, and the management of science, as well as the industrialisation of research.

The workshop's objective is to consider the premise that science must allow itself to be more open to public opinion and involvement in a properly democratic society. The aim is also to classify various types of science and society interaction in order to develop advice on the most appropriate course of action related to different contexts.

Participants are invited to register and submit topics for discussion.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The workshop web site is available at: <http://alba.jrc.it/interfaces>

NEW PUBLICATIONS and ON-LINE RESOURCES

JRC Included in Oxford Publication

The EC's Joint Research Centre has been included in a new edition of the *Oxford Companion to the History of Modern Science*, entered under 'multi-national laboratories'.

The *Oxford Companion to the History of Modern Science* is an encyclopedia that provides an overview of the field of science and its development over the past few generations, ranging from biographies on Galileo and Dorothy Hodgkin, to the discussions chronicling the change of science from simply a tool of learning to a major force in society. The coverage is world-wide, tracing science from its traditional centres and explaining how non-western societies have modified and contributed to its global arena.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://www.oup.co.uk/isbn/0-19-511229-6>

Focus Paper on Regional Railways

The International Association of Public Transport (UITP) has published a position paper, highlighting new growth possibilities for regional railway operators in Europe.

In a number of regions in Europe, medium-sized operating companies have registered record numbers of passengers on lines that had been poorly frequented, or even closed down, by the large national operators. The paper puts forward a number of proposals to help in the aim of achieving quality transport at the lowest cost, and at an affordable price for the customer. Recommendations include strengthening current services, extending the territory of services, opening the regional passenger railway market further, and extending services over new infrastructures.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The document is available in English, French and German at:

<http://www.uitp.com/mediaroom/index2.htm>

WETO Publication Online

The World energy, technology and climate policy outlook – 2030 (WETO) publication is now available online. In addition to the full report, 'key messages' are available in the 11 official EU languages.

WETO positions Europe in a global context, covering world energy projections, energy technology progress, and climate change policy impacts.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The report and 'key messages' are available at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/energy/gp/gp_pubs_en.html

Paper copies are available from the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, priced €20. These can be ordered online at:

<http://online.eur-op.eu.int>

Gas and Electricity Web Pages

The EC's Energy and Transport DG has launched new web pages on gas and electricity. Both contain an overview and introduction to the area, as well as information on benchmarking and infrastructures, and links to publications, reports and documents.

The gas pages also include information on the European Gas Regulatory Forum of Madrid and on security of gas supply; whilst the electricity pages include information on the Electricity Regulatory Forum of Florence and on South-East Europe

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The Gas web pages are at:

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/energy/gas/index_en.htm

The Electricity web pages are at:

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/energy/electricity/index_en.htm

Public Health Website

The EC's Health and Consumer Protection DG has launched a new website in the field of Public Health. The new site, replaces the old English version site, is available in all 11 official European Community languages.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The web site is available at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/index_en.htm

CORDIS

CORDIS is the Community Research and Development Information Service. It is a web-based service which provides information on EU R&D programmes and related issues.

URL: <http://www.cordis.lu>

IGLO Project Search

The IGLO Project Service offers a forum for publishing and disseminating details of proposed FP6 project and/or research skills offered. Using the service will enable researchers to find contacts and partners within the international research community as well as contributing to the mobilisation of a critical mass of researchers in a specific research area.

URL: <http://www.iglortd.org/>

EUR-LEX (Official Journal C and L)

This website provides information on European Union Law. It includes electronic copies of the Treaties and recent copies of the Official Journal of the European Communities (OJ). The OJ, published daily in eleven languages, consists of two related series, the L series (Legislation) and the C series (Information, notices and preparatory EU legislation), a supplement and an annex. EUR-Lex provides free access to the C and L series of the Official Journal for a period of forty-five days following publication. (The OJ issue with the Euro exchange rates (L 359, 31/12/1998) is permanently available in PDF format in EUR-Lex).

Deleted:

URL: EUR-LEX <http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/index.html>

Official Journal C & L <http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/oj/index.html>

Treaty of Amsterdam <http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/treaties/index.html>

EUROPA

EUROPA is the official European Union's Server. It contains links to the EP, the European Council, the EC and other EU institutions and contains information on EU policies listed by subject area.

URL: <http://www.europa.eu.int/index-en.htm>

RAPID

RAPID is a database giving a daily view of the activities of the European Union as presented by the Institutions in their press releases.

EC Press Releases are available at:

<http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh>

GLOSSARY

A&S	Aeronautics and Space Priority (FP6) http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/activities.htm
C&G	Citizens and Governance Priority (FP6) http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/activities.htm
COST	European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research is a framework for scientific and technical cooperation, allowing the coordination of national research on a European level. http://www.netmaniacs.com/cost/
'Council'	'Council' refers to the 'Council of Ministers', the principle decision-making body within the European Union. It has both executive and legislative powers, the latter in some cases exercised jointly with the European Parliament (co-decision procedure). The Council is composed of one representative at ministerial level from each Member State. Which Ministers attend each Council meeting varies according to the subject discussed, e.g. The Minister of Science in the UK attends the Research Council.

<http://ue.eu.int/en/summ.htm>

- Culture 2000 First European Community Framework Programme in support of culture, which runs from 2000-2004 (inclusive).
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/culture/index_en.html
- EC The European Commission - made up of 20 Commissioners nominated by the Member States - both initiates proposals for EU legislation and executes EU policies and actions.
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/index_en.htm
- eEurope eEurope
A political initiative of the EC to allow Europe to benefit fully from the Information Society.
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/eeurope/documentation/index_en.htm
- EP The European Parliament - which is made up of elected representatives (MEPs) from all the Member States. It shares decision-making power with the Council in a number of areas including research and education.
<http://www.europarl.eu.int/sg/tree/en/default.htm>
- ERA European Research Area. On 18 January 2000, the EC issued a Communication entitled "Towards a European Research Area" which proposed ways in which research in Europe could be more effectively organised and coordinated.
<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/area.html>
- ESC European Economic and Social Committee is a consultative body made up of representatives of Europe's employers' organisations, trade unions, farmers, consumer groups and professional associations.
<http://www.ces.eu.int/>
Press Releases:
http://www.ces.eu.int/en/acs/fr_acs_press_rels.htm
- ESF European Science Foundation.
<http://www.esf.org/>
- ESF The European Social Fund
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg05/esf/en/index.htm>
- Eureka Eureka is a Europe-wide network for Industrial Research and Development.
<http://www3.eureka.be/Home/>
- FQS Food Quality and Safety Priority (FP6)
<http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/activities.htm>
- FP (FP5, FP6) The EU's Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. The Fifth Framework Programme (FP5) was adopted in 1998 and will run until 2002, when the next framework programme (FP6) is expected to supersede it.

FP5 is composed of four thematic programmes (see QoL, IST, Growth, EESD) and three horizontal programmes (see INCO II, Innovation and SMEs, and IHP).

<http://www.cordis.lu/fp5>

GBH	Genomics and Biotechnology for Health Priority (FP6) http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/activities.htm
Green Paper	Green Papers are communications published by the European Commission on a specific policy area. Primarily they are documents addressed to interested parties who are invited to participate in a process of consultation and debate. In some cases they provide an impetus for subsequent legislation.
ITRE	The European Parliament Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy (FP5) http://www.europarl.eu.int/committees/en/default.htm
INTAS	International Association for the promotion of cooperation with scientists from the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union. http://www.intas.be/mainfs.htm
IST	Information Society Technologies Priority (FP6) http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/activities.htm
MEDIA	The MEDIA Plus Programme (2001 - 2005) is to be introduced as a follow-up to the Media II programme which ends in December 2000. The programme aims to strengthen the competitiveness of the European audiovisual industry. http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/avpolicy/media/index_en.html
Mobility	Human Resources and Mobility Programme (FP6) http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/activities.htm
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation http://www.nato.int/
NMP	Nanotechnology, Materials and Production Priority (FP6) http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/activities.htm
PHARE	The Phare Programme is the European Union's instrument for financial and technical cooperation with the countries of central and eastern Europe. http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/pas/phare/index.htm
RTD	Research and Technological Development
SDGC	Sustainable Development and Global Change Priority (FP6) http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/activities.htm

- TACIS The Tacis Programme aims to forge closer economic and political links with the former republics of the Soviet Union and Mongolia (also known as New Independent States (NIS))
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg1a/tacis/index.htm>
- Treaty of Amsterdam The Treaty of Amsterdam was signed in October 1997 and entered into force on 1 May 1999.
<http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/treaties/index.html>
- UUK Universities UK
(formerly the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals)
<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk>
- White Paper White Papers are documents containing proposals for Community action in a specific area. They often follow a Green Paper.

Produced by the United Kingdom Research Office (UKRO)
for the British Council.

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