

News on EU Research Policy and Programmes

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EU POLICY.....	2
Europe and science: Barroso speaks out	2
Potočnik’s view on human resources.....	2
Austrian Presidency of the EU	3
FP7 Rules of Participation.....	3
2005 innovation scoreboard.....	4
The potential of adult and embryonic stem cell research.....	4
Sustainable development.....	4
ICT research programmes in the new Member States	5
EU policy on biofuels.....	5
EC proposes new environmental strategies.....	6
Nano(eco)toxicology	6
Galileo satellite launch	7
RESEARCH NEWS	7
Innovative medicines.....	7
Zero emission fossil fuel power.....	8
Microdosing: speeding up drug development and reducing animal testing	8
EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CULTURE	9
EC efforts to promote European culture and identity	9
Culture 2000.....	9
Progress report on education and training	10
Education, audiovisual and culture executive agency.....	11
EXTERNAL COLLABORATION	11
EU - Republic of Korea agreement on Galileo	11
IST-Africa 2006 conference	12
EVENTS and AWARDS.....	12
Avian and human pandemic influenza conference	12
Research infrastructures	13
The return of Famelab.....	14
NEW PUBLICATIONS and ONLINE RESOURCES.....	14
Health and electromagnetic fields.....	14
Linking science to environment policy.....	15
CORDIS	15
IGLO Project Search	15
EUR-LEX (Official Journal C and L).....	15
EUROPA.....	16
RAPID	16
GLOSSARY	16

EU POLICY

Europe and science: Barroso speaks out

The President of the EC, Jose Barroso, recently gave a speech entitled 'Europe: Art or Science?' reflecting on the challenges facing Europe in the field of education and science. Mr Barroso started by outlining Europe's investment in R&D compared to that of the United States, highlighting how Europe fails to attract students from other countries, particularly in core scientific subjects.

The importance of universities and research in meeting the Lisbon agenda was stressed, as was the need to modernise. Mr Barroso also argued that the relationship between universities and industry should be strengthened through eliminating restrictive national regulations; strengthening the recognition of other Member States' degrees, and removing barriers to trans-national mobility of staff and students. Universities should be given increased autonomy, while also being held accountable to society. In highlighting the European efforts that are being undertaken in the field of research, the President of the EC pointed to the ERC, stating that 'it should be up and running by 1 January 2007, with a budget of at least EUR 1 billion a year.' Finally, Mr Barroso stated that if the Spring European Council in March gives its go ahead on the European Institute of Technology (EIT), a proposal could be put forward by this summer, with the EIT potentially starting in the academic year 2009-2010.

FURTHER INFORMATION

EC press release SPEECH/06/12 of 18 January 2006 available at:
<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/searchAction.do>

Potočnik's view on human resources

Janez Potočnik, Commissioner for Science and Research, recently spoke at a conference in Karlsruhe, Germany, on building up and building on human resources in European research. The Commissioner reminded the audience of the need to create a single, open and competitive labour market for researchers. The EC, along with the EU Member States, has been working hard to look at the issues that are considered obstacles to researchers working around Europe, as well as attracting them to research in the first place. The work includes the researchers' visa, adopted late last year, and the ERA-MORE network, a series of centres that provide practical support to researchers moving to another country. There still remains, however, the issue of inter-sectoral (between academia and industry) mobility and the negative effects of migration between countries on social security coverage. The Commissioner also explained that the focus of the FP7 'People' proposals will be on structuring research training across Europe, participation of industry in research training and enhancing the international dimension of researchers' careers.

In addition to its work mentioned above, the EC intends to publish a paper on the role of universities in research, which includes a focus on how to manage human resources by offering sustainable research careers.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

EC Press release SPEECH/06/24 of 23/01/2006 available at:
<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/06/24&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Austrian Presidency of the EU

Austria assumed its six-month Presidency of the Council of the EU on 1 January 2006, under the Chairmanship of Austria's Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel, and presented its Operating Programme in early January. The Austrian Presidency will address major issues crucial to the future of the EU, including the adopted Financial Perspectives; the European Constitutional Treaty; and taking forward the Lisbon Agenda. Austria has explicitly expressed its intention to ensure a timely launch of FP7 as well as a timely start to the new Integrated Action Programme in the field of Lifelong Learning (IPLLL). In terms of supporting the re-launched Lisbon Strategy, the Austrian Presidency will continue the work on fostering conditions conducive to stability and growth.

The Austrian Presidency state that they will work closely with the EP to avoid any gap between FP6 and FP7. They also aim to make all relevant decisions (including the FP Proposal, the Specific Programmes, and The Rules for Participation, JRC) well before the end of 2006. In addition, it is hoped that there will be a final adoption of the European Quality Charter for Mobility and the Recommendation of the Council and the EP on key competences for lifelong learning.

FURTHER INFORMATION

available from the Austrian Presidency website at <http://www.eu2006.at/en/>

FP7 Rules of Participation

The EC has published its 'Proposal for a Regulation of the EP and of the Council laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the Seventh Framework Programme and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2013)'. The Rules of Participation (RoPs) indicate how projects in FP7 will be handled by the EC in light of efforts towards 'simplification' and lessons learned from FP6. The Rules of Participation include, amongst others, the following aspects: participation in projects; procedures for calls for proposals; the evaluation process; types of grants to be used; numbers of participants; cost reporting; level of financing by the EC; financial management of FP7 projects and dissemination of project results.

Key points include the proposal to abolish the cost models from FP6; to introduce two alternative mechanisms of funding (flat-rate and lump-sum financing), and aim to reduce the auditing requirements for participation in the Framework Programme. All proposals will have to be submitted electronically and there will be an increased use of two-stage evaluation and two-stage submission for proposals. As was the case in FP6, a Model Grant Agreement will be drawn up, establishing the rights and obligations of participants. The Scientific Council of the European Research Council (ERC) will propose its own funding mechanisms, with EC support. The RoPs are subject to co-decision and will now be considered by Council and EP before agreement is reached on a compromise text.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The RoPs and further information on the FP7 can be found on the Cordis website at: <http://www.cordis.lu/fp7/faq.htm>

2005 innovation scoreboard

The 2005 indicators reveal a very diverse performance across the 25 EU Member States. The European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS) highlights strengths and weaknesses for each of the Member States. Sweden and Finland are ranked as the leading countries, with the UK ranked seventh. The leading new Member State is Estonia, ranked thirteenth overall. In general, the new Member States appear to be catching up slowly with the performance of the rest of the EU.

The indicators cover five key dimensions of innovation performance: innovation drivers, knowledge creation, innovation and entrepreneurship, application and intellectual property. In particular the report which accompanies the scoreboard highlights that, were trends to remain as they are, the gap with US performance would not close for another 50 years.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Innovation Scoreboard 2005, website, available at:

<http://www.trendchart.org/scoreboards/scoreboard2005/index.cfm>

The potential of adult and embryonic stem cell research

The Italian Delegation in the PSE group (socialist group) of the EP recently held a conference on the 'Potential of Adult and Embryonic Stem Cell Research'. The conference was organised by Ms Pia Locatelli MEP and Professor Giovanni Berlinguer MEP. Stem cell research is currently an area of much debate within the EP and this event was intended to generate information on and provide clear definition of the relevant arguments.

Stem cell research is generally broken down into two areas: adult stem cell and embryonic stem (ES) cell research. There is currently some debate within the EP since some MEPs wish to see ES cell funded research withdrawn from FP7. The conference, which was attended by MEPs and representatives from the EC and other organisations, was introduced by Professor Berlinguer, with a European perspective on stem cell research put forward by Mr Philippe Busquin (MEP and former Commissioner for Science and Research). Presentations were then featured from a range of experts, including: Hans Schöler (Max Plank Institute); Elena Cattaneo (University of Milano); Lilian Wikström (NeuroNova, Sweden); Trevor Jones (Director of Allergan, UK); Marie Claude Boiteux (France) and Yon Englert (Hopital Erasme, Brussels, Belgium).

FURTHER INFORMATION:

None

Sustainable development

The EC has adopted the review of the first Sustainable Development Strategy. The review outlines the main challenges European citizens are faced with. These include climate change and clean energy; public health threats; social exclusion; demography and

migration; better management of natural resources; sustainable transport and fighting global poverty.

It is expected that the review will receive the support of the EU Institutions and Member States by setting and reviewing priorities to target these issues. The review emphasises the need for all stakeholders to work together, including business leaders, regional and local authorities, NGOs, academia and citizen organisations. A number of specific initiatives have been proposed, including the co-ordination and delivery of development aid and strengthening our leadership on global sustainable development; cutting greenhouse emissions beyond the existing 2012 objectives and reviewing the EU's Emission Trading Scheme to consider its extension to include the emissions from aviation and maritime transport.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

EC Press Release [IP/O5/1582](#) of 13 December 2005, also available from <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/searchAction.do>.

ICT research programmes in the new Member States

The ALIPRO project, funded under the EC's Sixth Framework Programme (FP6), recently published a report examining research programmes in the area of information and communication technologies (ICT) in EU's new Member States and in the candidate countries to the EU. The ALIPRO project consists of 14 organisations from Germany, the new Member States and the candidate countries. Overall, the project evaluated 32 national research programmes from the countries involved. The consortium worked with eleven evaluation criteria, awarding each research programme a value from one to four in each category.

The report concluded that Cyprus leads with programmes in the ICT field, followed by Hungary, Estonia, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Poland. The report draws attention to the fragmentation of the programmes that were assessed, and highlights the main weaknesses of the programmes as being financial capacity and management quality. The report draws attention to the strong influence of the European integration process in shaping research policies and programmes.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

the full report is available at:

http://alipro.eurescom.de/documents/ALIPRO_D3_benchmarking_results_en.zip

EU policy on biofuels

On 12 January 2006 Andris Piebalgs, Energy Commissioner, opened the Bioethonal stand at the European Motor Show in Brussels. The Bioethanol exhibition, located in a central position at the show, is aimed at promoting biofuels and dispelling the myths and misconceptions to the general public. The Commissioner outlined why the EU is committed to using biofuels to tackle the problems of security and supply and of climate

change. In the transport sector there are too few large scale alternatives to oil. Importing oil is very expensive and its scarcity is leading to an increased security risk. By finding feasible alternatives to oil it will also be possible to reduce the production of greenhouse gas emission.

Researchers, farmers and industry will work in collaboration with partners in developing countries to enable the development of biofuels and help overcome the present technical obstacles. The Commissioner commended the stand organisers on the initiative, stating that their appearance at the motor show was a sign that there is increased willingness to take action.

FURTHER INFORMATION

EC press release SPEECH/06/2 of 12/01/2006 available at: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/searchAction.do> and from the European Motor show website at: <http://www.salonauto.be>

EC proposes new environmental strategies

The EC has proposed strategies for the sustainable use of natural resources and to make Europe a recycling society ('the waste strategy'). The proposals address current environmental issues associated with overexploitation of the world's natural resources and the creation of waste. The waste and resources strategies set out ambitious targets to educate society and improve regulation and are two of the seven 'thematic' strategies required under the 6th Environmental Action Programme (2002 - 2012).

The European strategy for the sustainable use of natural resources provides a framework to reduce the environmental impacts of resource use in a growing economy, where consumption of natural resources also grows. The new waste strategy acknowledges the successes of the EU environment legislation, stating how it has helped improve the way waste is disposed and has encouraged recycling. The waste policy and the natural resources policies are interrelated, and the strategy includes a legislative proposal to modernise the 1975 Waste Framework Directive. The main revisions include: focusing the policy on improving resource use; enforcing mandatory national waste prevention programmes; improving the environmental standards for recycling; and simplifying waste legislation.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

available from the DG Environment website at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/>

Nano(eco)toxicology

The EC has launched an informal consultation on research and development topics in the field of nano(eco)toxicology. The consultation seeks views on research activities that may form the basis of priorities in Framework Programme 7 and invites stakeholders to review the policy objectives relating to nano(eco)toxicology in the context of prioritising the future research agenda.

The specific areas include: R&D in nano(eco)toxicology; the need for databases on toxicity and 'Poles of excellence' in nano(eco)toxicology. The latter would entail mapping existing infrastructures and inputs for maximising the added value, meeting the needs of industry and in particular of SMEs as well encouraging transnational networking and integration of resources across universities, R&D organisations and industry as a means of assembling critical mass. Other initiatives are also present including those on metrology and standardisation. Interested stakeholders are invited to submit responses before 28 February 2006.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

available from the EC Nanotechnology Homepage at:

<http://cordis.europa.eu.int/nanotechnology/> Contributions should be submitted in writing to María Pilar Aguar Fernández at: pilar.aguar@cec.eu.int by 28 February 2006.

Galileo satellite launch

The Galileo satellite radio-navigation system is an initiative launched by the EU and the European Space Agency (ESA). Satellite radio-navigation is an advanced technology. It is based on the emission from satellites of signals indicating the time extremely precisely. Galileo is based on a constellation of 30 satellites and ground stations providing information concerning the positioning of users in many sectors such as transport, social services and public works.

This month saw the launch GIOVE-A, a satellite manufactured by the British company Surrey Satellite Technology Limited which was put in to a 23,222 kilometres orbit. The GIOVE mission (Galileo In-Orbit Validation Element) actually comprises two satellites (GIOVE-A and B) and tests critical new technologies.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

EC Press release IP/05/1712 of 28/12/2005 available at:

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/searchAction.do>

Further information on Galileo available from the Europa website at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/galileo , and the European Space Agency Website (ESA) at: <http://www.esa.int/export/esaSA/navigation.html>

RESEARCH NEWS

Innovative medicines

Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs) form part of the ECs proposal for the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). The six proposed JTIs would be set up to address areas that would benefit from long term public-private partnerships, and where existing instruments are deemed insufficient. The JTIs are being developed from the current Technology Platforms (TPs), and build on their Strategic Research Agendas. JTIs would

take the form of Article 171 bodies and as such are subject to approval by the European Council and EP.

The Innovative Medicines JTI aims to increase the competitiveness of the European pharmaceutical sector by providing a co-ordinated approach to overcome research bottlenecks in the drug development process. In particular, it hopes to do this by reducing development time and clinical attrition rate for new medicines. This will allow faster access to innovative medicines and earlier return on research investment. In addition to research and innovation activities, the JTI will address knowledge management and will run education programmes. Provided that the Innovative Medicines JTI is funded, an executive office will be established to co-ordinate the initiative and to launch open calls for proposals for research to be undertaken. The proposed JTIs are all at various stages of development, though it remains to be seen what proportion of the reduced budget for FP7 will be allocated to the JTIs.

FURTHER INFORMATION

available from DG Research website at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index_en.cfm?p=1_innomed .

Zero emission fossil fuel power

A new Technology Platform (TP), Zero Emission Fossil Fuel Power Plants, was launched in December 2005. The main objective is to enable the sector to work together towards reducing the environmental impact of fossil fuels, particularly coal. The Platform includes experts from all fields, including energy companies and consumers, equipment suppliers, financial institutions, regulatory and public authorities and researchers who are going to develop research goals.

The main aim of the TP is to meet the challenge of producing power plants with zero emissions of climate-damaging greenhouse gasses. They will focus on CO₂ capture and geological storage, which includes developing technologies that capture carbon dioxide emission as they are produced by power stations and storing them underground so they are unable to interact with the atmosphere and produce greenhouse gasses. The platform is also aiming to advance the research into sustainable energy sources and processes.

FURTHER INFORMATION

available from the DG Energy website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/energy/index_en.htm

Microdosing: speeding up drug development and reducing animal testing.

The EU Microdose AMS partnership Programme (EUMAPP) is funded under the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6). The programme aims to boost EU expertise in microdosing and its application of AMS or accelerator mass spectroscopy. This will help to develop new candidate drugs for treating global diseases. Collaborators from ten

organisations from the United Kingdom, Sweden, the Netherlands, France and Poland will contribute to the 20 month project.

The project hopes to address the current issue where one in three drugs fail in clinical trials. The new technology will assist researchers in predicting Pharmacokinetics, how the drugs behave in the body. Microdosing will improve human metabolism profiling and assist with 'candidate' selection. Microdosing could reduce the need for animal testing thereby contributing to the 3R objectives; reduce, refine and replace. It will also improve EU citizen health and welfare and make human clinical trials safer.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Available from the Europa website at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/headlines/news/article_06_01_20_en.html

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CULTURE

EC efforts to promote European culture and identity

On 12 January 2006, a meeting was held in Brussels to bring together the EC and some important European cultural figures to discuss ways to promote European culture and identity. At present the EC allocates €35 million per year to its cultural programme as well as wider efforts of cultural promotion. The focus of the meeting was culture as a means of avoiding conflicts and enhancing intercultural dialogue. The European Education and Culture Commissioner, Jan Figel, presented a proposal to the participants of 2008 as 'European Year of Intercultural Dialogue'.

The President of the EC, Manuel Barroso, had said before the meeting that culture had a crucial role to play in the European Agenda, as it is vital to European integration. The meeting included musicians, philosophers, researchers, writers and television directors.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

European Cultural Portal, bringing together funding activities and policy objectives across the Commission's directorates, available at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/portal/index_en.htm

EC proposal for 2008 as the "European Year of Intercultural Dialogue", available at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/portal/events/current/dialogue2008_en.htm

Culture 2000

In late December 2005, the EC announced the 217 projects which have been offered support in the Culture 2005 call, including some 700 organisations across 30 countries. The total financial support amounts to over €33 million. The 2005 call supported 196 annual projects, including projects specifically on translation works, as well as 21 multi-

annual projects. The areas supported are wide ranging but include cultural heritage, translation projects, projects in third countries, performing arts, visual arts and literature.

The Culture 2000 programme, due to run until 2006 in its current form, includes support for annual and multi-annual projects which will promote European cultural networks. In 2005, Cork also received support as the designated European Capital of Culture, while Patras, the 2006 designated city, received support for preparatory works. In 2006 the Culture 2000 programme will not prioritise a particular sector, but will support projects in all artistic and cultural fields.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

EC Culture website, available at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/index_en.html

Progress report on education and training

The EC has published a Communication entitled 'Modernising education and training: a vital contribution to prosperity and social cohesion in Europe'. The Communication is the first in a new cycle of two year progress reviews on implementing the Education and Training 2010 work programme. It states that although there have been some improvements in implementing the Education and Training 2010 work programme since the last report in 2004, there is still much work to be done. In particular with respect to sustained funding of the sector, life long learning policies and coherent policy evaluation and monitoring procedures. The Communication outlines key areas of work at national as well as European level for the next two years. The analysis is based on the 2005 national reports of the Member States, EFTA-EEA countries and the candidate countries, with the report due to be adopted by the Council in February 2006.

The Education and Training 2010 work programme outlines the role of education and training in the Lisbon strategy, in terms of its economic and social objectives. Education and training are considered as key factors in Europe's potential for innovation and competitiveness, but also for improving the long-term sustainability of its social welfare systems. This message is repeated throughout the report. The report concludes that national reforms are going in the right direction. It also highlights how the education benchmarks most closely related to social inclusion – those concerning compulsory education such as school completion rates – are far from being met. Taking these into account, the report suggests that reforms need to pay special attention to issues of equity and governance by mobilising the relevant actors and learning from good practice all across Europe.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

can be found on the EC's website on education and training at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/nationalreport_en.html

Education, audiovisual and culture executive agency

The new Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency started its work on 3 January 2006. The new agency will replace the current Technical Assistance Office Leonardo, Socrates and Youth, and will also take over some tasks currently handled by DG Education and Culture. It will be responsible for most management aspects of the education and training programmes, including drawing up calls for proposals; project selection; signing project agreements; financial management; monitoring of projects (intermediate reports, final reports); communication with beneficiaries; and on the spot controls. The move to an executive agency should allow the Commission more time to focus on policy issues.

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency will be responsible for the following programmes: Socrates; Leonardo da Vinci; Youth; MEDIA-Plus and MEDIA-Training; Culture 2000; Erasmus-Mundus; eLearning; other community action programmes in the field of youth, culture, education and training (incl. Jean Monnet and Town Twinning) and projects in the field of higher education in developing countries in Asia.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Contact details for the executive agency are: Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, Office: BOUR, 1049 Brussels, Belgium, e-mail: eacea-info@cec.eu.int
Further information on the agency available at
http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education_culture/eacea/index_en.htm

EXTERNAL COLLABORATION

EU - Republic of Korea agreement on Galileo

January 2006 saw agreement given for participation of the Republic of Korea in Europe's satellite radio-navigation programme, Galileo. The Republic of Korea, the fourth economical power in Asia, is a producer and user of consumer electronic goods and systems for which satellite navigation will potentially bring effective economic benefit. In addition, the Republic of Korea currently uses satellite navigation services in a number of sectors including transport, fleet management and science. This agreement with the EU will provide for co-operative activities in a number of areas, including scientific research and training; industrial co-operation and trade; and market development, and further confirms EU ambitions to stimulate international co-operation.

The agreement was signed by Heinz Hilbrecht from the EC and Counsellor Choi Jong Hyun who was representing the Republic of Korea. EC Vice-President Jacques Barrot commented on the agreement by saying that 'after the successful launch of the first Galileo GIOVE-A satellite, this new agreement underlines, once again, the ever growing worldwide interest for the programme'.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

EC press release IP/06/23 of 12/01/2006 available at:

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/searchAction.do>

Further information on Galileo is available from the Europa website at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/galileo/index_en.htm, and the European Space Agency website at: <http://www.esa.int/export/esaSA/navigation.html>

IST-Africa 2006 conference

The IST-Africa 2006 Conference will take place 3-5 May this year in Pretoria, South Africa. The conference will bring together actors from the private sector, government and research organisations, from across Africa and within Europe. The conference is the first in a series of annual conferences and will focus on bridging the digital divide through sharing best-practice, knowledge and experience. The overall goal of the conference series is also to facilitate EU-African research co-operation, including exploitation of research results, and promoting international co-operation in the EC's Framework Programme. The conference will include keynote speakers as well as workshops and technical and policy papers.

The conference will also include an exhibition showcasing research results from a variety of funding sources. The call for exhibitors will be open from 30 January until 28 February. The call for papers for the conference is now closed.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Further information on the conference, including registration and preliminary programme is available from: <http://www.ist-africa.org/Conference2006/default.asp>

EVENTS and AWARDS

Avian and human pandemic influenza conference

On 18 January 2006 an international pledging conference was held on avian and human Pandemic Influenza in Beijing. The total amount pledged by the international community amounts to 1.9 Billion US Dollars. A number of governments and organisations made significant non-financial pledges on top of the financial assistance to target the provision of technical assistance, scientific expertise, training and exchange programs of scientists, as well as research in key areas.

The EU pledged €100 million (over 122 million US Dollars). By including the Member State pledges, the EU have pledged around a total of €214 million (260 million US Dollars). Pledges from the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, the New EU member states and South East Asian countries, including Malaysia and Thailand,

demonstrate world wide solidarity and international partnerships. The money will be able to support affected countries and provide support to others which may experience outbreaks as the disease continues to spread.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

EC press releases SPEECH/06/14 or 18/01/2006, SPEECH/06/11 of 18/01/2006 and IP/05/1686 of 22/12/2005 available at:

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/setLanguage.do?language=en>

Research infrastructures

The third European conference on Research Infrastructures was held in December at the University of Nottingham. The conference focused on several issues, including the long-term scientific needs in relation to European research infrastructures; European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI); development of a co-ordinated roadmap and the role of Community financial instruments and Framework Programme 7, in particular in relation to research infrastructures. The conference was attended by over 300 delegates from across the world and included key note speeches from Janez Potočnik, Science and Research Commissioner and Sir Keith O’Nions, Director General of the Research Councils.

Mr Potočnik spoke of the issues that Europe as a whole has been facing with respect to its citizens perception of the EU’s role in their lives. He emphasised the need for the European Institutions to acknowledge and address these issues in order for the Lisbon strategy to be implemented and for Europe to reach its potential of becoming the most competitive knowledge economy by 2010. He cited the importance of the Barcelona three per cent objective and how the EU still falls far behind R & D investment of Japan and USA. He referred to research infrastructures as the ‘highway to generating new knowledge’ and explained the main points of the current Framework Programme 7 proposal, that of supporting access to existing world-class structures and its contribution to the structure of new research infrastructures

FURTHER INFORMATION:

available from the University of Nottingham website at:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ecriuk/>

It’s researchers’ night!

The EC intends to launch a call in early February for ‘Researchers’ Night 2006’. The call is intended to build on the experiences of ‘Researchers’ Night 2005’ and it would seem that the EC hope for at least one ‘Researchers’ Night’ event to be held in each Member or Associated State on 22 September 2006.

An information event to be held early February 2006 should provide information on the following: the concept behind ‘Researchers’ night’, the main objectives and the necessary requirements to be fulfilled. Participants will also be offered the opportunity of describing potential ideas regarding Researchers’ nights in 2006 and to start networking with other potential organisers.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

on Researchers Night 2005 is available from the Researchers in Europe website at: <http://europa.eu.int/researchersineurope>

The return of Famelab

After the success of Famelab 2005, the competition returns in 2006 to find the best scientific communicators, who will inspire the public with a vision of science in the 21st Century. Contestants have three minutes to impress a panel of judges by giving an exciting and engaging talk directed at the general public. The panel of judges for 2006 has yet to be confirmed, but in 2005 the panel included Robert Winston, Professor of Fertility Studies and BBC Presenter; Roger Highfield, Science Editor The Daily Telegraph and Louisa Bolch, Science Editor, Channel 4.

FameLab 2006 was launched in November 2005 in London by a line-up including Kathy Sykes, Cheltenham Science Festival Director; Jonathan Kestenbaum, NESTA's new Chief Executive Officer; Roger Highfield, Science Editor of the Daily Telegraph and of course, Dr Mark Lewney, winner of FameLab 2005, who gave his 'electrifying' performance on the Science of Rock. The heats for FameLab 2006 will begin in March at the following venues: 11 March, Newcastle, LIFE Conference Centre; 19 March, Swansea, National Waterfront Museum; 26 March, Edinburgh, Dynamic Earth; 1 April, London, Dana Centre and 22 April, Belfast, W5. Each of the auditions will select two candidates to go forward to the final to be held at the Cheltenham Science Festival in June 2006. The competition is organised in partnership with NESTA (the National Endowment of Science, Technology and the Arts) and is supported by Pfizer, Research Councils UK, Channel 4 and The Daily Telegraph.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Further information about Famelab 2006, including last years 10 finalists, is available at: <http://www.famelab.org/>

NEW PUBLICATIONS and ONLINE RESOURCES

Health and electromagnetic fields

The EC has produced a new publication showcasing EU-funded research into the impacts of electromagnetic fields and mobile technologies on health. The publication is very readable and clearly describes the background to research on the health impacts of electromagnetic fields.

The co-operation and co-ordination of research across Europe to investigate the potential hazards of EMF supports a number of EU policy areas, such as consumer and worker protection and industrial standards. The brochure provides examples of EU funded research projects, placing the research in the context of the EU policies and international initiatives.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

available from the Europa website at: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/quality-of-life.html>

Linking science to environment policy

The Commission's Directorate General for Environment has launched a new weekly news alert service. The service, 'Science for Environment Policy', is aimed at improving the dissemination of research results for the benefit of policy makers and the general public.

The alert will provide news on DG Environment policy priorities and on the EU's Environmental Action Programme. It will also report on the outcome of EU funded projects in the environment area and on other research initiatives.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Including subscription, can be found at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/integration/research_alert_en.htm

CORDIS

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

URL: <http://www.cordis.eu.int>

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 EU 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 45 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).

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 EU 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 EU as presented by the Institutions in their press releases.

EC Press Releases are available at:

<http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.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 Co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research is a framework for scientific and technical co-operation, 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 2000/04 (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 - 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 co-ordinated. 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, FP7)	The EU's Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. The Fifth Framework Programme (FP5) was adopted in 1998 and ran until 2002, with FP6 superseding until 2006, with discussions underway on FP7 beyond 2006. Further information on the thematic and horizontal programme composition of FP6 is available at: http://fp6.cordis.lu/fp6/home.cfm
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 co-operation 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
JRC	The ECs Joint Research Centre acting as a scientific and technological laboratory in support of EU policies, with a range of institutes and research activities. http://www.jrc.cec.eu.int
MEDIA	The MEDIA Plus Programme (2001–05) 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 co-operation 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.

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