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News on EU Research Policy and Programmes

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EU Policy

Eurostat provides picture on biotechnology in Europe

A new Eurostat report has been published, which examines the state of biotechnology in Europe. The report uses data patent applications, research and development (R&D) intensity and R&D. Defining and measuring biotechnology is a challenge for statisticians as there is no single sector of biotechnology that can be easily and clearly distinguished from other technology sectors. The report finds that in 2003 Denmark was world leader in biotechnology patent applications to the EPO per million inhabitants (followed by Ireland and Israel), whereas Germany was first in absolute terms. The UK was the most active European country in biotechnology R&D investment, followed by Denmark and Sweden.

The EU as a whole ranks second worldwide when it comes to patenting and at European level, Germany submitted 901 biotechnology patent applications to the EPO, followed by the United Kingdom with 416 applications and France with 370. Interestingly, from 1993 to 1998, China's applications to the EPO increased by 44 per cent. The report also finds that US companies spent close to eight times more than the EU-27 companies in R&D investment in this field. This gap is unlikely to narrow in the near future because R&D funding in biotechnology is growing faster in the US than in Europe.

Further information

The report is available directly from the Eurostat website at:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-07-100/EN/KS-SF-07-100-EN.PDF

The Eurostat website is available at:

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

EC is world's largest public investor in nanotechnology

Framework Programme Six (FP6) accounts for one-third of total public funding for nanotechnology, according to the recently published implementation review of the nanosciences and nanotechnology action plan. The action plan is a four year plan, based on an extensive consultation, which defines a series of interconnected actions for the immediate implementation of a safe, integrated and responsible strategy for nanosciences and nanotechnologies. The implementation report finds that much is being done in this field, with EC funding for nanosciences and nanotechnology increasing considerably in recent years. It also reports on some potential future challenges for nanosciences and nanotechnologies over the coming years.

The total of €1.4 billion has been allocated to 550 projects in the field of nanosciences and nanotechnology throughout FP6, helping to ensure that the EC is the world's largest single investor in nanotechnology. Janez Potočnik, EU Commissioner for Research, stated: 'Nanotechnology is an area where Europe is an acknowledged world leader. This is an opportunity we must grasp with both hands. The EC has already shown in this first phase that it is able to steer this course.' This looks set to continue into Framework Programme Seven (FP7), where the annual funding for nanosciences and nanotechnologies has increased substantially from FP6.

Further information

The implementation report is available at:

ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/nanotechnology/docs/com_2007_0505_f_en.pdf

EC Press Release IP/07/1321 of 13 September 2007 is available at:

<http://europa.eu/rapid>

ERA Green Paper responses

The Scientific Council (ScC) of the European Research Council (ERC) has published its response to the European Research Area (ERA) green paper. The ERA green paper looks at how to overcome persistent barriers to building a true ERA, including free movement of researchers, technology and knowledge between the EU-27 and putting an end to fragmentation and duplication of research. The ERC ScC response addresses key requirements for future developments of the ERA from the perspective of fundamental research. The topics discussed in the response relate to the autonomy of the ERC, research infrastructures, the training and mobility of researchers and research publications amongst others. Among other things, it highlights the importance of autonomy for its success and also suggests that its budget be doubled in FP8. The response also concludes with a series of recommendations that cut across the themes identified in the ERA green paper.

At the same time, the Heads of European Research Councils (EUROHORCS), the European Science Foundation (ESF), and the League of European Research Universities (LERU) have published their responses to the ERA green paper. Essentially, they suggest that the EC places too much emphasis on increasing top-down co-ordination of research activities and centrally managed networks. The EUROHORCS and ESF response suggests that there should be more of a bottom-up approach as this would foster basic research at a high level of excellence. The LERU response

feels that the green paper builds strongly on the existing framework and it should avoid strong central management that could potentially reduce flexibility in research.

Further information

The ERC ScC response to the ERA Green Paper is available at:

http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/scc_reflections_era_greenpaper_310807_erc_format_fck2_en.pdf

The LERU response is available at:

<http://kampela-leru.it.helsinki.fi/?bmlkPTlw>

The ESF and EUROHORCS submission is available in full at:

http://ims.ukro.ac.uk/NR/ronlyres/5C6B137A-68DE-4ED6-83DC-FBD1DB57EE1A/4763/070907_esf_and_eurohorcs_era_green_paper_response.pdf

Shaping the European Neighbourhood Policy

EU Ministers and Ministers of countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy all came together for the first time at a conference in Brussels recently. The conference, entitled 'Working Together - Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy', sought partners' input and ideas about the best way to take proposals for co-operation forward. The European Neighbourhood Policy applies to the EU's immediate neighbours by land or sea, which is: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.

It allowed partners to put forward their views on where they thought their interests were reflected and where gaps still remained. This event follows on from EC proposals on how to strengthen the opportunities for partner countries, particularly in relation to facilitating mobility and managing migration, including making it easier to obtain visas for researchers and students. The other area of co-operation was more people-to-people contacts, particularly through educational and youth exchanges. To this end, a new ENP scholarship scheme is being set up. The presentations from the event, including speeches by EC President Barroso and Benita Ferrero-Waldner, EU Commissioner for External Relations, are now available online.

Further information

The conference website, which includes the presentations from the event, is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/conferences_2007_en.htm

Intelligent cars

The EC has recently outlined plans to speed up the drive for safer, cleaner and smarter cars through its Intelligent Car Communication. It plans to begin negotiations with EU and Asian automotive industry associations to reach an agreement on offering the pan-European in-vehicle emergency call system (known as eCall) as a standard option in all new cars from 2010. In addition, it will also attempt to further promote the take-up of other life-saving technologies such as Electronic Stability Control (ESC) and investigate how technology can help make cars greener and smarter. The new initiative has the backing of EU Commissioner for Transport, Jaques Barrot, EU Commissioner for Enterprise, Günther Verheugen, and EU Commissioner for Information Society and Media, Viviane Reding.

The EC will be holding a consultation later this year on whether fitting braking assistance and crash avoidance systems should be obligatory for all cars. It is believed that rear-end collisions could be reduced by 60 per cent by fitting sensors that can give drivers a half-a-second more warning ahead of a crash. The EC will also be producing guidelines by mid-2008 on incentives, such as tax

schemes for member states, for smart car systems. In 2008 it will also propose a plan to roll-out low-CO2 technologies in vehicles and infrastructure, which it is thought will follow work to quantify the role ICT plays in reducing CO2 in road transport.

Further information

EC Press Releases MEMO/07/358 and IP/07/1342 of 17 September are available at:

<http://europa.eu/rapid>

A press pack including a frequently asked questions sheet, related websites and audiovisual material amongst others is available from:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3602

Appointment of first ITER director

The Governing Board of the European Joint Undertaking for ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor) and the Development of 'Fusion for Energy' appointed the organisation's first Director on 17 July 2007. The Director is Dr Didier Gambier, currently Head of Unit for the Joint Development of Fusion in the EC's Directorate-General for Research.

'Fusion for Energy' aims to play a central role in realising fusion as a possible future limitless source of energy. It was established in order to provide the European contributions to the ITER International 'Fusion for Energy' project and the Broader Approach Agreement with Japan. In addition, 'Fusion for Energy' is charged with the responsibility of co-ordinating a programme of activities to prepare for the first demonstration fusion reactors that can generate electricity (DEMO). It is estimated that Fusion for Energy will become fully operational towards the end of 2007, after which it will start placing its first industrial contracts. The formal establishment of ITER as a true international organisation requires ratification, acceptance and approval of the ITER Agreement, in accordance with the procedures of each ITER Party. The EU (represented by EURATOM), Japan, India, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the USA have already concluded this process. The People's Republic of China will be the last country to follow this procedure.

Further information

Further information on ITER and 'Fusion for Energy':

http://ec.europa.eu/research/energy/fu/fu_rd/article_3329_en.htm

Background information on 'Fusion for Energy':

<http://fusionforenergy.europa.eu>

Further information on ITER is available at:

<http://www.iter.org>

EC wants action on interlinking Cohesion Programmes, FP7, and CIP

The EC has presented a policy paper which offers guidance to national and regional authorities on how to interlink the Cohesion Policy programmes with the innovation and research funding available through FP7 and the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP). In order to promote the economic and social development of all the member states it is essential that the appropriate sources of funding are utilised in a coherent way.

Regions that wish to harness their research and innovation potential have a range of EU funding sources available to them, in particular the cohesion policy instruments; FP7; and CIP. The EC has proposed various actions in order to improve the coherence in which these funding opportunities are used for regions. These include the development of a practical guide by the end of the year to help interested parties identify the most appropriate source of funding; improving information exchange with national/regional authorities so that they know which organisations receive FP7 and

CIP grants, in order to provide complementary support; and organising regular events so that those involved in research, innovation and regional development can come together to share ideas, exchange best practice and access support and advice.

Further information

Further information is available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/research-cohesion.html>

First European Security Research and Innovation Forum Meeting

The inaugural meeting of the European Security Research and Innovation Forum (ESRIF) took place on 11 September 2007. EU Justice, Freedom and Security Commissioner, Franco Frattini, highlighted the importance of co-operation at all levels. The aim of ESRIF is to foster a public-private dialogue on security research by bringing together all relevant stakeholders. Its ultimate goal is to develop a long-term approach to deliver effective policies and ultimately better security for EU citizens.

In the first ESFRI meeting, Frattini emphasised the importance of basing security policies on solid research. The EU is already contributing to this aim by allocating nearly €1.5 billion to the FP7 Security theme. In addition, €750 million is available to improve security within the Community and support the work of member states. With regard to FP7, several new projects are underway. Around 44 projects will receive €156 million between them following the first call for proposals. Future projects are expected to address several crucial research areas, including a mobile device to detect the home manufacture of threatening substances; protecting water networks with automatic surveillance systems; security for large-scale public events; creating a ballistics database; crisis management; and the video detection of abnormal behaviour in a crowd.

Further information

EC press releases MEMO/07/346 and MEMO/07/347 of 11 September 2007 are available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid>

Further information on Security research is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/security/index_en.htm

EU Marine Environmental Policy

The Council of Ministers has adopted a common position on a draft directive establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (9388/07 + 11440/07 ADD 1). The text will be sent to the EP for the second reading under the EP-Council of Ministers co-decision procedure. The main role of the proposed directive, which is intended to serve as the environmental pillar of a future EU maritime policy, is to establish a framework for the preservation of the marine environment, the prevention of its deterioration and, where practicable, the restoration of that environment where it has been adversely affected.

This will be done through the development and implementation by the member states of marine strategies aimed at achieving or maintaining good environmental status by 2021 at the latest. Furthermore, the directive will contribute to coherence between, and will ensure the integration of environmental concerns into different policies, agreements and legislative measures that have an impact on the marine environment. Co-operation at regional level will be essential to the successful implementation of the directive, which will contribute to enhancing action at international level, in particular in the context of regional seas conventions for the protection of the marine environment.

Further information

Council Press Release PRESS/07/170 of 4 September 2007 is available at:

<http://europa.eu/rapid>

Draft directive 9388/07 is available at:

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/07/st09/st09388.en07.pdf>

Draft directive 11440/07.ADD 1 is available at:

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/07/st11/st11440-ad01.en07.pdf>

Fostering public and private dialogue in security research and innovation

An EC press conference aimed at fostering public-private dialogue in security research and innovation took place on 11 September 2007 in Brussels. There is an increasing awareness and acknowledgement that security threats need to be addressed at both national and EU level. Internal and external security is increasingly inseparable and nearly nine in ten EU citizens believe that security questions should not only be dealt with at national level, but also at EU level.

While Europe aims to preserve its values of open society and civil liberties, it also aims to address the increased security threat level. At the same time it is essential for Europe to secure its economy and competitiveness against an increased threat of disruption to its basic economic infrastructures, including industrial assets and transport, energy and information networks. Both the public and private sector play an important role in the security sector. While the public sector often contributes as end users of security applications and technologies, the private sector is often involved in the development of appropriate security capabilities.

Further information

EC Press Release IP/07/608 of 11 September 2007 is available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid>

FP7 Funds for the GMES Space Component Programme

European Space Agency (ESA) member states have been invited to sign up to phase two of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) Space Component (GSC) programme. The GMES Space Component Programme takes place during the period 2006-2013 and will cover the development, launch and initial operations of the space infrastructure for GMES. €430 million is needed to continue the GSC programme over the period 2008 to 2012. The FP7 Space theme is expected to contribute an additional €575 million to GSC funding. In phase two the development, build and launch of the first three GMES Sentinel Satellites is expected to be completed.

ESA management and spending of FP7 funds will be established in the financial arrangements that are currently being discussed between ESA and the EC. Proposals on these financial arrangements will be presented in the autumn. A joint meeting of the ESA Programme Board on Earth Observation and the FP7 Space Programme Management Committee will look at how ESA and EU member states could work together to enhance the use of FP7 funds for the GMES space component programme. ESA has applied for a €42 million data access grant from FP7, which is currently being evaluated. FP7 funded GMES projects would benefit from the results provided by this support action.

Further information

Further information in GMES is available at:

<http://www.gmes.info>

Further information on the FP7 Space programme is available at:

<http://www.fp7uk.dti.gov.uk/site/ThematicAreas/Space/default.cfm>

World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) publishes 2007 Patent Report

The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) recently published the 2007 edition of its Patent Report. The report provides worldwide statistics on patent activity. In this year's report, extra sections have been added to show activity by fields of technology, and improvements have been made to statistics on patent processing and patent life cycles. The report also gives a more detailed analysis of the European procedures and statistics. The report discusses several topics, including worldwide patent filings; patent filings by residents and by non-residents; indicators of patent intensity; fields of technology and patent filing in the European region.

The report shows that German residents are the biggest filers of patent applications at their national patent office (with 48,367 resident patent applications filed in 2005), followed by the United Kingdom (with 17,833) and France (with 13,985). Further, most European national offices receive relatively few patent applications from residents of other European Patent Convention (EPC) member States, but the patent offices of Germany and the United Kingdom do receive a significant number of patent filings from extra-regional residents. In the global context, trends in patent activity are a reflection of the transition currently occurring in worldwide industrial activity. Very high growth rates in the use of the patent system can be observed in North East Asian countries, particularly the Republic of Korea and China.

Further information

The report is available at:

http://www.wipo.int/ipstats/en/statistics/patents/patent_report_2007.html#P543_32815

EURAB suggests broad approach to FP6 impact assessment

At its final meeting, the European Research Advisory Board (EURAB) has proposed two alternative ways to assess the success of European research policy and its accompanying framework programmes. The alternatives concern an assessment of goal attainment, and assessing the evidence base for research policy-making. A working group within the EC's DG Research is in the process of developing a strategy and procedure for the performance of scientific and technological project reviews and ex-post impact assessments. In this context EURAB was asked to provide recommendations on ex-post impact assessments.

EURAB recommends an increase in funds allocated to ex-post assessments, however, this money should be allocated to the assessment of collaborative research projects rather than individual ones. Further, EURAB recommends an increased emphasis on the assessment of goal attainment and efficiency of implementation at project and programme levels. In this context particular emphasis should be placed on the diversity of projects funded by the EU's framework programmes and their diverging goals. If necessary, different evaluation approaches and techniques would need to be implemented. EURAB's second proposal relates to an appraisal of the processes leading up to the setting of research policy and spending. In this context EURAB asks for more information on the evidence base that led to the establishment of the research investment target at three per cent of GDP, as set in 2002.

Further information

Further information is available at: <http://www.cordis.eu>

EC Publishes Outlook Reports on the future of European Research

The EC has recently published three new reports looking at European research performance in the face of globalisation and the future of important research actors in the European Research Area (ERA). The reports bring together the work of various foresight activities overseen by DG Research since 2001 and the work of an expert group established in 2005.

The reports present an economic and prospective analysis on the consequences for Europe of an intensified globalisation of knowledge production and R&D. In this context the reports call for wider international co-operation, multinational enterprises and the public sector to both play their part. This should include engagement with emerging and developing countries, as well as the traditional large economies. The synthesis paper presents an analysis of the various individual reports and provides scenarios on the future of knowledge production in the ERA of 2020, as well as policy options on how to best adapt to future trends and changes in knowledge production in our society. The paper calls for Europe to move beyond industrial-era challenges to embrace those of the knowledge society and provides a list of key requirements for development of the ERA including policies to strengthen the autonomy of universities and policies to enhance the capacity of policy-makers to recognise and facilitate new forms of research.

Further information

Outlook report "Europe in the global research landscape" is available at:
http://www.eurosfaire.prd.fr/7pc/doc/1188833148_prospective_report2007_en_12_web.pdf

Further information on foresight activities is available at:
<http://cordis.europa.eu/foresight/reports.htm>

Eurobarometer shows interest levels in EU health research

The EC has carried out a Eurobarometer public opinion survey to find out how interested European citizens are in different areas of health research. 29,000 people took part in the survey, from 29 countries (EU member states and Turkey and Croatia). The findings have shown that 84 per cent of the respondents are interested in Environmental research and 71 per cent are interested in medical and health research. The survey compared this to the interest levels for European and international news (70 per cent), economic and social affairs, (68 per cent) and general science and technology (60 per cent). The interest in health and medical research increased with the age of the respondent to 76 per cent for the respondents over 55.

The survey also analysed the areas that interested the respondents the most, for health research the majority of citizens who took part were interested in the results of medical research and new discoveries on major diseases as well as information which allows better protection from infectious diseases. More than half of the respondents (52 per cent) were aware that it is possible to work with colleagues across Europe on research projects and 44 per cent were aware that the EU provides co-funding for collaborative research. The results also showed that 53 per cent of respondents trust doctors and medical staff, 47 per cent trust researchers as a source of reliable information and 31 per cent trust the specialized press. TV was highlighted as the most important source of information on science and research.

Further information

EC Press release IP/07/1341 of 17 September 2007 is available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid>
Survey available at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

EU's new interregional co-operation programme

The new cohesion policy for 2007-2013 is structured around three new objectives (convergence; regional competitiveness and employment; territorial co-operation). The territorial component has been reinforced since 2000-2006. It has three strands: cross-border co-operation; trans-national co-operation; and inter-regional co-operation. The new inter-regional programme (INTERREG IV C) was launched at the Inter-regional Co-operation Forum hosted by Portugal, in its capacity as EU Presidency. INTERREG IV C will support co-operation among regional and local actors in the fields of innovation and the environment. Inter-regional co-operation is addressed by a single programme covering all 27 member states as well as Norway and Switzerland.

The INTERREG IV C programme will have two main strands: innovation and the knowledge-based economy, which focuses mainly on innovation, research and technology; and the environment and risk prevention, which concentrates mostly on natural and technological risks; water management, waste prevention and management; biodiversity and preservation of the natural heritage; energy and sustainable transport, and the cultural heritage and landscape. The first call for proposals will close in mid-January. Public authorities can submit projects to the joint secretariat in Lille, France. Proposals will be assessed by a monitoring committee made up of representatives from all member states. The Commission expects to approve 70 territorial co-operation programmes to implement cohesion policy 2007-2013 (including inter-regional, trans-national and cross-border co-operation).

Further information

Interreg info-points are available at:

www.interreg3c.net

Further information on EU Regional Policy is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.htm

Research News

European Southern Observatory (ESO) equips very large telescope

ESO's Very Large Telescope (VLT) has been equipped with a new 'eye' to study the universe in more depth. The 'eye' is referred to as HAWK-I (High Acuity, Wide field K-band Imaging) which was designed and built by scientists at the flagship facility for European astronomy. HAWK-I is the more advanced tool to study faint objects such as distant galaxies and small stars and planets in near infrared wavelengths.

HAWK-I will take images in the 0.9 to 2.5 micron domain over a large field-of-view of 7.5 times 7.5 arcminutes. Its 2k times 2k array detectors enable the instrument to study much larger areas with an excellent image quality. Its most important merits are its ability to cover a wide field, its fine sampling and high sensitivity, which is why its deepest scientific impact is expected in the areas of faint sources. HAWK-I is expected to scrutinise the very first objects that formed the universe. Additionally, the instrument will be used to search the most massive stars and the least massive objects in the Galaxy, such as hot Jupiters. It will also be a very useful instrument for the study of outer Solar System bodies, such as distant, icy asteroids and comets.

Further information

Further information is available at: <http://www.eso.org>

Distant planet gives hint to Earth's fate

Astronomers recently discovered a planet orbiting a star which is coming to the end of its life. The star in question, V 391 Pegasi, is found in the constellation Pegasus. The ten billion year old planet, named V391 Pegasi b after its star, is one of the oldest ever found. As only about five per cent of stars have planets, it was quite a coincidence that this particular planet was discovered.

Scientists had been carrying out observations and computations before concluding that the irregularities in the star's brightness were indeed caused by a planet. The discovery provided astronomers with an indication that planetary systems can survive the giant phase and helium flash by their parent star, which is caused by an enormous expansion of the star when it runs out of hydrogen fuel. During this 'red giant' stage inner planets often become engulfed by the star. The astronomers also discovered that prior to the star's expansion the planet orbited the star at a similar distance to which the earth orbits our sun. With regard to our own planet, astronomers remain uncertain about whether the Earth will survive when, in around 5 billion years time, our own sun runs out of fuel and becomes a red giant. As the Earth is a relatively small planet it may not survive the red giant expansion of the sun.

Further information

Further information is available at: <http://www.cordis.eu>

Interim Evaluation of the Public Health Programme 2003-2008

The EC recently commissioned the interim evaluation of the Public Health Programme (PHP) 2003-2008. The report provides an assessment of the impact achieved on health in the EU and the efficiency of resources used. It also examined how consistently and how well the Programme complements other relevant Community programmes, actions and initiatives.

The report includes a number of important recommendations for the EC regarding the development of the Programme, including the need for a roadmap and horizon-scanning. The use of new funding modes to support adventurous projects is encouraged, projects should develop legacy plans and with the aid of the EC, should target dissemination to particular stakeholders. The report encourages the EC to consider different approaches to competition and evaluation of proposals and the application process should be simplified. The report states that the projects should monitor themselves against the PHP priorities. The recommendations are explained fully in the evaluation. The EC will be using the finding of this evaluation to feed into the development and design of the next Public Health Programme 2007-2013.

Further information

Further information is available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_programme/eval2003_2008_en.htm

EDCTP extended to children infected with HIV/AIDS

European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) is a partnership between European countries and African partners based on Article 169 of the European Treaty and supported by the EC under FP6 and the participating member states. EDCTP can be extended to include children. This follows a decision in August when the United States Federal Drug Administration (FDA) gave a tentative approval to a fixed-dose anti-HIV drug specifically formulated for paediatric use. The tablet is administered twice daily, according to a simple weight-based table allowing for easy prescribing. Three drugs are combined in one tablet (which is layered to ensure equal distribution of drugs if snapped in half), and the fact that tablets can be stored, distributed, and administered easily to children represents a significant advance in HIV treatment for children in

resource-limited settings. It can also be dissolved in water for young children who cannot swallow tablets.

This drug will now be included in the World Health Organisation (WHO) Prequalification Programme and will become available for distribution under the Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS relief (PEPFAR) and Clinton Foundation programmes. EDCTP have provided the funding for the pharmacokinetic study leading to this tentative approval. Triomune Baby and Junior have already been approved in Zambia and are currently being used to treat children there.

Further information

Further information is available at: <http://www.edctp.org>

EU-funded research aims to make shipping even more environmentally friendly

Even though shipping is considered the most environmentally friendly form of transport, there are still some areas that environmentalists and engineers feel could be better improved, such as the emissions from ships' exhausts. More environmentally friendly superior marine diesel engines could be developed which reduce the fuel consumed and the CO₂ emissions. One EU-funded €33 million project aims to research and develop new technologies to drastically reduce gaseous and particulate emissions from marine engines, whilst also reducing fuel consumption, CO₂ emissions and engine life-cycle costs.

The project involves over 40 organisations from across ten different countries and even involves two of the world's largest (and usually fierce) competitors in the shipping market: MAN Diesel and Wärtsilä who hold around 85-90 per cent of the world market between them. By developing efficient engines that use less fuel and produce less emissions, the 'Hercules' project (High Efficiency Research and development on Combustion with Ultra Low Emissions for Ships) ultimately aims to develop ships engines that will surpass both existing and future legislation on marine fuel emissions. The project has utilised the broad engineering expertise across the partnership, with one of the innovative highlights to date being the development of two prototype 'extreme parameter engines' which are able to work under extreme temperatures and pressures.

Further Information

For more information on the Hercules project see:

<http://www.ip-hercules.com/article/english/2/index.htm>

Scientists concern grows about recent dramatic Arctic sea-ice loss

Recent measurements taken by the European Space Agency (ESA) Envisat satellite have shown that the area covered by sea ice in the Arctic has shrunk to its lowest level since satellite measurements began around 30 years ago. Because the loss of sea ice this year has been particularly extreme, scientists are now concerned that the ice present in summer may disappear much sooner than previously expected. This year the 'Northwest Passage' has partially opened (and is partially navigable) around the Siberian and northern Canadian coast. Scientists from the Danish National Space Centre believe that this year's extreme ice reduction could mean that the passage may well open up fully sooner than previously expected.

This period of dramatic change has also been observed by an international team of researchers on board the Polarstern research vessel from the Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research (AWI). The researchers are studying the plants and animals that live in and beneath the sea ice; when the ice disappears, many of these organisms will face extinction. Their work, as well

as UK, other national and EU-funded projects, will contribute to the current International Polar Year (IPY). Of particular concern to the researchers is the thinning of the sea ice. Across large areas of the Arctic, the sea ice is now just one metre thick, equating to a 50 per cent thinning since 2001. Some current models suggest that the Arctic could be ice-free in as few as 50 years.

Further information

The International Polar Year website is at: <http://www.ipy.org>

Link to UK work and exhibitions on IPY see: <http://www.ipyuk.org>

Further details on the recent Envisat results, including images showing the sea ice loss and the partial opening of the northwest passage, see:

http://www.esa.int/esaEO/SEMYTC13J6F_planet_0.html

For more information on the Alfred Wegener Institute see: <http://www.awi.de>

Eurostars: launch date and updated website

Eurostars, the new research fund for Small to Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs), will be officially launched on 2 October 2007. The first deadlines are due to close on 3 December 2007. A conference will be held in conjunction with the launch as part of the Slovenian Presidency of the EUREKA programme, which Eurostars is a part of. Eurostars, unlike EUREKA, is only open to research-performing SMEs from Eurostars member countries investing more than ten per cent of their annual turnover in research.

At the same time, the Eurostars website has been updated to include further information on the scheme. This includes the addition of new material in the 'who' 'what' 'where' and 'when' sections, and the inclusion of some entirely new pages. They include guidelines for applicants and a section on submission and application. A 'frequently asked questions' section has been included and this contains general background information, more specific information on submitting a proposal, details of the assessment and evaluation procedure and information on other participation aspects, such as funding and monitoring. Other new sections include a contact details section, a useful link section and a section on communicating Eurostars. This includes PowerPoint presentations, leaflets, press releases and logos.

Further information

The Eurostars website is at: <http://www.eurostars-eureka.eu/tiles/main.html>

Second annual reports from trans-European transport network Co-ordinators

The Co-ordinators for the trans-European transport network, who are mandated by the EC to facilitate certain priority projects, have sent their second activity reports to Vice-President Barrot. The current projects relate to railway infrastructure and the Co-ordinators sent reports based on the networks for which they are responsible.

The EC Vice-President stated that these arrangements, which currently only apply to railway infrastructure, should now be extended to other projects. Consequently the EC will be appointing two new Co-ordinators responsible for projects relating to the 'motorways of the sea' and inland waterways.

Further information

EC Press Release IP/07/1294 of 10 September 2007 is available at <http://europa.eu/rapid>

Commissioner Potočnik speaks at the Conference on Research Integrity

The EC Commissioner for Science and Research, Janez Potočnik, spoke at an international conference in Lisbon on research integrity. The conference was organised by the European Science Foundation and the US Office of Research Integrity. The Commissioner began by outlining the responsibilities that policy-makers have to the public. These included: ensuring that policies and actions are based on sound science and safe products; ensuring that technologies and innovations respect the values of European citizens; and also to guarantee sound stewardship of taxpayers' money.

He went on to outline how the EC is responding to the challenges in Research Integrity. The first principle is that integrity issues are included throughout the process, from setting the research priorities, through selecting the proposals and monitoring the outputs. The Commissioner also stated that there is a need to make research activities and results more accessible by supporting transparency and access to scientific information and methodologies. He also identified a need for greater networking between European national offices in charge of research integrity. This will require information exchanges, comparisons of best practice and standards and co-ordination of sanctions, as well as training for young scientists. Commissioner Potočnik ended by stating that they will work with, and reflect on studies, by organisations such as the OECD, with respect to global norms and standards.

Further information

EC Press Release SPEECH/07/537 of 17 September 2007 is available at <http://europa.eu/rapid>

Education, Training and Culture

Transatlantic co-operation education projects launched

The EC and the US Department of Education have launched 14 new transatlantic co-operation projects, which were selected after a call for proposals for the EU-US Atlantis programme. The EC will invest about €four million, which will be matched by the US authorities. The projects selected include: eight transatlantic degrees for Bachelor's or Master's, two Excellence in Mobility projects, which are similar in nature to the Erasmus exchange programme for higher education, and four Policy Orientated Actions to address higher education and vocational training issues.

The selected projects cover 32 European institutions from 12 member states, with Germany, UK, Italy, Spain, and Sweden being the most represented. There are 22 American institutions involved. The number of funding applications under the Atlantis programme for 2007 was 40 per cent higher than in 2006. The projects selected in 2007 will support 380 students in two-way exchanges with full recognition by the home institution of the studies undertaken abroad. The transatlantic degree will account for 284 of these students, giving them the opportunity to spend an academic year on the other side of the Atlantic.

Further information

EC Press Release IP/07/1335 of 14 September 2007 is available at <http://europa.eu/rapid>

Consultation on 'Schools for the 21st Century'

The EC has launched a consultation to address the development of school education in Europe. The EU supports member states with education and training policy. To that effect, education and training-related initiatives like the Lifelong Learning Programme already exist. However, the role of schools, despite their importance, has never really been addressed. The new consultation will identify those aspects of school education on which joint action at European Union level could be

effective in supporting member states with the modernisation of their systems. It looks at a range of issues of particular concern, including key competences, social inclusion and the role of teachers

Some of the questions asked in the consultation include: 'How can school systems contribute to supporting long-term sustainable economic growth in Europe?' 'How can school systems best respond to the need to promote equity, to respond to cultural diversity and to reduce early school leaving?' and 'How can school staff be trained and supported to meet the challenges they face?' Respondents are invited to identify what actions are necessary within their national contexts to ensure that schools deliver the quality of education needed in the 21st century; and to identify those aspects of school education on which co-operation at EU level could help to support member states. The consultation will close on the 15 October 2007.

Further information

The consultation document is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/school21/index_en.html

Completed responses should be sent by email only to the following address:

eac-schools-consult@ec.europa.eu

External Collaboration

Database to boost EU-Eastern European collaboration

A new database designed to boost co-operation between researchers from the EU and Eastern Europe has been launched by the EU-funded NIS-NEST (New and Emerging Science and Technology in the Newly Independent States) project. The online database includes information on research institutions, universities, companies and public organisations, as well as individual researchers, from Russia, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus and Eastern Europe. Visitors to the website can search for partners by research field, country or language.

New information is constantly being uploaded to the database, as more researchers and research groups add their details. In addition to contact details and fields of activity, the profiles featured on the site include details of prior experience in European and international research projects. It is hoped that the database will boost the participation of scientists from Eastern Europe in the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7).

Further information

Further details are available at: <http://researchers.nisnest.gr>

Latin America: success rates in FP6 and future perspectives

The success rates of Latin American countries in FP6 and the relative importance of participation in different components of FP6 (thematic, horizontal (including INCO) and international Marie Curie Actions) have been set out in a document published by the EC. In total, almost 500 Latin American teams are involved in different FP6 projects. The findings reveal some progress, but also illustrate the potential for quantitative and qualitative development.

In the run-up to the Vienna Summit, preparatory policy dialogue at senior officials and ministerial levels had confirmed the mutual interest in further developing the EU-LAC (Latin American and

Caribbean Countries) Knowledge Area. On 1-3 February 2006, EU-LAC Senior Officials Meeting on S&T Co-operation, Salzburg, Austria reiterated the commitment to strengthen and promote the EU-LAC Knowledge Area and recommends text for the Declaration at the forthcoming ALCUE (EU-LAC) Summit in Vienna. The Vienna Declaration adopted 12 May 2006 underscored this commitment. A number of specific support actions (SSA) in the last period of FP6 were specifically geared at strengthening Latin American participation in FP7. Among these are thematic and generic SSAs.

Further information

Further details on the FP6 SSA projects are available at:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm>

International Co-operation pages of DG Research website - Latin America are available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/index.cfm?lg=en&pg=latin-america-carib#1>

EC support for Influenza Research

Following the recent evaluation of the first FP7 Health Call, the EC will invite 11 projects with € 27 million EC funding to enter into contract negotiations. Collectively these projects will perform research into development of sophisticated new diagnostic methods; the search for innovative drug targets; model the spread of a possible pandemic and the effects of preventive measures, and the development of an easy to administer novel vaccines via nasal sprays. Several of the selected consortia also include research institutions from the affected regions in Asia. The UK will co-ordinate three of these projects.

The EC has now committed over €90 million to influenza research since 2001. The topics in the FP7 Work Programme build on the work undertaken under the previous Framework Programmes. This includes the FLUPAN FP5 project bringing together research teams from the UK, Italy, Norway and France to develop the first ever human candidate vaccine against the potentially deadly avian influenza H7N1 subtype. Preliminary results of the first clinical trial of this vaccine have shown that it is safe and well tolerated in healthy volunteers. Additionally the EC has published a new publication giving details of all 38 influenza research projects funded between 2001 and 2007.

Further information

EC Press release IP/07/1298 and EC Memo MEMO/07/348 of 11 September 2007 is available at:

<http://europa.eu/rapid>

Further details on Influenza Research (EU-funded projects between 2001 and 2007) is available from the EC's Infectious Diseases Website:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/poverty-diseases/index_en.html

Events and Awards

European Week of Regions and Cities

The fifth OPEN DAYS – European Week of Regions and Cities will be held between 8 and 11 October 2007 in Brussels. It is expected that about 5,000 regional policy experts and practitioners will attend. The OPEN DAYS are organised by the by the Committee of the Regions, the EC's Regional Policy Directorate General and about 100 regions, cities and other institutions and private partners from all over Europe.

With a central theme: 'Making it happen: regions deliver growth and jobs' there will be about 150 workshops and sessions that will focus on the new generation of cohesion policy programmes.. Between 2007 and 2013, the public and private funding made available through these programmes amounts to about €500 billion. The programme will also include a series of workshops and seminars on the international dimension of regional policy will be held, involving authorities from third countries and international organisations. An 'Investors Café' in the Committee of the Regions will provide for exhibitions, stands and networking opportunities around the themes of the event.

Further information

Is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/od2007/index.cfm

Galileo: launch conference for first calls

On 14 to 15 November 2007 the European GNSS Supervisory Authority (GSA) will host a two-day launch event for GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite Systems) activities under FP7. The event, which is entitled 'Growing GALILEO – New technologies, new applications, new benefits, new horizons', will be taking place in the Charlemagne Conference Centre, Brussels. The event is being held in order to highlight the funding opportunities that will be available when Galileo calls open in November. Registration will open on 1 October 2007.

Over the course of the two days there will be several opportunities to network and develop possible partnerships with other delegates. The first day of the conference, which will be a showcase for GALILEO technologies and applications, will include sessions on the implementation status of the Galileo programme, roundtables on user technologies and keynote speeches from industry. The second day, which will take the form of an FP7 information day, will include sessions on the first Galileo calls, sessions on the financial rules of participating in projects, best-practice tips in submitting proposals and networking sessions.

Further information

Full details are available from the GSA website: <http://ec.europa.eu/transport/gsa/index.htm>

European Sustainable Energy Week 2008

Following the success the 2007 European Union Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW), the 2008 event is already being planned. European Sustainable Energy Week will take place from 28 January to 1 February 2008 in Brussels and in other cities across Europe. In addition, the Commission will organise the Award Ceremony in order to honour the best partners of the Sustainable Energy Europe campaign.

The EUSEW is the main reference for sustainable energy issues in Europe. EUSEW events address topics that highlight the multi-sectoral nature of sustainable energy development and stress the need for everyone to work together towards a common goal; from renewable energy sources to energy efficiency, from EU policy to local action, from distributed energy to planning, from technologies to markets, from legislation to behaviour to education, from buildings to transport. Registration will open on 1 October 2007. In the meantime, it is possible to create an account on the EUSEW website, and you will then receive information and updates regarding the EUSEW 2008.

Further information

Further information and registration is available at: <http://www.eusew.eu>

EastWest Institute organises fifth Worldwide Security Conference

The EastWest Institute (EWI), in co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the World Customs Organisation, is organising the fifth Worldwide Security Conference in Brussels. This event is free of charge and will take place on 19 to 21 February 2008. Registration opens 1 November 2007. The conference brings together government, business and civil society leaders from around the world to discuss the challenge of enhancing co-operation to fight terrorism and violent extremism.

The conference will examine, in a global context, a broad range of views on where the terrorist threat is going, how to deal with and respond to violent extremism and the responsibility of business, governments and people in finding ways to face the challenge. On the third day of the conference a special session will focus on weapons of mass destruction. EWI describes the conference as a 'centre-piece of an ambitious and pioneering initiative, the EWI Worldwide Security Network, which works to build a global track two framework to counter security threats and bridge current divides between the new East and the West.' EWI's network aims to build upon strong individual and institutional structures which already exist in order to create an effective and overarching framework.

Further information

Further information on the conference is available at: <http://www.ewi.info/pdf/Attachments87.gif>

Further information about EWI is available at: <http://www.ewi.info>

Manufuture Conference 2007

The 2007 Manufuture Conference will be taking place in Porto, Portugal, on 2 to 4 December 2007. The title of the conference, which is taking place under the Portuguese Presidency of the EU, is 'Constructing a Sustainably Competitive Europe'. This is the fifth in the series of annual Manufuture conferences, with the event last year taking place in Tampere, Finland. Manufuture is the European Technology Platform on future manufacturing technologies.

The event will discuss the future of manufacturing in Europe and the implementation of Manufuture in FP7. There will be a series of parallel sessions covering the following topics: The challenges for European High Tech sectors; the transformation of mature manufacturing sectors; the promotion of new companies/ sectors in emerging scientific and technological areas; sustainability in manufacturing; key issues in ICT for manufacturing; research and training for innovation; raising the RTD intensity of European industry; and East / West synergies. The event will be attended by major stakeholders from academia, industry, government and research institutes. Speakers at the event include Belmiro de Azevedo, the President of Manufuture and Christos Tokamanis from the EC.

Further information

Full details of the event including registration are available at: <http://manufuture2007.inescporto.pt>

The Manufuture Technology Platform website is available at: <http://www.manufuture.org/>

European forum on philanthropy and research funding

On 4 December 2007, a 'European forum for philanthropy and research funding' will be launched in Brussels. Those interested in this area are invited to submit an expression of interest. The launch of the forum follows several efforts to identify and review good practice in this area, most notably the establishment of an expert group in early 2006. The new forum will be launched under the leadership of the European Foundation Centre (EFC). It is intended to act as a platform to promote mutual learning, review best practices and improve synergies and collaboration.

The conference will debate the role of philanthropy in funding European research, and how the Forum will support this effort. Participants will discuss four key issues: the research funding policies of philanthropic organisations; the legal, regulatory and fiscal issues relating to donors and philanthropic organisations; governance and ethical issues relating to philanthropic support of research; and fundraising by universities from philanthropic sources.

Further information

The European forum on philanthropy and research funding website, which includes further details on the conference, is available at:

<http://www.efc.be/projects/eu/efprf/>

The EC website on philanthropy for research is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/policy/philanthropy_en.htm

New Publications and Online Resources

Updated web pages on FP7 Advisory Groups

The EC recently updated its pages on FP7 advisory groups, adding new documents and information. The website lists all of the members of the advisory groups for the various themes of FP7, including all of the Co-operation themes, People and most of the Capacities programme. The EC has an advisory group for almost all areas of FP7, which are groups made up of experts from industry and academia and other stakeholder organisations. They advise the EC on the overall strategy that should be followed for that particular area of research, recommending the priorities that should receive funding.

For some areas additional documents are included next to the list of members on the website. For the Transport theme, for example, the advisory group has published a report on their input into the draft 2008 Work Programme. For some, such as the People theme, the advisory group has just published the report of their previous meeting. This page will be updated regularly and any new information or reports of meetings will be posted on it. For example, the list of members for the advisory group for the Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Biotechnology theme in the Co-operation part of FP7 has recently been published.

Further information

The web pages are available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index_en.cfm?pg=eag

EFSA launches new website

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has launched its new-look website after a redesign. EFSA is the EU's risk assessment body for food and feed safety. It aims to provide independent scientific advice and clear communication on existing and emerging risks. The website has been completely rebuilt to increase its usability for online audiences and forms a key part in EFSA's online communication strategy. It receives around 115,000 visits per month and is a key resource for those working in the areas of food and feed safety in Europe.

The website has several new features including a new layout for simpler navigation, more graphics and increased use of the colour palette and topic and output driven content, which is more user-friendly. There is an events calendar section for important events and meetings. All of the ESFA meetings are highlighted in the same place in this section. The website also contains a documents section, which is searchable by title, date and category. ESFA opinions are included online and can be searched by sub-category, date and title. An ESFA staff directory is also provided on the website. During 2007 and 2008, EFSA will also launch a new search engine and increase use of multimedia. Anyone that is interested is encouraged to provide comments and feedback to EFSA on their new website.

Further information

The new ESFA website is available at: <http://www.efsa.europa.eu>

Comments on the website should be submitted to: sarah.weatherley@efsa.europa.eu

New FP7 energy and environment research websites

Cordis has recently launched two new research websites; one for FP7 energy research and one for FP7 environmental research. Both websites, although covering different areas of FP7 and therefore containing different content, follow broadly the same structure and format. They include brief introductions summarising why the EU is funding research in this field, what the objectives are, and what will be funded. They both also have an 'about energy' and 'about environment' page explaining in more detail the areas that will be funded as well as a recent news section, which highlights all of the recent related articles that have been published via Cordis.

An 'events' page gives details of important relevant conferences (information on past events, with downloadable agenda and presentations, where available, is also available). A library of further documents, publications and newsletters such as legislative documents, work programmes, FP7 official documents, and other publications is also available on both websites. Finally, a 'useful links' section has additional information on these fields of research, policy documents and initiatives, EU institutions and services and many more. Both websites will be updated regularly.

Further information

The CORDIS FP7 Energy website is at:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/energy/home_en.html

The CORDIS FP7 Environment website is at:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/environment/home_en.html

UK Science Insight

Science Insight is the British Council's monthly science news bulletin covering the latest developments and forthcoming events in science, engineering and technology in the UK.

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

CORDIS

CORDIS is the official Community, Research and Development Information Service for science, research and innovation and is provided by the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. The interactive website offers daily news and detailed information on the EU's research programmes.

URL: <http://cordis.europa.eu>

IGLO Project Search

The IGLO Project Service offers a forum for publishing and disseminating details of proposed FP7 projects and/or research skills offered. The service enables 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 EU treaties and recent copies of the Official Journal of the European Communities (OJ). The OJ, published daily in 23 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 on EUR-LEX).

URL: EUR-LEX <http://www.europa.eu/eur-lex>

Official Journals C and L <http://www.europa.eu/eur-lex/en/oj>

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

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>

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://europa.eu/rapid>

cubed... from the British Council

cubed, the monthly webzine from the British Council discusses the science that's shaping our society and bringing a new dimension to everyday life. It brings the latest innovations in fashion and music, design and digital, film and life, and the products and ideas that will change our world.

Visit: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/science-cubed.htm>

GLOSSARY

Capacities

'Capacities' is the fourth Specific Programme of FP7 and is worth over €4 billion from 2007 to 2013. It aims to enhance research capacities throughout Europe and ensure their optimal use. It is made up of the following broad areas: Research Infrastructures; Research for the Benefit of SMEs; Regions of Knowledge; Research Potential for the Benefit of Convergence Regions; Science in Society; Support to Coherent Development of Research Policies; and International Cooperation.

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/capacities>

CIP

The Competitiveness and Innovation Programme will run from 2007 to 2013. With a budget of €3.6 billion, it is made up of three Specific Programmes: the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme; the ICT Policy Support Programme; and the Intelligent Energy-Europe Programme

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/cip>

Cooperation

Cooperation is the first Specific Programme of FP7. Worth over €30 billion between 2007 and 2013, it is made up of ten thematic areas: Health; Food, Agriculture, Fisheries and Biotechnology; Information Communications Technology (ICT); Nanosciences, Nanomaterials, Materials and New Production Technologies; Energy; Environment; Transport; Socio-economic Sciences and the Humanities; Space; and Security.

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/cooperation>

COST

European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research is a framework for scientific and technical cooperation, allowing the co-ordination of national research on a European level.

<http://www.cost.esf.org>

'Council'

'Council' refers to the 'Council of Ministers', the principal 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://consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.ASP?lang=en

EC

The European Commission - made up of 27 commissioners nominated by the member states - both initiates proposals for EU legislation and executes EU policies and actions.

<http://ec.europa.eu>

EP

The European Parliament 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.europa.eu/news/public/default_en.htm

ERA

European Research Area. On 18 January 2000 the EC issued a communication entitled 'Towards a European Research Area' that proposed ways in which research in Europe could be more effectively organised and co-ordinated.

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/era>

ERC

The European Research Council, which is the Ideas Specific Programme of FP7, is worth over €7 billion from 2007 to 2013. New to the Framework Programme, the ERC will fund investigator-led, frontier research. It consists of two grant schemes, the Starting Independent Researcher Grant and the Advanced Investigator Grant.

<http://erc.europa.eu>

ESA

The European Space Agency is responsible for designing and developing the European space programme. The Agency's projects are designed to find out more about the Earth, its immediate space environment, the solar system and the universe, as well as to develop satellite-based technologies and services, and to promote European industries.

<http://www.esa.int>

ESC

The 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://eesc.europa.eu>

ESF

European Science Foundation

<http://www.esf.org>

ESF

The European Social Fund, part of the EU's Structural Funds

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf2000/index_en.html

ETP

European Technology Platforms are stakeholder groupings, led by industry, that help to define research and development priorities, timeframes and action plans on a number of strategically important issues.

http://ec.europa.eu/research/energy/nn/nn_rt/nn_rt_hlg/article_1262_en.htm

Euratom

The European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) was set up in 1957 and is legally separate from the European Community. Euratom will have €2.7 billion from FP7 to fund nuclear research and training activities between 2007 and 2011.

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/euratom>

Eureka

Eureka is a Europe-wide network for industrial research and development.

<http://www.eureka.be>

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 then running from 2002 to 2006, and FP7 running from 2007 to 2013. The budget for FP7 is over €50 billion.

Further information on the thematic and horizontal programme composition of FP6 is available at: <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp6>

Further information on FP7 can be found at: <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7>

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.

ICPC

An International Cooperation Partner Country is an economically less developed country, which is not an EU member state or associated state. ICPC partners can participate in FP7 projects and receive funding.

Ideas

'Ideas', is the second Specific Programme of FP7 worth over €7 billion from 2007 to 2013. New to the Framework Programme, 'Ideas' will fund investigator-led, frontier research. It is implemented through the European Research Council and consists of two grant schemes, the Starting Independent Researcher Grant and the Advanced Investigator Grant.

<http://erc.europa.eu>

ITRE

The European Parliament Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy (FP7)

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/itre_home_en.htm

JRC

The EC's Joint Research Centre acts 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>

LLP

The Lifelong Learning Programme is made up of four pillars: the Comenius programme for pupils, teachers and schools; the Erasmus programme for students, scholars, professors and universities; the Leonardo da Vinci programme for apprentices, workers and employees; and the Grundtvig programme for adults and teachers and related organisations. There is also a transversal programme (for policy development, languages, information and communication technology) and the Jean Monet programme (dealing with issues relating to European integration, European institutions and associations in the fields of education and training).

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/static/en/llp/index_en.htm

Marie Curie Actions

The Marie Curie Actions make up 'People', the third Specific Programme of FP7, which is worth over €4 billion during the period from 2007 to 2013. The Marie Curie Actions aim to improve the quality of human resources in European research through training and trans-national mobility of researchers.

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/people/home_en.html

MEDIA

The MEDIA Programme aims to strengthen the competitiveness of the European audiovisual industry.

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/avpolicy/media/index_en.html

NATO

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

<http://www.nato.int>

People

The third Specific Programme of FP7 is worth over €4 billion during the period from 2007 to 2013. Made up of the Marie Curie Actions, it aims to improve the quality of human resources in European research through training and trans-national mobility of researchers.

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/people/home_en.html

RTD

Research and Technological Development

SICA

Specific International Cooperation Actions are FP7 call topics where a partner from an ICPC country has to be involved.

SME

Small and medium sized enterprises

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/sme_definition/index_en.htm

Specific Programme

FP7 is made up of seven Specific Programmes: Cooperation; Ideas (implemented through the European Research Council); People (the Marie Curie Actions); Capacities; the Joint Research Centre (JRC); Euratom and the JRC implementing Euratom.

SSH

Socio-economic Sciences and the Humanities is the eighth theme of the FP7 Cooperation Specific Programme.

Treaty of Amsterdam

The Treaty of Amsterdam was signed in October 1997 and entered into force on 1 May 1999.

<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/en/treaties/index.htm>

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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