

# European RTD Insight

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## News on EU Research Policy and Programmes

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## EU Policy

### European economic recovery plan

The EC has adopted an economic recovery plan in response to the global financial crisis, which was then approved at the European Council meeting on 11-12 December 2008. The aim of the package, which amounts in total to around €200 billion, is to restore consumer and business confidence, restart lending, and stimulate investment in the EU's economies. The plan includes shorter-term stimulus actions and longer-term actions including those related to the four priority areas of the Lisbon Strategy – people, business, infrastructure and energy, and research and innovation. On 26 November 2008, Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for Science and Research, also gave a speech to the British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium focussed on the economic situation. His speech was entitled 'Knowledge based growth: keeping on course in turbulent waters'.

The actions include a simplification of the State Aid decision making processes and a temporary easing of the access to finance for companies, which should be channelled into actions including research, innovation and training. Noting a need to continue investment in research infrastructures the communication states that the European Investment Bank will accelerate the implementation of the Risk Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF), something which can be used to assist with infrastructure costs. To help counter the effects of potential cuts in both public and private research and development investments which are required to increase public-private partnerships. The EC, therefore, proposes three Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs) on European green cars, energy efficient buildings, and a 'factories of the future' initiative to help manufacturers integrate new enabling technologies.

### **Further information**

The EC 'European Economic Recovery Plan' is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_barroso/president/pdf/Comm\\_20081126.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/president/pdf/Comm_20081126.pdf)

EC Press Release SPEECH/08/655 of 27 November 2008 is available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid/>

## **Research policy and the global financial crisis**

What will be the consequences of the global financial crisis on research and development (R&D) spending? Will increased R&D spending help to establish sustainable growth and future competitiveness? Will the crisis affect efforts to create a knowledge society and a low carbon economy? In response to the crisis, the Commission recently organised a seminar to discuss possible impacts on European Research Policy. Academics and economists from several sectors met to discuss these issues in detail.

The experts felt that effects of the crisis on R&D are likely to be complex. In the short term, R&D spending is likely to decrease. Large companies are expected to focus on core business and continue to fund R&D spending in these areas. The best researchers in the best programmes and locations are not likely to suffer. However, small, specialised firms that play an increasingly important role in R&D are likely to be hit hard by the crisis. Europe will remain a good environment for attracting researchers but could lose competitiveness due to exchange rates.

The experts recommended that there be increased co-operation between business and universities in R&D. Small business that are most affected should be supported as much as possible. There should be a focus on green and other socially important R&D issues and more incentives for national governments to invest in R&D. Despite the crisis, it is expected that Europe will continue to be an attractive location for researchers, academics and students.

### **Further information**

The full conference report is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/events-22\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/events-22_en.html)

## **Clean Sky JTI pre-announces new calls**

The EC has just published the pre-announcement of the 2009 calls for the Clean Sky Joint Technology Initiative. This is a public-private partnership in the field of aeronautics and air transport. Both industry and the EC will be providing the funding to the initiative. The pre-announcements contain details of the first calls. There are around 90 calls that will be opening throughout the early part of 2009. Each Integrated Technology Demonstrator (ITD) will have its own calls and the details of these are given in the pre-announcements. In addition to a reference and short description of what is required for each, the planned budget of the projects and the amount of financing that will come from the Clean Sky Joint Undertaking for each is also included.

It is the EC's intention to publish these in advance so that organisations can start to build consortia in advance of the call opening date. The calls themselves will only be open for a short period, usually around four to six weeks. The dates by which the EC expects the work on projects to commence is also included in the pre-announcements. In many cases this is often three months after the call opening date.

### **Further information**

The details of the topics called for under each call are available at:

[http://www.cleansky.eu/index.php?arbo\\_id=52&item\\_id=16](http://www.cleansky.eu/index.php?arbo_id=52&item_id=16)

The Clean Sky website is available at:

[http://www.cleansky.eu/index.php?arbo\\_id=50&set\\_language=en](http://www.cleansky.eu/index.php?arbo_id=50&set_language=en)

## Council conclusions on joint programming and international co-operation

The Council adopted the EC's proposal for both joint programming and international co-operation during a recent Competitiveness Council meeting in Brussels. However, it did not adopt the EC's proposal for research infrastructures. Alongside the EP, Council is one of the two main decision-making bodies of the EU. When the EC proposes a new programme or initiative it needs to be approved by Council. On the subject of joint programming, the Council accepted that there is now a need for a process for Member States to work together more coherently on issues of global societal importance. The Council conclusions state that a pilot joint programme should take place on the subject of Alzheimer's research.

Council also reached agreement adopting concrete measures for the EU partnership for international co-operation. This includes providing a mandate for CREST, which is the EU's scientific and technical research committee, to set up a 'Strategic Forum for International S&T Co-operation'. Council did not reach an agreement, however, on the subject of research infrastructures, which will now need to be reached in the early part of the Czech Presidency of the EU, which begins on 1 January 2009.

### Further information

The full Council Conclusions, which contains details of the decisions taken on joint programming, international co-operation and research infrastructures, are available at:

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/intm/104497.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/intm/104497.pdf)

## EC communication on GMES

The EC has recently published a communication entitled, 'Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES): we care for a safer planet', which is being discussed in EP. The GMES initiative is concerned with implementing an Earth observation service system made up of satellites and sensors to monitor environment and support the security of citizens. It will deliver many services of public interest, including maps for emergency operations, the monitoring of climate change parameters or the chemical composition of the atmosphere, for example.

The pre-operational phase of GMES services was launched in 2008. In this context substantial R&D effort has already been invested on earth observation by the EU, ESA and Member States, in order to develop infrastructure and pre-operational services. In 2011 it will be technically feasible to move into the operational phase. The EC is responsible for the overall co-ordination of GMES, but certain other European organisations such as ESA and the European Environment Agency will also be involved in much of the implementation.

### Further information

Further information about GMES is available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/gmes/overview.htm>

## New technology platform on geological disposal

A feasibility assessment has been undertaken for a Technology Platform which would provide a European framework for networking and cooperation in the context of radioactive waste disposal in the EU. The project will be called the Implementing Geological Disposal Technology Platform (IGD-TP) and it will have three main challenges. The first challenge will be scientific, for example, to prepare and review the overall safety case for a geological repository. Secondly, there is the technological need to move from a research and development phase into an implementation phase on an industrial scale. Finally, there are the social and political aspects and the requirement to involve all the relevant stakeholders.

The feasibility study was conducted by the FP6 CARD project (Co-ordination Action for the co-ordination, research, development and demonstration, priorities and strategies for geological disposal

of radioactive wastes), which comprises organisations from the following ten countries: Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK. The organisations are to submit an expression of interest in the European Technology Platform, there will then be a draft Vision Document released in January. This new Technology Platform was announced at the Euradwaste 2008 conference, which brought together, researchers, radioactive waste management organisations, policymakers, regulators, and engineers to discuss the underground disposal of spent nuclear fuel.

#### **Further information**

Further information on the CARD project is available at: <http://www.cardproject.eu>

Information on the Euradwaste conference is available at: [http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/euratom-fission/euradwaste2008\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/euratom-fission/euradwaste2008_en.html)

### **Animal cloning survey results published**

The EC has presented the findings from a Flash Eurobarometer study on animal cloning conducted in July 2008 to assess European citizens' attitudes towards animal cloning. The results demonstrate that there is a good degree of knowledge about what animal cloning actually is, but that those questioned have a fairly negative perception of animal cloning for food production. The survey indicated that 81 per cent believe that the long-term effects of animal cloning on nature are unknown, whilst 84 per cent think not enough is known about the health and safety effects of using cloned animals for food.

However, 41 per cent approved if it could be used to protect animals against disease, and 44 per cent to preserve endangered species. Out of those believing that there are potential benefits of animal cloning 54 per cent thought it may assist in solving the worldwide food problems. But cynicism also seemed widespread with half the respondents believing animal cloning would ultimately only benefit the food industry and not consumers or farmers.

#### **Further information**

Further information, including the report, can be found at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/resources/publications\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/resources/publications_en.htm)

### **ICT research and in the current financial climate**

A speech from Viviane Reding, European Commissioner for Information Society and Media, opened the recent ICT conference 'I's to the future: invention – innovation – impact' held in Lyon between 25-27 November 2008. In her speech, the Commissioner focused on the role which ICT had to play in the current global financial situation and emphasised that there were some essential lessons to be learned from the crisis. Firstly, the Commissioner identified the importance of reinforcing investment in future capacities to innovate and grow, despite the temptation to cut public and private R&D spending in the current climate. Secondly, she noted that solid and sustainable businesses are those which produce, 'real high-value goods and services responding to real market needs.' Finally, she emphasised the strength and stability to be gained from acting as a united Europe.

Looking to the future, the Commissioner went on to outline five steps she considered crucial in order to ensure ICT's contribution to future economic stability: increasing the intensity of ICT research, particularly in areas in which European leadership can be strengthened; investing better by prioritizing a small number of key areas, such as the future internet; overcoming fragmentation by co-ordinating efforts and exploiting synergies; unblocking the innovative potential of Europe's single market; and making Europe a launch pad for high-tech start-ups.

### **Further information**

Further details of the Lyon conference, including a full transcript of Commissioner Reding's speech, is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/events/ict/2008/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/ict/2008/index_en.htm)

## **Scientific guidelines for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's released**

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) has recently published a revised set of scientific guidelines, which are aimed at assisting companies in developing medicines to treat Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. These guidelines have been published to take account of recent scientific progress in the understanding of these two diseases. There have recently been advances in clinical science, physiopathology and molecular biology, which have stimulated new interest in the development of more effective symptomatic or disease modifying treatments. These are treatments that may prevent the emergence of the disease, or slow down its progression. The companies developing these new medicines require guidance on the appropriate clinical trial designs.

The guidelines will come into effect on 1 February 2009 and are designed to help companies submit valid marketing authorisation applications for the medicines. They are prepared by the EMA's expert bodies, in this particular case the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP), and further relevant working parties, in further consultation with other EMA stakeholders.

### **Further information**

Further information is available at: <http://www.emea.europa.eu/pdfs/human/ewp/36992905en.pdf>

## **New flight path for ACARE**

The Advisory Council for Aeronautics Research in Europe (ACARE), which is the European Technology Platform for the aeronautics sector, has just published an addendum to its Strategic Research Agenda (SRA). The SRA sets out the strategic direction of the Technology Platform until 2020 and beyond. It was originally developed in the period 2000 - 2004 but given the current volatility in global markets, recessions and the vast fluctuations in both oil prices and exchange rates over the last three to four years, it was felt that new additions were needed in order to help meet these new challenges.

The revised SRA was launched during the Aviation Summit in Bordeaux in November as part of the French Presidency of the EU. The following four new priorities have been added: 'The environment'; 'alternative fuels'; 'security'; and 'international collaboration'. Under the environment priority, the SRA will focus on improving both global climate change and local noise and air quality. The 'alternative fuels' priority will look at 'drop-in' fuels that can be added to current fossil fuels. The 'security' priority is concerned with developing better and less intrusive security systems. Finally, the fourth new priority on 'international collaboration' is concerned with, amongst other things, setting worldwide standards and carrying out research globally.

### **Further information**

The addendum to the Strategic Research Agenda is available at: [http://www.acare4europe.org/docs/ACARE\\_2008\\_Addendum.pdf](http://www.acare4europe.org/docs/ACARE_2008_Addendum.pdf)

The ACARE website is available at: <http://www.acare4europe.org/>

The EC's pages on European Technology Platforms are available at: [http://cordis.europa.eu/technology-platforms/home\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/technology-platforms/home_en.html)

## First EIT stakeholder conference takes place

The EC has published the slides that were presented at the first EIT (European Institute of Innovation and Technology) stakeholder conference held in Bratislava on 24 November. The conference aimed to bring together stakeholders to discuss the format and scope of the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). The conclusions from the discussions will feed into the development of the first EIT KIC call. The timeline for the first call was presented at the event. The call is likely to open in April 2009 and have a closing date of June 2009. The KICs will then be selected in January 2010.

The following four keynote presentations are now available: a presentation on 'Sustainable Growth and Competitiveness' by Dr Martin Schuurmans, Chairman of the EIT Governing Board; a presentation on 'Education and Innovation' by Prof Michael Kelly, University of Cambridge; a presentation entitled 'Industry - University with relevance to innovation', by Prof Jan-Eric Sundgren, Senior Vice-President, Volvo; and a presentation on 'Entrepreneurship in Innovation', by Dr Alexander Von Gabain, Member of EIT Governing Board.

### Further information

The EIT conference website is available at: <http://eit.teamwork.fr/>

The presentations are available directly at: [http://ec.europa.eu/eit/seminars\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/eit/seminars_en.htm)

The EIT website is available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/eit/>

## 2008 EUROCORES themes - call results

The European Science Foundation (ESF) EUROCORES (European Collaborative Research) scheme aims at promoting collaborative research, networking and dissemination while targeting broad and complex topics of research across all scientific domains. The scheme provides a flexible framework, which allows national basic research funding organisations to support top class European research in and across all scientific areas. It stimulates research that is of the highest quality, innovative, investigator-driven, collaborative and multidisciplinary. The calls for themes are the first step to develop new EUROCORES Programmes. Following a thorough peer review process, a number of the submitted proposals are selected for further development.

Pending the viability of these selected themes, in terms of adequate interest and national funding commitment, these ideas will be launched into new EUROCORES Programmes. Once an agreement is reached with participating funding organisations, the ESF publishes a call for proposals for each EUROCORES programme inviting collaborative research project proposals from the scientific community. Following the 2008 call launched in March, 38 proposals were received and six of them have been selected for development into new programmes. Assuming adequate national funding commitment, the appropriate calls for outline proposals will be published around 20 December 2008.

### Further information

For further information on the EUROCORES scheme and the selected proposals, please go to:

<http://www.esf.org/index.php?id=50>

## First general assembly of the sustainable nuclear energy technology platform

On 26 November 2008, the Sustainable Nuclear Energy Technology Platform (SNE-TP) held its first General Assembly. SNE-TP aims at playing a key role in co-ordinating and facilitating fission research at the European level. It seeks to support the role of nuclear energy in Europe's energy mix, its contributions to the security and competitiveness of energy supply, as well as to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The Assembly featured sessions on the SET (Strategic Energy Technology) Plan and implementation of R&D for nuclear fission. The SET Plan, an EC

Communication published in November 2007, stresses the need to realise the longer term vision of a low carbon society by 2050

However, the main focus was the presentation of the platform's Strategic Research Agenda (SRA). The document was reviewed several times by a large community of SNE-TP actors including FP6 project co-ordinators, and organised to reflect the three different technological challenges and cross-cutting issues. These challenges include: maintaining the safety and competitiveness of today's technologies; developing a new generation of more sustainable reactor technologies (Generation IV Fast Neutron Reactors with closed fuel cells); and developing new applications of nuclear power such as the industrial scale production of hydrogen, desalination or other industrial process heat applications.

#### **Further information**

Detailed information about SNE-TP is available at: <http://www.snetp.eu>

### **Strategy to deal with alien threats to biodiversity**

A series of policy options for developing a strategy to deal with species from abroad threatening European biodiversity have been put forward in a Communication from the EC. Invasive species are a major threat to native plants and animals in Europe. One such example is the Harlequin ladybird, originally from Asia, which poses a deadly threat to native ladybirds in the UK, as well as to butterflies and other insects. Invasive species can disrupt local flora and fauna and cause considerable damage to nature and human health. Controlling invasive species and repairing the damage they do is estimated to cost European economies at least €12 billion each year. Although some EU countries have legislation to protect their national biodiversity, there is no harmonised approach across the EU.

The Communication proposes a number of policy options for a co-ordinated approach and measures that can be put in place immediately, including a Europe-wide early warning system to report new and emerging species. Feedback from stakeholders and other EU institutions will be taken into account by the Commission in finalising its proposal for an EU strategy which it intends to bring forward in 2010.

#### **Further Information**

EC press release, IP/08/1890 of 5 December 2008 is available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid/>

For more information on DG Environments' work, visit:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/index_en.htm)

### **The global health security initiative (GHSI)**

The EC recently hosted the ninth ministerial meeting of the Global Health Security Initiative (GHSI) in Brussels. The Global Health Security Initiative (GHSI) was established in 2001 in response to the 11 September terrorist attacks and the anthrax letters in the US. Global health security includes generic preparedness and response to encounter public health crises, pandemic influenza as well as threats caused by chemical, radio-nuclear and bioterrorism agents (by accidental or deliberate release). Health security is an important issue in both the European security and health agendas. The European Health Security Committee has a multi-annual work plan and links closely with Member State authorities to examine health security related matters and develop stronger collaboration at the European level.

This year's GHSI ministerial meeting focused on three key areas: research and development of drugs and vaccines against health threats; border measures and virus sample sharing for influenza pandemic preparedness; and crisis communication mechanisms among GHSI members. A

communiqué setting out the achievements of the GHSI to date and defining future areas of joint work to promote collective health security was agreed and published.

#### **Further information**

EC Press Release IP/08/1892 of 5 December 2008 and MEMO/08/769 of 5 December 2008 are available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid>

Information also available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_threats/health\\_security/health\\_security\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/health_security/health_security_en.htm)

### **EC funds rail infrastructure projects to tune of €1.7 billion**

The EC has recently funded 11 rail infrastructure projects under the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) programme. The confirmation of funding for these projects was announced recently in Verona during a high-level conference to discuss the future of TEN-T policy. The 11 new projects concern important railway works in Italy, Austria, France, Germany, Slovenia and Hungary. The total value of the projects amounts to around €1.7 billion.

Some of the projects were actual improvements to railway lines, such as the Lyon to Turin base tunnel, whilst others, such as the cross-border section between Trieste in Italy and Divača in Slovenia, were for designs and studies. The EC hopes that the projects will also have two-fold economic benefits for the EU. EC Vice-President and Commissioner for Transport, Antonio Tajani, said of the projects, 'Investing in key European transport infrastructure today is a demonstration that the European Union can respond to the economic crisis, in the short term by accelerating infrastructure projects, and in the medium term by creating the core rail network that will sustain Europe's competitiveness and meet the challenge of climate change'.

#### **Further information**

EC Press Release IP/08/1891 of 5 December 2008 is available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid>

The EC pages on the TEN-T programme are available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/ten/transport/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/ten/transport/index_en.htm)

### **EC launches debate on bio-waste management**

About one third of municipal waste in the EU comes from bio-waste: biodegradable garden, kitchen, and food waste. This has major potential impacts on the environment since when bio-waste is deposited in landfill sites it emits methane – this extremely harmful greenhouse gas is 23 times stronger than carbon dioxide. Currently there are substantial regulations related to waste management within Europe, but further improvements may be possible since bio-waste can be used for renewable energy or recycling therefore helping to combat climate change. The EC recently presented a discussion paper on bio-waste in the EU.

This EC Green Paper summarises current bio-waste management methods, and looks at their benefits and drawbacks in terms of the environment, and economic and social issues. It also looks at the impact of existing regulations, further opportunities, and considers the need for further measures and legislation. This could potentially direct more waste towards recycling and energy recovery. Another important issue is whether action is best on a local, national or EU level. In the consultation, stakeholders are asked for evidence for their respective views. After this consultation, the next step will be an impact assessment of possible new legislation in 2009, with potential legislation being adopted in 2010.

#### **Further Information**

EC Press Release IP/08/1879 of 3 December 2008 is available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid>

To participate in the consultation, and for further details, see:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/compost>

## Research News

### Converting sunlight into electricity

Scientists from the EC-financed project called 'Fullspectrum' have developed photovoltaic (PV) multi-junction (MJ) solar cells that are able to convert 39.7 per cent of the energy of sunlight into electricity. This is the highest percentage ever reached in Europe, according to researchers after their final workshop held in Spain.

The large collaborative project involves 19 European public and industrial research centres from seven EU Member States, as well as Russia and Switzerland. Co-ordinated by the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Instituto de Energía Solar, the project started in November 2003 with an overall budget of €14.7 million of which the EC financed €8.4m. Energy research is a constituent of the EU's Energy and Climate Package. One of its ambitious targets for 2020 is to increase the level of renewable energy in the EU's overall final energy consumption by up to twenty per cent. To reach this goal the EC started the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan.

#### Further Information

Details of the project are available at:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?pg=newsalert&lg=en&year=2008&na=na-201108>

### Smart fabric that helps prevent RSI

Researchers working on the EU-funded 'ConText' project have developed a smart fabric that can monitor muscular overload and help prevent RSI (repetitive strain injury). The project, which receives €2.3 million of EU funding, aimed to establish a system whereby various sensors are integrated into textiles to be used in continuous monitoring of individuals. ConText project partners have explained that the contactless sensors would be used to measure electromyography and electrocardiography signals. The sensors would be incorporated into textiles so as to generate a prototype of a wearable vest. Bringing together textile and signal processing of the myographic signals will play a key role in making personalised health applications a reality.

Over its 30 month duration, the project focused on resolving three issues: to use an innovative sensor requiring sophisticated electronics to be located in the clothing, to measure muscle contraction, and to investigate how muscle contraction could be used as a predictor of stress. While the ConText team succeeded in moving forward with the design of an RSI vest, the partners are now working on enhancing its reliability.

#### Further information

Further information about the ConText project is available at:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/research/infocentre/article\\_en.cfm?id=/research/headlines/news/article\\_08\\_11\\_26\\_en.html&item=Infocentre&artid=9094](http://ec.europa.eu/research/infocentre/article_en.cfm?id=/research/headlines/news/article_08_11_26_en.html&item=Infocentre&artid=9094)

## **(Very) Cold Mountain**

An interdisciplinary research team comprised of representatives from Australia, China, Germany, Japan the UK and the US has started work on the 'Antartica's Gamburtsev Province' (AGAP) project. The project, part of the International Polar Year (IPY) 2007-2009 programme, will explore the Gamburtsev mountains, covered by 600 metre-thick ice and thus hitherto unseen by humans. Dr Fausto Ferraccioli from the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), a participant in the project, highlighted the pioneering nature of the research: 'This is both an exciting and challenging project. It is a bit like preparing to go to Mars. For two and a half months, our international teams will pool their resources and expertise to survey mountains the size of the Alps buried under the ice sheet that currently defy any reasonable geological explanation.'

In addition, the team will also be analysing ancient ice that is over 1.2 million years old, with the expectation that this will reveal new details of the history of climate change. It is hoped that these and other activities, such as the investigation of subglacial lakes, will help to ascertain what geological changes took place in the past and what this can tell us about how the region will be affected in the future.

### **Further information**

Further information can be found at: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/infocentre/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/infocentre/index_en.cfm)

## **Key findings of research into age and retirement unveiled**

An ageing population is one of the most challenging trends facing Europe today. A large scale research project into the issues surrounding age and retirement in Europe is being funded by FP7, having also received funding previously in FP5 and FP6. The 'Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe' (SHARE) is building an interdisciplinary, cross-national database on health, socio-economic status and social and family networks of more than 35,000 individuals aged 50 or over in 15 European countries. It helps policy makers to understand how the European population is changing, and to make appropriate policy decisions on such issues as pensions, health care and labour market policies.

The second detailed results of the survey were recently unveiled, presenting some surprising results. The survey found that women tend to live longer, especially in Southern Europe. However, men are less likely to get sick, especially in Northern Europe. SHARE found a strong correlation between socio-economic status and health, and identified that geriatric care needs improvement in all countries surveyed. Regarding employment, the survey found that government programmes to prevent ill health pay for themselves in terms of production increases, and that pleasant work conditions support later retirement. These and other key findings were unveiled at a conference in Brussels in November.

### **Further information**

Detailed survey results and more information on the SHARE project: <http://www.share-project.org>

## **Dogs help researchers solve human genetic disorders puzzle**

An EU funded research project 'LUPA' brings together researchers from 12 European countries. The researchers will collect 10,000 DNA samples and genome wide association (GWA) data from purebred dogs that are either healthy or suffering from diseases that also affect humans. Dogs are less genetically complex but they suffer from the same diseases as humans. The dog population is made up of 400 purebred breeds, with each breed being a genetic isolate with unique characteristics. Inbreeding causes lower genetic complexity. The researchers will compare the genome of affected dogs to the genome of healthy ones of the same breed.

The project targets the genes responsible for at least 18 disorders and different breeds will be used for different diseases. Golden Retriever and German Shepherd for cancer; the English Cocker Spaniel for aggressive behaviour; the Doberman and Boxer for hypothyroid diseases; Great Danes and the Irish Wolfhound for cardio-vascular disorders group; and the Greyhound and Collie for monogenic disorders. The analysis of the genome of the affected dogs will aid the researchers to identify the genes involved in the mechanisms of these diseases.

#### **Further information**

Further information is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/headlines/news/article\\_08\\_12\\_15\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/headlines/news/article_08_12_15_en.html)

The LUPA project website is available at: <http://www.eurolupa.org/>

## Education, Training and Culture

### **Bordeaux communiqué on vocational and educational training**

On 25-26 November 2008, Ministers adopted the 2008 Bordeaux communiqué on Vocational and Educational Training (VET), an agreement which aims to build on the success of the 2002 Copenhagen process. The process was initiated in 2002 and is the main mechanism for enhancing European co-operation in Vocational and Educational Training, defined as that which enables people to acquire the knowledge, skills and competences needed for both particular jobs and the labour market more broadly.

The Bordeaux Communiqué identifies the four main objectives to be met in this area for the period 2009-2010: implementing tools and schemes for promoting co-operation in VET; heightening the quality and attractiveness of VET systems; improving the links between VET and the labour market; and strengthening co-operation arrangements. Jan Figel, the European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, explained that, 'High quality VET is crucial for the long-term sustainability of our economy and society. By adopting the Bordeaux communiqué, we are another step closer to a European area for vocational education and training, which will help the mobility of trainees, as well as improve the performance, quality and attractiveness of European VET.'

#### **Further information**

Further information on the EC's Vocational and Educational Training policy and a copy of the Bordeaux communiqué is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc60\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc60_en.htm)

### **University co-operation projects get €60 million**

The EC has approved 63 university co-operation projects, and thirteen other projects, under the new phase of the Tempus programme from a selection of 530 applications. The Tempus programme supports the modernisation of higher education and creates an area of co-operation outside the EU. The programme covers 28 partner countries in the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East. The total budget for all the projects is €60 million and they include 600 universities from partner countries and 300 from the EU. The projects are multilateral partnerships between institutions in the EU and the partner countries to develop, modernise, and disseminate new curricula or deal with other higher education issues such as management.

This latest, the fourth phase, of the Tempus programme has introduced some new features. These include the need to implement larger projects to create greater impact, with larger university networks and more input from the non-academic sector. This action will give impetus to structural measures

that contribute to the development and reform of higher education in the partner countries and promote greater convergence with EU developments in the area.

#### **Further information**

EC Press Release IP/08/1832 of 28 November 2008 is available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid>

Further news on the Tempus programme is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/tempus/news\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/tempus/news_en.html)

### **Agreement reached on Erasmus Mundus**

The Education, Youth, Culture and Audiovisual Council of Ministers, which met in Brussels on 20-21 November, reached final agreement with the EP on the second phase of the Erasmus Mundus programme. The programme is considered to be important for attracting the best students from non-EU countries to Europe, encouraging international partnerships, and enhancing the worldwide appeal of higher education in Europe. This new phase of the Erasmus Mundus programme is due to start in early 2009.

The essence of the programme has been to support top-quality joint European Master's courses, and provide scholarships for students from outside the EU to take these courses, and also to provide funding for EU students to study at the partner institutions around the world. A major addition for the second phase of the Erasmus Mundus programme is the introduction of joint doctoral programmes. The doctoral programmes are intended to be structured and integrated by the institutions in the consortium by being jointly designed and managed. It is also envisaged that they should be sustainable and last beyond the duration of the project funding.

#### **Further information**

Further information from the Council of Ministers conclusions is available at:

[http://www.ue2008.fr/PFUE/lang/en/accueil/PFUE-11\\_2008/PFUE-20.11.2008/Principaux\\_resultats\\_du\\_conseil\\_education\\_jeunesse\\_culture\\_et\\_audiovisuel\\_18581](http://www.ue2008.fr/PFUE/lang/en/accueil/PFUE-11_2008/PFUE-20.11.2008/Principaux_resultats_du_conseil_education_jeunesse_culture_et_audiovisuel_18581)

### **Education co-operation with industrialised countries**

The EU is investing €9.2 million for academic co-operation with industrialised countries in North America and Asia-Pacific. The EC is consolidating the longstanding co-operation with the US and Canada with the launch of a new round of 24 innovative projects involving universities and training institutions on both sides of the Atlantic. In addition, this year 11 joint curriculum development and student mobility projects were agreed and launched with Australia, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand.

All these projects are jointly funded and supervised by the EC and the governments in the partner countries. The objective is to promote mutual understanding, transparency and quality in higher education and training, by setting up long-term institutional co-operation at bachelor's and master's level, allowing students from Europe and from the partner countries to have a unique experience studying abroad in a global context. The 35 projects launched this year involve 189 institutions and more than 2,000 student exchanges. The funding comes through calls for proposals under the EU-US Atlantis Programme, now in its third edition, the EU-Canada programme and there are new joint projects with Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea.

#### **Further Information**

Further information on selected projects is set out in EC press release IP/08/1872, which is available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid/>

Further details about the programme can be found from:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/index_en.htm)

# External Collaboration

## New science programme for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific

The Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP - Secretariat) has recently announced the launch of calls for proposals under its 'ACP Science and Technology Programme'. The overall aim of the programme is to contribute to achieving the Millennium Development goals by targeting poverty eradication, enhancing scientific and technological capacity to support research, development and innovation in the region, and enabling the identification and formulation of activities that are critical to sustainable development.

The funding for the ACP Science and Technology programme actually comes from the EU, but it is implemented through the ACP Secretariat. The current call closes on 27 February 2009. The focus of the call is on the following areas: quality health care; environment; energy; transport; agriculture; and sustainable trade. The programme will be carried out via a mixture of the following types of activities: co-ordination and networking in applied research; instruments for collaborative research; and the management of research activities and reinforcement of research quality.

### Further information

Further details of the programme are available at: <http://www.acp-st.eu/>

## Agricultural research co-operation with China

The EC is looking into promoting greater agricultural research collaboration with China, and is discussing the best ways to do this with the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS). The EC is particularly interested in working with China in three areas: animal health and diseases (especially transmissible diseases like bird flu); improving the resistance of crop plants to factors such as drought, salinity and heat; and food safety. Twenty five projects financed under the 'Food quality and safety' theme in FP6 featured Chinese partners. Chinese researchers are also involved in a growing number of FP7 projects.

The exact form of EU-China agricultural research cooperation will be decided in future meetings, but it will probably start off with a relatively simple mechanism such as twinning projects. Twinning is where the EU and the research funding organisation in the respective country manage their own calls for proposals. Then, selected projects are compared, and if two projects appear similar, the researchers involved are encouraged to work together, sharing knowledge, ideas and further co-operation. A scheme is up and running at the moment with Canada's Agricultural Bioproducts Innovation Program (ABIP).

### Further information

Further information is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/biosociety/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/biosociety/index_en.htm)

Information on the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) is available at: <http://www.caas.net.cn/engforcaas/index.htm>

## Africa and EU work together to tackle climate change

On 2 December 2008 the EU and Africa endorsed a Joint Declaration on climate change outlining their common concerns for global warming and their common interest for an ambitious post-Kyoto international agreement. Africa has been identified by both the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) IV Assessment Report (2007) and by the Bali Action Plan as one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change and climate variability, while contributing very little to global warming. While African countries already face the worst of the impact as proven by unpredictable

rainfall, lower crop yields and diminishing resources, Africa's widespread poverty, disasters and conflicts also contribute to the continent's vulnerability.

Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Jean Ping, and European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, jointly stated that tackling climate change is a real challenge for both Africa and Europe. They felt the need to act now in order to avoid more dramatic consequences for the most vulnerable populations of Africa. Both the EU and the AU are committed to an ambitious post-Kyoto agreement on climate change. The EU intends to improve political dialogue and promote co-operation through the exchange of experiences between the European Union and African countries. The Joint Africa/EU declaration shows that an important milestone has been reached in terms of adopting a common approach and enhanced co-operation between Africa and the EU.

#### **Further information**

EC Press Release IP/08/1853 of 2 December 2008 is available at: <http://europa.eu/rapid/>

### **Higher education links between Europe and Africa encouraged**

A conference was held in early December, bringing together major African and European universities, higher education experts and Erasmus Mundus Alumni students for the first time. The conference sought to find ways to strengthen links between higher education institutions in Africa and Europe and increase the mobility of students, researchers and teachers between the two continents. The expertise gained from implementing previous mobility programmes is seen as key, with the Erasmus Mundus Programme being particularly significant. Participants at the conference looked at finding the best possible use of the new phase of the Erasmus Mundus programme, set to run from 2009-2013.

To achieve these aims, a new African chapter of the Erasmus Mundus Alumni Association was launched. African alumni of the programme have a key role to play in disseminating information about Erasmus Mundus, and more generally, the benefits of increased academic mobility, from sharing skills, to personal and professional development. Although African countries currently lag behind those from Asia and the Americas in participation in mobility programmes such as this one, it is hoped that one of the results of this conference will be better targeted information about the programme to African students, resulting in increased participation. Stronger links between African and European higher education institutions will improve the level of excellence at African institutions and promote the attractiveness of European higher education.

#### **Further information**

Details of the Erasmus Mundus programme are available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/doc72\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/doc72_en.htm)

The study in Europe website is available at: <http://www.study-in-europe.org>

## **Events and Awards**

### **Conference on future and emerging technologies**

The first European conference on Future and Emerging Technologies (FET) will take place in Prague on 21-23 April 2009. The registration for this 'FET 09 – Science Beyond Fiction' Conference will open in January 2009. The sessions at the conference will address topics which are embryonic, multidisciplinary, transformative or foundational and aim at presenting the state-of-the-art in science and technology and at developing new concepts or visions. A call for contributions to sessions and exhibitions closed in December 2008.

The conference itself aims to bring together scientists, policy makers, industry and journalists to discuss frontier science, the technologies of tomorrow, and the impact on society and the future. A major goal is to foster a dialogue between science, policy and society on the role and challenges of interdisciplinary ICT related research towards the development of policy options for increasing Europe's creativity and innovation base. Another main goal is to bridge diverse European research communities and disciplines to stimulate the creation of new research collaborations.

#### **Further information**

Further information of the FET09 conference is available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/events/fet/2009/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/fet/2009/index_en.htm)

### **Growing GALILEO 2009: conference and information day**

The European GNSS Supervisory Authority (GSA) will hold the Growing Galileo 2009 conference on 27-28 January in Brussels, Belgium. The conference will focus on the funding opportunities for satellite navigation project proposals available under FP7. The second call for proposals for GNSS research and development will be published soon. A total of €40 million is available through this second call for Galileo and EGNOS research and development projects, a sixty per cent increase over the funding is available in the first call. The information day on the second call will be held on 28 January 2009.

With a focus on the upcoming second round of FP7 calls, Growing Galileo 2009 is a good opportunity for participants to network and form partnerships with other organisations. The conference will feature sessions giving information about the projects accepted for funding under the first call. It will also include keynote speeches from industry experts and market leaders in order to stimulate brainstorming and exchange of ideas.

#### **Further information**

For further information, please visit the following website: <http://www.gsa.europa.eu>

### **EuroNanoForum 2009**

The EuroNanoForum 2009 is a four day conference taking place from 2 - 5 June 2009 in Prague under the Czech Presidency of the EU. The theme of the conference will be 'Nanotechnology for a sustainable economy' and as such it aims to help to address several acute issues underlining sustainable development of European society and industry, such as the need for a reduction in carbon emissions and fossil fuels dependence, a substantial increase in energy and material efficiency, pollution control, clean water management and sustainable quality of life of the European citizen, all through the application of various nanotechnologies.

The conference will comprise of a mixture of plenary and parallel sessions covering the whole range of nanotechnology themes. There will also be industrial and poster sessions throughout the four days. The event is being organised jointly by the Czech Technology Centre, the EC and the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, under the auspices of the Czech Presidency of the EU.

#### **Further information**

The conference website is available at: <http://www.euronanoforum2009.eu/>

# New Publications and Online Resources

## European Parliament TV

A new web TV channel 'Europarl TV' has recently been launched and aims at making the EP's work as transparent and understandable as possible to all EU citizens. The channel, available via the internet, will be staffed by 15 full-time journalists and will provide extensive coverage of parliament's activities, such as plenary and committee meetings, as well as specially-packaged programmes and MEP profiles. It is accessible to anyone with internet access, viewers can watch programmes based around the life of the parliament, all of which will be translated into more than 20 languages.

Europarl TV consists of 4 channels: 'Your Parliament', 'Your Voice', 'Young Europe' and 'Parliament Live'. 'Your Parliament' aims at those with a particular interest in politics at the EU level. 'Your Voice' is conceived for the general public and provides the possibility of featuring user-generated content. 'Young Europe' aims particularly at school-aged children, high users of the Internet and the European electorate of the future. 'Parliament Live' provides continuous coverage of live events in the Parliament, notably debates in the plenary sessions, with a link to the audiovisual archives of previous sessions, as well as in the coming months, the activities of the committees.

### Further information

The channel is available at: <http://www.europarltv.europa.eu/StartPage.aspx>

## CORDIS

CORDIS is the official Community Research and Development Information Service for science, research and innovation 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>

## Talking Science

Created by the British Council, the Talking Science website provides up-to-date information and links to the latest ideas in science communication in the UK: [www.britishcouncil.org/talkingscience](http://www.britishcouncil.org/talkingscience)

# 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 Co-operation.

<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>

## Co-operation

Co-operation 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 Co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research is a framework for scientific and technical co-operation, 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](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](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](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](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 Co-operation 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](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.ec.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](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/static/en/llp/index_en.htm)

### **MEDIA**

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

[http://ec.europa.eu/comm/avpolicy/media/index\\_en.html](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](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/people/home_en.html)

### **RTD**

Research and Technological Development

## **SICA**

Specific International Co-operation 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](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/sme_definition/index_en.htm)

## **Specific Programme**

FP7 is made up of seven Specific Programmes: Co-operation; 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 Co-operation 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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