



# HIGHLIGHTS

## on EU policies and funding programmes related to the knowledge-based economy

### The “Lisbon Strategy”

NOVEMBER 2006

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## General EU Information

### EU Institutions



#### ❖ Council of the EU

##### **7 November 2006 – German Presidency's top priorities : Energy, Constitutional Treaty**

The upcoming EU Presidency (to begin on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007) will be taken up by Germany. Germany will endeavour to revive the stalled ratification process and announced that on 25 March 2007 a "Berlin Declaration" will redefine the broad goals and values of the EU.

The German EU Presidency will have as its motto: "Gemeinsam gelingt Europa" ("Together Europe can succeed"). Energy security as well as the fight against climate change will be the presidency's main priorities. Another priority of the German presidency lies with the neighbourhood policy and future enlargement of the UE. Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel stated that Europe needs to define its borders, but these "should not become another Iron Curtain". Through a strong neighbourhood policy, the EU should offer security and prosperity based on common values to the countries bordering the EU. The Chancellor also sent a warning to Turkey that it has to move on the Cyprus issue; the Finnish Presidency gave Turkey until 6 December to move forward on this issue.

Further information: [Cabinet statement on German EU Presidency](#)

#### ❖ European Commission

##### **8 November 2006 – Commission adopts strategy for EU's enlargement policy**

The strategy includes a special report on the Union's integration capacity. The Commission concludes that the Union must be able to maintain and deepen its own development while pursuing its enlargement agenda. The current enlargement strategy, combined with ways and means to ensure the EU's capacity to integrate new members, form the basis for a renewed consensus on enlargement. The Commission also reviewed the progress achieved in each candidate and potential candidate country.

As regards Turkey, it concluded that the country has continued political reforms, but the pace of the reforms has slowed during the past year. As regards Turkey's obligation to fully implement the Ankara Protocol, the Commission will make relevant recommendations ahead of the European Council in December, if Turkey has not fulfilled its obligations.

Croatia made a good start in the accession negotiations. The country has taken important steps in many fields to adapt its legislation. However efforts need to be considerably stepped up to meet the main challenges, such as judicial reform, fight against corruption and economic reform.

The other Western Balkans countries have made progress following the road-map put forward by the Commission last year. Each country advances on its own merits. A country's satisfactory track-record in implementing its obligations under the Stabilisation and Association Agreements is an essential element for the EU to consider any membership application.

Further information: [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

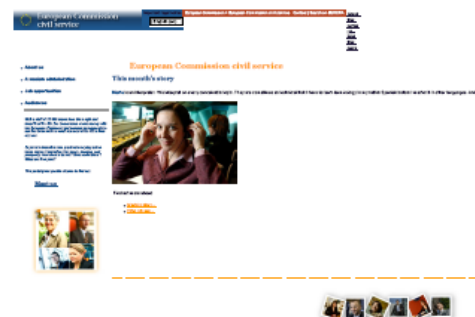
##### **14 November 2006 – Report on simplification of regulatory environment**

The Commission Working Document entitled “First progress report on the strategy for the simplification of the regulatory environment” highlights the Commission’s contribution to the common goal shared with European Institutions and Member States to simplify the regulatory environment for EU businesses and citizens. This report evaluates progress made since the launch of the simplification strategy in October 2005 and further reinforces the simplification programme with the addition of more than 40 new initiatives for the period 2006-2009.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

#### **17 November 2006 – New European Commission Civil Service website**

The new portal website lifts the veil on the people who make up the Commission Civil Service – who they are and what they do. For the first time, information on the Commission Civil Service is accessible through a single entry point, which helps European Citizens to find their way through the wealth of information at their disposal on the EUROPA website. It is one of the first of a new generation of thematic websites that are part of the results of the will of the Commission to improve communication with the European citizens.



Further information: [European Commission Civil Service website](#)

### ❖ **European Parliament**

#### **14 November 2006 – Parliament assesses Commission’s work programme for 2007**

MEPs debated the strengths and weaknesses of the Commission’s work programme (i.e road map for policy, legislative and financial EU actions) for 2007 when it was presented to the European Parliament on 14 November. While welcoming the focus on climate change, they also pressed for more progress on EU growth and job creation and the UN’s millennium development goals.

The programme adopted in October identifies 21 strategic initiatives that will form the main focus of the Commission’s work in 2007. They cover the four overarching priorities of the Barroso Commission: solidarity, security, prosperity and a stronger voice in the world. Key items include a framework for safe and efficient health services, a white paper on health strategy and a green paper on post-2012 climate change. MEPs will vote on a resolution on the work programme in December.

Further information: [Commission’s work programme](#)

#### **15 November 2006 – Services Directive reaches final stage**

The services directive which aims to facilitate the provision of cross-border services by removing obstacles to the free movement of services in the internal market reached its final stage with the European Parliament approving the Council common position with minor changes. The final position adopted by Parliament broadly reflects the Parliament’s first reading position achieving a balance between competition and social protection.

Member States have a maximum of three years to implement the provisions of the major directive. Rapporteur Evelyne Gebhardt called the Services Directive an example of “policies for the people”, stressing that the parliament managed to remove the disputed Country of Origin principle and ensure consumers’ rights. She stressed, however, that “important points remain to be discussed”, in particular in the fields of labour, social and penal law.

Further information: [Parliament Info Point](#)

## Financial bodies

### ❖ European Investment Bank

#### **8 November 2006 – The EIB Group Focus on Turkey**

2006 is proving to be a record year for EIB Group's operations in Turkey. The Group, composed of the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Investment Fund (EIF), is reaching new levels in terms of its exposure to the Turkish market, confirming its commitment to Turkey.

The EIB commenced operations in Turkey more than 40 years ago and has financed a substantial and highly diversified portfolio of both public and private sector projects across all key areas of the country's economy. Total lending in the period 2000-2005 came to *TRY 5.8 bn*. Against the background of growing investments in the country, accelerated by the start of EU accession negotiations, the EIB's investments in Turkey will reach a record figure of some *TRY 2.8 bn* in 2006, marking a 70% increase compared to the previous year and confirming the growing share of support to private sector initiatives.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

#### **10 November 2006 – FEMIP Conference: Regional integration in the Euro-Mediterranean area through transport systems**

Organised jointly by the EIB and the Government of Monaco, the Conference brought together some 250 experts and professionals in this sector from the 35 Euro-Mediterranean Partnership countries for an interactive dialogue with Mr Philippe de Fontaine Vive, EIB Vice-President responsible for FEMIP (*Facilité euroméditerranéenne d'investissement et de partenariat - Euro-Mediterranean Facility for Investment and Partnership*), Mr Jacques Barrot, European Commission Vice-President, and some twenty high-level speakers, including political authorities, CEOs and experts in the field of transport.

FEMIP's operations in support of modernising the partner countries' management structures and infrastructure are undertaken on a long-term basis in keeping with the economic policy choices of the countries concerned. Accordingly, FEMIP provides the partner countries with:

- a forum for exchanging expertise, through meetings of FEMIP's Ministerial Committee, its Committees of Experts and the FEMIP conferences;
- technical assistance for sectoral reform and identifying projects;
- financial products that are appropriate in terms of loan maturities (15-20 years), risk-taking (through the introduction of the Special FEMIP Envelope) and interest rates (interest subsidies for certain environmental projects);
- improved coordination between lenders, i.e. the European Commission, the 15 European Development Finance Institutions (EDFIs), the World Bank Group and the African Development Bank.

As an adjunct to this activity, FEMIP has also stepped up discussions with representatives from the private sector and civil society. More than twenty meetings with the business community have been organised by FEMIP, both in the EU and the partner countries, some of them in conjunction with the other IFIs. Furthermore, FEMIP is also a permanent observer at the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, works with the associations of Euro-Mediterranean towns and regions and has forged relations with a number of universities and academic institutes, such as the FEMISE network and the "Cercle des Economistes".

Further information: [FEMIP conference 2006](#)

**EU policies and funding programmes for Research, Innovation, Training and Competitiveness**

## ❖ The Research Policy

### **13 November 2006 – European Defence Agency launches its first research programme**

The EU's defence ministers have adopted a three-year [Defence R&T Joint Investment Programme on Force Protection](#). The programme is worth €54.23 million and will involve 19 European governments. France, Germany and Poland will be the three largest contributors to the common budget, but military heavyweight Britain has declined to participate.

Unlike previous collaborations on defence R&T, which involved governments negotiating financial and industrial shares for each individual project, the JIP (Joint Investment Programme) sets up a common budget to fund the whole programme with a management committee representing the contributors to oversee the selection and financing of individual projects. The votes of the contributors are weighted according to the size of their contributions, although decisions will be taken by consensus wherever possible.

The programme will focus on a limited number of specific R&T priorities driven by agreed capability requirements for future operations: collective survivability, individual protection, data analysis, secure wireless communication and mission planning and training.

Major initiatives for 2007 include establishing an ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) Capability Development Plan; developing a European Defence R&T Strategy to identify at the European level key defence technologies to be developed and preserved in Europe; elaborating the characteristics of the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base of the future and the way to achieve it; and identifying practical opportunities for collaboration by exploiting a “cooperative armaments process”, starting with the Armoured Fighting Vehicles and 21st Century Soldier areas.

Further information: [European Defence Agency Press Release](#)

### **17 November 2006 – Automotive suppliers identify four priority areas for research**

The European Association of Automotive Suppliers, CLEPA, has published a strategic research agenda, presenting an industry view of research priorities for keeping Europe's automotive sector sustainable and competitive.

CLEPA outlines four areas of interest, which it says should be supported under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7): mobility; energy, environment, powertrain; safety and security, comfort for safety; material, design, processing and manufacturing.

Speaking on behalf of DG Research, Director for Transport András Siegler noted that the CLEPA strategic research agenda is line with both the objectives of FP7's Surface Transport specific programme, and the strategic research agenda of the European Technology Platform (ETP) on road transport, ERTRAC. He welcomed the convergence of views that this represents, and claimed that it is also evidence of the leverage effect of the ETPs.

Further information: [CORDIS website](#)

### **21 November 2006 – Official signing of the ITER agreement in Paris**

The [ITER](#) fusion research project was officially signed by the seven partners committed to its construction - the EU, China, India, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States - on 21 November 2006.

The construction of the ITER reactor in Cadarache, southern France will start in 2007 and take at least ten years. The EU will contribute around 50% of its total costs, estimated at €10 billion, and the other partners up to 10% each. An experimental reactor could be fully operational by 2040.

Further information: [President Barroso's speech](#) (in French), [Commissioner for Research Potočník's speech](#) (in English), [ITER website](#)

### **21 November 2006 – Finnish Presidency launches European Network of Living Labs**

The European Network of Living Labs, launched as a step towards the creation of a new European Innovation System, is a collaboration of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) where companies, public authorities and people link up to share information, research and test new products in the fields of information and communication technologies (ICT) and mobile services. The aim of the initiative is to stimulate innovation by moving research out of the laboratories and into the real life contexts of cities and regions where citizens and users will be encouraged to cooperate with researchers, developers and designers to contribute to the whole innovation process. Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen said at the launch event: 'One of the goals of the network is to attract companies from around the world to take part in European research and innovation efforts.'

So far, about 20 European cities have signed up to the initiative, including the Spanish cities of Barcelona, Mataro and Sant Cugat, and the region of Catalonia, Budapest, Istanbul, London, Salzburg, Sophia-Antipolis in France, Stuttgart, Tallinn, Turin, Copenhagen, Helsinki, Oslo, the Swedish-Danish region of Oeresund, and the four Swedish cities of Lund, Malmoe, Vaestervik, and Stockholm.

Further information: [Living Labs website](#)

### **22 November 2006 - Commission Communication "Towards a more effective use of tax incentives in favour of R&D"**

The European Commission has adopted a Communication on the more effective use of tax incentives in favour of R&D in order to boost R&D investments and enhance job creation and economic growth in Europe. The Communication clarifies the legal conditions arising from EU case law and sets out some basic principles and good practices for the design of tax incentives for R&D. It encourages Member States to improve the use and coordination of tax incentives on specific R&D issues.

Currently, tax incentives have grown to become one of the major instruments used by many Member States to increase business R&D. In parallel, industry is embracing the open innovation model and cooperation across borders is becoming commonplace, in particular in the high tech sector. However, the diversity of schemes introduced has resulted in an increasingly complex landscape for R&D tax treatment in Europe hindering trans-European collaboration.

The Commission therefore clarifies that tax incentives which restrict their benefits to activities performed domestically are incompatible with the EC Treaty. It is also important to realise that R&D tax incentives which target a specific group or sector may constitute State aid and therefore must be made compatible with the Community State Aid rules. It is therefore particularly important for Member States to note that the new State aid framework for research and innovation, which has been adopted in parallel, may have a direct effect on their tax incentives for R&D.

The Commission also offers guidance on the main design options, features and relevant factors which Member States may wish to follow when designing or updating their R&D tax incentive schemes.

These include, for example:

- Ensuring that tax incentives are easily accessible for a broad range of R&D firms;
- including elements of simplicity as well as low administrative and compliance costs;
- principles for evaluation of tax incentives;
- the need for delivery to be timely, efficient and predictable.

The Commission also invites Member States to work together when considering the tax treatment of a number of issues of common interest – in particular the funding for large-scale trans-national R&D projects; the growth of young innovative enterprises; the cross-border mobility of researchers and the treatment of philanthropic funding of research. The Communication provides concrete recommendations in these fields.

Further information: [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

## 1- Tentative calendar

### Framework Programme

- European Parliament (EP): 2<sup>nd</sup> reading on November 29 (to be confirmed).
- Informal negotiations between EP / Council to facilitate adoption of the text in 2<sup>nd</sup> reading.
- European Council of 5<sup>th</sup> December: final agreement.

### FP7 Rules for Participation

- European Parliament: possible adoption in first reading on November 2006, 29
- Council: agreement : likely on December 5<sup>th</sup>

### Specific Programmes

- European Parliament : vote in ITRE Committee (Industry, Research and Energy Committee) in September (12/13) - vote in Plenary session on November 29
- Council: vote expected on December 5<sup>th</sup>

### Work programmes

- European Commission: consultation of advisory groups and technology platforms (September and October).
- European Commission: first draft of WP in October.
- Programme Committees: opinions in November.
- European Commission: WP adoption in December.

## 2- The 7<sup>th</sup> Framework programme for research and development 2007-2013 (FP7)

### **15 November 2006 – Parliamentary Committee ITRE reaches agreement on FP7**

The European Parliament's Industry, Research and Energy Committee (ITRE) has adopted, in a second reading, a set of comprise amendments on the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), which were agreed upon in informal meetings with the Council.

MEPs agreed on an amendment on renewable and end use energy, which foresees a 'major part' of the budget from FP7's energy theme going to the field, instead of two thirds as proposed by the Parliament in its first reading. According to ITRE, special attention will be devoted to the coordination of issues linked to rational and efficient use of energy in FP7 and in other EU policies.

ITRE also endorsed amendments on the rules for participation for companies, research centres and universities, as well as the RSFF (Risk Sharing Finance Facility), which is designed to encourage bank lending to research projects. Initially, the Council had planned to allocate €1 billion from the FP7 budget to finance RSFF. However, under the amendment, a lower contribution of €500 million is foreseen until 2010, with the possibility of releasing the additional €500 million after a review.

The amended text will be put to the vote at a Parliament plenary session, due to be held on 29 November, before it is put to the Council on 5 December.

Further information: [CORDIS website](#)

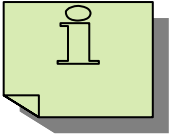
### **30 November 2006 – Parliament gives green light to FP7**

The European Parliament gave the go-ahead for the EU's research and development funding for the period 2007-2013, as MEPs debated and voted on 10 reports relating to the 7th Framework Research Programme (FP7).

MEPs are insisting on shifting some of the spending, including research on renewable energy and energy efficiency as well as the possibility of funding research on children's health, respiratory diseases (including those induced by allergies), plus research into neglected diseases.

The compromise states that renewables and end use energy efficiency will account for the "major part" of the budget of FP7's energy theme - rather than the two thirds proposed in Parliament's first reading. Special attention will be devoted to coordination of issues linked to rational and efficient use of energy within the Framework Programme and in other EU policies and programmes.

The overall budget planned for the 7th Framework Programme in the 2007-2013 Financial Perspective is €54 582 million in current prices. Of this, €50 521 million is for the European Community programme and €2751 million for the Euratom programme, which runs from 2007 to 2011. A further €1310 million is indicatively planned for the Euratom programme for 2012-2013 but this will need to be confirmed at a later stage. (all figures in EUR million)



### **FP7 first calls for proposals to be issued late December.**

The first calls for proposals under the 7<sup>th</sup> framework programme for research and development would likely be issued on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006 if the rules for participation are to be agreed upon in due time. The closing dates of these first calls should be for March 2007.

## **3- FP7 Rules for participation**

### **30 November 2006 – Parliament votes on rules for participation**

Parliament has adopted a codecision report (first reading) by Philippe Busquin (PES, BE) on the implementing rules for participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in activity under the Seventh Framework Programme. Here too a first-reading compromise has been reached between rapporteur, shadow rapporteurs and the Council, the main aim of which is to simplify the rules.

The FP7 rules for participation should be adopted simultaneously with the FP7 specific programmes, first by the Parliament on 29 November and then by the Council on 5 December 2006.

## **4- FP7 Events and consultations**

### **Cancellation of 'Today is the Future' FP7- launch event**

The Directorate General for Research has announced that the launch event of the Seventh Framework Programme, scheduled on 7 March 2007, will not take place due to exceptional circumstances. A new re-configured event is still to be announced.



Further information: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/events/>

### **6 December 2006, Bucharest – European IST conference**

FP7 – For SMEs. Organisation: NCP for SMEs in Romania.

### **15-16 January 2007, Bonn – German EU Presidency FP7 launch conference**

(with Commissioner Potočník, Director-General Silva and German Research Minister Schavan)

Organisation: German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), supported by DG for Research (C-5)

RTD-C-5 contact: [michael.wappelhorst@ec.europa.eu](mailto:michael.wappelhorst@ec.europa.eu)

### **16 January 2007, Berne – FP7 launch « à la conquête de l'excellence »**

### **7-8 February 2007, Brussels - FP7 Information Multiplier Event**

key audience: NCP and EU research liaison officers (by invitation only)

Organiser: DG for Research (C-5)

RTD-C-5 contact: [julia.acevedo@ec.europa.eu](mailto:julia.acevedo@ec.europa.eu)

### **13 February 2007, The Hague – FP7 Congress - World Forum Convention Center (WFCC)**

### **26-28 February 2007, Berlin - European Research Council (ERC) - Launch conference**

Organiser: German Research Foundation (DFG) + German Research Ministry (BMBF), hosted by the German EU Presidency.

Key audience: (by invitation only) ERC WG, EUROHORCS, ESF, ERC IDC, main Representative. Org. of European Scientific Community, next generation researchers.  
RTD-B1 contact: [gianpietro.van-de-goor@ec.europa.eu](mailto:gianpietro.van-de-goor@ec.europa.eu)

## 5- European Technology Platforms

### **14 November 2006 – eMobility holds its second general assembly in Heidelberg**

Presentations on the work of the platform in the past year and on the on-going work of the Post-IP and Broadband for Europe working groups are available on line. Two newly formed working groups on “Advanced Applications” and “Roadmap for Beyond 3G” were presented by Prof. Correia and Didier Bourse and members are invited to join both the new and existing working groups Information on how to join working groups as well as the copies of the slides shown during the General Assembly are available on the web site.

Further information: [eMobility general assembly](#)

### **4-5 December 2006 – Photonics21 holds annual meeting in Brussels**

In the course of the Photonics21 Annual Meeting, the European Technology Platform activities in 2006 will be recapitulated and a draft action plan for 2007 will be developed and presented. Initial steps in building consortia for FP7 projects will be undertaken. Furthermore, a special session - organized in cooperation with the European Commission - is dedicated to Photonics in FP7. Representatives from different units/DGs within the European Commission will give detailed up-to-date information on the first calls with relevance to Photonics.

Further information: [Photonics21](#)

## 6- Joint technological initiatives

### **21 November 2006 – Europe to pool private, national and EU research efforts in order to become more competitive: the example of ARTEMIS**

The European Union is changing the method of financing key technological research by launching Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs). The idea for JTIs came from the European Commission and was supported by EU Heads of State and Government at their recent informal summit in Lahti (Finland). JTIs will pool the resources of private industry, EU and national programmes to pursue ambitious common research objectives. The first JTI to be launched in early 2007 will be ARTEMIS. The ARTEMIS JTI will steer Europe's research in embedded computing systems, which are increasingly essential for many key industrial sectors. This initiative will act as a beacon for further such initiatives to follow. Industrial leaders and national and EU research experts met on 21st November in Helsinki to further discuss this new method of European research funding.

JTIs arise from European technology platforms (ETP), when the scale and technical complexity of strategic research agendas necessitate a 'critical mass' of research and innovative effort. They combine private-sector investment and national and European public funding, including grant funding from the FP7 and loan finance from the European Investment Bank, and may be decided on the basis of [Article 171](#) of the Treaty or specific programme decisions in accordance with Article 166.

"The budget of the ARTEMIS initiative will be around €3 billion over seven years. More than 50% of this would come from industry, while the rest would be financed by the Commission, member states and associated states involved," said the commissioner responsible for information society and media, Viviane Reding, in the [IST 2006 event](#) on 21 November 2006.

17 major [European companies](#), including Airbus, British Telecom, Daimler Chrysler, Nokia, Philips, ST Microelectronics and Thales have already joined ARTEMIS and some 14 European governments have also expressed their intention to join. The Finnish government [recently](#) committed €70 million for this purpose.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

## ❖ The Innovation Policy

### **20 November 2006 - Science, Technology and Innovation in the EU25 in 2004**

The latest panorama of Science, Technology and Innovation in Europe<sup>1</sup>, published by Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, reports on where the EU stood in 2004, and how its position has evolved in recent years. The publication covers a wide range of Research & Development (R&D) data, including R&D expenditure, R&D personnel, patents, venture capital, high-tech external trade and other indicators related to high-tech and knowledge intensive sectors of the economy.

In 2004, 2.82 million people were employed in the field of Research and Development in the EU25. Adjusted to take account of those working part time, this is the equivalent of 2.05 million full time jobs. Germany accounted for 23% of these full-time equivalents, followed by France (17%), Italy and Spain (both 8%).

In the EU25, more than half (53%) of R&D personnel were employed in the business enterprise sector in 2004, 31% worked in higher education, and 14% in the government sector. In the Member States for which data are available, the business enterprise sector employed the largest share of R&D personnel in fourteen Member States, the higher education sector in nine and the government sector in one (Cyprus).

Further information: [Commission statistics](#)

### **29 November 2006 - Stakeholders release declaration on innovation**

Innovation professionals have released a list of priority actions needed to ensure the EU's competitiveness. The 'Valencia Declaration on Innovation' sets out 20 points for action based on feedback collected from innovation specialists, researchers, CEOs, managers and others attending the Europe Innova conference in Valencia, Spain, from 26 to 28 November.



Many of the points echo those raised by the European Commission in its own 10-point innovation strategy which was issued back in September. Like the Commission, the innovation stakeholders place a high priority on education, improving the links between research and industry, reforming state aid rules, stimulating research through public procurement and strengthening regional innovation. The declaration calls on the Commission to establish a 'Pan-European Innovation Platform for start-ups in knowledge intense services, linking universities, incubators and the financing community to support young innovative SMEs.'

The authors of the paper invite the European Commission to take note of their concerns and pass them on to the Competitiveness Council. Europe's heads of government gave their backing to many of these proposals at their informal summit in Lahti, Finland, in October when they discussed the Commission's 10 point innovation strategy.

Further information: [CORDIS](#), <http://www.europe-innova.org/>

## ❖ Education policy

### **15 November 2006 – Consultation on a European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)**

The objective of the planned ECVET is to create a European device which will facilitate the transfer, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired by individuals moving from one learning context to another or from one qualification system to another, in particular during a mobility period, and who wish to obtain a qualification. ECVET will be used on a voluntary basis.

The Commission is consulting all the countries participating in the Education and Training 2010 work programme, the European Social Partners, the relevant European associations, NGOs and networks,

European sectoral bodies etc. The responses will be taken into account in establishing the final content and technical specifications of ECVET.

The consultation will close at the end of March 2007. The Commission and the German presidency will co-host a conference in Munich in June 2007. The conference will present an analysis of stakeholder responses to the consultation and generate discussions which will inform the Recommendation on ECVET. If you wish to participate in the ECVET consultation, please send your comments to: [EAC-A3-ECVET@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EAC-A3-ECVET@ec.europa.eu)

Further information: [Commission's working document](#)

## Other EU Policies and funding programmes supporting the Lisbon Strategy

### ❖ Information society

#### **21 November 2006 – Information Society Technology 2006 in Helsinki**

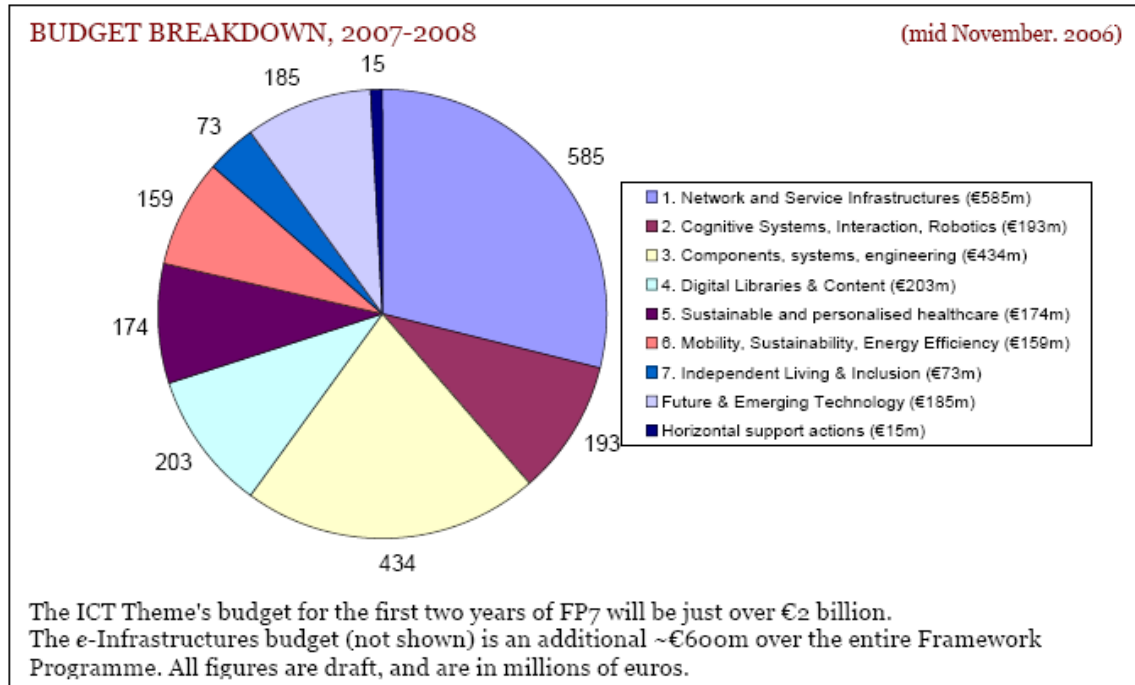
The EU plans to invest over €9 billion in research on information and communications technologies (ICTs). This is, by far, the largest single budget item in Europe's 7th research framework programme that will run until 2013 – a priority set by the EU, acknowledging the importance of ICTs for Europe's growth and competitiveness. To discuss the new research framework programme and the strategic priorities for fundamental and applied ICT research for the future, nearly 3500 members of the research community gathered from 21 to 23 November in Helsinki for the "Information Society Technology 2006" conference and exhibition.

"Europe is starting to catch up in ICT research," said Viviane Reding, EU Commissioner for Information Society and Media. "By investing heavily in collaborative ICT research projects, the Commission is giving a much-needed shot in the arm to European ICT research. With €9 billion we're challenging Member States, industry and academia to join us in the fight for a more competitive Europe. But we don't just need more research; we need better focused research too. To get our priorities right, we have relied heavily on the advice of nine European Technology Platforms in ICTs. In some areas we shall take this partnership a step further and pool resources in Joint Technology Initiatives."

ICT is the largest single research area within the EU's seven-year 7th Framework Programme (FP7) for research and development, accounting for 18% of the total Community budget. The ICT research work programme for 2007-2008 marks the start of the FP7 and will bring on stream a new generation of ICT projects that will raise Europe's research performance and help keep the European ICT sector at the forefront of technology development and advanced ICT use. Researchers were told in Helsinki what to expect from the first €1140m call for proposals, the selection procedure for receiving FP7 funds.

The work programme will focus on key areas where Europe has competitive advantages and established strengths: communications, electronics and photonics, and software systems and architecture. It will also aim to ensure that ICT research benefits not only the European economy but also society by improving everyday life in areas such as transport, energy efficiency and healthcare.

The Helsinki event also allowed the Commission to pursue its cooperation with European Technology Platforms (ETPs) active in ICTs which, through their industry-led Strategic Research Agendas, have contributed significantly to the focus of the new work programme. ETPs aim to speed up innovation, in particular by building consensus around technology development strategies. They are poles for attracting more research investment and help transfer new technologies to the market. Until now nine ICT European Technology Platforms have been launched.



Further information: [Information Society](#), [ICT in FP7](#)

## ❖ The Regional Policy

### 8 November 2006 – Commission initiative "Regions for Economic Change"

The European Commission presented a plan to boost innovation by bringing European regions together into strong partnerships and to help them take advantage of experience and best practice. This new initiative "Regions for Economic Change" was adopted by the Commission under the "Territorial Cooperation" objective. With regard to the new earmarking of 75% of Structural funds used to meet Lisbon objectives, the Commission identified a need to boost regional initiatives toward more innovative solutions. This communication therefore introduces new ways to dynamise regional and urban networks to help them work closely with the Commission to have innovative ideas tested and rapidly disseminated into the mainstream programmes. An annual 'Regions For Economic Change' conference featuring innovation awards is foreseen to coincide with the Spring European Council to further enhance communication and dissemination of best practice results in line with the EU agenda for growth and jobs.

"Regions For Economic Change" will work through the mechanisms for Interregional Cooperation and Urban Development under the Territorial Cooperation Objective, but feature the following novelties:

1. Identification of priority themes focused on economic modernisation and the renewed Lisbon agenda such as bringing innovative ideas faster to the market, managing migration and facilitating social integration, moving to a low carbon economy and bringing e-governments to regions and businesses;
2. Develop a bridge between networks and regular programmes;
3. Enhance communication through an annual conference and awards; and
4. A fast track option, through which the Commission will establish on its own initiative volunteer networks around selected priority themes in order to provide a rapid testing ground for policy ideas.

Further information: [Regions for Economic Change](#)

### 15 November 2006 - "Innovation and knowledge society" at the heart of European Regional Policy's programmes

Europe's interest is in modernising its economy through innovation and the creation of a society based on knowledge. This is the main message Regional policy Commissioner Danuta Hübner, delivered in the best practices conference held in Graz, Austria. The Commissioner was addressing the "New Horizons in Graz – Shaping Best Practice IV" conference which brings together almost 250 practitioners and experts from many member states of the European Union. Among the key themes discussed this year are: generating innovative projects, using innovative financial engineering, and creating an environment favouring the effective transfer of knowledge.

Further information: [Best Practice Conference](#)

## ❖ Competition

### **22 November 2006 – State aid: Commission adopts new state aid Framework for Research, Development and Innovation**

The European Commission has adopted a new Framework to clarify to Member States how best they can give state aid to not only research and development but also innovation projects, without infringing EC Treaty state aid rules. This new Research, Development and Innovation (R&D&I) Framework will help Member States wishing to use state aid as a complementary instrument to boost Research, Development and Innovation. The Framework sets out a series of guidelines for specific types of state aid measures – such as **aid for R&D projects, aid to young innovative enterprises and aid to innovation clusters** – that could encourage additional R&D&I investments by private firms, thus stimulating growth and employment and improving Europe's competitiveness. These guidelines allow individual Member States to tailor aid measures to particular situations, subject to the overall test that the aid must address a defined market failure, must be well designed and that the identified benefits must outweigh the distortions to competition resulting from the aid. The new Framework is due to apply from 1st January 2007.

The main changes in the new RDI Framework compared to the current Framework (dating from 1996) are:

1. the inclusion for the first time of aid measures for innovation, setting out clear rules concerning the compatibility of such measures in order to facilitate their approval by the Commission. These measures are particularly important to achieve the Lisbon objectives.
2. clear compatibility criteria, targeted at eliminating existing market failures.
3. more legal certainty for research organizations and for collaborative research, thanks to clarifications as to the state aid character of certain measures.
4. the introduction of a detailed assessment method for large aid amounts in order to allow for a deeper scrutiny of the cases which have the greatest potential to distort competition and trade

The new Framework maintains three categories of research aid, depending on whether the type of research is more or less remote from the market: fundamental research, industrial research and experimental development. This allows governments to use different aid intensities depending on the size of the market failure which certain research projects are facing.

Although three categories of research aid have been maintained, the definitions have been modernised. The existing category of pre-competitive development has been expanded to cover research closer to market activities, such as prototypes which can be used commercially. In order to highlight this change, this category has been renamed "experimental development".

The variations in the basic aid intensities of 100% for fundamental research, 50% for industrial research and 25% for experimental development are based on the size of the market failure that companies entering into RDI activities in the corresponding category are facing.

Further information: [Framework text](#), [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

## ❖ Enterprises

### **14 November 2006 – Commission proposal to reduce administrative burden for companies**

The European Commission has put forward a proposal to cut, jointly with Member States, the administrative burden for companies by 25 % by 2012. This could lead to an increase of an estimated 1.5 % in EU GDP and subsequently more investment for growth and new jobs, amounting to €150 billion. To achieve this target, member states and regional and local authorities must also give a new political momentum to their own efforts to cut red tape. This is one of the forward looking initiatives contained in the first strategic review of the "Better Regulation" initiative. The strategic review assesses the progress to date and makes an ambitious set of proposals. The system for impact assessment of all major new proposals for legislation will be beefed up to ensure quality and objectivity through the establishment of an Impact Assessment Board. Furthermore, 43 new initiatives have been added to the simplification rolling programme covering the period 2006-2009 across a broad spectrum of policy areas. These include actions in the agriculture domain, for manufactured goods including construction products, cosmetics, and industrial emissions.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

## ❖ Internal Market

### **16 November 2006 - Financial services: Commission sets out vision for modernising EU investment fund market**

The European Commission has set out its vision for the modernisation of the EU framework for investment funds, which provide consumers with access to professionally managed investments on affordable terms and now account for over €5500 billion of assets. The improvements, which are put forward in a White Paper, will simplify the current Directive on investment funds in order to ensure that investors receive useful cost and performance disclosures when selecting funds, and to make it easier for the industry to achieve cost savings and specialisation benefits across the single market. Following further studies on cost-effectiveness and investor protection, the Commission plans to propose these changes in autumn 2007, in the form of amendments to the current Directive. Meanwhile the Commission will also look at whether there is a need to make similar changes for other fund products, especially real estate funds, that are not covered by the current EU framework.

Further information: [White Paper](#)

## ❖ Environment

### **8 November 2006 – Environment programme LIFE+ still in discussion between Parliament and Council**

The Parliament's second-reading vote on 24 October 2006 was predicated by a desire not to 're-nationalise' the LIFE programme and to ensure that the Commission remains central to environmental policy definition. Thus, MEPs rejected the Council's position which foresaw at least 80% of the LIFE+ budget being managed directly by member states.

However, the Commission supported the Council's position to delegate management of the programme on concerns that it lacked sufficient staff to manage the funds on its own.

MEPs also called for an increase in the budget size by €100 million and for at least 55% of Life+ funds to be allocated to the nature and biodiversity component.

The process now enters into conciliation. In order to avoid a financial gap if no agreement is found by the end of 2006, the Parliament called on the Commission to guarantee the continuity of the programme in 2007.

Since 1992, LIFE has co-financed some 2,750 projects, contributing approximately €1.35 billion to the protection of the environment. LIFE+ is the proposed successor to LIFE III and will have a budget of approximately €1.9 billion for the period 2007-2013.

Further information: [LIFE+ 2007-2013](#)

**13 November 2006 – Commission sets out agenda for revising the EU emissions trading scheme from 2013**

The European Commission has adopted a Communication setting out its agenda for revising the EU emissions trading scheme (EU ETS) in the light of experience gained since it began operating in January 2005. The Commission wants to promote the environmental impact of emission trading by expanding it to new sectors and gases and further its global application as a key tool to combat climate change. The review will also seek to give greater predictability to investors and strengthen harmonisation by streamlining how it is applied in the various Member States. These and other issues will be discussed extensively with stakeholders before the Commission makes a legislative proposal to revise the Emissions Trading Directive in the second half of 2007. The changes will take effect in 2013 at the start of the scheme's third trading period. The EU ETS enables energy-intensive industry and power generators to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions cost effectively, and is stimulating emission-saving projects around the world.

Further information: [Emission Trading Scheme, First set of national allocation plans 2008-2012](#)

**15 November 2006 – European researchers call for wider use of existing eco-technology in the fight against global warming**

Current international protocols and national legislation designed to reduce air pollution need to go further if more damage to the climate and environment due to high ozone concentrations is to be avoided. Until that is in place, better use of existing technology can help reduce the harmful effect of such emissions and bring ozone levels in most regions of the world into compliance with current standards. This would minimize the negative impacts of ozone on human health, ecosystems and global warming. This is the conclusion of scientific studies carried out by European Commission scientists and the ACCENT network of research scientists, funded by the EU

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

**15 November 2006 – Conference on the Baltic Sea and the European Marine Strategy**

An international conference was held in Helsinki on 13 to 15 November 2006 under the auspices of the Finnish Presidency of the Council in order to focus on the need for intensified dialogue between researchers and policy-makers on issues related to the marine environment.

Scientists and policy makers discussed the Directive on marine strategy tabled by the European Commission that defines common principles for the protection of Europe's seas. In their final declaration, participants called on national, regional and European authorities to set up and implement more environmental policies and legislation using innovative and economic instruments to provide incentives and technical solutions to protect European Seas.

Further information: [EU 2006 Baltic Sea](#)

**22 November 2006 - Environmental data: Commission welcomes agreement on INSPIRE system**

The European Commission welcomes the agreement reached by the European Parliament and the Council in Conciliation on a directive creating INSPIRE - Infrastructure for spatial information in Europe. INSPIRE will strengthen the knowledge base for environmental policy and make it more accessible to citizens, stakeholders and decision-makers. The directive will cover a very wide range of spatial data ranging from basic mapping information, such as geographical names and administrative units, to key environmental information such as emissions, environmental quality and location of protected sites. The directive will now be formally adopted early next year and the Member States will then have two years to transpose it into national law.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

## ❖ Transport

### **7 November 2006 – Commission meets road haulage industry**

The European Commission has held a hearing with the main European associations representing road hauliers, their trade unions and their customers. The aim was to prepare for a review of the current Community rules on admission to the occupation and access to the market, the pillars of the internal market for road transport. The participants addressed issues relating to road haulage cabotage, the criteria relating to the setting-up of companies, the integration of Member States' control systems, the improvement of financial capacity and professional qualification and the simplification of procedures.

Further information: [Transport policy](#)

### **15 November 2006 – EU aims to cap airline emissions from 2011**

The European Union plans to issue a proposal to require all airlines flying in its territory to monitor their carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from 2010 and to join the bloc's emissions trading scheme in 2011.

The EU's current emissions trading scheme -- its key tool to fight global warming and meet targets for cutting pollution under the Kyoto Protocol -- puts a limit on the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> big polluters such as power plants and oil refineries can emit.

But it excludes international aviation, a major and growing source of pollution as air travel booms.

Airlines would be able to buy permits from other sectors, such as power generation, and make use of other trading mechanisms available under the Kyoto Protocol. Limits would be set at EU level to avoid problems that have arisen in the current scheme, where member states set caps for their industries, which the Commission can approve or reject. Most allowances would be given to airlines free of charge at the beginning, though some would be auctioned.

The Commission aims to table the proposal on 20 December, pending endorsement from the 25 commissioners.

Further information: [Reuters article](#)

## ❖ Health

### **9 November 2006 – Commission presents Eurobarometer on Health, Food and Nutrition**

Most Europeans consider themselves to be in good health, but 38% feel they are overweight, according to the results of the latest Eurobarometer on Health, Food and Nutrition presented by the European Commission. The survey, which reveals that 95% of EU citizens agree that obesity is harmful for health, addresses the health and physical characteristics of Europeans, their diet and general eating habits, problems related to being overweight, and their physical activity levels. Eating more vegetables and less fat are the most frequent changes that Europeans say they are introducing in their eating habits. However, most respondents report feeling trapped in a sedentary life that restricts their attempts to lead a healthy lifestyle. Less than 30% of Europeans carry out "intensive" physical activity on a regular basis. Most Europeans (85%) feel public authorities should play a stronger role in fighting obesity. Nine out of ten Europeans feel that marketing and advertising influence children in their food and drink choices.

Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner Markos Kyprianou stressed that the Commission planned to respond to this call by developing proposals for a European strategy on the issue next year.

Further information: [Eurobarometer](#)

### **9 November 2006 – Commission approves over €11.5 million to tackle animal diseases in Bulgaria and Romania in 2007**

The Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health has backed a draft Commission Decision to allocate up to €11 506 000 to Bulgaria and Romania for the monitoring, eradication and control of animal diseases in 2007. Surveillance for avian influenza, reducing salmonella in breeding hens and the application

of mandatory EU TSE measures are among the other areas which will be co-financed in 2007, under this Decision which will be adopted by the Commission in the coming weeks.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

#### **20 November 2006 – Debate over health impact of chemicals continues before REACH adoption**

A group of 38 scientists signed a letter on 20 November calling for the EU to tighten scrutiny of hormone disrupting chemicals and other toxic substances under REACH.

The scientists expressed concern that the REACH draft as supported by the Council of Ministers requires a too-high burden of proof before hormone-disrupting chemicals can enter the REACH evaluation process. The EU draft REACH legislation on chemical safety enters Parliament for a crucial second reading on 12 December 2006. It will then need approval by the Council of Ministers before it can enter into force. However, negotiations between the Commission, the Council and the Parliament came to deadlock as the Parliament's negotiator rejected the Finnish Presidency's proposals on 20 November, which increases the likelihood that REACH goes through a conciliation procedure.

Further information: [REACH](#)

### ❖ **Agriculture**

#### **8 November 2006 – Transparency: Commission facilitates access to Member State information on beneficiaries of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) payments**

To further improve openness and access to information, the European Commission is publishing on its EUROPA website a page with links to Member State websites containing information about end-beneficiaries of payments under the Common Agricultural Policy. This step is part of the European Transparency Initiative (ETI) Full transparency should be ensured with the publication of all end-beneficiaries of CAP payments in line with the Commission's proposals introduced in the Financial Regulation. The Council has agreed to start this process from 2009, and discussions are still ongoing with the European Parliament.

Further information: [Beneficiaries of grants](#)

### ❖ **Energy**

#### **9 November 2006 - Commission adopts new rules for managing electricity cross-border trade in the EU**

These new rules improve the way the electricity transmission system in the EU is operated. They require improved cooperation between Transmission System Operators (TSOs) to allocate cross-border flows and manage bottlenecks in the transmission network. TSOs have to use a common method to allocate transmission capacity considering the European network as one single network.

In the guidelines Europe is divided into seven regions based on the physical reality of the network. South-East Europe will be the eighth region applying the same rules through the Energy Community Treaty. This regional approach is a pragmatic intermediate step towards a fully integrated internal electricity market.

The guidelines adopted by the Commission amend the existing guidelines which are annexed to the regulation 1228/2006 on cross-border trade in electricity.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

### **17 November 2006 - Moldova, Norway, Turkey and Ukraine join the Energy Community as Observers**

The Energy Community Treaty is the legal vehicle for creating a wider European Energy market. It entered into force earlier this year, after the last country to ratify it – Montenegro – did so last month. Observer's status is the first stage to eventual membership in the Energy Community and its further extension is not ruled out.

The Energy Community is consciously modeled on the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty that was the basis for the European Union. It is open to any country wishing to accept the European Union's energy market rules and that has direct physical links to the European Union electricity and gas grids. Present members are the European Union (25 Member States), Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, UNMIK – Kosovo, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bulgaria and Romania.

Further information: [Energy Community](#)

### **21 November 2006 – EU energy actors meet to discuss an external energy security policy**

The European Commission has brought together in Brussels main influential players in the energy sector to discuss EU external energy policy and how to assure a high level of supply security. Representatives from the Commission, Member States, key third countries, the industry and international organisations debated during two days the external aspects of European policies on energy matters focusing on oil and natural gas security supplies issues as well as trade and development related topics. Among others, Commission President Barroso, Commissioners Ferrero-Waldner, Piebalgs, Mandelson and Michel, SGHR Solana and around 30 Ministers of External Relations or Energy from EU Member States and third countries participated.

On 29<sup>th</sup> November the Commission will propose to the Council an ambitious package of measures to strengthen our European Neighbourhood Policy. In this framework it will also propose the creation of an infrastructure fund designed to co-finance in particular energy and transport infrastructure investments in the ENP region.

Further information: [Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner's speech](#)

## **❖ Culture**

### **13 November 2006 – Culture contributes to 2.6% of EU's GDP and employs at least 5.8 million Europeans**

In a study presented to the EU's Ministers of Culture, the European Commission shows the importance of the culture sector for the EU economy, and underlines its potential for creating more and better jobs in the future. With its 5.8 million employees, the Culture sector employs more persons than the total employed in Greece and Ireland put together. Further, the culture sector accounted for 2.6% of EU GDP in 2003, and experiences higher growth rates than the average of other sectors of the economy.

The study also calls for a coherent strategy for the creative sector and includes a set of policy recommendations intended to unleash the "Lisbon potential" of the cultural economy in Europe.

The proposed future strategy is composed of three main strands:

- to improve intelligence gathering of statistical evidence on the importance of the cultural sector in Europe;
- to increase its contribution to the Lisbon strategy's goals through a more intensive use of the EU's programmes, fostering creativity, clustering technology and creation in joint platforms, promoting investment in cultural industries, and integrating the cultural dimension in international cooperation agreements between the EU and third countries;
- structural reform via strengthened coordination of activities and policies impacting on the cultural and creative sector within the European Commission.

Further information: [Executive summary of the study](#)

### **23 November 2006 – Conference on intercultural dialogue**

The event, organized by the Commission, explored and identified examples of best practice among projects that have received funding through one of the European Union programmes, such as the Leonardo da Vinci, Socrates, Youth, Civil Society and Culture programmes. The conference was accompanied by a special exhibition showing the results of 29 star projects from around Europe that are showcases for best practice in promoting inter-cultural understanding in a variety of settings.

Further information: [Intercultural dialogue conference and exhibition](#)

## **❖ External Relations- Enlargement**

### **9 November 2006 – EU and US meet to strengthen economic integration and boost jobs, growth and competitiveness**

The US Government hosted the second informal US-EU economic ministerial meeting to discuss transatlantic economic integration and shared economic challenges. European Union Commission Vice President Verheugen and Finnish Minister for Trade and Industry Mauri Pekkarinen met Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez and Energy Secretary Samuel W. Bodman to review joint progress in the most significant areas of the transatlantic economy, including innovation, intellectual property rights (IPR), and regulatory cooperation. The participants adopted a joint strategy to fight soaring global illegal trade in counterfeit and pirate goods and also discussed a range of other critical economic issues, including the challenges of the global energy market and the Doha Development Agenda negotiations.

The meeting follows on commitments made in the 2005 EU-US Summit, confirmed at the 2006 Summit, which called for further transatlantic economic integration. The next EU-US Summit is due to take place in the first half of 2007.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

### **16 November 2006 – Science and Research Commissioner visits the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

Commissioner Potočnik met the Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski as well as Deputy Prime Minister Gabriela Konevska, responsible for European integration and Sulejman Rushiti, Minister of Education and Science.

A major theme of the Commissioner's visit was that science and research is a good way for a candidate country to work closely with the EU as it prepares for membership. Participation in the European Research Area, and the EU's Framework Programmes for Research, is a process that starts long before enlargement and can be a useful tool to support the reforms needed to become an EU member. It can also be instrumental in increasing people-to-people contact, a major element of the EU's activities in the Western Balkans.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

### **17 November 2006 – EU welcomes solid results of Nairobi world climate conference**

The meeting, the first ministerial conference on climate change held in sub-Saharan Africa, brought together the 189 Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 166 Parties to the Convention's Kyoto Protocol. The Nairobi conference resulted in a series of decisions and new initiatives to support developing countries, which are the most vulnerable to climate change. These will help developing nations to adapt to climate change, thus reducing its adverse impacts, and will encourage more clean technology projects in Africa and other poorer regions. The conference gave added momentum to discussions on future global action to combat climate change which began last May. The Parties to the Kyoto Protocol agreed on a comprehensive work plan for their talks on further commitments by developed countries for the period after 2012, when the Protocol's current emission targets expire. The conference

carried out a first review of the Protocol and agreed to undertake a second review in 2008 as strongly requested by the EU.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

### **20 November 2006 – EU and Iraq launch negotiations for a Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA)**

The negotiations have been launched by Commissioners Ferrero-Waldner and Mandelson, on behalf of the Commission, and by Barham Salih, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, on behalf of Iraq. The TCA will help to progressively strengthen the EU's relations with Iraq and integrate the country in the world economy.

This agreement aims to improve the trade arrangements between Iraq and the EU, covering a wide range of issues, including trade in goods, services, measures to encourage investment, customs, intellectual and industrial property rights, and public procurement rules. Co-operation could cover a number of key aspects in the economic area, as well as in the human development and poverty reduction field, environment, culture and education. All agreements with third countries now feature human rights, terrorism and WMD as important elements.

By entering into negotiations for contractual relations with Iraq, the EU aims to:

- Facilitate Iraq's engagement with the international community and with the EU in particular, to the benefit of the internal and regional stabilisation process.
- Stimulate and anchor ongoing institutional and socio-economic reforms at both policy and operational levels.
- Contribute to the socio-economic development of Iraq and to the improvement of living conditions in the country.
- Promote bilateral trade relations in accordance with WTO principles.
- Ensure a minimum level of predictability, transparency and legal certainty for economic operators.

Further information: [EU's relations with Iraq](#)

### **22 November 2006 – EU and South Korea sign science & research agreements**

Both parties signed two cooperation agreements, one on science and technology (S&T) and one specific to fusion energy research. The S&T agreement will promote collaboration in areas where EU and South Korea have similar priorities, such as life sciences (biotechnology and health research), information society technologies and telecommunications, industrial and materials technologies, sustainable development, renewable energy sources, satellites and earth observation. The fusion energy research agreement will complement the ITER agreement signed yesterday in Paris, and promote the joint implementation of research and technological development activities to accelerate the development of fusion energy as a clean and sustainable energy source for the 21st century.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

### **22 November 2006 – EU and Japan reach agreement on a broader approach to fusion energy**

Europe and Japan confirmed their agreement on a so-called "Broader Approach" to fusion energy. This agreement will create a privileged partnership complementing ITER, the major international fusion energy project signed on 21<sup>st</sup> November in Paris. The partnership of ITER includes Japan, Russia, Korea, China, India and USA, with the European Union hosting the project at Cadarache in France. This new "Broader Approach" agreement commits the EU and Japan to work together on projects, in particular the design of a high-tech materials testing facility, which will complement research in ITER and set the basis for the construction of a future demonstration fusion power plant (DEMO). The agreement last ten years, and represents about €340m of European investment.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

### **22 November 2006 – EU and India agree to strengthen cooperation in civil aviation**

At the occasion of a joint EU-India Aviation Summit held in New Delhi, Vice-President Jacques Barrot and India's Minister for Civil Aviation Mr. Praful Patel signed a "Joint Declaration" that will lay the foundation for closer cooperation between the EU and India in a range of areas of civil aviation. Building on the results achieved under the 1999-2006 "EU-India Civil Aviation Co-operation Project", Messrs. Barrot and Patel agreed to prepare a Joint Action Plan that will set out the key priorities for strengthening future technical and technological co-operation. This Joint Action Plan, which will also be finalised as a matter of priority, and a new technical co-operation programme that will start in 2007 will be important instruments in taking forward the wide range of areas of mutual interest of industry, regulators and the wider public of both sides, as identified during the aviation summit.

The Joint Action Plan will identify the main priority areas for future technical cooperation which will cover aviation safety (including strengthening the cooperation with the European Air Safety Agency (EASA)), security, airport infrastructure, air traffic management, environmental policy, economic regulation, training and industrial co-operation.

At the EU-India Aviation Summit, Vice-President Barrot also invited India to become associated in major EU technological programmes such as GALILEO, the satellite navigation programme, and SESAR, the air traffic management project.

Further information: [EU-India Aviation Summit](#)

#### **24 November 2006 – New framework for the EU's Northern Dimension policy**

A new Northern Dimension policy has been launched jointly by the leaders of the EU, Russia, Norway and Iceland at a meeting in Helsinki on 24 November. It will provide a joint framework for addressing the challenges of Northern Europe, especially its fragile environment and the socio-economic problems facing its inhabitants. It will also reflect the EU/Russia Common Spaces as relevant for this region. Cross-border cooperation will be recognized as a cross-cutting theme producing added value at the sub-regional and trans-national level and facilitating economic cooperation and people-to-people contacts across borders in the North. The new European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument with its new opportunities for cross-border cooperation and the extended financing capabilities of the European Investment Bank for this area will represent the main EU financial contribution. Co-financing of projects will now be the general rule. The Northern Dimension Partnership model will be favoured as an effective way to organise practical implementation of projects. The International Financing Institutions will be given a prominent place in ensuring appropriate financing and effective project implementation. Among the existing partnerships, the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership has succeeded to bring together from various donors a total of € 235 Million for grants to finance nuclear safety projects in the Kola Peninsula and to act as seed money for large environmental infrastructures across North West Russia. The European Community is the largest donor with € 60 Million. Additional € 10 million have been allocated this year from the TACIS programme.

Further information: [Commission Press Release](#)

## Research, Innovation, Training and Competitiveness related EU events

### ❖ Announcements

#### **4-14 December 2006 – CISSE 2006 Online Conference**

**CIS<sup>2</sup>E 06** provides a virtual forum for presentation and discussion of the state-of-the-art research on computers, information and systems sciences and engineering. This international conference will be held entirely on-line. The accepted and presented papers will be made available after the conference both on a CD and as a book publication. CISSE 2006 is composed of four conferences: International Conference on Industrial Electronics, Technology & Automation (IETA 06), International Conference on Telecommunications and Networking (TeNe 06), International Conference on Systems, Computing Sciences and Software Engineering (SCSS 06) and International Conference on Engineering Education, Instructional Technology, Assessment, and E-learning (EIAE 06).

Further information: <http://www.cisse2006online.org>

#### **5 December 2006, Helsinki – Meeting of the Helsinki Group on Women and Science**

The meeting will be combined with a one-day seminar. The latter will assess progress made in achieving gender equality in science since the launch of the Helsinki Group in 1999 and the publication of the first ETAN Report on women and science in 2000. It will include a specific session on decision-making in science. The fact that the year 2006 is the 100th anniversary of universal and equal suffrage in Finland offers a good opportunity to approach women's empowerment and their role in decision-making more broadly.

#### **5 December 2006, Bratislava, Slovakia – Central European Science Day 2006**

The topic of the conference is 'Changes in the society - Research opportunities in the region'. The event will focus on the following areas:

- demographic aspects (with focus on migration, mobility and minorities);
- economical aspects (development of the labour market; small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and their role in society)
- political culture and power structures in Central Europe
- gender Issues in Central Europe.

Further information: <http://www.scienceday.sk/>

#### **5-8 December 2006, Prague, Czech Republic – Innovation 2006**

The week of research, development and innovation comprises three events:

- XIII International Symposium, looks at innovative entrepreneurship and the innovation infrastructure in the Czech Republic; innovation at the regional level; commercial use of research and development results; international cooperation; the EU Framework Programmes;
- XIII International Trade Fair of Inventions and Innovations, the research, will display development and innovations results of domestic and foreign exhibitors, along with science and technology parks in the Czech Republic and successful participants of projects in the EUREKA Programme;
- 11th Innovation of the Year 2006 Award, this prize is open to any company with a registered office in the Czech Republic. Eligible products/technologies are those which have already been commercialised.

Further information: <http://www.aipcr.cz/eng/>

**11-12 December 2006, Sophia Antipolis, France – 10<sup>th</sup> annual International Venture Capital Summit**

The 10th annual IVCS, International Venture Capital Summit hosts conferences, business meetings and demonstrations designed to foster contacts and business opportunities between innovative companies, large groups and venture capital investors. At this juncture, trade sales account for 70% of all exits, which raises a crucial question as to how to boost growth for these innovative enterprises: "How can active intermediation by venture capitalists encourage working partnerships and closer cooperation between innovative companies and large groups?"

Further information: <http://www.ivcs.org/>

**11-14 December 2006, Geneva, Switzerland – 3<sup>rd</sup> Broadband Europe Conference**

Information available at: <http://www.bbeurope.org/>

**12 December 2006, Brussels – Conference “FOOD Quality & Safety: first results from FP6”**

The Conference will be organized around consecutive sessions clustering different types of projects (IP, NoE, STREP) under 4 themes:

- Improved plant production systems
- Improved animal production systems -including welfare
- Food safety from fork to farm
- Food, nutrition and health

Contact person: Alessio Vassarotti (RTD-E:1) [alessio.vassarotti@ec.europa.eu](mailto:alessio.vassarotti@ec.europa.eu)

**14-15 December 2006, Helsinki – First EUROBIOFUND conference.**

The aim of EUROBIOFUND is to create a market place for funding research initiatives in the life sciences in Europe. EUROBIOFUND will organise three annual conferences that will take the form of brokerage events. Top European scientists will present 'business plans' for investment in key scientific areas in life sciences research to policy makers from the major funding organisations in Europe.

**15 December 2006, Brussels – Information Day on the Future of Internet**

The objective of this information day is to present and discuss views and understandings of which and how long term research could address the challenges for Europe.

Contact information: [Mr Remy Bayou](#)

**29 January – 4 February 2007, Brussels – First EU Sustainable Energy Week**

A dedicated event on the current and next Intelligent Energy – Europe programmes will form part of the First EU Sustainable Energy Week, which under the heading "Take a week to change tomorrow!" will take place in Brussels from 29 January to 2 February 2007. Initiated by the European Commission in the framework of its Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign, this week will feature a series of major EU and international events covering a variety of European sustainable energy themes:

- EU Renewable Policy Conference
- Changing systems and habits: the Intelligent Energy – Europe Programme
- EU conference on international co-operation on energy efficiency
- Sixth Annual ManagEnergy conference for local energy actors
- EU Sustainable Energy Construction Conference
- EU Urban Transport, Energy & Vehicle Technology Conference
- Energy Globe Award TV Gala
- Local and Regional Sustainable Energy Solutions
- 4 Technology Platforms
- Seminars and workshops proposed by European regional authorities, networks and trade associations

Further information: [www.eusew.eu](http://www.eusew.eu)

**1 February 2007, Cologne, Germany – Information Day on European ICT Research and Development**

Participants will be able to learn about the priorities and procedures for the ICT Work Programme 2007-2008, as well as network with potential partners for building a project symposium. Online event registration will be available from early January, while registered participants for the IST2006 event in Helsinki can already transfer their registration details now.

**14-17 February 2007, Eurexpo Lyon, France – « Le grand rendez-vous de l'habitat durable et du bâtiment de demain »**

7 différents salons :

- Energies Renouvelables
- ENEO (énergies, confort climatique et services de demain)
- SANIPOLIS (bains et bien-être)
- ECOBATIR (techniques constructives et développement durable)
- EUROBOIS (bois dans la construction et machine à bois)
- EUROTIPS (composant de l'ameublement et de l'agencement)
- SERVIBAT (outillage, véhicules utilitaires et services pour la construction)

Information : <http://www.eurexpo.com/batiment/index2.htm>

**21-23 February 2006, Berlin, Germany – 2<sup>nd</sup> annual CELTIC Event 2007: Facing the Challenges of Ubiquitous ICT**

CELTIC is a [EUREKA](#) cluster programme, which initiates and runs privately and publicly funded R&D projects in the field of telecommunications. CELTIC projects are focusing at telecoms networks, applications, and services looking at a complete system approach. The size of the CELTIC budget is in the range of 1 billion euro. CELTIC is open to any kind of project participants from all EUREKA countries.

The main objective of the event is to show the current status, the available achievements of the running CELTIC projects. Furthermore, the event provides an excellent opportunity to show the state-of-the art of the telecommunications development towards integrated next-generation telecommunications and multimedia systems for seamless use across mobile and fixed networks.

Further information: [Event website](#)

**8-10 May 2007, Växjö, Sweden - Sustainable Regions and Municipalities 2007**

The implementation of EU policies and directives in the field of energy and transport is often linked with great possibilities and opportunities. Nevertheless, it is also associated with difficulties arising from administrative, legal, technical and practical obstacles. This is a common problem for many local and regional European authorities.

The purpose of this conference is to give local and regional representatives an opportunity to discuss this practical work with other European regions and cities to obtain new ideas and inspiration on how to work towards sustainable regions and municipalities. Several EU projects financed under the IEE and INTERREG III B and C programmes will take part in the discussions and share their experience and knowledge. Training for energy agencies and local and regional representatives is also included in the programme.

Further information: including registration details and conference programme are available from:

[http://www.transporteko-so.se/pages/cgi-bin/PUB\\_View\\_File.exe?pageld=167&versionId=1&linkId=1&objId=11&objType=2](http://www.transporteko-so.se/pages/cgi-bin/PUB_View_File.exe?pageld=167&versionId=1&linkId=1&objId=11&objType=2)

Email: [conference@energikontor-so.com](mailto:conference@energikontor-so.com)

**8-10 May 2007, Leipzig, Germany - 'Sustainable Neighbourhood - from Lisbon to Leipzig through Research (L2L)' Conference**

The aim of the conference is to position sustainability research as an engine for European competitiveness within the Lisbon Agenda. It will be a cooperative event between policy and scientific communities, which seeks to provide a forum to debate current research in this field, the interaction between policy, economic and research communities, as well as future research priorities. The organisers are inviting proposals for oral presentations and posters for all areas. The deadline for submitting abstracts is 22 December 2006.

Further information: [Call for presentations](#), [CORDIS website](#)

**2007 -ESF further co-operation with Japan**

The European Science Foundation (ESF) has signed a new extended Memorandum of Understanding with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). They will co-operate further on the 'Frontier Science Meeting Series for Young Scientists' which brings about 80 young researchers from both Europe and Japan together with more eminent scientists to debate key topics at the cutting edge of research. The 2006 Conference has been held in June in Nynäshamn, Sweden, on the topic of 'Climate Change'. Future planned conferences also include 'Robotics' in Japan in 2007, followed by 'Social cognitive neuroscience' in Europe in 2008.

Further information:

[ESF-JSPS Frontier Science Conference Series for Young Researchers](#)  
[Japan Society for the promotion of science webpage](#)

❖ **List of calls for proposals launched by the European Commission this month**

<b>Political area</b>	<b>Call title</b>	<b>Deadline for submission</b>
<b>Research</b>	<b>Support European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research</b>	2007-03-30
<b>Education and Culture</b>	<b>EUROPE FOR CITIZENS - Structural support for research organisations and for civil society organisations</b>	2006-12-22
	<b>Call for experts for Socrates proposals assessment</b>	2006-12-31
	<b>European youth foundation</b>	2007-01-02
	<b>ACP-EU Cooperation Programme in Higher Education (EDULINK)</b>	2007-01-15
	<b>Vulcanus (Japan)</b>	2007-01-20
	<b>EAC 70/05 Erasmus Mundus</b>	2007-02-28
	<b>Culture 2007-2013 multi-annual cooperation projects cooperation measures</b>	2007-02-28
<b>Employment &amp; Social Affairs</b>		
<b>Transport</b>		
<b>Energy</b>		
<b>Environment</b>		
<b>Security</b>		
<b>Cooperation Office – EuropeAid</b>	<b>ASIA Invest II</b>	2007-03-09
<b>Entreprises</b>	<b>ProInvest (ACP)</b>	2007-01-17
<b>Media</b>	<b>MEDIA 2007 - Support for the transnational distribution of European cinema films</b>	2006-12-22
<b>Agriculture</b>		
<b>Information society</b>	<b>e-Ten 2006/1</b>	Until 2009-05-19
	<b>Call for independent experts for e-Content plus and Safer Internet programme 2005-2008</b>	2009-06-30

❖ **List of open consultations**

Title and description	Political activity	Targeted Group	Closing date
<b>ETP “Food for Life” consultation on Strategic Research Agenda</b>	critical assessment of the Stakeholders Strategic Research Agenda for the European Technology Platform ‘Food for Life’	experts	<b>2006/12/01</b>
<a href="http://etp.ciaa.be/webconsultation/welcome.asp">http://etp.ciaa.be/webconsultation/welcome.asp</a>			
<b>Media literacy</b>	Media and audiovisual policy	public	<b>2006/12/15</b>
<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/comm/avpolicy/media_literacy/consultation/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/comm/avpolicy/media_literacy/consultation/index_en.htm</a>			
<b>Adaptation to scientific and technical progress under directive 2000/53/EC on end-of-life vehicles</b>	Environment	Stakeholders	<b>2006/12/20</b>
<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/elv_index.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/elv_index.htm</a>			
<b>Detection technologies for law enforcement, customs and other security authorities</b>	Freedom, security and justice	public	<b>2007/01/10</b>
<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/news/consulting_public/news_consulting_public_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/news/consulting_public/news_consulting_public_en.htm</a>			
<b>Adaptation to scientific and technical progress under Directive 2002/95/EC on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment</b>	Environment	Stakeholders	<b>2007/01/10</b>
<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/rohs_6_consult.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/rohs_6_consult.htm</a>			
<b>Respecting the Rules Better Road Safety Enforcement in the European Union</b>	Transports	All interested parties	<b>2007/01/19</b>
<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/library/consultations/consultation_paper_enforcement_20060411.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/library/consultations/consultation_paper_enforcement_20060411.pdf</a>			
<b>European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training</b>	Education	Stakeholders	<b>2007/03/31</b>
<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/ecvt/index_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/education/ecvt/index_en.html</a>			
<b>A Maritime Policy for the European Union</b>	Maritime policy	public	<b>2007/06/30</b>
<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy_en.html</a>			

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## Get prepared for 2007

### Trainings' news and offers on new EU funding programmes.

#### ❖ Training News



##### - The 2007 Catalogue of training courses On-Line (available in FR and EN)

The catalogue presents all of our training formula, the content of courses and any practical information you would need to choose your training courses. It is downloadable in FR or EN from:  
<http://www.interfaceurope.net/news.php?p=news&lang=fr>

There will be a possibility to register on-line for all modules of our catalogue from our revamped website to be launched in the course of December.

#### ❖ Next sessions planned in Brussels (given in English or French)

\* **“FP7 : The Seventh Framework Programme: How to anticipate your participation and raise your chance of success? Presentation of the new priorities and orientations.”**

Available date :

- **6<sup>th</sup> December 2006:** Course in French
- **16<sup>th</sup> January 2007:** Course in English

\* **“How to write a successful proposal under FP7?”** – tips and methodology to set up a qualitative project to be more positively assessed and properly fill in the application form with a view to enhance your chances of success.

Available date :

- **7<sup>th</sup> December 2006:** Course in French
- **17<sup>th</sup> January 2007:** Course in English

\* **“Legal and financial aspects of European contracts for Research.”**

Available date :

- **18<sup>th</sup> January 2007:** Course in English

\* **“Mobility of Researchers – Marie Curie actions”**

Available date :

- **8th February 2007:** Course in English

To register or to consult our training sessions planned during the second semester, go on “Calendar of sessions” in the training department's page of our website. <http://www.interfaceurope.net/news.php?p=news&lang=fr>

## ❖ Next sessions planned in Paris

\* **“Le 7<sup>ème</sup> programme cadre de recherche de l’Union européenne : Comment anticiper et augmenter vos chances de succès ?** – Présentation détaillée des nouvelles orientations et opportunités - Au delà de la lecture des textes, adoptez une démarche stratégique, clé de votre succès pour le 7ème PCRD.

•Date disponible/available date : 12<sup>th</sup> December 2006 – Course in French  
23<sup>rd</sup> January 2007 – Course in French

\* **“Le montage de projets européens de recherche”. The module will focus on a methodology especially designed to set-up a RTDI project and write a successful application under FP7.**

•Date disponible/available date : 13<sup>th</sup> December 2006 – Course in French  
24<sup>th</sup> January 2007 – Course in French

*To register or to consult our training sessions planned during the second semester, go on Calendar of sessions in the training department’s page of our website. <http://www.interfaceurope.net/news.php?p=news&lang=fr>*



