Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

Spain, Ireland and Portugal before the Court over incorrect application of the public lending right

IP/04/1519
http://europa.eu.int/rapid/

On 21 December 2004, the European Commission decided to refer Spain, Ireland and Portugal to the European Court of Justice for failure to implement the public lending right (Directive 92/100/EEC on rental right and on certain rights related to copyright) fully into national legislation.

The Court already ruled against Belgium in a similar case in October 2003 *(Case C-433/02)*. Belgium adopted in April 2004 a decree implementing its 1994 law on public lending right and thus, the infringement procedure against it has now been closed, as it has been a case against France after publication of a decree *(September 2004)* to bring its law on PLR (*June 2003*) in line with the directive. Italy and Luxembourg are currently passing laws aimed at aligning their national legislation, thus the Commission has postponed its decision to refer them to Court. Letters of formal notice however have been sent to Denmark, Finland and Sweden.

Portugal is also to be referred to the Court for failure to implement correctly the rental right set out in the same Directive. The Directive aims at ensuring that the rights of authors and others who create cultural products are protected throughout the European Union when their works are lent or rented and thus that their ability and incentive to create is maintained.

Information Society

Transposition of directive on the re-use of public sector information
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/policy/psi/index_en.htm

The directive on the re-use of public sector information (PSI) was finalised on 27 October 2003 (*2003/98/EC*) when the Council accepted all Parliament amendments. Following its publication in the Official Journal (*L 345/90 of 31 December 2003*), Member States have 18 months to transpose the directive into national law.

The PSI group was set up to monitor progress and discuss issues of common interest related to transposition. It serves as a platform for discussion and the exchange of good practices on issues related to the re-use of information. The Commission will monitor the transposition process and will provide, where necessary, support to officials in the Member States responsible for the transposition. Status reports were prepared by the member states in view of the PSI group meeting held in Luxembourg on 1 October 2004 [http://europa.eu.int/information_society/policy/psi/implementation/index_en.htm]. The next meeting of the PSI Group would probably take place in February or March this year.

Furthermore, the European Public Sector Information Network, ePSINet (http://www.epsigate.org/) held its Policy Conference on 14 January and identified a range of future issues to be addressed in ensuring successful re-use of public sector information. A full report will soon be available; meanwhile, the programme and presentations can be consulted on the website.

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Lobbying for archives and libraries

EBLIDA Elections!!

2005 is election year for EBLIDA!

During its next annual Council meeting in Cork (Ireland), EBLIDA members will elect their new President and Executive Committee members for the term 2005 – 2007. The Council meeting will take place on 13 and 14 May 2005 in the Irish city designated Capital of Culture during the current year.

The nominations procedure will be publicly available through the EBLIDA website [http://www.eblida.org/], at a special section created for the purpose of facilitating the members' access to the information available.

Based on these nominations, the final voting will take place on Friday 13 May.

We encourage all our members entitled to do so to actively participate in this process and to join the Council meeting in Cork in May 2005.

For more information you can check the EBLIDA Constitution or contact the Secretariat. Stay tuned via our website!!

New EBLIDA members

EBLIDA wishes to warmly welcome the first two new members as of January 2005:
§ Scientific & Biomedical Information and Documentation Centre in Kallithea, Athens, Greece [http://www.sbcnet.gr/]
§ EBIB, the Polish Electronic Publishing Commission (Elektroniczna Biblioteka) in Poland [http://ebib.oss.wroc.pl/index.php].

EBLIDA is pleased to count with the first member from Poland, one of the new European Union countries' library and archive associations and Institutions, within our membership base, in line with recent changes in the political, geographical and cultural reality of Europe.

It is rewarding for all of us that new EU countries' associations are willing to support EBLIDA as the European organisation representing their interests in front of the EU Institutions. We look forward to welcoming many more during 2005!

EBLIDA initiates talks with the Federation of European Publishers

EBLIDA has recently initiated talks with FEP, the Federation of European Publishers (http://www.fep-fee.be/) on an informal basis.

María Pía González Pereira, EBLIDA Director, met with Anne Bergman-Tahon, Director of the Federation of European Publishers, in January in Brussels, as a first step towards establishing a more fluent relationship between both organisations, in order to discuss European legislative and policy matters affecting their respective membership and as an attempt to reach a better understanding of their concerns.

FEP has positively reacted to the EBLIDA approach and further steps will be taken along 2005 after consultation with the EBLIDA membership and working groups.

For more information on these subjects, please contact the EBLIDA Secretariat or visit our website at http://www.eblida.org/.

Audiovisual

EIB agreements in support of audiovisual production and distribution

The European Investment Bank (EIB) renewed on 22 December 2004 two agreements for € 20 million each with *Cofiloisirs S.A.* and *Natexis Coficiné S.A.* to co-finance projects relating to the production and distribution of audiovisual works for cinema and TV in France and other EU countries.

These agreements come under the **Innovation 2010 Initiative-Audiovisual** (i2i-AV), an integral part of the **i2i Initiative**

launched in June 2000 [visit http://www.eib.org/i2i/en/index.htm].

They follow on from two similar operations arranged in 2001 and 2003, which co-financed some 50 audiovisual productions (29 films and 21 TV films and series) involving co-productions from EU partners (France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, UK) which were distributed throughout Europe and, in some cases, in Australia, Canada, Japan and the US.

European Film Awards 2004
http://www.europeanfilmacademy.org/htm/Awards.html

Every year, the various activities of the European Film Academy culminate in the presentation of the European Film Awards which are produced by DDA Productions.

The Winners at the European Film Awards 2004 held in December 2004 in Barcelona were, amongst others: <u>European Film</u> – **Gegen die Wand** (Head-On) directed by Fatih Akin, Germany; <u>European Director</u> - **Alejandro Amenábar** for Mar Adentro

(The Sea Inside), Spain/France/Italy; <u>European Actor</u> - **Javier Bardem** for Mar Adentro and <u>European Actress</u> - **Imelda Staunton** for Vera Drake, UK/France. Seven of the films nominated received financial support from the MEDIA programme.

In 2005, the European Film Awards will be celebrated on 3 December in Berlin.

Film, TV, video and multimedia in Europe
http://www.obs.coe.int/oea_publ/yb/index.html.en

The European Audiovisual Observatory has recently published its yearbook, which offers in five volumes a comprehensive overview of the European audiovisual sector. It compares - whenever possible – 35

European states; it is a statistical and quantitative analysis, in addition to an analytical synthesis of recent trends which completes all main chapters. The volume on multimedia includes qualitative information.

Council of Europe, the right of reply in the new media environment
http://www.coe.int/T/E/Com/press/News/2004/rec(2004)16.asp

The Recommendation *Rec (2004)16* of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the right of reply in the new media environment was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 December 2004. The Permanent Representatives of the UK and the Slovak Republic indicated that they reserved the right of their Governments to comply or not with the Recommendation, in so far as it referred to online services.

The recommendation proposes that member states examine and, if necessary, introduce in their domestic law or practice a right of

reply or any other equivalent remedy, which allows a rapid correction of incorrect information in online or offline media along the lines of the minimum principles, without prejudice to the possibility to adjust their exercise to the particularities of each type of media.

In the recommendation, the term "medium" refers to any means of communication for the periodic dissemination to the public of edited information, whether online or offline e.g. newspapers, periodicals, radio, TV and web-based news services.

Consumer Protection

New standard clauses for data transfers to non-EU countries
http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/privacy/index_en.htm

The Commission approved in December 2004 a new set of standard contractual clauses for businesses to ensure adequate safeguards when personal data is transferred from the EU to non-EU countries [http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/privacy/docs/modelcontracts/c-2004-5271_en.pdf]. As from 1 April 2005 no Member State may object to their use by companies. This is the third set made available since 1998; its implementation will be reviewed in 2008. . The Commission is also working with the data protection authorities on other alternatives e.g. "Binding Corporate Rules", that is the use of codes of conduct instead of model contracts.

Companies believe that some of the new clauses e.g. litigation, allocation of responsibilities, auditing requirements are more business-friendly. Yet they provide for a similar level of data protection as those of 2001. Differences are mainly of a technical nature or related to liability systems.

Contractual clauses are not necessary to transfer data to Switzerland, Canada, Argentina and the Guernsey and the Isle of Man (UK) or to US companies adhering to the 'Safe Harbor' Privacy Principles.

Further information can be found at http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/privacy/modelcontracts_en.htm. See also MEMO/05/3 for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). A guide to citizens' basic data protection rights under EU law is available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/privacy/guide_en.htm.

Co-operation with third countries

European Neighbourhood Policy, Seven Action Plans for implementation
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/index_en.htm

On 9 December 2004, the Commission adopted the first action plans for the implementation of the new European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) with **Moldova, Ukraine, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Israel** and the **Palestinian Authority**. They now pass to the Council for endorsement, and to the relevant Association or Cooperation Council for approval.

Progress reports for **Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia** and **Lebanon** will also be presented in March this year. The ENP is open to **Belarus** and **all Mediterranean countries** once they have met the necessary conditions for inclusion.

The plans reflect the specific interests of the country concerned. They will offer participation in EU programmes e.g. education, IT, research and audiovisual. The Council intends to undertake a first review of their implementation two years from their adoption at the latest.

Financial aid will first be channelled through MEDA and TACIS; the Commission has however proposed a new financial instrument, ENPI - European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument – as of 2007.

Amendments to the EEA Agreement

On 13 December 2004, General affairs ministers adopted six Decisions enabling the European Economic Area (EEA) Joint Committee to amend EEA provisions in the fields of **culture, education, youth, research and technical development**, statistics and technical regulations.

Moreover, the EEA Decision no 110/2004 of 9 July 2004 amending Annex XVII (**Intellectual property**) to the EEA Agreement (**Directive 2001/29/EC**) was published in the OJ 2004/L 376/, p. 45 of 23 December 2004, available at http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/.

Culture

Culture 2000, 233 European cultural projects offered grants in 2004

In 2004, 233 projects were granted € 32 m, 133 of which focus on cultural heritage, the priority field in 2004. 30 European countries are taking part in Culture 2000 which is helping more than 850 cultural operators to work together on projects with a European dimension.

209 **annual projects** were selected (€ 18.5m) and 24 **multi annual cooperation projects** (€ 13.5m). In addition to EU-25 and EEA countries, Bulgaria and Romania also participated in the programme. See annual projects (*Action 1*) at http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/culture2000/project_annuel/projects1_en.html; multi annual projects (*Action 2*) at http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/cul

ture2000/pluriannuel/projects2_en.html; and **special projects** at http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/culture2000/special_events/projects_special_en.html.

For 2005-2006, the programme will support projects in all artistic and cultural fields without a sector priority.

With regard to **experimental actions in the field of cultural cooperation**, the funds in 2004 were used for projects selected following a call for proposals published in the *OJ C174 of 6 July 2004* [http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/other_actions/exp_act/pdf/exp_act_projects2004.pdf].

European Capital of culture, criteria for nomination of cities (2009-2019)

The Council unanimously adopted its common position on 21 October 2004; the Commission accepted it on 22 October (*COM (2004)0706*). On 1 February, Parliament's Culture committee approved without amendment the Council's common position listing the countries which will be asked to put forward a candidate for the period 2005 to 2019.

Rapporteur MEP Prets however calls on the Commission to submit a well-considered proposal reforming Decision 1419/1999/EC in the first half of 2005. Commissioner FIGEL is soon to submit a new proposal establishing new procedures and including strict selection criteria. In addition, budget for cultural capitals would be increased threefold in future. The

proposal should also take into account further reforms e.g. participation in the programme of future EU accession countries, and a specific financial framework for cultural capitals.

In 2007 (*Luxembourg* and *Sibiu* in Romania) and 2008 (*Liverpool*, UK and *Stavanger*, Norway), two cities currently outside the EU will take part, under an option which allows towns not in the EU to be involved. The ten new Member States are included as of 2009 (*Austria* and *Lithuania* in 2009) and the Council has agreed to guarantee sufficient Community funding for two annual capitals from that date.
This year the European Capital of Culture is *Cork* in Ireland, see http://www.cork2005.ie/home/default.asp.

European Capitals of Culture and European Cultural Months *(1995-2004)*

The Commission launched in 2003 a tender to commission an analysis/synthesis of the events "European Capital of Culture" and "Cultural Months" for 1995-2004. Palmer/ Rae Associates was selected to carry out the study. The report [http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources_info/studies/capitals_en.html] provides a single source of information and offers a basis for future policy-making in the

field. It focuses on the organisational and financing aspects as well as the social, economical and cultural impacts.

It is divided in two parts: **Part I** contains a synthesis on numerous aspects of the "European Capital of Culture" event and its impacts and **Part II** contains individual city reports for the 29 cities that formed part of the study.

Berlin Conference for European Cultural Policy

First Conclusions of the Berlin conference, which aimed at discussing the place of Europe in the world and the impact of culture in European foreign policy, were handed over during the closing reception on 27 November to the Dutch EU Presidency. It discussed the use Europe can make of its Cultures e.g. what it already exists, what is lacking and what should be done and focused on the objectives of the new, reunited Europe and its self-discovery.

Statements and conference papers can be found at http://www.berlinerkonferenz.net/index.php?id=90&L=en.

Cultural cooperation action as from 1 January 2007

On 30 November, an initial exchange of views on the proposed decision establishing the Culture 2007 programme (*COM (2004)0469 of 14 July 2004*) took place within the Parliamentary Committee on Culture and Education, with MEP Graça Moura as Rapporteur.

Under *Article 151(5) of the Treaty*, on which the proposal is based, the text must be adopted under the co decision procedure (jointly by Parliament and Council, with the latter acting unanimously). Adoption by the Culture committee is expected in July this year.

Visit the European Culture Portal at http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/portal/index_en.htm.

Circulation of works of art at European exhibitions

The inventory of national systems of public guarantees for the circulation of works of art to be shown at exhibitions in 31 European countries (*2003-4879-June 2004*) is now available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources_info/studies/garanti_en.html. This study was carried by the Réunion des Musées nationaux (France) in collaboration with the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Germany). Legislative texts in original language (for the 17 countries of the study and for the German Bundesländer which have a State indemnity scheme) are also available.

50th Anniversary of the European Cultural Convention
http://www.coe.int/t/e/DGIV/CulturalConvention/Web/default-en.asp

The opening conference to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the European Cultural Convention was held in Wroclaw, Poland on 9 and 10 December 2004. The purpose of this Convention is to develop mutual understanding among the peoples of Europe and reciprocal appreciation of their cultural diversity, to safeguard European culture, to promote national contributions to Europe's common cultural heritage respecting the same fundamental values and to encourage in particular the study of the languages, history and civilisation of the Parties to the Convention.

Education

EUROPASS, framework for transparency of qualifications and competences

Parliament adopted on 14 December 2004 a legislative resolution (*MEP Novak, A6-0056/2004)* to develop a framework for the various documents which certify the qualifications and experience of EU citizens. EUROPASS will present job applicants' qualifications and experience from other Member States in a common format. The use of any element of the EUROPASS system is purely voluntary and based on the 'European CV' developed in 2002, to which the other documents will be linked.

The Commission's proposal suggested the package would include the **European CV**;

Education

EUROPASS, framework for transparency of qualifications and competences
…Continued from page 6

the '**MobiliPass**' (periods of training in other Member States); the **Diploma Supplement** (additional information on what educational pathway the individual concerned followed to obtain the diploma); the **Certificate Supplement** (particular vocational qualification); and the **European Language Portfolio** (linguistic skills).

At first reading, Parliament adopted 14 amendments (most technical), 12 of which were agreed by the Council and the 2 remaining ones adopted in a revised form. Parliament adopted the report without further amendment.

Like Parliament, the Council added further documents to the EUROPASS package, including one relating to **IT skills**. It also suggested that citizens' access to the proposed EUROPASS information system should be more clearly set out in the legislation, and that the EUROPASS logo should be on all the documents in the portfolio.

EUROPASS came into force on 1 January 2005. The final act was published in the *OJ 2004/L 390 of 31 December 2004*, available at http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/.

Maastricht Communiqué, future priorities of European Cooperation in VET
http://www.vetconference-maastricht2004.nl/

A Ministerial meeting was held in Maastricht from 13 to 15 December 2004 aimed at adopting a *'Maastricht Communiqué'* [http://www.vetconference-maastricht2004.nl/pdf/Maastricht_Communique.pdf] as the next step in the Copenhagen process of cooperation in European vocational education.

Ministers responsible for Vocational Education and Training (VET) of 32 European countries, the European Social Partners and the European Commission agreed to strengthen their cooperation to modernise their VET systems for Europe to meet the 'Lisbon 2010' objectives, and to offer all Europeans the qualifications and competences they need to be fully integrated into the emerging knowledge based society.

Priority should be given to: the consolidation of priorities of the Copenhagen process and the implementation of concrete results; the development of an open and flexible European qualifications framework; the development and implementation of the European credit transfer system for VET (ECVET); the examination of specific learning needs and changing role of vocational teachers and trainers; and the improvement of the scope, precision and reliability of VET statistics.

Another Ministerial meeting will be held in two years to evaluate implementation and review priorities and strategies for VET within the Education and Training 2010 work programme.

e-Twinning, a new initiative for schools across Europe
http://www.etwinning.net/ww/en/pub/etwinning/index.htm

On 14 January, the Commission launched the e-Twinning portal. e-Twinning, the main element of the eLearning programme, is aimed at promoting the twinning of schools across Europe through the use of Internet. This new instrument was requested in the conclusions of the Barcelona European Council in March 2002.

ICT have a significant impact on the ways schools operate in the EU, as 93% of

schools are now connected to the Internet and the ratio of pupils per online PC has reduced to below 15.

All Member States of the EU, Iceland and Norway can participate. Two EU countries, Cyprus and Luxembourg will not have a National Support Service during the school year 2004-2005 for domestic reasons. Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey could also participate in the future.

Education

Commission Staff Working Paper on new indicators on education and training
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/indicators_en.pdf

SEC (2004)1524 of 29 November 2004
The work programme presented to the Barcelona Summit in 2002 included an indicative list of 33 indicators for measuring progress towards the agreed 13 concrete objectives of the education and training programme.

The 'Open Method Coordination' indicators on education and training are an important contribution to the benchmarking exercise of the Lisbon Strategy. The European Council also invited the Commission to draw up an annual synthesis report on the basis of the Structural Indicators.

In response to these requests the European Commission established a framework of 29 indicators for measuring progress towards the common objectives. A first report 'Progress towards the Common Objectives in Education and Training' was published in January 2004 [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/progress_towards_common_objectives_en.pdf].

Chapter 3 of the working paper responds to the request in the Joint Interim Report (*February 2004*) and to the indicator areas by suggesting strategies in: Key competencies, in particular learning-to-learn; Investment efficiency; Information and Communication Technology (ICT); Mobility; Adult education and VET. Three additional areas are proposed: Languages, Professional development of teachers and trainers and Social inclusion and active citizenship.

The Leonardo da Vinci Award 2004
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/valorisation/maastricht_en.html

The first ever Leonardo da Vinci Awards launched by the DG EAC were presented in Maastricht in December 2004. A special ceremony was held to reward the three projects which were judged the best examples of dynamic Trans-national vocational education and training (VET) in Europe.

The winning projects are:
§ 'LPQI, Leonardo Power Quality Initiative' (Pan-European project: Belgium, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, UK);
§ 'Accumulated Knowledge and Skills' (Denmark, Greece, Norway, Sweden, UK);

§ European Medical Imaging Technology Training' (France, Italy, Sweden, UK).

32 Leonardo "success stories" were selected from 165 innovative and successful Leonardo projects put forward in the summer of 2004 by the Leonardo da Vinci National Agencies and invited to the Leonardo da Vinci exhibition in Maastricht. They are an example of best practice in the development of practical, sustainable and innovative products and results. See the catalogue at
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/awards_en.pdf.

Education, implications for economic growth and public finances
http://europa.eu.int/comm/economy_finance/publications/economic_papers/2004/ecp217en.pdf

Andrea Montanino, Bartosz Przywara and David Young
DG for Economic and Financial Affairs
Economic Papers no 217, November 2004
ISBN 92-894-8127-7

This paper analyses the demographic and institutional influences underlying public spending on education and the consequences for average educational attainment and economic growth. According to the report, tentative numerical results suggest that the growth of average educational attainment is likely to slow slightly, compared to recent decades. Nevertheless, education is set to continue making a substantial contribution to economic growth in the EU as a whole, though the impact varies widely among Member States.

The issues are topical given, on one hand, EU objectives for increased investment in human resources and, on the other, increasing concerns about the sustainability of public finances, particularly in view of ageing populations.

Enlargement

Bulgaria and Romania, progress towards accession
COM (2004)0657 of 6 October 2004

Parliament adopted on 16 December 2004 two resolutions on Bulgaria and Romania's progress towards accession. The EU aims at welcoming them as members of the EU - if ready, in January 2007.

Bulgaria could join the EU on 1 January 2007. Parliament sees no obstacle to signature of the accession treaty in spring 2005. However, it called for greater efforts to be made to fight corruption and to speed up the integration of the Roma people through better access to education; healthcare and jobs [*MEP van Orden report, A6-0065/2004*].

Romania also has to make important efforts e.g. freedom of information, reform of the judicial and welfare systems. Parliament urged the Romanian Government to give priority to education [*MEP Moscovici report, A6-0061/2004*]. If Romania were not able to fulfil its obligations in time, accession may be postponed by one year, as it is the case for Bulgaria.

Moreover, additional Protocols between the EU-Bulgaria and the EU-Romania regarding the Europe Agreements to take accession of the new EU Member States into account are now being concluded.

EU Research and Development

Conditions of admission of students from third countries

On 13 December 2004, the General affairs Council discussed the proposed Directive laying down rules on the admission of third-country students in the EU for periods exceeding three months. The Directive - to be adopted after consultation with Parliament and waiving of the traditional reserve expressed by The Netherlands - is being proposed alongside two related Recommendations. The Council reached political agreement on the directive on 19 November 2004 and on the first recommendation on 26 May 2004, before Parliament had held its first exchange of views.

Some requirements to be taken into account by Member States for authorising admissions will be the validity of travel documents; parental authorisation; sickness insurance; guarantees on public security and health;

proof of admittance in an education centre; resources to cover subsistence, study and return travel costs. The new provisions will apply without prejudice to bilateral or multilateral agreements between Member States and third countries.

Parliament considered its draft report in January and set up the deadline for tabling amendments to 16 February 2005. The draft report (16 December 2004) can be consulted at http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/PR/549/549570/549570en.pdf. Parliament Rapporteur MEP Peillon deplores the fact that the Council is envisaging the possibility of derogating from the proposed system for two years after the directive's entry into force - this would mean a postponement until 2009.

A call for public to help compose themes for future EU research
http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/headlines/news/article_04_11_30_en.html

The European Commission launched a public consultation to allow stakeholders to shape the forthcoming Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), by suggesting thematic domains for future research.

The Commission has proposed the FP7 to

be larger and more ambitious than its predecessor, with double FP6's €17.5 billion budget and a much stronger focus on fundamental research. The partners expect to complement existing EU mobility initiatives. Under the Marie Curie umbrella, the Union already has numerous career and mobility initiatives in place e.g.

A call for public to help compose themes for future EU research

ERACAREERS (Researcher's Mobility Portal) and ERA-MORE (European network of mobility centres), the Marie Curie grants and fellowships.

After consultation, which closed on 31 December 2004, the Commission will use three criteria to identify which thematic domains to include in FP7: contribution to EU policy objectives (including the Lisbon objective); European research potential to carry our excellent RTD in the field; and European added value, e.g. there must be a strong need for additional public funding and for such intervention to be at European level.

More information on Thematic priorities in FP7 consultation, European Heads of Research Councils, background on consultation process and the Commission communication 'Science and technology, the key to Europe's future' (*June 2004*) can be found at http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/themes/index_en.html.

Information Society

WSIS, Council conclusions on World Summit on the Information Society

www.itu.int/wsis/
www.ifla.org/III/wsis.html

On 9 December 2004, the Telecommunications Council held an exchange of views on the key issues of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process, namely, the main political issues for the EU during the second phase of WSIS and the most significant public policy issues regarding the governance of Internet. The Council adopted conclusions on *'Translating the Geneva Principles into Actions and Preparing for the Tunis Phase'* which address, on the one hand the implementation of the commitments undertaken in Geneva and on the other, examine the EU approach on Internet Governance (*13 October 2004*).

The Council invited the Commission to propose initiatives for implementing the Plan of Action and report on progress of the preparatory second phase.

In its conclusions, the Council wants the outcome of the Tunis Summit to be adopted by Heads of State and Government as a document which consists of two parts:
§ a concise political preamble reaffirming the commitment to translate into concrete action the Declaration of Principles and an operative part based on the Plan of Action;
§ Progress made between Phases I and II on the two unresolved issues from the first phase (Financing and Internet Governance).

The document should also concentrate on the implementation of the Geneva undertakings, focusing on a limited number of priority applications e.g. eInclusion, eGovernment, eLearning, eHealth, and eBusiness.

Council Resolution on the future of ICT
http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/trans/83022.pdf

Telecommunications ministers adopted on 9 December 2004, following an exchange of views on the basis of a Presidency note, a Resolution on '*Looking into the future of Information Communication Technologies (ICT)*' to be submitted as a contribution to the debate on the mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy (March 2005). The Resolution will be published in the Official Journal, available at http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/.

The Council invited the Commission to put forward proposals, where needed, to keep the appropriate regulatory environment; to analyse the competitiveness of the ICT sector and start preparatory work for the follow-up of the eEurope 2005 Action plan and to recognise the importance of ICT in the coming proposal for the next research Framework Programme.

Commission consultation on ICT products and services

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/policy/accessibility/com_ea_2005/index_en.htm

The Commission launched on 10 January a public consultation on how to make the benefits of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) available to the widest possible range of citizens as a first step to remove the technical challenges and difficulties that people experience when trying to use electronic products or services e.g. computers, mobile phones or Internet.

Consultation focuses on three key areas in which the EU could promote e-Accessibility: public procurement, certification and the use of legislation. The consultation document argues that EU Member State public authorities should develop common requirements to facilitate the purchasing of accessible good and services and proposes to assess whether a certification mechanism should provide a quality label for accessible products and services.

Consultation will be open until 12 February 2005. The results will feed into a Commission Communication on e-Accessibility to be adopted before June 2005.

EMCC Report on ICT and related services in the EU

http://www.eurofound.eu.int/newsroom/archive_pressrelease/pressrel_041213.htm

The European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC) has released its new report '*Outsourcing of ICT and related services in the EU*', which shows that employment in other business services is growing consistently across all the countries studied and, in some cases e.g. the Czech Republic, this growth is quite spectacular.

Three major trends have been identified: outsourcing of ICT services is moving from an experimental to a consolidation phase; there is continuing growth in the importance of intermediaries and the extension of offshore outsourcing into increasingly skilled fields.

eEurope 2005, Survey of eGovernment services

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/activities/egovernment_research/doc/top_of_the_web_report_2004.pdf

The survey 'Top of the Web - User Satisfaction and Usage of eGovernment services' (*December 2004*) considers progress made under the eEurope action plan 2005 in the field of eGovernment. It covered 48,228 users (19,896 replies from citizens and 28,332 from businesses).

According to the survey, 90% of users appreciate the quality of services offered electronically and over 60% are very satisfied with these services. 77% of users would recommend the online services; there were also some clear messages about areas for improvement. The most commonly reported benefits are saving time and gaining flexibility e.g. online income tax declarations already save 7 million hours, online VAT declarations save about € 10 per declaration. On average, citizens and businesses save over one hour per service transaction.

The Commission intends to bring forward proposals for a new eEurope 2010 initiative, including proposals for public services, before summer 2005.

Final report on the assessment of IST RTD

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/information_society/evaluation/ist_rtd/5_year_assessment/index_en.htm

The Five-Year Assessment Panel of Information Society Technology-Research and Technology Development (IST-RTD) published its final report for the period 1999-2003 on 17 January. It evaluates the implementation, effectiveness, achievements and impacts of IST-RTD programmes. It also assessed the evolution, future perspectives, options and requirements for future IST RTD.

Key recommendations are to increase funding for IST RTD; reduce bureaucracy; step up the involvement of SMEs and new Member States; improve communications and target them by audience to broaden take-up of research results and assess the need for additional human resources.

Preservation of academic publications in danger

On 1 November 2004 relevant key players met at the European Conference 'Permanent access to the records of science' in The Hague (Netherlands) to discuss permanent access to science records (including social sciences and humanities) and the creation of electronic archiving systems for scientific publications, as a contribution to the present debate in the Council about the future EU support to research and the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7).

The conference resulted in conclusions and recommendations on infrastructure, RTD issues, the need for cooperation and obtaining European funding and support for national and European policy makers. Proceedings of the panel discussion, conclusions and papers are available at http://www.kb.nl/coop/euconference/.

Moreover, a task force made of representatives of the different sectors involved will be asked to define a research agenda and develop scenarios for a European networked infrastructure for long-term preservation and permanent access. Its results will be presented to the European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) and to the Commission DG for Research.

Libraries and academic organisations should work together for the sustainable preservation of digital and scientific information for the future. The Dutch Royal Library in cooperation with IBM has set up 'e-Depot', storage and opening-up system that automatically adjusts to new technological developments.

Internal Market

Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications

Second reading
Co decision procedure

On 21 December, the Council adopted a common position (*13781/2/2004 - C6-0008/2005*) on the proposed Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications aimed at providing simpler and clearer rules for the professions concerned. The Commission assessed it on 6 January [*COM (2004)0853*] and Parliament in turn, received it on 13 January. The vote by the Parliamentary committee responsible is expected in May 2005. The Luxembourg Presidency hopes agreement will be reached by July.

The draft Directive seeks to consolidate into a single Directive twelve "Sectoral" Directives covering doctors, nurses responsible for general care, dental practitioners, veterinary surgeons, midwives, pharmacists and architects, as well as three "general system" Directives.

It is connected to the **Services directive**, for which Parliament vote at first reading is not expected until July. The Luxembourg Presidency however is currently preparing a working document on the issue.

Systems of recognition of professional qualifications

On 22 December 2004, the Commission referred **Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece and France** to the Court as each of these Member States has informed the Commission of the adoption of only part of the set of national measures necessary to implement Directive 2001/19/EC on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications. The deadline agreed to transpose the Directive into national law was 1 January 2003. The Directive is part of the "SLIM" initiative to simplify single market legislation. It makes it considerably easier to

keep up to date the lists of national qualifications which can be recognised automatically in other Member States and overhauls the workings of the overall system for the recognition of professional qualifications.

As long as it is not implemented fully by all Member States, some professionals will not be able to take advantage as easily or as quickly as they should. Users of the services of such professionals will not have as wide a choice of providers as they should.

Internet

Parliament and Council approve Safer Internet plus Programme
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/activities/sip/index_en.htm

On 2 December 2004, Parliament voted in favour of the Safer Internet plus Programme 2005-2008 [*MEP Mastenbroek - A6-0033/2004*]. The final text was unanimously agreed at first reading with EU Telecommunications Council which voted on 9 December. The 4-year programme (2005–2008) aims at empowering parents and teachers with internet safety tools. As regards the financial provisions, the compromise text provides for an amount of € 45 million for the four-year period (€ 20,050 million until 31 December 2006).

It develops four actions: fighting illegal content, tackling unwanted and harmful content, promoting a safer environment and raising awareness. In each case, international cooperation would be an integral part of the action. It also covers other media e.g. videos and explicitly addresses the fight against racism and "spam".

In addition, following calls for proposals of 4 September 2003 and 4 August 2004, four evaluations were organised and funding decisions taken for 39 projects: 19 for European hotlines network; 18 dealing with raising awareness of safer use of the Internet; 1 for applied research for media education; and 1 quality labelling scheme. Moreover, negotiations have been opened with 2 hotlines and 4 awareness nodes. Further details will be published once negotiations are complete. A call for tenders for "*Benchmarking of filtering software and services, SIP-BENCH*" was also published on 14 December 2004; time-limit for receipt of tenders is 28 February 2005.

INSAFE, a European awareness-raising network was launched in Prague in November to coordinate and reinforce actions undertaken by national nodes and raise their level of visibility.

European Commission signs contract with the .eu Registry
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=1383

Since 12 October 2004, the Commission allows EURid - a consortium of Belgian, Italian and Swedish organisations - to set and permit the registration of .eu domain names.

Before users can register .eu domain names, the Commission will ask the Internet Corporation For Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to introduce the new .eu TLD; the Registry will accredit registrars – companies that can register domains on behalf of end users, under competitive market rules; providers of Alternative

Dispute Resolution (ADRs) services will have to be enlisted; the requisite technical infrastructure and software will have to be put in place, and the Registry must approve a registration policy.

Following these steps, the Commission expects the .eu domain to start with a phased registration period in the third quarter of 2005, in which certain right holders e.g. trade mark holders can register domain names. Registration will then be opened up to all other eligible parties.

Telecommunications

EU electronic communications, more progress needed on regulatory reform
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/ecomm/all_about/implementation_enforcement/annualreports/10threport/index_en.htm

The Commission adopted the latest report on the implementation of the EU electronic communications regulatory package on 6 December 2004.

Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, and **Luxembourg** have not yet fully transposed the EU rules into national

primary law. The Commission has launched infringement proceedings against Member States that have not notified it of these laws, and proceedings are still pending before the European Court of Justice against **Belgium, Greece** and **Luxembourg**. Secondary (implementing) legislation is still to be adopted in eight Member States (**Spain, France, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia** and **Slovakia**).

EBLIDA, European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations

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Information sources used include

Bulletin Quotidien Europe
Council Press Office Newsroom, http://ue.eu.int/newsroom/newmain.asp?lang=1
European Parliament Press Service http://www.europarl.eu.int/press/index_en.htm
RAPID - Press and Communication Service of the European Commission, http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/welcome.htm
EUR-Lex, http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/. Since 1 November 2004, EUR-Lex incorporates the CELEX service and provides free access in 20 languages to EU law.
Europa, http://europa.eu.int/
Various mailing lists

Calls for Tenders are published in the **S** series of the OJ as well as in the Tenders Electronic Daily database TED, http://ted.publications.eu.int/official/ (new dates for the Official Journal Supplement since January 2005). EBLIDA Hot News online provides links to calls and programmes!

Calls are in general published in the **C** series of the Official Journal (OJ) of the European Communities, which comprises information and notices issued by the institutions of the Union e.g. preparatory legislative documents and questions put by Members of Parliament to the Commission and Council.

The **C** series is available online via EUR-Lex. Please note that the **C E** edition of the Official Journal, which is only available online, now publishes the explanatory statement for all Commission proposals.

EBLIDA encourages dissemination of our information. However, we would ask that the source be acknowledged. Documents are available at the EBLIDA Secretariat.

About EBLIDA…

EBLIDA is the European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations.

We are an independent umbrella association of national library, information, documentation and archive associations and institutions in Europe.

Subjects on which EBLIDA concentrates are European information society issues, including copyright & licensing, culture & education and EU enlargement. We promote unhindered access to information in the digital age and the role of archives and libraries in achieving this goal.