



June 2005

EBLIDA Hot News

The EBLIDA newsletter on EU library & information society issues

Information Society

Highlights:

- § Commission launches five-year strategy to boost the digital economy, p.1
- § EBLIDA meets with the Federation of European Publishers, p. 2
- § Adoption of the directive on the recognition of professional qualifications, p. 12

EU negotiation principles for the World Summit on the Information Society http://europa.eu.int/information_society/activities/internationalrel/docs/wsis/com02062005_en.pdf

Preparations for the second World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis (16-18 November 2005) have entered a crucial phase. This summit should reach an international consensus on two key unresolved issues from the first phase: Internet governance and financial mechanisms for bridging the digital divide between developed and developing countries.

The Commission adopted on 2 June a communication (COM (2005)0234) outlining the EU's priorities for the Tunis meeting, which recommends not reopening debate on questions settled in Geneva, but instead focusing on arrangements for implementing agreed principles. To promote an Information Society for all, respectful of human rights and of freedom of expression

and cultural and linguistic diversity, the EU wishes to preserve and strengthen the sound foundations laid during the first summit in Geneva.

In parallel to the discussions in the WSIS process, Telecommunications ministers' exchange of views on 28 June centred on the future of **Internet governance**.

WSIS is a formal UN Summit at the level of heads of State and Government. The EU is represented by the EU Presidency and the European Commission, with Members of Parliament included. Further information can be found at <http://www.itu.int/wsis> and/or http://europa.eu.int/information_society/activities/internationalrel/global_issues/wsis/index_en.htm.

Commission launches five-year strategy to boost the digital economy

The Commission adopted on 1 June the "European Information Society 2010" initiative to foster growth and jobs in the information society and media industries.

The i2010 is a comprehensive strategy for modernising and deploying all EU policy instruments to encourage the development of the digital economy: regulatory instruments, research and partnerships with industry. It is the first Commission initiative to be adopted under the EU's renewed Lisbon strategy; it focuses on ICT, the most promising sector of the EU economy. In i2010, three policy priorities are outlined: to increase EU investment in research on ICT technologies by 80% and to promote an inclusive European information society. To close the digital divide, the Commission

proposes an action plan on eGovernment for citizen-centred services (2006); three quality of life ICT flagship initiatives: technologies for an ageing society, safer, smarter and cleaner cars and **digital libraries**. With regard to the latter, a communication addressing development, management and use of digital archives for text, image and sound information promoting European cultural heritage is scheduled for July. Moreover, the European Commission will discuss the topic with national libraries at a meeting scheduled for September in Luxembourg.

Two crucial programmes, the FP7 and the Competitiveness and Innovation programme (CIP) give priority to ICT.

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Lobbying for archives and libraries

EBLIDA meets with the Federation of European Publishers

On 15 June, the Federation of European Publishers (FEP) and EBLIDA representatives met formally for the first time in Brussels to discuss EU policy and legislative issues which cause concern to both organisations' constituencies. Initial talks served to establish a common agenda for future development, including the following subjects:

- § EU Copyright & related rights legislation e.g. Copyright, Database, IPR Enforcement, Public Lending Right directives
- § Open Access publishing
- § Google Scholar & European Digital Library
- § Digital Rights Management systems
- § Directive on Collective management

EBLIDA was represented by the Director, María Pía González Pereira and members of the Copyright Expert Group: Toby Bainton

(Chair), Emanuella Giavarra (EBLIDA Legal Advisor), Harald von Hielmcrone and Pedro Hípola (substitute). FEP representatives were Anne Bergman Tahon (Director), Olga Martín Sancho (Legal Advisor), Hugh Jones (UK Publishers Association), Catherine Blache (Syndicat National de l'Édition, France), and Anne-Katrin Leenen (Borsenverein, Germany). Olav Stokkmo, Secretary General of the International Federation of Reproduction Rights Organisations (IFRRO) joined the participants for lunch.

Amongst others, EBLIDA and FEP agreed that the meeting was very positive and decided to hold a follow up meeting in Brussels on 14 September. On the basis of the effectiveness of a second meeting, a more structured discussion group could be agreed upon. Please contact the EBLIDA Secretariat for further information.

<http://www.eblida.org>

<http://www.fep-fee.be/>

EBLIDA meets with LIBER to promote further cooperation

Further to previous informal steps from both organisations, LIBER (*Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche*) representatives made contact with EBLIDA last May to discuss possible ways of closer cooperation. A formal letter was sent by Mr Raf Dekeyser, LIBER Development Director, to both EBLIDA President and Director, inviting them to attend an exploratory meeting, organised in connection with the LIBER Annual General Conference in Groningen on 5 July. A preliminary meeting was arranged and held in The Hague on 20 June, where, amongst others, the following issues were discussed.

LIBER wants to put more emphasis on defending matters of common interest within the European community, thus better serving its members. A position paper was sent lately and other library organisations will be consulted on 5 July.

EBLIDA has built up a vast lobbying expertise, network and prestige during its thirteen years of existence. It should continue to be the European voice for Libraries & Archives. The scientific libraries

form an important part of its constituency. EBLIDA welcomes stronger, more focused cooperation between the scientific libraries but warns against a partition of the library world. The contribution of representatives of scientific libraries in the Executive Committee and the working groups is essential. It would be a great loss when EBLIDA loses its claim to speak for the libraries in Europe with one single voice.

EBLIDA has done a lot of work with a very small professional bureau (2, 3 persons) and the active cooperation of many voluntary workers from the European library world. LIBER depends also on members' voluntary contributions and could establish lately a very modest professional support. It is very important that we use all the available resources the best we can.

LIBER wants to strengthen EBLIDA's role on the European lobby and advocacy field. It respects its policies and chosen strategies but wants to join forces to work in very close cooperation. An EBLIDA/LIBER working group consisting of members of the boards of both organizations could be formed to discuss areas and ways of cooperation.

<http://www.eblida.org>

<http://www.kb.dk/liber/>

Audiovisual

MEDIA 2007 Programme

*Co Decision Procedure
First Reading*

Pending Parliament's opinion, the Council adopted on 23 May an overall partial general approach to the Media 2007 action programme (2007-2013) which aims at establishing the Council's position on the activities to be supported under the programme. The 'partial' nature of this approach is due to the fact that the budgetary aspects have still to be discussed, remaining unresolved until the future Community financial framework has been defined (Financial Perspective 2007-2013)

[Article 2 of the Commission proposal is not part of the agreed text].

Under the proposed legal basis (Articles 150(4) and 157(3) of the Treaty), the proposed programme requires qualified majority in the Council and co decision procedure with the European Parliament. The CULT Committee will vote on the report in September; vote in plenary is scheduled for October.

Television without Frontiers, application of articles 4 and 5

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/stat/2003/4-5/27-03-finalreport.pdf>

[COM (2004)0524 of 28 July 2004]

Own-initiative Report

The report by MEP WEBER (A6-0202/2005) constituting the Sixth Communication on the application of Articles 4 and 5 of the Television without Frontiers (TVwF) Directive (2001-2002), was adopted by the Culture committee on 21 June. Vote in plenary is scheduled for September. The Rapporteur underlines that an ideal European audiovisual model has to find balance between an independent public service and a dynamic private sector.

being able to regulate broadcast services that are primarily targeted at their countries, but being produced by a broadcaster established in another Member State, not subject to regulation by the target-country.

They also considered certain amendments which could be made to the Directive e.g. measures and proposals already initiated in connection with the fight against incitement to hatred in broadcasts from outside the EU. In this context, they recognised that the Directive should be adapted to the most recent technological developments. If these measures were to be fully effective, neighbouring countries also needed to be alerted, particularly where, for technological reasons, broadcasts whose content did not comply with Community values must be restricted at source.

In addition, audiovisual ministers discussed the review of the Directive on 24 May. Belgian, Austrian, Czech, Estonian, Irish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Netherlands, Polish, Portuguese, Slovenian and Swedish delegations showed their concern at not

Collection and preservation, competitiveness of related industrial activities

[COM (2004)0171 of 16 March 2004]

*Co Decision Procedure
First Reading*

The proposed recommendation on film heritage and the competitiveness of related industrial activities follows the Commission's communication on certain legal aspects relating to cinematographic and other audiovisual works and deals with two aspects of issues vital for the cinematographic industry: state aid for the film industry and the protection of cinematographic works for Europe's common heritage, in particular, the legal deposit of audiovisual works.

The European Parliament adopted on 10 May the report by MEP HEGYI (A6-

0101/2005) broadly approving the proposal, subject to a number of compromise amendments to avoid second reading. MEPs recommend that Member States establish a system of mandatory deposit of cinematographic works with national archives, and set up a database at the European Audiovisual Observatory. The need for increased use of digital and new technologies in the collection, cataloguing, preservation and restoration of cinematographic works is also stressed.

The recommendation is now awaiting Council first reading.

Consumer Protection

Rome II, cross-border disputes, non-contractual obligations

[COM (2003)0427 of 22 July 2003]

The report by MEP WALLIS (A6-0211/2005) was adopted by the Legal Affairs committee on 27 June. The amendments presented to the proposed regulation are intended to rationalise and simplify the original proposal. In contrast to previous instruments where the Community has taken over an existing international convention on private law, in this case there was no previous convention, which provides a chance to legislate in a specifically Community context.

Above all, the Rapporteur wants to ensure that the regulation can co-exist with Internal Market legislation and promote, rather than hamper, its functioning. Particular

consideration has been given to the Regulation's relationship with the Television without Frontiers and the eCommerce directives. As far as other non-contractual obligations are concerned, the Rapporteur has chosen to deal with unjust enrichment and agency without authority in two separate articles. As regards violations of privacy and rights relating to the personality, the Rapporteur believes that the '*lex loci delicti commissi*' should apply in principle, but that the court should be able to consider that a manifestly closer connection exists with the country of publication or broadcasting having regard to sales per Member State, audience figures and so.

Vote in plenary is scheduled for July.

*Co Decision Procedure
First Reading*

Cooperation with Third Countries

ASEM and Europe will reinforce cultural dialogue to fight intolerance

ASEM culture ministers and UNESCO leaders closed the second 'Europe-Asia Dialogue' on cultural diversity on 8 June with a final declaration which will set up a 15-point action plan to encourage cultural events and exhibitions between Asian and European countries and facilitate

development of co production and cooperation between **theatres, art centres, museums and publishers.**

Projects will also involve the **UNESCO Convention on cultural diversity** to be adopted next October.

EU-Brazil Agreement on scientific and technological cooperation

The Competitiveness Council adopted on 7 June a Decision approving an Agreement on scientific and technological cooperation between the EU and Brazil, signed on 19 January 2004, which aims at encouraging,

developing and facilitating cooperative activities in areas of common interest by carrying out and supporting scientific and technological research and development activities.

EU-Mexico Agreement for scientific and technological cooperation

General affairs ministers adopted on 13 June a Decision approving the conclusion of an Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the EU and Mexico, signed on 3 February 2004. The purpose of

the Agreement is to encourage, develop and facilitate cooperation in areas of common interest by conducting scientific and technological research and development or by contributing to such activities.

EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council

The EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council welcomed on 13 June the progress achieved so far on the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Action Plan and looked forward to further progress in areas such as political,

economic and social reforms; justice and home affairs, trade, market and regulatory reform; transport, energy, **information society**, environment and **people-to people contacts.**

Western Balkans participation in Community programmes

Justice and Home Affairs ministers adopted on 3 June Decisions approving the conclusion of Framework Agreements with **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia and Montenegro**, as

well as a Protocol with the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** on the general principles for the participation of these countries in Community programmes.

Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

Call for tenders for copyright-related studies launched

On 30 March, the DG for Internal Market and Services published a prior information notice regarding a call for tenders on several studies:

- § Study on the implementation of the Directive 2001/29/EC on the harmonisation of the certain aspects of **copyright & related rights in the information society**. The award procedure was scheduled for 13 June;
- § Study on **recasting copyright for the knowledge economy**. The award procedure was scheduled for 13 June;
- § Study on the implementation of the Directive 98/71/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13.10.1998 on the **legal protection of designs** (15 April 2005);
- § Study to monitor the development of the European self-regulatory codes for online advertising by the regulated professions as foreseen in the **Electronic commerce**

directive (10 May 2005);

§ Study on the economic impact of the **Electronic commerce directive** (10 May 2005).

For further information contact the European Commission, DG for Internal Market and Services, C107, 8/55, B-1049 Brussels; fax: +32 (2) 299 30 88; email: eu-intmarket-contracts@cec.eu.int or visit http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/internal_market/calls_en.htm, <http://ted.publications.eu.int/> [2005/S 62-059340 of 30 March 2005].

In addition, a special feature entitled *Copyright at the Crossroads?* Was published in the Single Market News of June 2005 (Edition 37), available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/smn/smn37/docs/special-feature_en.pdf.

Culture

Latest developments on cultural activities

Culture ministers discussed on 23 May the **Culture 2007 Programme** (2007-2013). Contribution by the Estonian, Hungarian and Latvian delegations were made recalling their proposal to include in Culture 2007 support measures to commemorate the victims and preserve the main sites and archives connected with Stalinist deportations. EU culture ministers also met for informal talks in Luxembourg on 27 June.

The Culture committee of Parliament had an exchange of views with Commissioner FIGEL on 15 June. Referring to the Council meeting of May, he explained the EU views and priorities regarding the renewed **Lisbon strategy** and the importance of education,

youth and culture and underscored the five main points of the legislative programme to come: **Citizens for Europe** 2007-2013; strategy for **EU Universities** - EU actions will focus on increasing universities attractiveness and on finding public as well as private financial resources to invest in research and development; **European Capital of Culture**; **Youth** and the **UNESCO preliminary draft Convention on cultural diversity**.

Furthermore, the Culture committee adopted on 20 June the report by MEP HONEYBALL (A6-0200/2005) on options for developing the **European Schools system**. Vote in plenary is scheduled for September.

Culture

European Cities of Culture for the years 2007 to 2019

The EU-10 which joined the EU on 1 May 2004 were not included in *Annex 1* of Decision 1419/1999/EC (*OJL 166 of 1 July 1999*) setting out the chronological of entitlement from 2005 to 2019 - starting with Ireland in 2005, Greece in 2006. The Commission thus proposed in November 2003 amending this Decision to enable the new Member States to participate from 2009, which was adopted by Parliament and Council last April. As a result, from 2009 onwards, there will be two European Capitals of Culture each year (one from the EU-15, one from the new Member States).

The present proposal suggests that the European Capitals of Culture will be designated in two phases, on the basis of the assessment of a panel composed of experts appointed by the Institutions and experts

designated by the Member States concerned.

A monitoring panel will support the designated cities in their preparation phases until the start of the event; a prize will reward the quality of the programme once finalised. It replaces and repeals Decision 1419/1999 and will apply as of 2007. It includes a transitional period between the two schemes to cover the designations for 2011 and 2012.

Furthermore, culture ministers took note on 23 May of the two nominees proposed by the Luxembourg and UK delegations for the selection panel responsible to designate the "European Capitals of Culture" for 2010, Mr Claude Frisoni (Luxembourg) and Sir Jeremy Isaacs (UK). Both members will be officially appointed by the Council in the second half of this year.

Citizens for Europe programme

The proposal for the "Citizens for Europe" programme designed to promote active European citizenship for the period 2007-2013 was submitted by the Commission and was the subject of an initial exchange of views in Council on 23 May. The Presidency had suggested that the following questions for guiding the exchange of views be addressed by Ministers:

- § Do you think that this programme, which is devoted to citizens, helps to make European citizenship a reality? Does it encourage citizens to realise their citizenship fully and actively at European level and make this European area, which is based both on common values and on respect for its diversity, their own?
- § How do you see the European added value of the programme, which aims to focus on Trans national actions and exchanges and

encourage the mobility of citizens, and also of ideas, across Europe?

- § What is your perception of the special attention this programme gives to the participation of citizens and organisations of all Member States, particularly those which have only recently joined the EU?

Delegations warmly welcomed the proposed programme in that it aimed at bringing citizens closer to the reality of Europe, to promote their active participation in democratic life and to enhance mutual understanding between citizens of the various Member States. It was acknowledged that there was real added value to be gained from the fact that such an initiative was being taken at European level. Delegations also recognised that particular attention should be paid to those Member States which had only recently joined the EU.

Second interim evaluation of the Culture 2000 framework programme

http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources_info/evaluation/evaluation_en.html

The contract to prepare the second interim evaluation of the Culture 2000 Community framework programme (*EAC/31/04*) was awarded on 14 April 2005 [2005/S 118-116049 of 21 June 2005]. Thirteen tenders

were received. The name of the contractor is **ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd**, Dr Andrew McCoshan, Priestley House, 28-34 Albert Street, Birmingham B4 7UD, UK; fax: (44) 121 616 36 99.

Cultural participation, Euro barometer survey

Furthermore, the contract to evaluate the questionnaire on **cultural participation** included in the **Euro barometer** survey (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat>) was awarded on 13 May [2005/S 92-090291 of 13 May 05] to **AGILIS SA**, Mr George Petrakos, Director-General, 77, Acadimias Street, Athens, GR-10678; tel.: (30-210) 330 43 15; fax: (30-210) 330 43 45; email:

George.Petrakos@agilis-sa.gr or visit <http://www.agilis-sa.gr>.

Also in preparation are a study on the **cultural economy** in Europe (*EAC/03/05*) and an inventory of the **best practices linking culture with education** in the Member States, the 12 candidate countries and the EEA countries (*EAC/59/03*).

Cultural Diversity, a major step towards adoption of UNESCO Draft Convention

<http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php>

[URL ID=25926&URL DO=DO TOPIC&URL SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php?URL_ID=25926&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

The negotiation of a draft UNESCO Convention on cultural diversity was concluded successfully in Paris on 3 June. The third negotiating session adopted a revised draft Convention and recommended to the next UNESCO General Conference (October 2005) to ratify it. As per the mandate given by the Council in November 2004, the European Commission negotiated on behalf of the European Community.

The revised draft Convention legitimises cultural policies and promotes international cooperation. It reaffirms the respect of

international obligations whilst obliging Parties to take into account cultural diversity objectives when applying and interpreting all their international obligations, and when negotiating new international commitments. This is a first in international law.

Around ten countries e.g. USA, Australia, New Zealand, Israel and Argentina rejected the principle of non-subordination of the future convention to the WTO, whereas the remaining 140 delegations approved the principle of cultural goods being regarded beyond merchandise subject to WTO laws.

Mobility of European museum collections

On 23 May, culture ministers held an exchange of views on the mobility of European museum collections in preparation for an action plan. The Work Plan for Culture 2005-2006 [see *Council conclusions of 16 November 2004*] specifies that a group of experts will submit a report during the first half of 2005. The mandate of this group was to prepare practical recommendations for improving the mobility of museum collections, with a special emphasis on questions related to e.g. insurance and indemnity, standards, guidelines and the role of the registrar. The report '*Lending to Europe: Recommendations on collection mobility for European museums*' was submitted to the Council by Mr Ronald de Leeuw, Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam). A further follow up by the upcoming EU Presidencies is foreseen.

Delegations reacted very positively to the possibility of promoting mobility of museum collections.

Amongst the problems to be considered and resolved under any action plan, reference was made to the transport of works, possible insurance arrangements, non-seize ability of works, need for an exchange of information on works to ensure that those in charge of other museums were aware of those works, the possibilities of using digital technology to disseminate works, and long-term lending. Delegations acknowledged that action at this level should involve museums as well as Member States and the EU.

They thought that any support measures should not necessarily be binding and could be based on the exchange of good practice. They also pointed out that implementation should not lead to the introduction of cumbersome structures.

The report can be consulted at http://www.museumcollectionsonthemove.org/references/Lending_to_Europe.pdf.

Education

Council conclusions on indicators in education and training

On 24 May, Education ministers adopted conclusions on indicators in education and training recognising that a coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks is beneficial to monitor performance and progress in this field. The establishment of the **Lifelong Learning Research Unit** at ISPRA can increase the Commission's research capacity in terms of development.

As regards indicator areas where data collections already exist or EU surveys are planned, the Commission is to further develop and submit strategies of efficiency of investment, ICT, mobility, adult education, teachers and trainers, vocational education and training, social inclusion and active citizenship. As regards indicator areas

where no comparable data exist, the Commission is to present detailed survey proposals for the development of new indicators in e.g. learning-to-learn, language skills and any other area where new surveys might become relevant. The Commission is to report back to the Council to assess progress made no later than the end of 2006.

Moreover, Education ministers exchanged views on the proposal for **integrated guidelines for Growth and Jobs** (2005-2008) submitted by the Commission on 12 April. It was stressed that education and training serve wider goals than those concerning economy and employment e.g. culture, citizenship and personal development.

ECTS Label and Diploma Supplement Label selection round 2004

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/socrates/ects/selection04.pdf>

Out of 55 applications, 3 higher education institutions have been awarded the **ECTS Label** for 2005-2008. They join the 11 institutions awarded under the 2003 selection round. The ECTS Label is awarded to institutions that are able to apply ECTS credits correctly in all degree programmes offered; make an ECTS Course Catalogue in the local language of instruction and in English accessible via its website and use properly all other obligatory ECTS tools for Erasmus mobility.

In addition, 30 higher education institutions were awarded the **Diploma Supplement (DS) Label** under the 2004 selection round, which join the 28 institutions awarded in

2003. The Commission received 71 applications. The DS Label, valid for three years, is awarded to institutions that are able to issue a DS to all graduates in first/second cycle degree programmes, free of charge and in a widely spoken European language; make accessible public information and use the DS model.

Among the 31 countries that have adopted ECTS, only the Holy See and Scotland use it now fully for credit transfer purposes; the DS is very widespread. Most countries have a national body for evaluation and/or accreditation, the majority members of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

National Trends in the Bologna Process, Higher Education in Europe

<http://www.eurydice.org/Documents/FoHE2005/en/FrameSet.htm>

Eurydice published a report covering the situation in the 40 current states signatory to the **Bologna Declaration** for the Bergen Conference on 19 and 20 May 2005.

Courses in higher education now have a two-cycle (Bachelor/Master) structure in 33 countries. Hungary, Romania and Spain have recently passed legislation to introduce this cycle in the near future; Portugal and Sweden are also preparing draft legislation to the

same end. This structure is now applicable to almost all fields of study. A second-cycle (Master) is generally required to embark on a doctoral programme. Candidates occasionally have to satisfy other requirements often determined by their institutions. In nine European countries, it is possible under certain circumstances to gain access to a doctoral programme with a first-cycle (Bachelor) qualification.

EU Information Policy

InfEuropa Schuman 14, new public information centre in Belgium

The new public information centre **InfEuropa Schuman 14** was launched on 30 June as a joint action by the Council of the European Union and the European Commission. It will be run by the Council jointly with the Commission Representation in Belgium; it has a broader mandate and is intended for all sections of Belgian civil society, above all through a network of public information centres - known as **Europe Direct** - which has 11 relays throughout Belgium to serve the country's French, Dutch and German-speaking public.

The centre will have an information and documentation desk, a conference room, a visitor reception service and an area for exhibitions and cultural events. Anyone with a question on European affairs will be able to consult the services free of charge.

Contact Victor Flavian, victor.flavian@consilium.eu.int (Council) or Mikolaj Dowgielewicz, mikolaj.dowgielewicz@cec.eu.int (Commission) for further information.

EU Research and Development

FP7, consultation on the proposed measures for simplification

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/consultations/list_en.html

This consultation aims at providing an opportunity for all researchers, but especially those within the EU (and Associated Countries), to offer their views on the 10 proposed measures for simplification contained in the staff working document on simplification that accompanied the Commission proposal on the Seventh Framework Programme (*COM (2005)119 of 6 April 2005*) at http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/pdf/ec_2005_0431_1_en.pdf. Input from all parties with an interest in the policy areas mentioned on other issues that would be addressed by the Rules for Participation e.g. intellectual property provisions, evaluation criteria, financial collective responsibility and

other participation principles is very much welcome before 31 August 2005 (issues related to the rules for participation). Comments on other aspects of simplification can be sent after that date.

Furthermore, the European Commission co-hosted a 2-day workshop on 'Simplifying participation in EU research - Opening up accessibility for all' on 16 and 17 June to review a series of proposed new measures to simplify access to FP7. Issues addressed during the workshop were legal and financial rules, Community funding schemes, intellectual property rights, evaluation and selection processes. Presentations can be found at the URL above.

409 proposals received under the last Priority 7 (FP6) call for proposals

The last calls for proposals under Priority 7 (FP6) closed on 13 April. Calls were organised around various instruments. Evaluation of these proposals started on 30 May by more than 200 independent evaluators from all European and some non-European countries; the evaluation results will be available in late autumn 2005.

Moreover, a call for tender for a study under Priority 7 (research topic 8.4.1) on Indicators in Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), published in the OJ Supplement (*2005/S 78-*

074923 of 21 April 2005), closed on 10 June. It aims at supporting the development of RTD indicators and data for SSH.

- § 'Citizens 4' open for Integrated Projects (IP) and Networks of Excellence (NoE) received 98 proposals;
- § 'Citizens 5, open for Targeted Research Projects (STREPS) and Coordination Actions (CA) received 279 proposals;
- § 'Citizens 6' open for Specific Support Actions (SSA) received 32 proposals.

Commission launches GÉANT2, Europe's world-class research networking infrastructure

From 14 June onwards, GÉANT2, the pan-European research and education network, successor to the pan-European multi-gigabit research network GÉANT, uses pulsed light (photons), rather than electrons, to carry huge volumes of research data faster than ever before. GÉANT2 will provide a Europe-wide "roaming" service that enables scientists to access the network and their home university's working environments from anywhere, at any time.

Europe's research network will thereby supply unprecedented computing power to an estimated 3 million users from over 3 500 academic institutions in 34 countries across Europe. Compared with similar research networks in the USA or in Asia, GÉANT2 innovates by seamlessly combining dark fibre with more traditional broadband technology, notably to supply research networking services to schools, via its partner networks.

Europeans support more money for EU research

According to two Euro barometer reports published on 13 June, 71% of EU citizens agree that collaborative research at EU level is growing in importance and 59% consider that the EU should spend more money on scientific research. 64% of Europeans agree that our economy can become more competitive only by applying the most advanced technologies.

Some critical messages also come out of the surveys: Europeans tend to resist some technologies; there is an overwhelming recognition of what science and technology have done for society until now, people see however negative impacts on e.g. environment and employment. A majority of people believe that computer technologies

GÉANT2 is co-funded by the European Commission and Europe's national research and education networks (NRENs), and is managed by DANTE (Delivery of Advanced Network Technology to Europe, <http://www.dante.net/>), a not-for-profit limited liability company owned by the NRENs and based in Cambridge, UK. Together, GÉANT2 and the NRENs will provide advanced communications services to Europe's research and education community.

The project within which GÉANT2 is funded began officially on 1 September 2004, and will run for four years. For information on the network, and on the other project activities which are carried out alongside it, see <http://www.geant2.net>. You can also consult *IP/05/722* and *MEMO/05/205 of 14 June 2005* at <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/>.

eliminate more jobs than they create. There is still a comprehension gap between science and society. Europeans feel badly informed and not very involved in science and technology issues. Efforts still need to be made to bring science and technology closer to people and foster communication between scientists and the public. This duality is also valid for the image Europeans have of scientists: people recognise the positive role scientists play in society but there is also some criticism of the way scientists' explain their achievements and handle information towards the public.

To read the full studies, see http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion.

Seventh Framework Programme for Research (2007-2013)

The Industry committee of Parliament deplores the research budget cuts proposed by the Luxembourg Presidency in the financial perspectives for 2007-2013, which would imply a substantial reduction (30% or more) in the budgetary resources for the FP7 compared to those proposed by the Commission proposal. Research policy should receive funding in proportion to the

Lisbon strategy.

The most significant cuts (up to 50%) involved the Lisbon Strategy, particularly on research; if the cuts were around 40%, it would be necessary to start from scratch. Funding would change as well as the structure.

Information Society

The Information Society

The European Parliament adopted on 23 June a resolution drafted by MEP TRAUTMANN (A6-0172/2005) on the information society. According to the report, special attention should be paid to possible problems arising from the concentration of mobile and internet services and their content. e-Inclusion should centre on accessibility, on the supplying of online services and on teaching and learning how to use these.

The report calls on the Union and Member States to take due account of the need to safeguard cultural diversity when planning governance arrangements and stresses that digital literacy programmes are essential.

As regards the Tunis Summit (WSIS), the most-debated issues concern **governance** and the **financing** that will enable the success of the Plan of Action. The Rapporteur believes the EU must work for the development of an international-level monitoring mechanism. The idea of a state

fund for mandatory financing has been abandoned; however, the **Digital Solidarity Fund** which relies on a voluntary contribution and is complementary to the existing mechanisms was set up on 14 March in Geneva.

Furthermore, the Rapporteur wants public responsibilities to be clarified regarding in particular intellectual property and cultural diversity (governance). The neutrality and interoperability of digital technologies and platforms should be ensured; technological, economic and cultural exchanges within a framework of fairly-regulated competition as well as innovation in educational systems, lifelong learning programmes and e-learning initiatives (for both teachers and students) should be fostered. In addition, the report calls for a use of ICT that combines the principles of pluralism, equitability, freedom and faith in the security of the system.

The report is awaiting publication in the Official Journal.

Commission launches five-year strategy to boost the digital economy

...continues from Page 1

The new IST priority in FP7 gets the largest single share of collaborative research funding. The new ICT policy support programme, a specific programme within the CIP, will put € 802 million into promoting wide take-up of ICT applications.

Member States are asked to define National Information Society Priorities in their National Reform Programmes in mid-October 2005 to contribute to the objectives of i2010. Further information can be found at: <http://europa.eu.int/i2010>.

2007 to be "European Year of Equal Opportunities for All"

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/index_en.htm

The European Commission has designated 2007 as 'European Year of Equal Opportunities for All' as an effort to promote equality and non-discrimination in the EU. The European Year is the centrepiece of a framework strategy designed to ensure that discrimination is effectively tackled, diversity is celebrated and equal opportunities for all are promoted.

The four core themes of the European Year proposed by the Commission are: Rights, Representation, Recognition and Respect

and tolerance.

The proposed budget of € 13.6 million will cover preparatory actions in 2006 as well as the various activities taking place during the European Year itself in 2007. In addition to the European Year, new initiatives include a feasibility study to look at possible new measures to complement existing EC anti-discrimination legislation and the creation of a high-level advisory group to look at the social and labour market integration of minorities, including the Roma.

Internal Market

Adoption of the directive on the recognition of professional qualifications

Parliament adopted 34 amendments to the Council's Common Position at second reading, which improve certain aspects of the text without affecting the substance or principles of the Common Position and the Commission's proposal. The Commission accepted the 34 amendments (*COM (2005)0248*) on 1 June 2005. Lastly, the Competitiveness Council adopted - Germany and Greece voted against, Luxembourg abstained - the Directive on the recognition

of professional qualifications on 7 June. It consolidates fifteen existing Directives in the field of professional qualifications for regulated professions. While maintaining the main existing guarantees for migrants, it will improve conditions of free movement and ensure a simpler management of the system.

Member States will have two years, from the date of official publication, to transpose the Directive into national law.

Commission seeks mandate to discuss UN Convention on "e-contracting"

The Commission has asked the Council for authorisation to open negotiations, on behalf of the EU, on a draft UN Convention aiming to make it easier to conclude international business to business (B2B) contracts electronically. Negotiations will take place within the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

The increased use of electronic communications calls for international contracts to be concluded by electronic means. UNCITRAL has thus begun work on

a draft Convention which aims at creating uniform rules to facilitate international electronic contracting, thereby improving the legal framework for commercial activities.

These negotiations will allow European companies to get the utmost benefit from the updated framework for international contracting. The EU must also ensure compatibility between the draft Convention and Directive 2000/31/EC on electronic commerce (provisions on contracts to be concluded by electronic means).

Internet

High-speed internet connections growing fast, say Commission figures

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/e-comm/all_about/implementation_enforcement/index_en.htm

Take-up of high-speed "broadband" internet connections is growing fast, according to figures released on 1 June by Commissioner Reding. There are now 40 million broadband lines in the EU, an increase of 70% on last year. This represents 45 000 new broadband lines on average per day.

Some European countries are among the top performers in the world while others are lagging behind - broadband take-up is higher than 10% in nine countries compared with only four in January 2004. The Netherlands, with take-up of 19%, and Denmark with 18%, top the list and are among the best-performing countries in the world; Belgium, Sweden and Finland also show strong take-up. Among the new Member States, Estonia is performing very well. There is a second group of countries where the take-up rate is around 8%. In the third group of countries,

the penetration rate is below 6% of the population.

Broadband Internet access can be provided by different means: digital subscriber line (DSL), wireless local loop, (WLL), cable TV access (cable modem), dedicated leased lines and other access technologies (satellite, optical fibre, power line communications).

As regards implementation of the electronic communications framework - to be transposed into national legislation on 25 July 2003, the Commission will present a proposal at the end of 2006 to assess validity of its objectives for the period after 2010 and will revise the 2003 Recommendation on relevant markets; revision will start with a call for proposals to operators in December 2005 and a public consultation in 2006.

Trade Policy

EU tables revised services offer in Doha Round negotiations

http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/index_en.htm

On 2 June, the Commission transmitted to the WTO the EU's revised services offer in the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) negotiations, which outlines how the EU is prepared to open further access to its services market in exchange for improved access to other WTO Members' markets.

The EU's offer, while ambitious in scope

ensures that public services within the EU are fully safeguarded and no commitments are proposed in the areas of **education**, health and **audiovisual** services.

It has been prepared in close consultation with Parliament, the Member States and EU civil society. The EU now encourages other WTO members to submit ambitious offers.

Youth Policy

Commission presents new communication on youth policies

http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/index_en.html

The Commission adopted on 30 May a Communication entitled "European policies concerning youth" as a follow-up to the European Youth Pact (*March 2005*), which invites Member States to consult young people in developing measures for the Pact and following up its implementation.

It outlines how Member States can put the Pact into operation and highlights actions for young people at European level within the

Pact. It announces the consultation process that the Commission will undertake, beginning with an Internet consultation this summer and ending with the Youth 'Etats Généraux' - 'Youth takes the floor' at the end of 2005, involving young people, Commissioners, MEPs and other policy makers. The communication also identifies other policy areas and EU programmes that are especially relevant for youth.

Council Resolutions on European cooperation on Youth

The Council adopted on 26 May three Resolutions to involve young people and youth organisations in developing specific implementing measures of their concern.

Council Resolution on European cooperation on Youth

Ministers agreed to further develop the procedures for implementing the open method of coordination and invited the Commission to propose implementing procedures bearing in mind the Spring European Council, the national reports as well as the views of young people and their organisations.

Council Resolution on Young people's participation in democracy

The Council invited the Commission and Member States to make an inventory of the existing knowledge about obstacles to young people's active participation in democracy; to

pool measures already undertaken and examples of good practice for increasing youth participation in democracy, at both Member State and European level; to strengthen dialogue between young people and political leaders and to review progress on the basis of national reports in 2006.

Council Resolution on Youth information

The Council called on the Commission and Member States to use existing means to propose guiding principles enabling youth information structures to develop quality assessment; to raise the profile of quality youth information in Europe and thus make it more accessible; and to promote and develop cooperation, networking and the exchange of good practice between national youth information sites and portals across Europe, together with analyses of the use of such sites and portals.

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Information sources used include

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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.

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