



October 2004

EBLIDA Hot News

The EBLIDA newsletter on EU library & information society issues

Highlights:

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Culture

UNESCO Draft Convention on the protection of the diversity of cultural contents and artistic expressions

UNESCO is working on a Draft International Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions (July 2004), which can be found at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001356/135649e.pdf>.

The first meeting of governmental experts on the draft Convention took place from 20 to 24 September, bringing together about 600 participants representing 132 Member States, 9 intergovernmental organisations and 20 NGOs. A drafting group made up of 24 members set up at the end of the meeting should meet in December to propose, on the basis of the comments that Member States

will submit no later than 15 November; the new draft text will then be presented at the next intergovernmental meeting, planned for 31 January to 12 February 2005 – certainly, a critical meeting for negotiation on the text. The next meeting of governmental experts will take place from 12 April to 28 April 2005.

It would be interesting to look at *Art.7 and 19* which call for states to ensure that “intellectual property rights are fully respected and enforced according to existing international instruments, particularly through the development or strengthening of measures against piracy (art7) and option A and B in Art.19”.

EU Information Policy

EUROPE DIRECT Information Network in EU-15

The Commission has launched a call for structures to house the new generation of local information relays in the former EU-15 countries of the Union. The new relays – to perform the tasks currently undertaken by the **Info-Points Europe** and **rural Carrefours** - will be known as the “EUROPE DIRECT Information Network” and are due to be up and running by spring 2005.

Each Commission representation will launch the call - open to public bodies/ private entities which have a public sector mission - in its own Member State; full details will be available at

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/represent_en.htm. The relays will enable local citizens to obtain information and advice about the EU; allow the European institutions to improve dissemination of information tailored to local and regional needs; and help

the public send feedback to the EU institutions. Annual co-funding of between €12 000 and €24 000 for up to four years will be available and the relays will receive a wide range of EU related documentation, training and networking services. Similar calls will be launched later this year for the new Member States, via a specially appointed domestic body in each country. Funding levels, services and contractual stipulations with these structures will be identical to those laid down for the EU-15.

EUROPE DIRECT follows upon the recommendations on implementing the EU information and communication strategy [*COM (2004)0196 of 20 April 2004*, http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/press_communications/pdf/com_2004_196_en.pdf]; the current EUROPE DIRECT contact centre will continue to exist and be promoted by the new relays.

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Lobbying for archives and libraries

EBLIDA Working Group on Professional Education

The EBLIDA PEG (Working Group on Professional Education), recently created, held its first meeting in The Hague on 15 October. The EBLIDA Executive Committee and Council approved its creation to tackle, amongst other issues, the proposed Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications, which aims at harmonising previous European legislation covering regulated professions. Library and Information professionals are not embodied in this text.

Within the framework of the EBLIDA PEG, the EBLIDA Executive Committee decided to establish cooperation with EUCLID, the European Association for Library and Information Education and Research [<http://www.jbi.hio.no/bibin/euclid/>], in order to follow up on higher education related matters.

The EBLIDA PEG discussed also the Accreditation and Certification of

professionals, the European Higher Education Area, the Bologna process and the possibility of the creation of a European Professional Platform representing the professionals working in the library, archive and information sectors, which is introduced in Article 15 of the proposed Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications.

EBLIDA Secretariat together with the PEG working group will follow up on the work initiated on the abovementioned matters. The Finnish Library Association will host the next EBLIDA PEG meeting on 11 and 12 March 2005 in Helsinki. Members wishing to join this EBLIDA working group are most welcome to contact the EBLIDA Secretariat.

For further information, visit:

<http://www.eblida.org/>
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/qualifications/index_en.htm
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/index_en.html

EBLIDA Seminar in Prague

http://www.eblida.org/eblida/meetings/executive/prague_nov04_agenda.htm#Seminar

Following the *EBLIDA Strategy 2004 – 2007* [www.eblida.org/strategy/EBLIDAstrategy2004-2007.htm] approved by the EBLIDA members at the Estoril Council in May 2004, the EBLIDA Executive Committee is celebrating its autumn meeting in another new EU country, the Czech Republic.

In connection with the internal EBLIDA board meeting, a seminar on current relevant EU matters for libraries and archives has been organised to take place on 5 November at the National Library of the Czech Republic in Prague.

Key representatives from the Czech Republic and neighbouring countries have been invited to participate and exchange with the EBLIDA representatives their concerns as regards the present legislation

and policies emanating from the European Institutions which have an impact on the functioning of libraries, cultural and educational institutions on these new members of the European Union.

The issues on the agenda include Copyright and related rights, Professional Education, Culture, Open Access and European Union funds (see http://www.eblida.org/eblida/meetings/executive/prague_nov04_agenda.htm).

EBLIDA wishes to thank the excellent cooperation and support received from the Czech colleagues!

Further information will be posted on the EBLIDA website and *Hot News*. Stay tuned!

Audiovisual

Study on external cooperation in the cultural and audiovisual sectors

A study of external cooperation by the EU and its Member States in the cultural and audiovisual sectors (*DG EAC/58/02 in OJ S159-127412*) is now available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/stat/studi_en.htm#11 (summary, final report -

only in French – and terms of reference).

The selected contractor was Barbier, Frinault et Associés sa - person in charge is Gilles Pedini, email: gilles.pedini@fr.ey.com – France.

Study on regulatory measures on the TV advertising markets

A workshop on Articles 4 and 5 of the "Television without Frontiers" Directive was held in Brussels on 14 October. David Graham and Associates, a London-based consultancy, presented to interested parties the initial findings of a study on the economic impact of measures concerning the promotion of distribution and production of European TV programmes

provided for under Article 25(a) of the "Television without Frontiers" Directive (*DG EAC/27/03 in 2003/S 70-060812 of 9 April 2003*). A presentation of the initial findings can be found at http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/stat/studi_en.htm#10. Final results are expected before end of the year.

Latest figures on TV fiction production in Europe released

On the eve of MIPCOM 2004, the European Audiovisual Observatory released on 1 October the latest figures on TV fiction production in Europe, produced by the EUROFICTION network and based on data gathered by the research teams in the five countries which have been participating in the EUROFICTION project since 1996: Italy, France, Germany, Spain and the UK. The complete analysis of the data will be published in volume 5 of the 2004 edition of the by the Observatory's yearbook.

countries decreased from 5713 hours (in 2002) to 5380 hours. 2003 shows an increase in the scale and scope of the downswing which is both significant in terms of hourly volume and generalised. However in 2003, the fall in the domestic TV fiction offer concerns all five countries.

The latest EUROFICTION figures show that new domestic fiction broadcast in the course of 2003 on the terrestrial TV channels of the five largest European

To conclude, the hours, episodes, titles and formats of European TV fiction were down in 2003. Other factors to be considered are the comeback of American product and the dramatic fall in co-productions, both inter-European and intercontinental. See the full text of the press release at <http://www.obs.coe.int/about/oea/pr/mipcom2004.html>.

Declaration of Lille on European films

<http://www.lesrencontres.org/>

Les Rencontres, a network for cultural policies and cooperation among European local/regional authorities launched in 1994, held its general meeting on 'Europeans and their films' in Lille, France from 28 to 31 October. Plenary sessions held focused on cinema and TV in European societies, training, local and regional authorities, schools, type of cinemas, technical facilities and audience, as well as a round table on European films' diversity or uniformity and several workshops on the situation of film production and distribution in European

countries, ciné-clubs, cinémathèques: what actions can local authorities undertake?, digital films and the consequences on diversity and distribution e.g. pirate copying, film festivals and film circulation. Participants signed the Declaration of Lille, a cooperation agreement between European regions stating concerns on the difficulties encountered by the European film industry and its professionals which will next be presented to the European institutions in November.

Consumer Protection

Service of Judicial and Extrajudicial documents in civil or commercial matters

This Report on the application of Regulation (EC) 1348/2000 on 31 May 2001 since entry into force is based on the information provided to the Commission and on a study covering 14 Member States. It presents information on the meeting of the European judicial network in civil matters (December 2002), a public hearing (July 2003), a study on the application of the Regulation and a meeting of the Advisory Committee on the Service of Documents (April 2004). A second section focuses on the application of several provisions of the Regulation and suggests possible solutions to problems that have occurred in their application.

In its conclusions, the Commission recognises that its application is not entirely satisfactory and thus welcomes all suggestions for possible solutions to the problems encountered and addressed in this report e.g. how more training on the Regulation could be provided to persons involved in its application.

Taking into account any reactions, the Commission will consider presenting a legislative proposal in 2005. The report (*COM (2004)0603 [SEC (2004)1145] of 1 October 2004*) can be found at http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_lip.html.

Enforcement of consumer protection laws

On 7 October, Ministers adopted at first reading a Regulation on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws. It provides a framework of mutual assistance for enforcement authorities to use

when dealing with cross-border infringements and for administrative cooperation among member states and with the Commission on projects that are designed to inform, educate and empower consumers.

ARTICLE 29 Data Protection Working Party

Article 29 Working Party aims at fostering better and harmonised data protection practices in the EU as well as at promoting the fundamental right to data protection. It monitors the developments of data protection in Europe and, where necessary, it adjusts its priorities to better serve the citizens whose personal data are processed in the EU.

The Working Party will publish a yearly work

programme as an outline of its priorities for the next year e.g. technology, infrastructure and planning of IT products.

Its Strategy Document was published on 29 September, which contains a section on challenges and priorities aimed at making public their specific matters for the coming months and years. It can be consulted at http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/privacy/docs/wpdocs/2004/wp98_en.pdf.

Co-operation with Third Countries

Nine new Agreements between EU and Switzerland signed

In the margins of the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting on 26 October (Conference Centre- FIL), the EU and Switzerland signed nine new Agreements concerning: taxation of savings income in the form of interest payments; counter fraud and all other illegal activities; Schengen

Acquis; asylum; agricultural products; statistics; European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network; free movement of persons and participation of the Swiss Confederation in the MEDIA Plus and MEDIA Training Community Programmes.

Scientific and technological cooperation with USA

The European Community and the USA agreed on 8 October to extend their agreement on scientific and technological cooperation for a period of five years. The content of the renewed five-year agreement will be identical to the previous one, which expired on 13 October 2003.

Cooperative activities between the EU and the USA may take the form of coordinated and joint research projects, task forces and studies. The sectors covered include environment,

biomedicine and health, non-nuclear energy, telematics, science and technology policy, management, training and mobility of scientists. Over 700 joint research projects have been proposed under the sixth Framework Programme (FP6).

The European Commission and the US Department of State have established a Joint Consultative Group to oversee scientific and technological cooperation under the agreement.

PHARE Thematic Evaluation Report 2004

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/phare_evaluation_pdf/fv_zz_gr_03083_e3_120704.pdf

The PHARE Grant Scheme Review, an interim evaluation report of PHARE support allocated in 1999-2002 and implemented until November 2003 (*April 2004*) identifies key trends, conclusions and lessons learned to date. It also serves as an ex-ante evaluation to feed into the programming and design of Grant Schemes in remaining and future candidate countries. Key recommendations of the report are:

§ Introduction of a better fit between measures and institutions under Structural

Funds and preceding PHARE financed equivalent Grant Schemes and institution building;

§ Strengthen the multi-annual programming approach to fiscal management in pre-accession activities;

§ Introduction of strong pre-conditions concerning administrative capacity (including Commission Delegations) to improve the evaluation process;

§ Clearer distinction between operational rules for small and large grants.

Asia - Europe summit

The Council Asia - Europe meeting (ASEM) held in Hanoi, Vietnam on 8 and 9 October aimed at discussing issues of common interest e.g. international developments, new global challenges, the future of ASEM, cultural diversity and national cultures.

Ministers adopted the "ASEM Declaration on Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations" and supported recommendations adopted at the first ASEM conference on Cultures and Civilizations (December 2003). The second conference will be held in France in 2005.

They encouraged the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) to undertake concrete activities and programmes and welcomed the

launching of the ASEM Info board as a pilot project by ASEF. In addition, ministers underlined their conviction that cultural diversity is the common heritage of humanity and emphasized the need to preserve the national cultural identity. They underlined their commitment to pursue dialogue within UNESCO in the course of ongoing negotiations on a draft convention on cultural diversity. They also agreed to further expand and strengthen ASEM cooperation at all levels in various fields e.g. social development, labour and employment, education and training, public health and environment.

The next ASEM will be held in Finland on 14 and 15 September 2006.

European Neighbourhood Policy

External relations ministers debated on 11 October a progress report on the state of play of the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans with the seven countries concerned.

It welcomed the considerable progress made and invited the Commission to submit its formal proposals to the Council by 20 October.

Culture

European Capital of Culture

ECOFIN ministers adopted on 21 October a common position on a draft Decision adapting the Decision on the European Capital of Culture (1419/1999/EC, OJL 166 of 1 July 1999, p.1) to enable the

participation of the new Member States in the event from 2009.

The common position will be sent to the European Parliament for a second reading.

Education and Culture, national systems of public guarantees

An inventory of national systems of public guarantees in 31 European countries (2003-4879-June 2004) is available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources/info/studies/garanti_en.html. It was carried by the Réunion des Musées nationaux (France) together with the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Germany).

Germany, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the UK - are also offered.

The study investigates national systems of indemnity insurance as regards the movement of art works intended for display in exhibitions in Europe.

Legislative texts (original language) for the 17 countries of the study which have a State indemnity scheme - Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France,

“State indemnity” means that the owners of the exhibit object on loan are guaranteed that public authorities will provide financial compensation in case of damage or loss.

Study on the ties between culture and education

http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources/info/studies/studies_en.html

The Commission has selected the tender proposed by the University of Lorraine for the completion of an inventory of the best

practices linking culture with education in the EU25, Bulgaria, Romania and the EEA countries.

Mobility in the cultural sector

A conference on personal mobility of those working within the EU cultural sector was held on 7 and 8 October in Rotterdam (Netherlands). SICA/ CCP NL drafted a series of recommendations on **availability of information, artist tax, social security and Culture 2007** which will be presented to European Ministers of Education, Youth and Culture at their next meeting on 15 and 16 November.

expenses (*Arnoud Geritse Decision [2003, C-234/01]*), VAT exemption (*Matthias Hoffmann Decision [2003, C-144/00]*), the creation of a database covering e.g. national artist tax systems, allowances, exemptions and refund procedures as well as the tools available for artists temporarily working abroad; social security schemes (employment status, unjust deduction - *Barry Banks/Théâtre de la Monnaie Decision [2000, C-178/97]*). As regards Culture 2007, the new programme should also support small projects, reconsider the role of the Cultural Contact Points, and establish better links with other Community programmes.

One of the conclusions was that a lot of information is not readily available e.g. funds, artist tax, social security. It was suggested to integrate an extensive information task into the already existing EU-structure whereby this information – national and European - could be found. In addition, the Commission should support: the creation of an action plan for mobility in the cultural sector; the deduction of

Representatives of national governments and experts also met from 28 to 29 October in The Hague (Netherlands) to discuss the removal of existing obstacles and the development of instruments for the mobility of collections within the EU.

Culture

Council of Europe, a law for Montenegro's museums

The Council of Europe (CoE) offers legal expertise in the cultural field to the Republic of Montenegro, Serbia and Montenegro.

During October and November 2004, experts will assist their colleagues of the Ministry of Culture in drafting a museum law. For more information please contact Ms Bodea, email: Dorina.Bodea@coe.int or visit the MOSAIC project at

http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Cooperation/Culture/Policies/MOSAIC/.

MOSAIC (Managing an Open and Strategic Approach in Culture), launched in 1998, aims at creating a framework for exchanges and cooperation amongst countries in South-East Europe and at assisting them in the transition of their cultural policies.

Council of Europe, culture and democracy at the STAGE Colloquy

The fourth Ministerial Colloquy of the STAGE (Support for Transition in the Arts and Culture in Greater Europe) project, held in Moscow on 30 September and 1 October, focused on cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue as crucial factors in establishing and preserving democratic stability and human rights. See the Final Declaration at http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Cooperation/Culture/Policies/STAGE/colloquy_4_decla.asp.

Ministers for Culture of the South Caucasus

- Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia - and of the observer and donor states - Austria, Germany, Greece, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine - underlined the importance of the STAGE project to develop cultural strategies and foster cultural exchanges. Visit the STAGE project at http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Cooperation/Culture/Policies/STAGE/.

The next Ministerial Colloquy will be held in Kiev in 2005.

Education

UNESCO/OECD Forum on Trade in Educational Services

The UNESCO/OECD Forum, the final in a series of forums covering different aspects of trade in education services, was held in Sydney from 11 to 12 October [first in Washington DC (May 2002) and second in Trondheim (November 2003)].

Three cross-cutting themes focused on: bridging the divide, trade capacity building (GATS and trade negotiation process) and building capacity in quality assurance and accreditation in higher education, particularly in the Asia Pacific region.

OECD and UNESCO are working collaboratively on guidelines for 'Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education' to be completed in 2005.

Further information and key papers from the forum can be found at

http://www.oecd.org/document/54/0,2340,en_2649_37455_32230710_1_1_1_37455.00.html and shortly at <http://www.dest.gov.au/unesco-oecd/australiaforum.htm>.

Euro pass, a single framework for the transparency of qualifications

ECOFIN ministers adopted on 21 October a common position on the draft Decision establishing Euro pass, a single European portfolio of the documents, including the European CV. The Commission in turn, presented its opinion on 22 October (see

COM/2004/0705 at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>), which considers the common position acceptable; the draft Decision is now awaiting Parliament second reading, scheduled for December 2004.

Education

Education and Training 2010

Outcome of consultation on the role of universities in the Europe of knowledge

Altogether 150 answers from 103 organisations, mostly during the spring and summer of 2003, were received to contribute to the consultation on “The role of universities in the Europe of knowledge”. Most contributions came from European or national groupings e.g. associations, networks, rectors’ conferences, unions, professional bodies, etc. as well as from governments and governmental agencies.

Many answers provide comments, examples of national or institutional initiatives and suggestions in some or all of the eight policy

areas in which specific answers were invited. The main conclusions drawn from the consultation and addressed to Ministers of Education at their meeting in Berlin on 22 September 2003 within the framework of the Bologna process; a detailed breakdown of the comments received on higher education issues to each of the eight policies areas rose in the Communication; a synopsis and the full text of the analysis of the comments received on research and innovation issues are all available for downloading at http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/consultation_en.html.

Vocational education and training, mobility and language education

Several meetings focused on education were held under the auspices of the Dutch Presidency during October. The regular official meeting of Directors-General for **vocational education and training** was combined with a seminar on **Sectoral qualifications on a European scale** from 3 to 6 October in Scheveningen (Netherlands), which focused on cooperation in vocational education in Europe in view of preparing a communication for the Ministerial Conference on Vocational Education in Maastricht on 14 and 15 December.

A conference on **mobility** as an instrument for achieving the Lisbon ambitions and the Bologna process was held from 10 to 12 October in Noordwijk (Netherlands). New perspectives on the classification of

educational institutions, and implementation issues such as student grants were discussed. Another conference held from 14 to 16 October in Scheveningen aimed at improving **modern foreign language education**

(www.linguacentrum.europeesplatform.nl).

Three aspects were discussed: policy analysis and policy-forming in modern foreign language education; stimulating and maintaining the professionalism of language teachers; assessing language skills in an internationally transparent way.

In addition, a conference organised by EADTU, the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (<http://www.eadtu.nl>), was held from 21 to 23 October in Heerlen to discuss the **mass individualisation of higher education**.

Enlargement

Call for proposals aimed at civil society and public sector bodies

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/communication/index.htm#call_civil_society_eu25_2004

In comparison to previous calls for proposals, the main features of this call are as follows: it is the first to cover the EU-25; its total funding under the **PRINCE programme** amounts to € 14 million, with grants ranging from € 100 000 to € 500 000 per project; it is not only open to organised civil society, but also to public sector bodies; it is not restricted to trans-national actions

involving several Member States, but also open to projects implemented in a single Member State or region. The call closed on 30 September 2004 and projects must be completed by 31 May 2006 at the latest. A list of selected projects in 2003 is available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/communication/list_projects_en.htm.

Enlargement

EU endorses 2007 target for Bulgaria and Romania

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/romania/index.htm>

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/bulgaria/>

COM (2004) 0657 of 6 October 2004

The European Commission published on 6 October its Strategy Paper on progress in the enlargement process launched in 1997 - including **Croatia**. In turn, general affairs ministers discussed the Strategy Paper on 11 October as well as the 2004 Regular Reports on **Bulgaria** and **Romania**.

Bulgaria and **Romania** are both close to completing the negotiations. The Commission aims at finalising membership talks with Romania and Bulgaria by the end of the year to allow the two Balkan countries to join the EU in 2007, if they are ready. If not ready, a safeguard will be included to allow the EU to delay membership by one year. Before Bulgaria and Romania join the EU, their parliaments and the EU-25 still need to ratify the membership treaties. On

the whole, the Commission report is quite positive. However, it expresses ongoing concern over corruption and press freedom, especially in Romania.

All Western Balkans countries have a perspective to become candidate countries. Negotiations with **Croatia**, became an accession candidate in June, would begin next year; the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** has already applied for membership. The Commission is preparing an opinion on that application, upon Council's request.

Discussion on these documents will continue in the relevant Council bodies and the outcome will flow into the preparation of the European Council on 17 December.

Commission recommended opening negotiations with Turkey

COM (2004)0656 of 6 October 2004

On 6 October, the European Commission set a series of hard conditions to open negotiations with **Turkey**. The strategy consists of three pillars.

The first concerns cooperation to reinforce and support the reform process in Turkey. In the second pillar, it proposes the specific conditions for the conduct of accession negotiations with Turkey. The third suggests a substantially strengthened political and cultural dialogue bringing people together from EU Member States and Turkey. The

study draws attention to various sectors that will require lengthy periods of preparation and adjustment of Turkey's policies.

Moreover, general affairs ministers discussed the recommendation on 11 October. The final decision on whether to open negotiations with Turkey provided that Turkey fulfils the criteria set in Copenhagen (June 1993), including institutional stability, democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities is to be taken by the European Council in December.

EU Research and Development

4th world conference of Science Journalists

The 4th world conference of Science Journalists was held in Montreal, Canada from 4 to 8 October. A new structure was approved by a newly elected Board to ensure the creation of programmes and a solid financial base for the Federation; the structure implies a triangle of partnership between the International Development Research Centre (<http://www.idrc.ca/>),

SciDev (a science news agency) and the World Federation of science journalists (WFSJ), which would offer support and the human resources for workshop programmes, awards, and mentorship.

New plans for the 5th conference in Melbourne, Australia in 2006 are now taking place. Visit <http://www.wcsj2004.com/>.

EU Research and Development

Initiative for Science in Europe

http://www.initiative-science-europe.org/ISE_conference.html

On 25 and 26 October, the *Initiative for Science in Europe* (ISE), a platform of European learned societies and scientific organisations, held a conference on the European Research Council (ERC) at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France.

The Conference aimed at identifying and discussing crucial issues related to the establishment of an ERC. It discussed the general principles of the ERC, provided an update on the current views from the Commission, confronted the

recommendations of the EC-EUROHORCs (European national research councils) working group on the principles that should govern the ERC and its practical implementation with the views of the scientific community and discussed further issues affecting ERC policies.

EU Heads of State and Government are scheduled to decide upon the creation of the ERC at the European Council meeting in November.

ERA-Link, a Network for European Researchers in the US

<http://www.evaluationpartnership.com/surveys/eralink.htm>

A new network is being developed for European researchers in the US which will provide web-based and other services for researchers who are interested in strengthening their contacts with other European researchers in the US and Europe.

This project, conceived by the European Commission in partnership with Embassies

of the EU Member States in Washington, has launched a survey to find out how the network should be developed and what kind of information and services would be useful to researchers.

The results of the survey will be used to develop the network, which will be launched under the name ERA-Link in autumn 2005.

Information Society

IST Results launches User Survey

<http://istresults.cordis.lu/index.dfm>

IST Results provides news on emerging technologies and innovation from the EU-funded IST programme. The online editorial service, launched in 2003, attracts around 800 000 hits per month, with 2 000 subscribers to the weekly e-bulletin. Some 900 IST projects have already been covered in news and feature articles.

The IST Results team is keen to receive

feedback on the service and to identify possible areas for improvement. A short survey has been published and is open until 15 November 2004. The conclusions of the survey will be presented as recommendations to the European Commission, DG Information Society.

For further information please email helpdesk@istresults.info.

Eleven new Information Society fact sheets published

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/factsheets/index_en.htm

The first eleven fact sheets on the Information Society were published on 18 October, covering both policies e.g. electronic communications, intellectual property and digital rights management,

radio spectrum and mobile communications, privacy, spam and many programmes e.g. IST, eContent, eTEN, Safer Internet, etc. More fact sheets will be published over the following weeks.

Information Society

Technology-enhanced learning information day

The next call for proposals for research projects in technology-enhanced learning will be launched mid November 2004. The call will cover strategic objectives defined in the updated version of the IST work programme for 2005-2006. In the field technology-enhanced learning, focus of research will be on exploring interactions between the learning of the individual and that of the organisation, and on contributing to new understandings of the learning processes by exploring links between human learning, cognition and technologies.

Potential proposers can attend the

information day to be held in Luxembourg on 29 November, aimed at building consensus on trends and challenges in future research on technology-enhanced learning, at developing better understanding of the FP6 instruments, sharing ideas and experiences, and helping to find partners for project consortia. Participation is free of charge, and based on mandatory registration by 17 November at the latest.

For online registration and agenda, visit http://www.cordis.lu/ist/directorate_e/telearn/infoday2004.htm.

Future European Research in Information and Communication Technologies

http://www.cordis.lu/ist/ict/ict_consultation.htm

The European Commission services responsible for the management of the Information Society Technologies (IST) thematic priority in FP6 have drawn up a document as a starting point to explore the views of a broad set of interested parties on the future of European research in ICT.

The document highlights the crucial role played by ICT in economy and society. It shows that RTD is a key to mastering,

assimilating and exploiting these technologies, and it proposes objectives and priorities for European ICT research.

All interested parties are invited to comment on the future of European ICT research, and in particular on the issues addressed in the document. The Commission services will analyse the first set of comments starting from mid-November 2004.

eGovernment report on the online availability of public services

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/europe/2005/doc/all_about/cgy4_measurement_final.pdf

After this report was published some important errors were identified in the sampling methodology used in Spain. These errors will have resulted in an underestimate of the true figure for online delivery of

government services in Spain.

A revised estimate for Spain will be made in the 5th survey to be undertaken at the end of 2004.

CoBrA recommendations for modern and innovative public administrations by 2010

On 28 September, at a meeting on "eGovernment beyond 2005" at the CoBrA modern art museum in Amsterdam, leaders and representatives of national eGovernment initiatives from some 30 European countries, chaired by the EU's Dutch presidency, issued a set of recommendations for modernising and

stimulating innovation in public administrations between now and 2010.

For further information visit http://www.europa.eu.int/egovernment_research.

Internal Market

Directive on mutual recognition of professional qualifications in Sweden

http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/qualifications/infringements_en.htm

On 19 October, the European Commission made a formal request to Sweden to complete the transposition into national law of **Directive 2001/19/EC on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications**. The request takes the form of a reasoned opinion, which is the second stage of the infringement procedure (Article 226 of the EC Treaty); if there is no satisfactory reply from the national authorities within two months, the Commission may decide to take Sweden to the Court of Justice.

Sweden has not communicated all the measures for transposing Directive 2001/19/EC on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications, part of the SLIM

initiative intended to simplify legislation for the internal market. Directive 2001/19/EC modifies fourteen previous Directives and requires member states to take professional experience acquired in other member states into account. It also facilitates the updating of lists of diplomas, certificates and titles eligible for automatic recognition.

The deadline for transposing Directive 2001/19/EC expired on 1 January 2003. Professionals involved run the risk of enduring needlessly bureaucratic and slow procedures before being able to exercise their right to work anywhere in the EU as long as Directive 2001/19/EC is not applied.

Lists of regulated professions available online

A database containing the lists of regulated professions of the EU15 and EEA countries, in the original language(s) of each country with translations in French, German and English is available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/qualifications/regprof/index.cfm?lang=en.

The lists of regulated professions for the 10 new Member States, Switzerland and those regulated under Directive 1999/42/CE are still being compiled. Updated directly by the countries themselves, the database includes information regarding e.g. the level at which

the profession is regulated, the competent authorities, contact points and migration statistics for each profession e.g. archivist (State), mass media and communications specialist, museum director/curator.

The professions covered are those regulated under the General System Directives and does not include doctors, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, architects, dentists and veterinary surgeons. A profession is said to be regulated when access to it is subject by legal, regulatory or administrative provisions to the possession of a specific qualification.

Directive on the patentability of computer-implemented inventions

Oral question O-0055/04

On 18 May 2004, the Competitiveness Council reached political agreement on a common position on the Software patents directive (*COM (2002)0092, OJ C 151 E of 25 June 2002, p.129*). However, despite translation into all the EU languages, the adoption of its final version is still pending.

MEPs Cohn-Bendit, Lichtenberger and Hammerstein Mintz, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group asked Council why the delay in adopting the text; whether it could indicate why its spokespersons invoked translation problems (available online) and sources from one permanent representation

indicated that it will be sent back to COREPER, given the current disagreements. In addition, MEPs asked whether it was still appropriate to have this dossier as an A item of agenda when (a) the Netherlands Government has been asked by its national parliament to withdraw its support for the Directive and (b) the Polish delegation was not asked in the second and decisive round.

MEPs also asked the Council to indicate why numerous amendments (36, 72, 76, 107, 108, 111 and 119) tabled by Parliament had not been taken into account, with the result that the current draft authorises software patents, although this was unconditionally rejected by Parliament.

Social Policy

New Member States play full part in evolving European Social Model

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/news/2004/oct/socsit_2004_en.pdf

The European Commission published on 1 October the fifth annual report on the social situation in Europe, which provides a prospective overview of the social dimension in the EU - the first to cover the enlarged EU-25. The report combines harmonised quantitative information with qualitative survey data on public opinion.

With regard to **education**, attainment levels of the population have improved significantly over the last thirty years, particularly among women. In 2002, 77% of young people aged 20-24 in the EU25 had an upper secondary qualification. At the same time, however, 17% of people aged 18-24 left the education system with only lower

secondary education at best.

As regards **lifelong learning** in the EU25, 8% of the population aged 25-64 participated in education and training in 2002. Such training activities are more prevalent (between 18-22%) in Denmark, Finland, Sweden and the UK, whereas the new Member States display the lowest level of adult population participating in education or training (the peak stands at around 9% for the Slovak Republic and Slovenia).

Older people are less likely to receive training than younger people. Higher qualified people are more likely than the low-qualified to participate in such training.

Trade Policy

Implementing measures for Directive 77/388/EEC on the common VAT system

The European Commission published on 25 October a proposed Council regulation laying down implementing measures for Directive 77/388/EEC on the common system of VAT (see *COM(2004)0641* at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>).

According to the Commission, implementing provisions should ensure the correct and more uniform application of the current VAT system to improve the functioning of the internal market. They are particularly necessary where there is a danger of double taxation of cross-border transactions as the result of divergences between Member States in the application of the provisions of the Sixth Directive governing the place of

supply.

Between 1977 and 2003 the VAT Committee unanimously adopted a number of non-binding guidelines to improve the correct and more uniform application of the current VAT system and - since 1993 - the functioning of the internal market. The Commission has considered the guidelines and is now proposing legislation, where appropriate, to give some of them legal force. Among the comments regarding the individual provisions, there is that on Article 23 which deals with the arrangements for running the special scheme for electronically supplied services.

Foreign Sales Corporations, US to repeal illegal export subsidies as from 2007

http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/issues/respectrules/dispute/pr111004_en.htm

On 11 October, the US Congress adopted a Bill repealing the FSC/ETI legislation, which provides WTO-illegal subsidies to US exporters. The Bill however, provides that FSC/ETI benefits will still be available to US exporters up to the end of 2006. After signature by US President, the Commission proposed that trade sanctions the EU has imposed on a range of American imports since March this year be removed. If the

Council approves, sanctions will be lifted on the day the new American legislation comes into force, 1 January 2005.

The Commission however has asked the WTO to rule on whether various provisions of the American law are compatible with its 2000 verdict, which condemned the FSC, notably the so-called grandfathering clause, transition periods, and other relevant fiscal provisions.

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<http://ue.eu.int/newsroom/newmain.asp?lang=1>
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RAPID - Press and Communication Service of the European Commission,
<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/welcome.htm>
EUR-Lex: European Union law <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>
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.europa.eu.int/CD/application/pif/resources/shtml/common/home/home.html>.
EBLIDA Hot News electronic 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, such as preparatory legislative documents and questions put by Members of Parliament to the Commission and Council.

The C series is available on-line via EUR-Lex, <http://europa.eu.int/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. Henceforth the two-column presentation of the amended proposal will be replaced by two columns of continuous text. The text that has been deleted in the amended proposal will be struck through with a line and new or replacement text will be underlined.

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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