



September 2004

EBLIDA Hot News

The EBLIDA newsletter on EU library & information society issues

Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

Microsoft/Time Warner/Content Guard JV

(Case COMP/M.3445)

On 12 July, **Microsoft** and **Time Warner**, both US companies, sought clearance under the EU's Merger Regulation for plans to jointly acquire a US company called **Content Guard**, formerly controlled by Xerox, which is active in the development and licensing of intellectual property rights (IPRs) relating to **Digital Right Management (DRM)** solutions.

The European Commission decided on 25 August to open an in-depth investigation into the proposed joint acquisition. After a preliminary review, the Commission believes that the transaction might possibly create or strengthen Microsoft's already leading position in the market for DRM solutions.

The initiation of proceedings opens a second phase investigation with regard to the notified concentration. This does not however prejudice the Commission's conclusions and final decision, which must be reached in a maximum of four months e.g. by 6 January 2005.

The Commission invites interested third parties to submit their observations on the proposed concentration. Observations should reach the Commission not later than 15 days following the date of publication (OJ 2004/C 245/05 of 2 October 2004) by fax +32 (2) 296 43 01/72 44 or by post [*reference* COMP/M.3445 - Microsoft/ Time Warner/ Content guard] to Commission of the European Communities, DG Competition, Merger Registry J-70, B-1049 Brussels.

Information Society

Priorities for DG Information Society and Media

Commissioner Reding, current DG EAC and Commissioner designate for Information Society and Media held her hearing before Parliament on 29 September. She will base her work on three pillars: innovation, inclusion and creativity.

Specific proposals for **eEurope 2010** will be presented by early 2005. Particular attention to the **regulatory framework for telecommunications** will also be paid to stimulate competition. Her priority is to ensure that the framework is correctly implemented in all member states; a review is planned for 2006, whilst the **Universal Service Directive** is due to be reviewed in 2005. Defining a new ambition for **eEurope** to give more Community added value to the **audiovisual sector** is another priority.

In the framework of preparation of FP7, Commissioner Reding wants to launch a cost-benefit analysis and take measures to ensure that the benefits of European technological research become more visible for citizens. This is also intended to contribute to the Lisbon Strategy. Three aspects are fundamental: combating the **digital divide**, stimulating the **quality of life** and encouraging **participation**.

At the beginning of 2005, DG INFSO intends to present a communication on 'e-accessibility' aimed at providing answers to two major challenges regarding inclusion of all: the problems associated with the ageing population and the specific problems of disabled people.

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Lobbying for archives and libraries

EBLIDA Seminar on current relevant EU issues for libraries and archives

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

In line with the EBLIDA objective to strengthen relations with new EU countries' representatives and celebrating events in those countries, the next EBLIDA Executive Committee meeting will be held in Prague, Czech Republic on 5 and 6 November 2004. A Seminar on current European matters relevant to libraries and archives will take place in parallel for key representatives of our community in Czech Republic and neighbouring countries e.g. Hungary,

Poland, Slovenia and Slovak Republic.

The Seminar aims at bringing together professionals to discuss the current EU legislation and proposals impacting on libraries and to raise awareness on the EBLIDA mission, objectives and achievements on these regards. Due to room limitations the Seminar will be attended only by invitation, however the outcomes will be uploaded on our website for public access.

CALIMERA Review

CALIMERA is a coordination action under the IST programme, which will assist local libraries, museums and archives to apply and develop innovative technologies and strategies for serving ordinary citizens in their everyday lives. It aims at identifying country co-ordination groups, national representatives and industry participants in virtually all the countries of Europe and will organise expert workshops on key topics. It will foster collaboration with Europe's research partner countries all over the world and with international and national funding agencies dealing with the local services dimension.

The CALIMERA website is one of the key tools of the project in which all the information about events, activities, partners and reports can be found (<http://www.calimera.org>). EBLIDA is overall responsible for the dissemination, networking and training activities within CALIMERA and for the issuing of the CALIMERA Newsletter through the stakeholders' database and mailing list.

On 6 October, the Commission is to undertake a review of the project, which will come to an end in May 2005.

European Commission Copyright review

The Commission recently initiated a review of the copyright legislation by issuing its Staff Working Paper on the "*Review of the EC legal framework in the field of copyright and related rights*" in July. The report addresses the main issues they wish to revisit comprising the following Directives:

- § Legal protection of computer programs - **Software** - (91/250/EEC of 14 May 1991)
 - § Rental right and lending right and on certain rights related to copyright in the field of intellectual property - **Rental Right** - (92/100/EEC of 19 November 1992)
 - § The term of protection of copyright and certain related rights - **Term** - (93/98/EEC of 29 October 1993)
 - § The legal protection of databases - **Database** - (96/9/EC of 11 March 1996)
- The Commission intends to assess the inconsistencies among the definitions and

provisions of exceptions among these and the harmful impact on fair balance of interests and rights of those involved, and compared to those exceptions contained in the **Copyright Directive** [2001/29/EC], the most horizontal piece of legislation in the field of copyright. This will serve to present legislative proposals in 2005. It is therefore, once again, of extreme relevance that EBLIDA actively participates in this process representing its member concerns to the EU Institutions.

EBLIDA welcomes the Commission's work, but there is still a lack of coherence in the existing legislation and concerns about inconsistencies e.g. "Database" and "Term" "Database" and "Copyright" directives. EBLIDA is preparing its Position Paper which will be available at <http://www.eblida.org/position/index.htm> before the end of October 2004.

Audiovisual

The key role of Public Service Broadcasting

http://www.congrex.nl/public_broadcasting/

From 1 to 3 September, a conference entitled 'The key role of Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) in European Society in the 21st Century' was held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Organised jointly with the Dutch Public Broadcaster, the conference focused on the role and meaning of public broadcasting in the various EU countries relative to the market, politics and the state.

Representatives of national governments, broadcasting companies, parliamentarians, delegates from the European Commission and media-experts gathered to discuss

convergence, PSB in an enlarging Europe e.g. contributing to European policy objectives, serving the cultural communities, conditions and responsibilities for PSB.

In addition, representatives of national governments and experts from the film sector met in Utrecht on 26 and 27 September to discuss the future of the **Media Plus** programme, coordinating national policy on the European policy for deploying new financing instruments, and coordinating policy discussion on professional practice.

Legal Observations of the European Audiovisual Observatory

http://www.obs.coe.int/oea_publ/iris/iris_plus/iplus8_2004.pdf.en

The last edition of IRIS Plus, the legal observations of the European Audiovisual Observatory, looks at the protection of cinematographic heritage in Europe; how different countries deal with property rights and film preservation and what initiatives have been taken in this area at European level e.g. the different deposit systems that have been developed, film preservation methods and accessibility of deposited works.

This article attempts to draw a picture of the current measures which exist for protecting cinema heritage in Europe, looking also at

the European initiatives that have recently been taken to guarantee better conservation of this heritage. Existing national mandatory and voluntary deposit systems were analysed and relevant actions taken by the Council of Europe and the European Union reviewed.

The specific copyright aspects that need to be addressed for film archives to fulfil their tasks of preserving and making available the films deposited in their care were also analysed. In this context, film archives are the bodies entrusted by the State responsible for collecting, preserving and making the national film heritage available.

A new EU programme for the audiovisual sector in 2007-2013

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education_culture/newprog/com2_en.pdf

Commissioner Reding, Commissioner designate for Information Society and Media, pointed out at her hearing before Parliament on 29 September that the revision of the *Television without Frontiers* Directive showed that the Directive still provided a valid and appropriate legal framework.

In a short term, the Commission will adopt an interpretative communication on TV advertising, which will define how the

directive is applied to new advertising techniques. Moreover, it intends to hold expert group meetings in the medium term to focus on regulation of audiovisual content, the level of regulation detail applicable to advertising and the right to information.

The Commission will decide whether to proceed to revise or submit the proposal by the end of 2005.

Co-operation with third countries

Cultural Heritage Commission for Kosovo

<http://www.coe.int/eap-kosovo>

Representatives of the Council of Europe, European Commission and UNMIK met in Paris on 10 September to formally establish the “**Independent International Commission for Cultural Heritage in Kosovo**” (IIC). This initiative was proposed by the Council of Europe Secretary General following the violent disturbances which took place in Kosovo in March 2004.

The IIC is a high-level international expert group whose mandate is to advise and support the appropriate authorities on the middle- and long-term policy and legislative measures and implementing measures for the protection, conservation and enhancement of Kosovo's cultural heritage which is of international, regional and local importance.

The establishment of the IIC contributes to the efforts underway to reach the “Standards of Kosovo” in the field of culture. The IIC's work is part of the “emergency action plan for Kosovo” conducted by the Council of Europe jointly with the European Commission as part of the “Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe”.

Dr John Bold (UK) and Prof. George Lavas (Greece) have been nominated by the Council of Europe and the European Commission to the Independent International Commission for Cultural Heritage in Kosovo. A representative of UNMIK will be appointed within the next

Culture

UNESCO on the convention on the protection of cultural diversity

The Commission adopted on 1 September, a recommendation to the Council to allow the EC negotiate with UNESCO on the convention on the protection of the diversity of cultural contents and artistic expressions (*SEC (2004)1062*, http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/extern/mandat_en.pdf).

In October 2003, UNESCO unanimously called on its Director General to submit a preliminary draft convention on the protection of cultural diversity to the October 2005 General Conference session.

Last May, UNESCO produced a text constituting a basis for the Preliminary Draft Convention (PDC). The PDC together with a preliminary report marked the start of a second phase - the intergovernmental negotiation - which began on 20 September. A second session is envisaged around February 2005 and a third will probably schedule around spring 2005, before the September 2005 Executive Council, the body to place the PDC on the agenda of the September-October 2005 General Conference for adoption.

The PDC defines a series of complementary objectives concerning e.g. preservation and promotion of cultural diversity, development of cultural policies and the encouragement of intercultural dialogue and international cooperation. It defines "culture", "cultural diversity" and "cultural expressions" in a broad way and provides a list of cultural goods and services whose distinctive nature it recognises, and a list of cultural policies. It affects internal and external policies at both Member State and Community levels.

The PDC is thus likely to affect the *acquis communautaire* and Community policies specifically in the cultural field e.g. Culture 2000, MEDIA Programme, freedom of movement for cultural goods and services, intellectual property, cultural aspects of development policies. It also includes those policies which have an influence on the cultural sector. Those taken under other policies which affect cultural expressions and in particular cultural goods and services e.g. tax policies relating to the internal market, competition, international trade, etc are thus also covered.

Culture

Guide to culture and education programmes and actions 2003

A guide for those organising a project at European level and would like to know whether they are eligible for EU financial assistance can be downloaded from http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education/culture/publ/pdf/guide-eac/2003_en.pdf.

Funding can be awarded to projects under Socrates (Comenius, Erasmus, Grundtvig, Lingua, and Minerva), Leonardo da Vinci, Youth, Tempus, and Erasmus Mundus, eLearning, Culture 2000, MEDIA, EU/Canada cooperation and EU/USA cooperation. Funding is also available for

actions supporting European integration activities organised by the academic world, the "Television without frontiers" directive, Netd@ys Europe, Jean Monnet, Town Twinning, EUROPASS-Training, the European Year of Education through Sport, Partnerships with civil society, and other public interest services.

A list of addresses is also available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education/culture/publ/pdf/guide-eac/2003-adresses_en.pdf (December 2003).

Education

Erasmus Mundus, 82 European universities launch programme

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html

The Erasmus Mundus programme aims at strengthening European and international cooperation in higher education by supporting high-quality master courses and encouraging students and academics exchanges from the EU and all over the world. A total of € 230 million will be spent between now and 2008, 90% of it on the mobility of students and researchers. The budget for the launch year is €8 million.

Erasmus Mundus issued a call for proposals which prompted 128 applications for master courses (**Action 1**) involving hundreds of European universities. The applications were assessed by independent experts, and a list of the 19 best courses was produced by a Selection Board consisting of 12 leading figures from European academia. Out of these 19 courses chosen for a period of five

years, 14 will come into operation fully this academic year (2004-2005), while the other 5 will have the status of a preparatory year.

European universities in 17 countries are participating, notably in Germany (13), France (12), Italy (10) and the UK (8). These universities will welcome 140 students and 42 academics from about 80 countries all over the world, with excellent academic records and chosen by their universities (**Action 2**). The master courses cover a very wide variety of disciplines.

Action 3 of the programme, which will enable European students and researchers to go to non-EU countries to enrich their studies, will be launched in 2005. A list of proposals to enhance attractiveness (**Action 4**) is also available for downloading.

Commission grants € 93 million to upgrade GEANT

<http://www.geant.net>

The Commission signed on 3 September a contract to upgrade GÉANT, the European Research and Education communications network. Upgrades will include high-performance services; end-to-end connectivity; and mobility and roaming service. GÉANT together with the National Research and

Education Networks (NRENs) provide the research communications backbone infrastructure for 34 countries in Europe. The Commission's contribution to this project, € 93 million, is estimated at less than 50% of total expenditure. The remainder will be co-financed by the participating countries.

Policies for Arts and Heritage Education across the EU

<http://www.culture-school.net/>

Representatives of national governments and expert organisations met from 8 to 10 September at a conference entitled 'Culture and School: Policies for Arts and Heritage Education across the EU', held in The Hague, the Netherlands to discuss how to create a foundation for structural information and knowledge exchange on cultural education between EU member states.

The conference aimed at gaining insight into the various objectives and methods that member states apply when developing arts and heritage education curricula, and at contributing to the development of comparable European indicators for arts and

heritage education. The focus was on in-school arts and heritage education for children between the ages of 4 and 18, which basically encompasses primary and secondary education, with equal attention given to arts and heritage alike.

The more specific contribution of heritage education and the need for Europe-wide exchange of best practices in that field will be explored during the Europa Nostra Forum "*Cultural Heritage and Education - A European Perspective*"

http://www.europanostra.org/lang_en/0520_news_forum.html to take place in The Hague on 1 October 2004, in conjunction with the Dutch Presidency.

Inter Parliamentary Colloquium on Education and Youth

http://www.europarl.eu.int/conferences/youth_and_education/default.htm

Members of the European Parliament and of national Parliaments of the Western Balkan Countries met from 20 to 22 September at an inter parliamentary colloquium on education and youth, which aimed at discussing how to ensure access for all to education and training, improve technical resources and equipment in schools as well as on financial instruments.

Speakers were MEPs Pack, Sifunakis, Beazley, Kallenbach amongst others,

Anastasia Fetsi (European Training Foundation), Commissioner Reading (DG EAC), Jeanne Schmitt (UNICE), Gerlando Genuardi (European Investment Bank).

Topics discussed included: funding education and youth policies; the development of education reform in the Western Balkan Countries; Donors' support; curriculum modernisation; the role of teachers; caring for disadvantaged youth and minorities.

Education at a Glance, education levels rising in OECD Countries

http://www.oecd.org/document/7/0,2340,en_2649_34515_33712135_1_1_1_1,00.html

According to the 2004 edition of *Education at a Glance*, the OECD's annual compendium of education statistics, more people around the world are completing university courses and other forms of tertiary education than ever before. However, progress has been uneven across countries and some have significantly fallen behind, potentially compromising their future ability to keep up with economic and social progress.

This year, the report highlights factors affecting the future supply of qualified people and the relationship between educational attainment and employment and earnings. On average across OECD countries, half of today's young adults now

enter universities or other institutions offering similar qualifications at some stage during their life. Almost all OECD countries have seen a rise in the education levels of their citizens over the past decade, and in some countries the increase has been spectacular. However, in eight OECD countries, 20% or more of 20 to 24 year olds have at most only lower secondary school qualifications and are not in education.

Further information on Education at a Glance 2004 as well as country chapters on France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, UK and USA can be found at <http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2004>.

Enterprise

The Impact of the European Tech Investment Forum

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/newsroom/documents/etif_impact_assessment_book.pdf

The European Commission carried out a survey assessing the impact of the 10 first editions of the European Tech Investment Forum (ETIF). The survey findings and recommendations from 430 European ICT companies seeking venture capital funding during 1998 - 2003 have been compiled in a reference book published in September. The data is based on a number of surveys that were performed immediately after each of the 10 events.

The purpose was to assess whether the presenting entrepreneurial companies have been successful in raising finance due to, or partly due to the event, as well as to monitor the general satisfaction among the

companies as regards the different aspects of the event. In addition, this report provides a general overview of the ETIF programme and contains a section with insights and recommendations from investor and corporate experts and several successful entrepreneurs. A complete list of all companies that been present at ETIF during the 10 editions is also included.

Over the past five years, ETIF has developed into an important pan-European meeting platform, promoted by the IST Programme. The next edition of ETIF series will be held alongside the 2004 IST conference in The Hague, the Netherlands from 15 to 17 November.

EU Research and Development

Council conclusions on European Research Policy

On 24 September, the Competitiveness Council approved conclusions responding to the Commission communication on the evaluation of the new instruments of the FP6, which followed a high level panel report (1 July 2004) and the Commission communication on the future EU policy to support research (27 August 2004). The draft conclusions emphasise the potential of the new instruments introduced with FP6 - **Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence** - as well as the **Specific Targeted Research Projects (STREPs)**.

The Council called for the maintenance of these instruments in an appropriate balance between new and traditional instruments in the seventh Framework Programme (FP7),

depending on the outcome of the financial perspectives negotiations. The Council asked the Permanent Representatives Committee (COREPER) for its support on the essential features of the future Framework Programme in time for preparation of the Competitiveness Council of 25 November.

In addition, the Commission is to start a policy debate on the future EU research and innovation policy and to launch a wide-ranging consultation process with users and stakeholders (*COM (2004)0353*). It will give priority to further improving and simplifying administrative and financial procedures and monitor the impact of these measures and report on this by the end of 2004 and regularly thereafter.

European Research Advisory Board Members

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/eurab/index_en.html

The European Research Advisory Board (EURAB) is a high-level, independent, advisory committee created by the Commission to provide advice on the design and implementation of EU research policy (*OJ L 192, 14.7.2001, P.21*). On 3 June, the Commission appointed 45 members to the

European consultative committee for research.

Names, affiliations and CVs of EURAB members for 2004-2007 (EURAB2) are available at

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/eurab/members_eurab2.html.

EU Research and Development

RTD activities of the EU, 2003 annual report

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/reports/2003/index_en.html

[COM (2004)0533 and SEC (2004) 1023 of 2 August 2004]

This Commission report relates to RTD activities of the EU from January 2002 to March 2003. 2002 was the last year of the implementation of FP5 and the conclusion of the negotiations for FP6, the specific programmes as well as the rules of participation and dissemination. A first also in terms of its use was **Article 169** of the EC Treaty, which allows the Community to participate in research programmes undertaken jointly by several member states. Its first-ever practical application constitutes one of the major FP6 innovations directly

linked to the creation of the European Research Area (ERA). The examination of the main trends of the national RTD policies in Europe showed the common drive towards certain priorities and it confirmed that the creation of the ERA is necessary e.g. Barcelona European Council agreed to raise investment in RTD from 1.9% of GDP in 2000 to approach 3% by 2010.

More details are included in the Commission working document that accompanies the report, available at

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/reports/2003/pdf/report-working-doc-2004_en.pdf.

The European Union Contest for Young Scientists

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/youngscientists/>

<http://www.eucontestireland.com/>

From 25 to 29 September, Ireland hosted the 16th annual EU Contest for Young Scientists (EUCYS). EUCYS is open to people aged between 15 and 20 and judged by 15 distinguished scientists.

The best of Europe's young scientific minds competed to win prizes totalling €28 500, divided into 9 top prizes. 105 young people from 34 countries were exhibiting 74 innovative projects. An exhibition of the students' entries was set up. Two Nobel laureates, Sir Kroto and Professor Neher hosted a special evening for the finalists.

See the list of participating projects at http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/youngscientists/pdf/ysc2004_projects.pdf.

EUCYS, launched in 1989, replaced the Philips contest (1968 - 1988) and aims at attracting more young people into careers in science. Part of the EU's wider Science and Society programme, it addresses the problem of youngsters who are turning away from scientific studies and careers in the discipline by encouraging young people to pursue their interest in science and embark on scientific careers.

Information Society

eContent *plus*, Community programme for more accessible digital content

http://www.cordis.lu/ist/directorate_e/telearn/econtentplus.htm

The Competitiveness Council adopted on 24 September a Common Position on a draft Decision establishing a Community programme, **eContent *plus***, aimed at making digital content more accessible, usable and exploitable.

The draft Decision will be transmitted to the European Parliament for a second reading

under the co decision procedure. The Common Position provides for a budget of € 135 million for 2005-2008.

eContent *plus* aims at creating conditions for broader access to and use of digital content and - where necessary for greater economic return from services based on access and (re)use of digital content.

Information Society

IST Prize 2004, 20 European IST Prize winners

20 winners of the European IST Prize 2004 were selected by the European Commission on 17 September. The IST Prize is organised by Euro-CASE with the support and sponsorship of the IST Programme.

The winners will each receive € 5,000 and will be invited to exhibit their products in the European IST Prize Winners Village at the 2004 IST Event in The Hague from 15-17 November
[\[http://europa.eu.int/information_society/istevent/2004/index_en.htm\]](http://europa.eu.int/information_society/istevent/2004/index_en.htm).

Independent experts from 16 European countries evaluated 430 candidate products from 29 countries. The winners come from Finland, France, Ireland, Israel, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Details of the 20 winners and 70 nominees are available at <http://www.ist-prize.org>. Three Grand Prize winners will be selected among the 20 IST prize winners. Each will receive €200,000 and the European IST Prize Trophy at an Awards Ceremony in Brussels in early 2005.

Tomorrow's Internet, € 52 million euro to boost use of GRID

<http://www.cordis.lu/ist/gids/>

The European Commission has launched a € 52 million package of twelve EU-funded research projects aiming at bringing "Grid" networked computing out of research labs and into industry.

Grid tools will give everyone access to the immense computing power and knowledge. EU funding (IST programme) is going to four projects, each receiving around € 9 million, together with eight smaller projects. The approach to Grid research combines

"technology push" (developing underlying technologies and interoperability standards), with "application pull" (developing the enabling technologies needed for real-world applications e.g. modelling, simulation, data mining and collaborative working tools).

The European Grid Technology Days 2004 was held on 15 September in Brussels
[\[http://www.nextgrid.org/events/registration.htm\]](http://www.nextgrid.org/events/registration.htm).

WSIS and Libraries, Conference on Libraries for Active Citizenship

<http://www.eduskunta.fi/kirjasto/Home/Uutta/wsis.htm>

"Libraries for Active Citizenship - Global Perspectives" was held in Helsinki, Finland on 13 September to focus on the visibility and potential of libraries in the process of the World Summit of Information Society (WSIS) endorsed by United Nations (UN). WSIS - held in two phases - aims at developing a common vision for the IS as well as a strategic plan of action to realise this vision.

From the global perspective, the position of libraries as a recognised actor in the IS is one of the current and burning issues in the library field.

The convergence development of memory institutions e.g. libraries, archives and museums, will be an important step for libraries when trying to influence on the development of the IS.

Nominees for 2004 Sakharov Prize

<http://www.europarl.eu.int/compar/afet/droi/sakharov/>

11 nominations for the 2004 Sakharov Prize were presented to Parliament on 15 September. The Foreign Affairs committee will decide on 3 candidates on 5 October; the Parliament Conference of Presidents will then select the winner. Nominations must be

supported by at least 25 Parliament members or by a political group. The prize will be awarded at plenary session in Strasbourg on 14 December. Parliament has awarded the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought since 1988.

Information Society

Reasons for and consequences of citizens' decision on Constitutional Treaty

Between 29 October - the date when the Constitutional Treaty will be signed in Rome - and 1 November 2006 - the date set for its entry into force - the new Parliament's term will be distinct by the process of ratification of the European Constitution in the 25 Member States. This means ratification per month on average, with Spain opening the process in February 2005.

Parliament voted on 14 September in favour of consulting the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the draft Treaty. On 15 September, MEPs Méndez de Vigo and Corbett argued that Parliament should give its seal of approval to the draft Constitution. MEP Corbett outlined a timetable and the procedures needed to enable Parliament's plenary to vote on 15 December in Strasbourg. A hearing with NGOs will be held on 25 November. No hearings are scheduled with representatives of national parliaments but delegations from the EP

Dialogue with Citizens

<http://europa.eu.int/citizensrights/>

'Dialogue with Citizens' provides information on citizens' rights and opportunities in the EU and its Internal Market plus advice on how to exercise these rights in practice e.g. living, working and studying in another EU country. In addition, general EU-wide guides are available giving a general overview of citizens' EU-wide rights and opportunities

Draft EU general budget 2005

The Council agreement on the draft general budget for 2005, adopted on 16 July, was presented to Parliament on 14 September. Drawn up by the Council, the draft budget covers for the first time the expenditure for the EU25 over the whole year. Parliament - which sets the EU budget jointly with the Council - will adopt its own first reading amendments at committee level on 4 October, with plenary votes to follow on 28 October in Strasbourg.

Some member states have recently called for the EU budget to be capped at 1% of Community GDP (against 1.24% at present).

Constitutional affairs committee will visit national parliaments in the course of 2005.

Members of Parliament's Constitutional affairs committee discussed the need for a **communication strategy** with Council President-in-Office Bernard Bot, the Dutch Foreign Minister. The two main questions were whether a timetable for ratification by the various member states should be coordinated and what kind of communication strategy is needed. Mr Bot believed ratification would require a different approach in each country and thus, preferred the idea of a joint communication strategy. On 5 October an informal meeting of European affairs ministers is due to take place in Amsterdam to discuss the topic "communicating Europe".

Visit:

<http://europa.eu.int/futurum/>

<http://www.constitutional-convention.net/>

<http://european-convention.eu.int/>

and of how to make effective use of them; over 80 individual fact sheets giving detailed practical information about exercising citizens' rights both at EU and national level. Other useful resources are offered e.g. postal addresses, telephone numbers, websites and email addresses.

After enlargement, the Commission is proposing that the total budget should be at least 1.11% of GDP, of which 0.43% would be for regional policy.

Compared with the 2004 budget, the amounts represent an increase of 5, 2% (commitment appropriations) and of 9, 8% (payment appropriations). The Council however has made major cuts in many areas compared to the Commission's original draft e.g. €3 000 million (Structural Funds), external action and a 1.5% cut in the administrative spending plans of most of the EU institutions.

Information Society

Parliament temporary committee on policy challenges and budgetary means

The Commission adopted on 14 July a package of proposals on future budget plans for 2007-2013 based on five regulations: a general regulation for all instruments, one for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) and Cohesion Fund and a new regulation providing for "European cross-border co-operation groupings".

On 15 September, Parliament decided to set up a temporary committee to prepare a final report on the next financial perspective before the Council adopts its common position. The report should help Parliament coordinate with the Council and enable it to present a more detailed set of proposals. It should set out priorities, propose a structure for the next financial perspective and estimate the resources needed for the different headings in the EU budget during 2007-2013. Fifty members from the different permanent parliamentary committees will make up the temporary committee, while the Chair, Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur will be chosen at its first meeting. On 13 September, the General Affairs Council held a policy debate and endorsed the methodology proposed by the Presidency -

the so-called building block approach - focusing on the various expenditure headings and subheadings and the amount of resources they entail, whilst noting that the Commission proposals remain the basis for the Council's work. Following its July first set of detailed proposals, the Commission was due to approve further proposals on 29 September.

The Presidency aims at reaching decisions on principles and guidelines in respect of the new financial perspective at the European Council meeting on 17 December. These will serve as a framework for further work aimed at achieving political agreement next year. COREPER will be responsible for preparing the Council's deliberations. An *ad hoc* group will be set up to carry out preparatory work on the basis of an indicative work programme.

See 'Building our common Future: Policy challenges and Budgetary means of the Enlarged Union 2007-2013' [COM (2004)0101 of 26 February 2004] and 'Financial Perspectives 2007-2013' [COM (2004)0487 of 14 July 2004] at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>.

Internal Market

Progress report on better regulation

On 24 September, the Presidency presented a progress report on better regulation and simplification of legislation leading to a policy debate. The report focused on four areas where work is currently being done:

- Simplification of legislation:

Competitiveness ministers took note of progress achieved towards identifying those legislative areas which offer the greatest scope for simplification to prepare a draft priority list for the Council to consider at its session on 25 November, with a view to agreement before the end of 2004;

- Most member states submitted a **list with concrete proposals**. The Working Group

competent at the Council is examining them to draw up a priority list that will be submitted for decision to the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) and then to the Competitiveness Council;

- **Competitiveness testing:** work is under way on the feasibility and requirements of a measurement tool for administrative burdens;

- **Impact assessments on Council amendments:** as a follow-up to the Inter institutional Agreement on Better Lawmaking, a pilot project is conducted to develop a workable procedure.

2004 Scoreboard on the implementation of internal market legislation

http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/score/index_en.htm

On 24 September, Competitiveness ministers took note of the Commission's recommendation (12 July 2004) setting out a number of best practices that are currently used in member states to facilitate the correct and timely transposition of Internal Market directives into national law [SEC (2004)0956,

http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/score/index_en.htm].

Transposition of Internal Market directives remains problematic in most Member States.

The transposition deficit represents almost 9% of Internal Market directives. According to the scoreboard, there are big disparities among the new member states. The Council encouraged member states to examine which are the main obstacles to timely and correct transposition in their internal systems. A High Level Group within the Council will coordinate the different actions to be taken by member states and to produce a short summary report for the next Competitiveness Council meeting in November 2004.

Social Policy

Guidelines for the Community initiative INTERREG 2000-2006

http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/guidelines/index_en.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/inter2004/226_en.pdf

The European Commission issued a communication on 2 September to update and consolidate the existing guidelines for the INTERREG III Community Initiative (OJ 2004/C 226/02 of 10 September 2004).

Strands A (education, culture, communications and health topics), **B and C** (RTD, SMEs, information society, tourism, culture and employment) of this initiative

support Trans national, interregional and cross-border cooperation aimed at encouraging the development of the European territory.

EU funding of around € 6 billion is available between 2000 and 2006.

The communication notably provides a list of the new cooperation areas following enlargement.

Telecommunications

Household communications in the EU, Telecoms services indicators 2004

The results of a survey conducted by IPSOS-INRA (<http://www.inra.com/>) for the DG INFSO as a follow-up of the 2002 report to monitor developments in the diffusion and usage of electronic communications services as regards the regulation in the field of universal service were published on 28 September. The survey, aimed at analysing developments in the use of telecom products (fixed and mobile telephony and Internet services) in households residing in the EU, took place between the end of 2003 and the beginning of 2004 and consisted of over 44,000 household interviews in 127 regions of the 15 pre-accession Member States.

It compares key indicators with the previous survey published in autumn 2003. It also

studies the relationship between the usage of electronic services and geographic and socio-demographic factors, and explores the household consumption patterns.

The first objective was to monitor access to and use of services covered by universal service obligations e.g. public telephone service. The second was to assess the development of newer services e.g. digital TV and those related to Internet access. The third was to monitor the ongoing growth and use of mobile services.

The report can be downloaded from http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/ecom/useful_information/library/studies_ext_consult/index_en.htm.

Telecommunications

ENISA, the European Network Information and Security Agency

<http://www.enisa.eu.int/>

ENISA, the European Network Information and Security Agency, now has its Executive Director, internal rules of procedure are ready, and recruitment of technical experts has just begun.

ENISA aims at helping to deliver high EU-wide standards of security in electronic

communications, and at building the necessary "culture of security" for the single market to deliver its full benefits to European citizens, consumers, enterprises and public sector bodies.

ENISA has a budget of € 34.3 million for five years.

OECD Launches Anti-Spam Toolkit and Invites Public Contributions

<http://www.oecd.org/sti/spam>

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) launched on 21 September an Anti-Spam "Toolkit" to help policy makers, regulators and industry restore trust Internet and email. The aims and components of the toolkit were outlined at the second OECD workshop on Spam in Korea on 8 and 9 September. The toolkit will next be developed to include: a spam regulation handbook; an examination of the self-regulatory arrangements which exist at industry, national or international levels which can be applied against spam; a central resource of information to educate and raise awareness of the threat of spam and how to fight it and an overview of existing

partnerships against spam, examples of good practice and lessons that can be learnt for the development of cooperative partnerships against spam.

The OECD Spam Task Force, which includes participants from all 30 OECD countries, the European Commission, the Business and Advisory Committee to the OECD and civil society, will lead the development of the toolkit. Contributions from all stakeholders in business and industry, policy makers, governments and civil society, including non-member countries are most welcome. Public contributions to the OECD anti-spam toolkit may be sent to spam.project@oecd.org.

Trade Policy

Consultation on the Recast of the 6th VAT Directive (77/388/EC)

On 2 September, the European Commission published the summary report on the outcome of its consultation on the Recast of the Sixth VAT Directive (TAXUD consultation, July-September 2003

[\http://europa.eu.int/comm/taxation_customs/taxation/consultations/recast_6th/recast_result_en.pdf (provisional draft)].

Consultation closed on 26 September 2003; 25 external contributions were received. The majority of respondents agreed on the need for Community VAT legislation to be clearer and simpler and for consolidation of the Sixth VAT Directive. Most welcomed this being achieved by a recast of the existing text.

The work undertaken to codify the Sixth

VAT Directive should result in an effective instrument providing a clear overview of existing VAT legislation. After having made the necessary changes to the recast text, the draft proposal was adopted by the Commission last April (*COM (2004)0246 of 15 April 2004*,

http://europa.eu.int/comm/taxation_customs/proposals/taxation/tax_prop.htm; see in particular Chapter 3 - Place of supply of services, Section 2 - Particular provisions, Subsection 3 - **Cultural and similar services**, ancillary transport services and services relating to movable tangible property). Before this proposal can enter into force, it will have to be adopted by the Council (unanimity) under the consultation procedure.

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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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