

EBLIDA Hot News

The EBLIDA newsletter on EU library & information society issues

Highlights:

- § MEPs demand more money for cultural and student exchanges, p.1
- § Commission unveils plans for European Digital Libraries, p. 2
- § European Commission develops its plans for future research programme, p. 10

Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

Study on a Community initiative on collective management of copyright

80 organisations and other stakeholders e.g. Bertelsmann, Bridgeman Art Library, EBLIDA and SCONUL submitted contributions to the "Study on a community initiative on the cross-border collective management of copyright". A list of the 77 contributions authorised for publication can

be found at http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/copyright/management/management en.htm #contribution.

Based on the results, the Commission will submit a proposal, probably in October.

Culture

MEPs demand more money for cultural and student exchanges

The Culture committee of Parliament adopted four major reports on 12 September calling for increased funding from 2007 to 2013 for EU education and cultural exchange programmes. MEPs also recommended some changes in the scope, including the target groups, of these multi-

annual programmes. The reports were all adopted under the co decision procedure by overwhelming majorities.

The reports on the Media, Culture, Lifelong Learning and Youth programmes are scheduled for vote at plenary on 24 October.

Education

Lifelong Learning in Europe in 2003

Eurostat Statistics in Focus, Population and Social Conditions, 8/2005

http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/

In 2003, 42% of the EU-25 population aged 25-64 years old had participated in at least one form of education, training or learning activity over the previous twelve months; 4% were in formal education, 17% participated in non-formal education and nearly 1 out of 3 declared having followed some form of informal learning.

More than 10% had participated in more than one form of learning activity. These figures show however that 58% of EU-25 citizens did not participate in any kind of learning activity. These data comes from a publication issued by Eurostat, which

presents key statistics on lifelong learning in the EU-25, based on an *ad hoc* module included in the EU Labour Force Survey 2003.

The participation rate in any kind of learning activity (formal, non-formal or informal) varied significantly between Member States (more frequent in Austria). Unemployed participate less often in non-formal learning than the employed but their volume of training is higher (the highest participation rates were registered in Denmark, the UK, Austria and Finland). In all Member States, non-participation in learning, mainly linked to the level of educational attainment, was higher among the low qualified than for the highly qualified.

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Commission unveils plans for European Digital Libraries http://europa.eu.int/information society/activities/digital libraries/index en.htm

The Commission unveiled on 30 September its strategy to make Europe's written and audiovisual heritage available on the Internet. Turning Europe's historic and cultural heritage into digital content will make it usable for European citizens for their studies, work or leisure and will give innovators, artists and entrepreneurs the raw material that they need.

The Commission proposes a concerted drive by EU Member States to digitise, preserve, and make this heritage available to all. It presents a first set of actions at European level and invites comments on a series of issues in an online consultation (deadline for replies 20 January 2006). The replies will feed into a proposal for a Recommendation on digitisation and digital preservation, to be presented in June 2006.

"Without a collective memory, we are nothing, and can achieve nothing. It defines our identity and we use it continuously for education, work and leisure", commented Information Society and Media Commissioner Reding. "The Internet is the most powerful new tool we have had for storing and sharing information since the Gutenberg press, so let's use it to make the material in Europe's libraries and archives accessible to all".

Jan FIGEL, Commissioner for EAC, added: "European cooperation is an obvious necessity in this field: it is about ensuring preservation and access to our common cultural heritage for the future generations". Making the resources in Europe's libraries and archives available on the Internet is not straightforward. On one hand, we are talking about very different materials: books, film fragments, photographs, manuscripts, speeches and music. On the other, we have to select from very large volumes e.g. 2.5 billion books and bound periodicals in European libraries and millions of hours of film and video in broadcasting archives.

The Commission communication sets out three key areas for action: digitisation, online accessibility and digital preservation. At present, several initiatives exist in the Member States, but they are fragmented. To avoid creating systems that are mutually incompatible and duplicate work, the Commission proposes that Member States and major cultural institutions join EU efforts to make digital libraries a reality throughout Europe. Private involvement and public/private partnerships are a key element in achieving this goal.

For its part the Commission will step up coordination work and contribute funding through its research programmes and the eContent plus programme:

- § Results of an online consultation on digitisation and digital preservation issues (2005) will feed into Commission Proposal for a Recommendation (2006). They will also be an input for other relevant initiatives e.g. the review of EU copyright rules (2006) and the implementation of the Community R&D programmes (2007). A High Level Group on digital libraries will advise the Commission on how to best address the identified challenges at European level;
- § Collaboration among Member States will be facilitated by an update of the Lund action plan, providing operational guidelines on digitisation (2005), backed up by quantitative indicators to measure progress. The Commission will work together with cultural institutions e.g. the national and deposit libraries, to ensure coordinated action at European level;
- The Commission has made €36 million available for research on advanced access to our cultural heritage and digital preservation in the fifth call for proposals under FP6 (2005). Under FP7, the research on digitisation, digital preservation and access to cultural content will be considerably stepped up, inter alia through a network of Centres of Competence in the fields of digitisation and preservation (2007), and between 2005 and 2008, the eContent plus programme will contribute €60 million towards making national digital collections and services interoperable and facilitating multilingual access and use of cultural material.

'Digital Libraries' is one of the flagship initiatives of *i2010* of 1 June (*see IP/05/643*).

IP/05/1202 MEMO/05/347 Brussels, 30 September 2005

Audiovisual

Protection of minors and human dignity and right of reply

Co Decision Procedure First Reading

On 7 September, Parliament adopted, by an overwhelming majority, a resolution (*T6-0330/2005 of 7 September 2005*) on competitiveness of audiovisual and information services, drafted by MEP de SARNEZ.

Several recommendations were made e.g. the creation of a new top-level domain name ".kid" with content reserved for children; the introduction of a European free telephone service providing information on existing filter methods; the systematic provision of an effective and easy-to-use filtering system for users at the time of subscription to an access provider and developing effective filtering solutions and the introduction of specific Internet training aimed at children from a very early age. Parliament also added some proposals on the scope of the right of reply. MEPs recommended that industry, all parties concerned and the national and European

authorities consider more actively the technical/legal feasibility of developing a uniform content labelling system to encourage better filtering and classification at source, regardless of the communications media used e.g. Internet, mobile telephones.

Member States are to submit a report to the Commission on measures taken in application of this Recommendation two years after its adoption.

By 31 December 2008, on the basis of these reports, the Commission will submit to Parliament a report on the implementation and effectiveness of the measures, identifying also any additional ones which may be necessary, including binding legislation at European level.

The report ((A6-0244/2005 of 19 July 2005) is now awaiting Council's opinion.

Application of Articles 4 and 5 of the TV without Frontiers Directive (2001-2002)

Own initiative report Procedure terminated Parliament also adopted on 6 September a resolution (T6-0322/2005 of 6 September 2005) on the application of Articles 4 and 5 of the TVwF directive, based on the report drafted by MEP WEBER (A6-0202/2005 of 21 June 2005), noting that the Commission communication highlights positive results and that the indicators, in all but a few cases, show an increase in the scheduling of European works. Findings have shown however that major discrepancies among the methods of applying/interpreting the provisions of the Directive make it impossible to reflect the situation accurately.

MEPs opposed to extending the current quotas' system and concluded that a closer watch must be kept on new developments in the broadcasting industry to guarantee cultural diversity; they advised that a safeguard clause be included expressly to establish respect for Member States' competence in the fields of culture/media.

As regards pluralism and concentration, Parliament was alarmed at the tendency towards (vertical and horizontal) concentration of the media in certain Member States and urged the Commission to pay particular attention, when drafting new legislation to preventing the majority of new digital distribution services from falling under the control or decisive influence of large, capital-rich, multinational media groups.

In addition, the Culture committee held a public hearing on 13 September, based on two round tables: impact of technological changes in audiovisuals' rules and regulations and promotion of tourism and cultural diversity.

Towards a modern framework for audiovisual content

The Commission is preparing its proposed amendments to the 1989 TVwF Directive (last revised in 1997). The debate within the EU centres on four key issues: general access to major events e.g. sports, cultural diversity

and programming quotas, advertising rules, and protection of minors. The EU aims at achieving a balance between citizen's rights (democratic, social and cultural) and commercial interests.

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Towards a modern framework for audiovisual content

172 written contributions to the consultation have been made available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/revision-tvwf2005/2005-contribution.htm.

Moreover, a conference entitled 'Between Culture and Commerce' was held in Liverpool on 20-22 September (http://www.eu2005.gov.uk/). It aimed at assisting the Commission in developing its proposals for the revision of the TVwF Directive.

In a common declaration, 9 organisations urged the Commission to propose measures tailored at promoting cultural diversity and implementing European content online. Measures should be based on the contribution to the production of, emphasis

on and access to European content. The issue of what to do in the non-linear environment is rather controversial, covering all services of audiovisual content, regardless the technology or distribution platforms used. ETNO, the European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association called for a distinction between non-linear services and linear services and for provisions on traditional broadcasting services not to be transposed to e.g. video on-demand. ENPA, the European Newspaper Publishers' Association called for the principle of division between advertising and content to be preserved.

Nothing has yet been decided, but decisions will be drafted and presented to Parliament and Council before the end of the year.

CEPI CICCE CPE Euro-MEI Euro dinema EuroFIA FERA FIAD

Impact of control measures on the TV advertising markets http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/stat/2003/tvpub/2003-carat-finalreport-draft.pdf

The final report on the impact of control measures on the TV advertising markets in EU-25 and certain other countries (*EAC/44/03*), available only in French, can be found at the website above. For further information contact Bruno LIESSE, CARAT S.A. (http://www.carat.com/).

In addition, the questionnaire and a summary of answers on the regulation of

non-linear audiovisual services in the Member States can be consulted at http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/regul/contact_committee.htm#3; answers from Member States on measures concerning access of visually and hearing-impaired people to TV programmes can be consulted at

http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/regul/contact committee.htm#4.

Consumer Protection

Retention of data when providing public electronic communication services

Two rivalling proposals for EU legislation on retention of traffic data are on the table: a draft framework decision proposed by UK, France, Ireland and Sweden (*April 2004*) and a proposal for a Directive (*COM (2005)0438 of 21 September 2005*), which aims at harmonising obligations for providers of publicly available e-communications services or of a public communications network to retain certain traffic data related to mobile and fixed telephony for a period of one year, and internet communication data, for six months.

The proposed Directive will have an effect on the privacy right of citizens as well as on the right to protection of personal data. For its adoption, the proposal requires the approval of both Parliament and Council (*a decision procedure*). Despite the reactions of Parliament concerning the legal basis and the lack of proportionality between the ends and the means - MEPs rejected the initial proposal on 27 September feeling that the proposal is a threat to the privacy of citizens, the Council is moving ahead with the process of adopting the framework decision, which would allow for data retention of up to 3 years and could be adopted by Council alone.

Peter HUSTINX, the European Data Protection Supervisor (http://www.edps.eu.int/) also believes that some criteria should be met for it to be acceptable.

Cooperation with Third Countries

Commission launches further support for independent broadcasting in Belarus http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/belarus/intro/index.htm

The Commission has begun preparations for a €2 million project to increase access in Belarus to independent sources of news and information. This follows the €138.000 contract already granted to Deutsche Welle Radio which will begin broadcasting via radio and Internet on 1 November.

The tender is open to broadcasters or consortia who can demonstrate an annual turnover of more than €3 million. Interested broadcasters have until 11 October to signal their interest in a new contract for coproduction and broadcasting on TV and radio in Belarusian and Russian over a period

of two years starting on 1 January 2006. The aim is to provide access to independent information about events in Belarus and in the outside world, and to enhance the knowledge of the Belarusian population about democracy, pluralism, rule of law, freedom of the press and human rights.

In addition, project identification is underway for the TACIS National Indicative Programme 2005-2006 (€8 million) in the fields of sustainable development, **higher education & training** and alleviation of the consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe.

Communication on external actions through thematic programmes (2007-2013) http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/lex/lex/lex/site/en/om/2005/om/2005 0324en01.pdf

In its communication [COM (2005)0324 of 3 August 2005, the Commission proposed, in the context of the next Financial Perspectives (2007-2013), a simplified structure for the delivery of the Community's external assistance. In place of the existing range of geographical and thematic instruments, which have grown in an ad hoc manner over time, six instruments have been proposed for the future. Three of them are designed as horizontal instruments to respond to particular needs: humanitarian aid, stability and macro-financial assistance; the remaining three are designed with a defined geographical coverage to implement particular policies: Instrument for preaccession assistance (IPA), European **Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument** (ENPI) and Development Cooperation and

Economic Cooperation Instrument (DCECI).

In drawing up the thematic programmes, the Commission will fully involve Parliament and Council and will consult civil society. As regards human and social development, the Commission intends to propose a single thematic programme that would be based on a coherent and comprehensive strategy to support the achievement of the development policy goals. The thematic programme could address appropriate aspects of health, AIDS, population, education and training, gender equality, decent work, social cohesion and culture and promote the related international agendas, based on the Millennium Declaration, the Cairo, Beijing and Copenhagen agendas, the Education for All initiative, etc.

Educational exchanges between the EU and Australia receive another boost http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/eu_others/australia/call_en.html

The EU and Australia are stepping up their efforts to promote cooperation between their universities and vocational training institutions. After a three-year pilot phase, the Commission and the Australian government have each tripled their commitment to €1 million to stimulate innovative curriculum development and student exchange projects.

The new programme is aimed at promoting better understanding and more structured collaboration and exchanges between higher education and vocational training institutions.

A call for proposals has been launched for projects that will run for 3 years from 2006; the deadline for submission of proposals is 30 November 2005.

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Cooperation with Third Countries

EEA Agreement concerning cooperation in fields outside the four freedoms

Agriculture ministers approved on 20 September two draft decisions of the European Economic Area (EEA) Joint Committee amending the EEA Agreement concerning cooperation in specific fields outside the four freedoms: a decision extending the cooperation in the field of information society by establishing the multi

annual Community eContent plus programme to make digital content in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable and a decision extending the cooperation in the field of interoperable delivery of pan-European eGovernment services to public administrations, businesses and citizens (IDABC).

Turkey and Culture 2000

Following the decision of the Turkish Government of 22 July 2005 regarding the participation of Turkey in the **Culture 2000** Programme in 2006, the procedure for the conclusion of a **Memorandum of Understanding** between Turkey and the EU is set to be launched in a near future.

Its timely conclusion before the end of the project selection process, due in the spring of 2006, could allow Turkish cultural operators to take part in this call.

Culture

Action in the field of culture, Culture 2007 programme (2007-2013)

COM (2004)0469 of 14 July 2004

The Culture Committee adopted on 12 September the report by MEP GRAÇA MOURA on Culture (*A6-0269/2005 of 19 September 2005*) after 2006 and supported the Rapporteur's proposal that EU funding should be increased from € 236.5 million (2000-2006) to € 600 million for 2007-13 (the Commission had suggested € 408 million). While the Commission's figure assumes 8% would be used for administration, the Culture Committee wants this cut down to 6%.

Alongside the objectives set out by the Commission (trans-national mobility of

cultural players, trans-national circulation of art and intercultural dialogue), MEPs emphasised the importance of support for 'cultural heritage of European significance'.

The committee decided to move the funding for "sites of memory" from Culture 2007 to the forthcoming **Citizens for Europe** programme. Other amendments focus on simplifying the selection criteria and rules governing grants. Lastly, the committee proposes that the programme be called Culture instead of Culture 2007.

Vote on the report is scheduled for 24 October; the Council in turn will debate Parliament's opinion on 14 November.

Co Decision Procedure First Reading

International Liaison Committee of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity http://www.cde-cod.org/Anglais/Liensenanglais/nouveautes-eng/BA_Declaration_ENG.pdf

The Coalitions for cultural diversity gathered in September for their seventh General Assembly in the context of the Third International Meeting on Cultural Diversity, hosted by the city of Buenos Aires.

The coalitions called on all member states of UNESCO to adopt the proposed Convention in October and to ratify it in

2006 to ensure it rapidly enters into effect. The Convention represents a good balance between the concerns of developed and developing countries with regard to culture in an era of globalization.

Moreover, the Coalitions urge these governments to integrate into their own policies the principles set out in the Convention.

Buenos Aires Dedaration 6 September 2005

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Negotiations on cultural diversity taking place within UNESCO http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php
URL ID=11281&URL DO=DO TOPIC&URL SECTION=201.html

The UNESCO General Conference launched in October 2003 the preparation of a draft international convention on the protection of the diversity of cultural contents and artistic expressions, which is set for adoption in October 2005. The UNESCO convention could be binding on its signatories and thus have repercussions for the EU.

The European Parliament launched a call for the governments of EU countries to present a united front in the negotiations on cultural diversity taking place within UNESCO.

MEPs wanted to express their commitment to multilingualism and cultural respect in a political resolution (which has no legal force) adopted on 14 April (http://www.europarl.eu.int/oeil/file.jsp?id = 5235262).

MEPs have made no secret of their concerns. The EU and its Member States should do nothing to compromise cultural diversity or undermine the ability of governments to support cultural diversity and identity.

MEPs are particularly concerned about the compatibility of the future UNESCO convention with international trade rules, thus they intend to win acceptance for this policy within the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as part of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

Education

Lifelong Learning Integrated Action Programme COMENIUS, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, GRUNDTVIG and Jean Monnet http://www.europarl.eu.int/oeil/file.jsp?id=5190202

COM (2004)0474 of 14 July 2004

In their vote on Erasmus, Leonardo, COMENIUS and other sub-programmes that make up the EU Lifelong Learning programme (2007-2013), the Culture committee followed the suggestions of Rapporteur PACK (A6-0267/2005 of 19 September 2005), who described the proposal as 'well-designed' but calling for more money to cover proposed improvements.

To increase student mobility grants, secondary school mobility, school exchanges and cross-border teacher mobility, the committee calls for an additional €980 million for the whole package over and above the multi-annual budget of €13.62 billion proposed by the Commission.

For the <u>Erasmus sub-programme</u>, which promotes student mobility, the committee voted to increase the monthly standard grant from €210 in 2007 to €300 in 2013 (instead of €200 and €250 as proposed by the Commission).

The committee also agreed to cut back slightly the share of the budget for the <u>Leonardo da Vinci sub-programme</u>, which supports vocational training.

The committee also voted to increase the participation of pupils and teachers in the <u>COMENIUS sub-programme</u>, which is designed for schools, and to create a new programme (COMENIUS-REGIO) to promote cross-border teacher mobility, especially between adjacent regions.

Other amendments focus on simplifying application and grant award procedures, the teaching and learning of official, regional and minority languages as well as two foreign languages, higher grants for disabled participants and support for sign languages and Braille.

The report by MEP PACK will be voted at plenary on 24 October; the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee was published in the OJ C 221 of 8 September 2005, p. 134 available at http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/.

Co Decision Procedure First Reading

Education

European Quality Charter for Mobility in education and training http://www.europarl.eu.int/oeil/file.jsp?id=5274982

COM (2005)0450 of 23 September 2005

Recommendation as appropriate.

Charter for Mobility, which aims at laying down a common statement of principles whose use will lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness in all types of organised mobility for learning purposes and more specifically, at providing a reference point for all stakeholders within the **integrated lifelong learning programme** (2007 -2013) proposed by the Commission. The Recommendation consists of ten guidelines,

The Commission has issued a proposal for a

Recommendation on a European Quality

The Recommendation, by nature, is intended as a reference point, to encourage transparency and coordination of mobility practices, and to help generate a climate of reciprocal understanding.

Member States may be inspired to act on the

addressed mainly to the sending and

mobility.

receiving organisations responsible for

The legal basis of the proposal is Articles 149(4) [education] and 150(4) [vocational training] of the Treaty. Both enable the Council and Parliament, acting in co decision, to adopt recommendations for the achievement of their objectives, one of which is to support mobility. The proposal has no implication for the Community budget. The proposed act concerns should be extended to the European Economic Area.

Co Decision Procedure First Reading

European Register of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agencies http://www2.europarl.eu.int/oeil/file.jsp?id=5207052

The proposed Recommendation (*COM* (2004)0642 of 12 October 2004) seeks to promote mutual recognition of quality assurance (QA) systems and quality assessments in Europe. It defines five steps on the way to mutual recognition of QA systems and assessment: Internal QA mechanisms; a common set of standards, procedures and guidelines; a European

Register of QA and accreditation agencies; University autonomy in choice of agency and Member State competence to accept assessments and draw consequences.

The report by MEP Novak (A6-0261/2005 of 2 September 2005) will be voted at plenary on 12 October; the Council common position is scheduled for 14 November.

Co Decision Procedure
First Reading

Public consultation on the creation of a European Institute of Technology http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/eit/index_en.html

In its mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy (COM (2005)0024, page 23), the Commission indicated that it would explore the idea of a European Institute of Technology (EIT). A public consultation on whether and how to create it has been opened by the European Commission, aimed at gathering the views of stakeholders on how an 'EIT' could strengthen research, education and market innovation in Europe.

The consultation, which will run until mid-November, and will feed into a wider analysis by the Commission services, will focus on e.g. key missions, objectives, addedvalue and possible structure of EIT (see http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/eit/ <u>paper en.pdf</u>). An online questionnaire, available at

http://europa.eu.int/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=EIT asks for views on how the EIT could best organise its activities to support innovation and the transfer of knowledge throughout the EU.

Once the public consultation is concluded, the Commission will consider whether it wishes to take the matter further, and may then prepare a paper for the Spring European Council in March 2006. If the idea of the establishment of an EIT were to be approved by the European Council, the Commission would make a formal legislative proposal to Parliament and Council.

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Education and training policies in Europe

http://europa.eu.int/comm/economy finance/publications/european economy/especialreport0403 en.htm

European Economy Special Report no. 3, 2004 Office for Official Publications of the EC ISBN 92-894-8128-5 ISSN 1684-033X

Education and training policies in Europe have aroused growing interest in recent years, at both national and EU levels, and from economists and labour market specialists as well as from educationalists.

Several reasons for this led EU leaders to call in March 2000 for a 'substantial annual increase in per capita investment in human resources'. This is a key strand of the Lisbon strategy by which the EU aims to become 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustaining economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.

Erasmus Mundus, EU universities continue to attract the world http://europa.eu.int/erasmus-mundus

In its second year the EU's Erasmus Mundus programme - a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education with third countries, is reaching a rapidly expanding number of participating universities, courses, students and academics from the EU and all over the world.

A description of the selected courses,

partnerships and projects selected under Action 1 is available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/projects/index_en.html.

Interested students are invited to contact the coordinators of the courses concerned for further information on admission conditions, application forms and scholarships.

SOCRATES, increased funding for adult education http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/socrates/grundtvig/home-en.html

The Commission granted on 26 September over €30 million to European cooperation projects in the field of adult education under the GRUNDTVIG action (Socrates programme). Funding will support 2,500 organisations involved in the general education of adults.

GRUNDTVIG encompasses not only learning within the formal educational system but also in non-formal settings e.g. **libraries**, **museums**, hospitals and prisons

as well as learning undertaken on an informal or individual basis.

This year, 71 cooperation projects and 10 networks and thematic seminars have been selected among more than 430 applications from all over Europe. Each project usually involves between 6-8 partners from at least 3 of the participating countries, and will receive on average a grant of between €60,000 and €340,000 for duration of 1 to 3 years.

Europe to celebrate its Day of Languages http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lang/awareness/day05 en.html

The annual European Day of Languages took place on 26 September. Organised annually since 2001 by the Council of Europe (http://www.coe.int/edl), the European Day of Languages is a celebration of Europe's linguistic diversity and a major part of the campaign to encourage more language learning across the continent.

This year the European Commission presented the results of a Euro barometer survey, conducted last June which focuses on knowledge of languages among European citizens. Results conclude that 50% of the

European population say they can speak a foreign language; English is known as a second language by one third of the EU population and almost 8 out of 10 students can use at least one foreign language.

The Commission has committed itself to undertaking 45 actions at European level between 2004 and 2006 (see Action Plan on Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity, July 2003) and will also publish this autumn a Communication on Multilingualism, setting out its broad strategy for the years ahead.

EU Information Policy

Access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents in 2004 http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/lex/lex/lex/lex/site/en/com/2005/com2005_0348en01.pdf

The Commission published on 29 July its report on the application in 2004 of **Regulation EC/1049/2001** regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents [COM (2005)0348 of 29 July 2005].

According to the report, public interest in accessing unpublished Commission documents is growing. Applications were made largely by companies, NGOs, law firms and various interest groups (over 40%).

A significant proportion of them relate to Commission activities regarding the monitoring of Community law to obtain documents which could support the requester's position in connection with a complaint e.g. a presumed infringement of Community law, an administrative or legal appeal. The reasons most frequently given for refusal are: purpose of investigations, commercial interests of companies and the Commission's decision-making process. The latter is invoked more to protect the taking of individual decisions than the legislative process.

Regulation EC/1049/2001(OJ L 145 of 31 May 2001, p. 43) requires the EU institutions to keep a register of documents and to grant direct access to documents in electronic form. MEP Davies and Baroness Sarah LUDFORD, in two oral questions (H-2005-0663 and H-2005-0665) at plenary in September, addressed that despite recent improvements, the Council Register is not organised in a user-friendly way and asked the Council to reorganise its Register and its website to allow citizens to trace all relevant documents, follow the decision-making process and therefore end with the citizens' frustration to access information.

EU Research and Development

European Commission develops its plans for future research programme http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/index_en.cfm

Following the adoption of FP7 in April, the Commission adopted on 21 September the second stage of the process, the Specific Programmes: Cooperation, Ideas, People and Capacities. These will be discussed with Parliament (*consultation*) before being decided by the Council.

The **Cooperation** programme aims at enabling Europe to master and shape the future developments of ICT to meet the demands of both society and economy. The amount proposed is € 11,197 million, with €700 million for the Socio-economic sciences and Humanities (competitiveness, social cohesion, sustainability, education, cultural issues and global interdependence).

The **Ideas** programme will establish a European Research Council (ERC), the **People** programme will be Marie Curie Actions and the **Capacities** programme will aim at developing research infrastructures, regions of knowledge and SMEs. The

Commission has also adopted a programme setting out the future direction of its inhouse research facilities, DG Joint Research Centre, which aims at strengthening its ability to provide sound scientific and technical support. Later in the year the European Commission will make a proposal relating to the Rules of participation in the various Specific Programmes.

The amount proposed by the European Commission is \in 70 billion.

The third stage of the process will consist of the preparation of detailed research agendas which will be the basis of the future work programme and calls for proposals. Work will now begin on this and consultations with the scientific community will be organised.

Further information on FP7 can be found at http://www.cordis.lu/fp7/.

Information Society

Commission opens public consultation on publishing industries in the digital age http://europa.eu.int/information_society/media_taskforce/publishing/consultation/index_en.htm

A public consultation on how to enhance the competitiveness of the publishing sector in the EU's increasingly digital economy was launched by the European Commission on 20 September. Replies to this consultation, which are expected by mid-November 2005, should help EU policy makers to better understand the needs and challenges of Europe's publishing industry.

The starting point is a Commission study on factors affecting publishing industry competitiveness indicators, which indicates that innovation and reform are major challenges facing the EU publishing industry. Comments by all interested parties are invited on: obstacles to the take-up of ICT; business models, including digital rights management systems (DRM); media ownership structures; differing regulatory traditions e.g. licensed broadcast media,

unlicensed press; and advertising rules.

The "Task Force on Media Affairs" (http://europa.eu.int/information_society/media_taskforce/index_en.htm) will analyse stakeholder responses and act as an 'entry point' for small players in the media market who wish to raise specific issues with the Commission.

In addition, chief editors from Austria, Denmark, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Spain, and the UK met on 23 September in Brussels to brainstorm how the written press in Europe is addressing the challenges and opportunities arising from online publishing, digitisation and increased competition in the advertising markets. Results of the consultation will be presented at a publishers' summit on 6 December in Brussels.

Commission calls for action to make ICT more accessible for citizens http://europa.eu.int/information-society/policy/accessibility/com-ea-2005/index-en.htm http://europa.eu.int/information-society/doc/factsheets/012-eaccessibility.pdf

In a communication on eAccessibility (COM (2005)0425) adopted on 15 September, the Commission calls upon Member States to further promote EU eAccessibility initiatives and to encourage uptake by industry. It includes the main findings of a consultation held this year, which showed that there is a lack of consistency amongst accessible information and communication technologies (ICT) products and services in Europe.

The Commission believes that coordinated action by EU Member States is needed to make ICT more accessible to all, in particular to people with disabilities and the elderly. Rather than proposing new legislation directly, the Commission is first to fully

explore the possibilities available with stakeholders e.g. users, industry and standardisation bodies.

While continuing to support ongoing measures e.g. standardisation, Design for All (DFA), web accessibility and RTD, the Commission proposes the use of three policy levers available to Member States: public procurement contracts in the ICT domain, certification schemes for accessible products and services, and better use of the eAccessibility potential of existing legislation.

Progress will be reviewed two years from now, when additional measures may be proposed, including new legislation if needed.

The future regime for professional recognition http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/qualifications/future_en.htm

The Directive 2005/36/EC of Parliament and Council of *7 September 2005* on the recognition of professional qualifications (EEA relevance) was published in the Official Journal of the European Union no L

255, Vol. 48, p. 22 of 30 September 2005 (See all official languages at http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:255:SOM:EN:HTML).

Internal Market

Commission urges EU-25 to open professional services to competition http://europa.eu.int/comm/competition/antitrust/legislation/#liberal

In its communication on competition in professional services, the Commission welcomes progress made in some Member States but finds that regulations that seriously restrict competition e.g. fixing prices or banning advertising are still all too common in many countries.

This communication is a follow-up to the 2004 Report and gives an overview of progress made in reforming unjustified regulatory restrictions in the six professions selected for study by the Commission so far - lawyers, notaries, engineers, architects, pharmacists and accountants (including the

related profession of tax advisers).

The majority of national competition authorities along with the Commission are now actively engaged; a range of work is being undertaken e.g. the Polish competition authority's study on factors hindering competition in five professions (http://www.uokik.gov.pl/pl/ochrona konk urencji/analizy_rynku/) and the Irish authority's report on restrictions affecting competition in the legal profession (http://www.tca.ie/professions/legal_report_executive_summary.pdf).

Commission intends to withdraw one third of screened proposals http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/regulation/better-regulation/index-en.htm

On 27 September, the Commission delivered more results from its better regulation initiative. After screening 183 proposals for EU laws pending at Parliament and Council that predate 1 January 2004, the Commission has decided to scrap more than a third (68).

About 100 constitute truly new legislative initiatives, while the rest relate to international obligations, administrative decisions, and technical adaptation and, in some cases, codification and simplification of EU laws.

The Commission has also noted 5 proposals that it suggests be maintained but subjected to further economic analysis; three other

proposals (sales promotions, protection of inventions and the entry conditions for non-EU workers) - are to be withdrawn but could be reinstated following impact assessments. Some controversial regulations however will not be among those to scrap or rework, notably the services directive.

The Commission will now submit far-reaching proposals (work programme) to simplify existing EU legislation in October. Member States, business and citizens are invited to tell it where red-tape and over-regulation can be cut (Internet consultation) until the end of December at http://europa.eu.int/yourvoice/forms/dispatch?form=418&lang=EN.

Telecommunications

Mid term review of the eTEN Programme http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/lex/lex/lex/lex/site/en/com/2005/com2005_0354en01.pdf

The Commission has published the mid term review of the eTEN Programme [COM (2005)0354 of 1 August 2005], which discusses five options for the future; the first three are presented as theoretical possibilities and draw attention to the essential role of the programme in filling a gap between research and market roll-out which is not filled by other Community initiatives.

The report identifies a need for a major change in the current form of the programme and proposes an optimal mix of approaches including a more coordinated strategy which is led by demand. Under this approach, requirements would be defined by committee and projects would be implemented by a public procurement procedure.

Mid term review of the eTEN Programme

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The Commission will investigate the prospects for applying the Open Method of Coordination to support policy learning, good practice exchange, benchmarking and better coordination of strategies across local, regional and national activities.

Most of the recommendations have already been incorporated in the Work Programme for 2005; Recommendations of a longer term nature have been taken into account in re designing the programme as a key element in the i2010 initiative. The Commission will not make a separate proposal to revise the current Guidelines Decision, which will consequently lapse on 31 December 2006, except in respect of calls for proposals which have already been published in the Official Journal of the European Union before that date.

A forward-looking EU radio spectrum policy, second annual report http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/lex/lex/lex/site/en/om/2005/om2005_0411en01.pdf

COM (2005) 411 final of 6 September

The Commission has presented a new EU strategy for an optimal use of radio spectrum in Europe. Radio spectrum is a critical input for many sectors relying on wireless transmission e.g. broadcasting, mobile telephony. The proposed strategy aims at lowering the barriers to access radio resources and to take advantage of the synergies resulting from a common European approach. The Commission also proposes that, between now and 2010 the

exclusive usage rights for significant parts of the radio spectrum ought to be made tradable according to common EU rules. In addition, the new strategy foresees investigating further the opportunities to make available licence-free radio frequencies to allow different users to share bands as is already the case for WiFi radio access. This will ultimately widen the choice of the wireless applications for the consumer.

The new strategy on radio spectrum is part of the i2010 initiative (1 June 2005).

Youth Policy

Youth Action Programme for 2007-2013 http://www2.europarl.eu.int/oeil/file.jsp?id=5190212

COM (2004)0471 of 14 July 2004

The CULT Committee voted for €1.128 (instead of the €915 million proposed by the Commission) suggested by Rapporteur MEP GRÖNER (A6-0263/2005 of 29 September 2005), to support the Youth in Action programme, designed to promote active citizenship and mutual understanding among young people across Europe.

The Rapporteur proposed to set indicative minimums of financial support for Actions 1-5. Action 1 "Youth for Europe" should be the programme's main emphasis and thus receive a higher share of at least 30 % of total costs. For Action 2 "European Voluntary Service" a relatively small share is sufficient, particularly as Action 3 "Youth of the world" is on the same lines. Action 4 "Youth workers and support systems" should receive at least

15 %, with Action 3 taking 4 %. **Action 5** "Support for policy cooperation" should receive a higher share (at least 4 %) for funding the 'European Youth Week' initiative.

In the scope of the report, the Committee considered: adjusting the age limits for participants; participation of all neighbouring countries; guaranty of no discrimination and participation of young people with less opportunity; involvement of young people in the evaluation and ongoing monitoring of programme's objectives; possibility of organising youth seminars; European Youth Week as an established part of European youth policy and terminology of the proposal.

Vote at plenary is scheduled for 24 October; the opinion of the EESC was published in OJ no C 234, p. 46 of *22 September 2005*.

Co Decision Procedure
First Reading

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Information sources used include

Bulletin Quotidien Europe

Council Press Office Newsroom, http://ue.eu.int/newsroom/newmain.asp?lang=1
European Parliament Press Service http://www.europarl.eu.int/press/index_en.htm
RAPID - Press and Communication Service of the European Commission, http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/welcome.htm

EUR-Lex, http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/. Since 1 November 2004, EUR-Lex incorporates the CELEX service and provides free access in 20 languages to EU law. Europa, http://europa.eu.int/

Various mailing lists

For further information contact: Carmen Morlon EU Information Officer, morlon@debibliotheken.nl Calls for Tenders are published in the **S** series of the OJ as well as in the Tenders Electronic Daily database TED, http://ted.publications.eu.int/official/ (new dates for the Official Journal Supplement since January 2005). EBLIDA Hot News online provides links to calls and programmes!

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

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

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

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

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