



Brussels News Update

July 2009

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Swedish Presidency:

Priorities

The Swedish presidency of the Council of the European Union began in July and will continue to the end of 2009. The priorities of the new presidency's work programme include tackling the urgent challenges of economy, employment and climate, and strengthening competitiveness by investing in research and education as well as improving the governance of the European Research Area (ERA).

The presidency plans to continue the work that has begun on the ERA, and to 'propose governance mechanisms for the effective use of these resources and better cooperation between policy areas'. Ensuring that the direction of forthcoming programmes for research and development are best positioned to respond to future challenges in health, energy and climate is another of the presidency's goals.

'The focus will be on how the EU is to use its research resources more efficiently,' the work programme reads. 'The objective is to agree on what research resources should be used for and how these investments could be better coordinated and managed. One important issue is the design of joint initiatives at European level, including the EU Framework Programme for Research.'

The role of research and innovation in helping to lift Europe out of the current economic crisis is highlighted in the Swedish work programme, which points out that 'research and innovation create new development areas'. According to the document, 'The Presidency will submit a contribution to a European Innovation Plan, with links to the European Research Area.'

The presidency plans to help Baltic Sea Member States to manage the serious environmental problems they face and to encourage growth and development in that region. Part of this means fostering larger joint initiatives in the areas of research, innovation and entrepreneurship. In addition, the new presidency will address the importance of transferring technologies to poorer nations as part of an effort to limit greenhouse gas emissions. 'Regulatory frameworks should be adapted to promote the spread of climate-friendly technology, particularly to developing countries,' the work programme reads.

Sources: <http://cordis.europa.eu/1>

Links: <http://www.euractiv.com/1> <http://www.euractiv.com/2> <http://www.euractiv.com/3>

The Lund Declaration:

The Swedish presidency of the Council of the EU has recently hosted a conference in Lund on the role of research and innovation in the development of Europe up to 2025 called 'New Worlds - New Solutions - Research and Innovation as a Basis for Developing Europe in a Global Context'. The participants of the conference have agreed on the Lund Declaration, a document, which calls on the EU and academia to more clearly identify the major challenges facing the world, and states that European Research Policy should move away from the present bureaucratic structure and instead focus on those challenges.

Sources: <http://cordis.europa.eu/3> <http://www.se2009.eu/>

Link: <http://bulletin.sciencebusiness.net/1>

Public to share ideas on EU as innovation society

An open consultation on EU innovation policy has been set up by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry (DG ENTR) in the form of an online blog. Members of an expert panel have posted their ideas for creating a more innovative Europe, and the public is invited to comment, vote, and share their own ideas from now until 31 August. The

panel will use the feedback to make recommendations for the Commission's European Plan for Innovation in early autumn. The panel comprises six established leaders in business, law, management and banking. Their ideas, together with those shared by the public over the next few weeks, will form the innovation plan, which was called for by the Council of the European Union in December 2008.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/4>

New narrative for the 'Lisbon Strategy'

A EurActiv interview on the revamping of Lisbon Strategy with Gerard De Graaf, Head of Unit of the European Commission's Lisbon Strategy's "Strategic Objective Prosperity".

Source: <http://www.euractiv.com/4>

R&D information service launched on CORDIS

CORDIS, the Community Research and Development Information Service, has published a new internet portal to provide information on research and development (R&D) activities under the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/5>

Sustainable Nuclear Energy Technology Platform and its SRA

The Sustainable Nuclear Energy technology platform (SNE-TP) has finalised its Strategic Research Agenda (SRA). The SRA incorporates the input of around 160 SNE-TP members, and covers every aspect of research in the nuclear energy field, including mining, fuel fabrication, fuel reprocessing, waste storage and 'recycling' (transmutation), reactor technologies, advanced fuels and research facilities, as well as safety requirements for operating reactors and ageing factors that affect existing reactors. The SRA outlines priorities that will direct global research efforts for the current and future 'generations' of nuclear reactors. The strategy recognises the importance of meeting the EU's ambitious targets of reducing greenhouse gases by 20% by the year 2020 from 1990 levels. It prioritises maintaining the competitiveness of nuclear energy while supplying long-term waste-management solutions, developing reactors with a closed fuel cycle (which burn up waste products), and building competence by promoting education and training while ensuring the availability of research infrastructures.

The SNE-TP vision report set out three major objectives: maintaining the safety and competitiveness of today's technologies; developing a new generation of more sustainable reactor technologies; and developing new applications of nuclear power including the production of hydrogen as well as desalination and industrial 'heat' applications such as the production of concrete or glass.

The SRA specifically addresses the objectives of the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) plan, one of which is to complete preparations for the demonstration of 'generation-IV' reactors for increased sustainability. The SRA sets out specific objectives for work on four types of generation-IV reactors.

Another important objective of the SNE-TP is to assure the safe, secure and economic operation of existing and future 'light water reactors'. The SRA also emphasises the importance of continuing research in the areas of partitioning and transmutation and developing advanced fuel cycles.

In addition the SNE-TP's SRA addresses the importance of bringing young scientists into the field, managing the existing knowledge and organising a network of research infrastructures.

In related news, the Environment Council of the European Union has adopted legislation bringing into law the fundamental safety principles set out by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The Council also adopted decisions authorising the Commission to open negotiations on agreements for scientific and technological cooperation between the Euratom (European Atomic Energy Community) and Croatia, Serbia and Turkey, associating these countries to the Euratom Framework Programme for Nuclear Research and Training Activities (2007-2011).

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/6>

Commission adopts template for National Renewable Energy Action Plans

The Commission has adopted a decision establishing a template for National Renewable Energy Action Plans (NREAPs) as required by the recent Renewable Energy Directive. The template will guide Member States in the elaboration of their Renewable Energy Action Plan and detail their strategies for reaching their 2020 renewable energy targets. Each Member State must submit a NREAP to the Commission by 30 June 2010 at the latest.

Source: <http://europa.eu/rapid/1> **Link:** <http://www.euractiv.com/7>

JRC report highlights the need for increased investment in renewables

A new report entitled *Renewable Energy Snapshots* from the Joint Research Centre (JRC), concludes that Europe can meet its ambitious renewable energy targets, but only if governments increase their financial and regulatory support for the new technologies. The report adds that further research funding is also needed to enlarge the markets for these technologies, 'as cost reduction and accelerated implementation will depend on the production volume and not on time'.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/7>

New framework to link up Europe's polar research

Over 26 leading European scientific institutions have agreed to streamline links between their national research activities through a new European Polar Framework to facilitate joint funding calls, share scientific data and for countries to host scientists in each others' research stations, creating international teams similar to those in the International Space Station and the Integrated Ocean Drilling Programme.

Source: <http://www.esf.org/1>

EU-Russia research cooperation

EU-Russia cooperation works well and Russian partners' contribution to EU-funded projects is highly appreciated by EU partners. Nevertheless, much needs to be done to boost Russian participation in the EU framework programmes and to integrate them fully into the European Research Area (ERA).

These are the main conclusions of a new report from the EU-funded RUSERA EXE ('Expanding ERA over Russia') project. The report uncovers that a number of issues such as linguistic, structure of organisations and restricted funding, affect EU-Russia research collaboration and sets out a number of tips and measures to overcome these problems such as further development of FP7 (Seventh Framework Programme) to support structures in Russia and increase funding to enhance researchers' mobility.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/8>

Compendium On EU-Russia "science landscape"

The Compendium on Science & Research Cooperation Between the European Union & Russia provides guidance for scientists and research organisations in the EU and in Russia seeking opportunities for cooperation, as well as at policy-makers and science managers who require an overview of the respective agreements and programmes.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/9>

EU biowaste directive

A EurActiv article on the conclusions on the Commission's Green Paper on biowaste management.

Source: <http://www.euractiv.com/8> **Link:**<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/1.pdf> (Council's Conclusions on the Green Paper on biowaste management)

Eco-efficiency roadmap for Europe

A report by the Stockholm Environment Institute, entitled 'A European Eco-efficient Economy', will provide a basis for discussions during an informal meeting of energy and environment ministers. The report argues that Europe's leadership is "primarily evident" in its climate change commitments but in order to continue attracting investment and businesses, greater efforts must be made to promote innovation and energy efficiency.

Source: <http://www.euractiv.com/9>

Chemical sector claims positive role in climate change

A EurActiv article on the first-ever lifecycle analysis of the chemical industry's global emissions. The report entitled *Innovations for Greenhouse Gas Reductions:*

A life cycle quantification of carbon abatement solutions enabled by the chemical industry was prepared by the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA)

Sources: <http://www.euractiv.com/10>
<http://www.icca-chem.org/> (ICCA's full report)

Report on pesticide residues in food

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published its first Annual Report on Pesticide Residues, which provides an overview on the pesticide residues in food observed throughout the European Union (EU) during 2007 and assesses the exposure of consumers through their diets. The report showed that the majority of the samples complied with the legal maximum residue levels (MRLs) of pesticides and made a series of recommendations to further improve the collection of data required for pesticide exposure assessment. EFSA provided a series of recommendations for future monitoring programmes on pesticide residues, such as amending the reporting format to ensure more detailed results, which will allow more accurate exposure assessment.

Sources: <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/.htm> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/> (EFSA's full report) **Link:** <http://www.euractiv.com/11>

Tackling nanotoxicology dilemma

The NHECD ('Nano health-environment commented database') project, funded under the EU's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) to the tune of EUR 1.45 million, seeks to create an open

access and sustainable database system on the health, safety and environmental impact of nanoparticles that can meet the challenge of automatically maintaining a rich and up-to-date scientific research repository.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/10>

Halve patent fees for SMEs, says EU think-tank

A EurActiv article on the new report by the Brussels-based Bruegel think-tank on SMEs and intellectual property.

Source: <http://www.euractiv.com/11>

R&D can secure Europe's future

Andreu Mas-Colell, the new head of the European Research Council (ERC), talking to Science|Business

Source: <http://bulletin.sciencebusiness.net/2>

Innovation

EU innovation

EurActiv interviews with EU Science and Research Commissioner Janez Potočnik.

Sources: <http://www.euractiv.com/12> <http://www.euractiv.com/13>

Innovation policy in times of crisis

Report on the final conference of the 'Knowledge for Growth' (K4G) advising group, set up by EU Science and Research Commissioner Janez Potočnik.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/11>

Education at the heart of EU innovation 'manifesto'

A EurActiv report on the manifesto to be published later this year by the 27 ambassadors for the European Year of Creativity and Innovation.

Source: <http://www.euractiv.com/13>

Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Technology Initiative: A €140 million call

The Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking (FCH JU) has launched a call for proposals under its Annual Implementation Plan 2009. Around €140 million have been allocated to this second call, with €71.3 million by the Commission matched by in-kind contributions of the industrial partners. Consortia have to be composed of at least three legal entities established in EU Member States or Associated Countries, but no two in the same country. All three entities must be independent of each other and at least one must be an industry or research organisation. The 29 project topics aim to put fuel cell and hydrogen energy technologies on the market two to five years sooner than what is estimated without the support it offers. Selected teams of researchers will investigate bottlenecks in the whole range of applications for these energy technologies, from cars to large scale power plants, as well as the whole supply chain from hydrogen production to demonstration of the market-readiness of applications. Breakthrough research should foster the use of hydrogen-fuelled buses and fuel cell vehicles. It will help develop hydrogen storage and improve fuel cells' durability, performance and the cost-efficiency to make green applications such as power stations or laptops ready for the market. This call is the

second being launched by this EU-wide collaborative private-public partnership whose total budget amounts around €1bn to be invested by 2014.

Sources: <http://cordis.europa.eu/12> <http://europa.eu/rapid/2>

Link: <http://bulletin.sciencebusiness.net/3>

Call information day: Environment (including climate change)

The European Commission is organising an information day on the upcoming call for proposals under the *Environment (including climate change)* theme of the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) on 17 September in Brussels, Belgium. A brokerage session will allow participants to give a short presentation of their project idea and start or join a consortium. The call for proposals is scheduled for launch on 30 July 2009.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/13>

Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation call published

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) is calling for proposals for the implementation of the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EM ECW). The EM ECW aims to improve mutual understanding between the European Union and third countries. It is designed to foster institutional cooperation in the field of higher education between countries through a mobility scheme for students and academic staff for the purpose of studying, teaching, training and research. This call for the academic year 2009 to 2010 focuses on the Latin America region.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/14>

Call for proposals to develop networks of knowledge brokerage initiatives

The European Commission has published a call for proposals to develop networks of knowledge brokerage initiatives for evidence-based policy and practice. The call will support international cooperation in the development of 'knowledge brokerage' mechanisms in the field of education and training. These mechanisms are intended to strengthen the links between research, policy and practice. Their main role is to make the results of research on education and training understandable and accessible, and to bring research to the attention of policy makers, decision makers and practitioners.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/15>

Brokerage event on materials

A brokerage event on materials, directed at the research organisations and enterprises from European Union and partnering Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) countries interested in participating in the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), will be held on 17 and 18 September in Warsaw, Poland. The event aims to bring together the skills and knowledge of potential consortia members and to present concrete project ideas for future proposals in the framework of upcoming calls for proposals under the 'Nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials and new production technologies' (NMP) theme of FP7.

The following specific research areas will be covered:

- hybrid materials for electronic and photonic applications;
- bio- and chemosensing materials in health, safety and security applications;

- materials for energy applications, including energy thermo conversion and energy storage;
- nanocrystalline materials with novel functionalities and tools for their development;
- nanomaterials characterisation.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/16>

Tender for 'project technical advisers'

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Research has launched a call for tenders for technical assistance by scientific-technical and industrial experts. Referred to as 'project technical advisers' (PTAs), they will assist Commission staff in monitoring research projects of the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) theme 'Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials, and New Production Technologies' (NMP).

The call is divided in four lots, each one of which will provide assistance with projects in one of four NMP activity areas (Lot 1: Nanosciences and nanotechnologies; Lot 2: Materials; Lot 3: New production; Lot 4: Integration of technologies for industrial applications).

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/17>

How implicit stereotypes affect gender equity in science

New research shows that implicit stereotypes could influence gender equity in science and mathematics engagement and performance. Results showed that more than two thirds of the study's participants connect science with men, not women. The study also found that boys achieved a higher level in eighth-grade science and mathematics in countries whose citizens had strong implicit stereotypes. The study's results suggest that implicit stereotypes may also have a hand in ensuring that women and girls steer clear of science as opposed to their male peers.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/18>

Matchmaking event on sustainable energy

Within the framework of the EUREKA network, seven EUREKA member countries are organising a matchmaking event on sustainable energy on 17 and 18 September in Copenhagen, Denmark. The event will address current global issues related to energy shortages and pollution from fossil fuels. There will be a focus on alternative renewable energy sources, such as those based on second generation biomass and district heating technologies, as well as on solar and wind energy. Companies, research institutions and networks from EUREKA countries will be able to meet potential collaboration partners from all over Europe in the fields of renewable energy and to access to technology expertise and new business channels.

Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/19>



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