



European Association for Chemical and Molecular Sciences
Europäische Vereinigung für Chemische und Molekulare Wissenschaften
Association Européenne pour les Sciences Chimiques et Moléculaires
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Further Progress on FP7

The European Council adopted a common position on the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) on 25 September in Brussels. Agreement on FP7 could now be reached fairly quickly if the European Parliament responds positively in its second reading, as expected.

The political decision was made by qualified majority on 24 July but the Presidency has now agreed clarification of the rules on stem cell research in order to secure agreement broader agreement to the proposal.

The Council's common position will now be forwarded to the Parliament for its second reading, which is expected to take place on 29 November 2006. "The objective of both the Council and the Parliament is to get the programme through in the second reading in order to ensure a timely launch of the FP7 in January 2007," said the Finnish presidency. "The aim is also to adopt the rules for participation in FP7 in the first reading. If they go to a second reading, the launch of FP7 will be delayed. As to the four specific programmes, currently under preparation, the Council will vote on them as soon as possible after the adoption of FP7."

The **first calls for proposals for FP7 projects could be published by December 2006** for submission in March 2007, and, after an evaluation period, the first FP7 project could begin at the end of 2007 or early 2008.

Source: Euractiv.com <http://www.euractiv.com/en/science/fp7-decision-passed-parliament/article-158142>
Council conclusions
http://www.eu2006.fi/news_and_documents/conclusions/vko39/en_GB/1159249182760/

Council press release:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/misc/91058.pdf

Euroscience Criticises European Institute of Technology

Euroscience says the EIT is "a politically motivated idea, starting from a wrong premise and with a vague and then unrealistic financial underpinning, will not help Europe forward".

According to Euroscience, Europe's two major problems are lack of innovation and the current, uniform, university system. Establishment of a new institution will resolve none of them. Euroscience questions, in particular, the efficiency of "widely dispersed virtual knowledge communities governed at a distance by a board of governors" to develop strategic technologies and innovations.

Instead, the association urges reform of European universities which seriously lack differentiation. The association fully supports the establishment of the European Research Council (ERC). "Europe clearly needs continental mechanisms to fund frontier research". European-wide competition on research funding will enhance diversity among universities as, in order to excel, the universities need to specialise in a few research fields".

The association suggests turning the EIT into a European Innovation Agency, which would help create innovation-prone markets, stimulating innovative companies, training, and dedicated approaches to technology transfer, adoption and uptake.

Source: Euractiv.com <http://www.euractiv.com/en/science/scientists-slam-european-institute-technology/article-157411>

European Institute of Technology http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eit/index_en.html

Euroscience http://www.euroscience.org/WGROUPS/SCIENCE_POL/EIT.htm

ICT Industry Gives Backing to EIT

In contrast to Euroscience, leaders of Europe's digital technology sector have supported the latest proposals for the EIT.

The EICTA, the European information and communication technologies association, said that the EIT would help strengthen existing networks between the best universities, research institutes and industrial research development labs in Europe.

The paper says that unlike the US Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the EIT should not be created top-down; it must grow bottom-up from existing research communities. It also says that seconding people and resources from university departments and industrial labs is 'not particularly attractive.' It suggests that alternative models could be employed, such as awarding contracts, procuring or commissioning deliverables or even leasing resources from selected excellent departments of universities, institutes and industrial laboratories.

The paper further argues that the EIT should not be financed at the expense of the seventh Framework Programme (FP7).

Cordis

http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS&ACTION=D&RCN=26349&DOC=1&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1160400123409

EICTA <http://www.eicta.org/>

Carbon Free Sources 'Backbone' of Future EU Energy Policy Roadmap

European Commissioner for Energy, Andris Piebalgs, has set out what he expects to achieve following the public consultation into the Energy Green Paper, which closed on Sunday 24 September.

He expects action in six areas, and three of those areas will have a direct impact on European research. During a public hearing on the Green Paper for European Energy Policy in Brussels on 22 September, he said: 'by 2050 the EU will need to source the clear majority of its energy use from carbon free sources, as will other countries. This has to be the backbone of Europe's energy policy.'

The six policy areas are:

- An EU strategic energy review, to underpin European Energy Policy, with a step-by-step road map on how to achieve this vision (to be published January 2007);
- A long-term Renewables Road Map;
- An internal Energy Market Review and the final results of the Sectoral Competition Energy Enquiry;
- A Priority Interconnection and Infrastructure Plan (PINC);
- A communication on Sustainable Coal use;
- A PINC Communication on nuclear energy in the EU as required by the Euratom Treaty.

He pointed out that developing carbon neutral energy sources would be a great opportunity for industry and research and said that for the medium and longer-terms, plans are needed to develop the overall energy mix for the future, with a focus on carbon-neutral sources, renewable energy sources and carbon trading.

Meanwhile the US government announced on 20 September that it will invest more than \$3 billion in research to avoid global warming by developing "visionary" technological breakthroughs.

The new Climate Change Technology Programme (CCTP) Strategic Plan is the technological component of the climate-change strategy presented by President Bush in 2002. Through the new CCTP strategy, the Bush government will invest in climate-change research and development. The main technologies to be developed under the programme are hydrogen, biorefining, clean coal and carbon sequestration, nuclear fission and fusion. Energy efficiency, one of Europe's main responses to fight climate change, is noticeable by its absence from the programme.

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http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP6_NEWS&ACTION=D&RCN=26396&DOC=15&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1159863086537

Energy-Saving Plan Delayed

The Commission's postponement of the adoption of the action plan on energy efficiency has raised questions about its commitment to one of the main priorities of the new European energy policy prioritised by Commissioner Piebalgs as part of his Strategic Energy Review.

Speaking at the public consultation event on the Strategic Energy Review the Commissioner said "If I had to identify one policy as my priority, it would be energy efficiency" and that it was important to harness the 20 per cent in energy efficiency available with current technology, but not exploited.

The energy-efficiency action plan was supposed to be adopted at the beginning of September but was postponed. A commission spokesperson said that there will be an action plan, but that the Commission intends to make changes to the structure of the paper and to strengthen its political message. A special meeting before the end of the week should make the final decision

whether the action plan would still be adopted before the November energy council or postponed and presented together with the energy package at the beginning of 2007.

Green Paper on Energy Efficiency http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/index_en.htm
Euractiv.com <http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/energy-efficiency-action-plan-ditched-strengthened/article-158224>

New Commission Innovation Plan

The Commission has proposed a ten-point programme to foster innovation, in response to a call from the Spring European Council of March 2006. But most of the action needs to come from member states

In 2000, the Commission adopted the Lisbon agenda - which was revised and relaunched as the Partnership for Growth and Jobs in 2005 - aimed at making Europe more competitive by making the regulatory and economic framework more innovation friendly and by increasing investment in training, research and development.

The Communication on "Innovation: putting knowledge into practice" focuses on implementing a cultural change in Europe towards a society where innovation is encouraged both on the supply and demand side. It sets out ten high-priority actions:

- establish innovation-friendly education systems;
- establish a European institute of Technology;
- develop a single labour market for researchers;
- strengthen links between researchers and industry;
- nurture regional innovation through the new cohesion policy programmes;
- reform State aid rules for R&D and innovation and provide better guidance for R&D tax incentives;
- improve protection for intellectual property rights;
- copyright levies for digital products and services;
- develop a strategy for innovation-friendly 'lead-markets';
- stimulate innovation through public and private procurement.

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http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS&ACTION=D&RCN=26342&DOC=2&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1160387401789

DG Enterprise http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/index_en.htm

Commission (memo):

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/06/325&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

'Science-Teaching Must Be Innovative'

A study on science-teaching in Europe highlights the importance of teacher-education in helping pupils develop a 'scientific way of thinking'.

The Eurydice study on Science Teaching in Schools in Europe, published on 28 September 2006, highlights the role of science teachers in pupils developing 'a scientific way of thinking'. Teachers' ability to teach in innovative ways is, according to the study, the main link between the theory and practice of teaching. But research suggests that current science-teaching has a more 'stereotypical' approach.

The study, completed with Commission support, is a contribution to the current debate on improving the effectiveness and attractiveness of science-teaching in the EU, which is one of the EU objectives contributing to the Lisbon agenda.

Eurydice report

http://www.eurydice.org/portal/page?_pageid=257,167666&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&pubid=081EN

Widening Access to European Research Information

A new EU-funded project will lay the foundations of a large-scale, pan-European public infrastructure for research information.

Open-access to research information is vital for researchers. The long-term vision of the DRIVER (Digital Repository Infrastructure Vision for European Research) project is to create an knowledge infrastructure for European researchers, which could include any form of scientific resource, from reports, to research articles, to raw data to other media.

DRIVER project <http://www.driver-repository.eu/>

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http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP6_NEWS&ACTION=D&RCN=26337&DOC=36&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1159863086537

Future EU International Research Cooperation

As preparations get underway for the launch of the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), work has already begun that is looking to FP8 and to what research policy might look like by 2015. An EU-funded project has outlined a vision of how the EU's international cooperation in science and technology might develop in the future. It sees the EU focusing on, among other things, helping developing countries to reform their research policy rather than investing directly in research.

The Scope 2015 project looks at how research in developing countries might evolve in the next ten years in order to inform how EU international cooperation policy should be developed.

The recommendations propose, among other things, transferring the European Research Area (ERA) concept to regions like Latin America, and expanding the ERA to include non-EU Member States. The project also recommends that EU resources should go towards helping policy makers develop skills for policy design and management.

Scope <http://les.man.ac.uk/PREST/SCOPE/>

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http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP6_NEWS&ACTION=D&RCN=26304&DOC=49&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1159863086537

Proposal for EU Medicines Research Academy

The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI), has published a new version of its Strategic Research Agenda (SRA). The agenda recommends establishments of a European Medicines Research Academy to fill in the gaps the IMI has identified within medicines development education and training.

The SRA identifies predicting safety (early safety evaluation), predicting efficacy (better understanding of clinical basis of diseases), bridging gaps in knowledge management (lack of data pooling and processing infrastructure) and bridging gaps in education and training as the main bottlenecks in the current biomedical R&D process.

In addition to the establishment of the European Medicines Research Academy, the SRA recommends the creation of a European Centre of Drug Safety Research and regional centres of excellence and of a Knowledge Management Platform to develop effective data integration and analysis tools.

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http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS&ACTION=D&RCN=26374&DOC=1&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1160400540671

Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp6/index_en.cfm?p=1_innomed
European Technology Platforms http://cordis.europa.eu/technology-platforms/home_en.html

Note:

This news bulletin provides a digest of news relevant to the chemical and molecular sciences during the preceding month. Links to further information and more detailed sources such as Cordis and Euractiv.com are provided for those wishing to investigate further.

Produced for EuCheMS by

Glenn Vaughan, EuCheMS European Policy Consultant
tel. +32 473 96.44.68 email. Glenn@GVCBrussels.eu

EuCheMS AISBL - Registered office Avenue E. Van Nieuwenhuysse 4, B-1160 Brussels

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