



# Brussels News Update

## June 2007

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### EIT- Basic Agreement Likely Soon

A basic agreement on the European Institute of Technology (EIT) can be expected in June, said German Education and Research Minister Annette Schavan following a meeting of the EU Competitiveness Council in Brussels on 21 and 22 May.

However, an agreement will only be possible if the Commission provides further information on how the new body will be financed. It is likely that in the beginning there will be just two KICs, in the fields of energy and climate change. Further KICs will follow in a second phase once the EIT's activities have been evaluated.

Significant progress has been made during recent months. The German Presidency proposal with its two-stage approach has won significant backing from member states, the Parliament and the Commission

The two-stage approach foresees, in the first phase (2008-2012), the nomination by the Commission of four people in charge of nominating the 15-person governing board (GB). The GB would then be allowed to bring forward proposals for one, two or three KICs within 24 months, and would also have until 2012 to deliver a strategic innovation agenda, which would need to be approved by the Council and the Parliament. If approved, the GB could then propose further KICs. If not, no additional KICs would be established and the existing KICs would stay as they are. The second phase, corresponding to the growth of the EIT, could thus begin at the earliest by 2013.

The most likely outcome will be two KICs in the first stage, with energy and climate change the themes most often mentioned. The Parliament would like to see the themes defined in legislation while the Presidency argues that these should be defined by the EIT governing body.

According to business representatives, the sooner the details on the European Technology Institute (ETI) are ready and concrete proposals are on the table, the sooner business will

provide the cash to support it, and their financial contribution to the institute could cover some 20-30% of the final costs.

"Businesses will get involved in the EIT if the institute selects attractive themes, if it is independent, has ambitious goals, world-class brand and reputation, flexible IPR and secured political support," added Günter Baumann, vice-president of the German chamber of commerce.

Euractiv.com: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/education/eit-business-awaits-concrete-proposals/article-164095>

Cordis:

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN\\_NEWS\\_FP7&ACTION=D&DOC=6&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1181307054913&RCN=27720](http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS_FP7&ACTION=D&DOC=6&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1181307054913&RCN=27720)

### Parliament Hears Criticism of EIT Proposal

Participants in a Parliamentary hearing argued that the proposed financing for the European Institute of Technology (EIT) remains unclear, but Commissioner Figel says it is now a question of how, not if.

"I'm pleased to note that we are no longer talking about whether or not to establish the European Institute of Technology (EIT) but about how we are going to establish it," concluded Education Commissioner Ján Figel at a public hearing in May 2007.

Nina Škottová, the drafts person of the Budget Committee's opinion on EIT expressed "legal doubts" on the planned financing.

Other criticisms were that:

- The EIT represents no value-added to existing programmes and tools
- collaboration between excellent existing research units in universities, research institutes and industry is already happening without the EIT
- the EIT might bring "value-added" as doctoral training would partly take place in an industrial environment but universities should already do this
- the only reason for the "innovation gap" between the EU and the US is the amount of money spent on R&D. All European countries trail the US's yearly \$300 billion R&D spending
- the €2.4 billion foreseen for the EIT between 2008-2013 does not represent a decisive boost in funding.

European Parliament Hearing:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/hearings/20070502/itre/programme\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/hearings/20070502/itre/programme_en.pdf)

Euractiv.com: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/education/stakeholders-discuss-value-eu-technology-institute/article-163498>

### Commission Consultation on the European Research Area (ERA)

The European Commission has launched an online consultation on the future of the European Research Area (ERA). The questions in the consultation are based on issues highlighted for discussion by the Commission in its recent Green Paper on the future of the ERA.

EuCheMS is preparing a response to the consultation, which closes 31 August 2007. The results of the consultation will feed into the overall debate on the ERA which will run until the end of 2007, and which will form the basis of further initiatives in 2008.

Commission – ERA: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/index_en.html)

## First Joint Technology Initiatives

The Commission has presented two Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs), worth approximately €5 billion, on embedded computing systems, to be known as ARTEMIS (Advanced Research and Technology for Embedded Intelligence and Systems), and on innovative medicines (Innovative Medicines Initiative).

In June 2005, the Commission identified six areas in which JTIs could be established. These are: innovative medicines; embedded computing systems; aeronautics and air transport; hydrogen and fuel cells; nanoelectronics technologies 2020, and; global monitoring for environment and security.

The two JTIs will pool private sector investment with national and European public funding to create a single European-wide research programme that is driven by the needs of industry, and focused on clear joint technological and economic objectives.

ARTEMIS, focused on embedded systems, will have a research budget of €2.7 billion over seven years, with around 60% of the budget expected to come from industry, €410 million from the Commission and €800 million from EU Member States.

The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) will aim to support the development of new knowledge, tools and methods so that better and safer medicines can be made available on the market more quickly. This programme will have €2 billion to invest over seven years. The Community contribution of €1 billion will go entirely to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and universities, for research that can be used by the pharmaceutical sector. In return, major companies will match this amount and involve these same SMEs and universities.

The Commission's proposals for each JTI will be presented to the Competitiveness Council on 21 and 22 May, with the hope that the regulations will be adopted during the Portuguese Presidency, in time for both JTIs to start work early in 2008.

The next potential candidates for JTIs are in the fields of nano-electronics, clean skies (greening of aeronautics), hydrogen and fuel cells, and global monitoring for environment and security. Proposals are expected to follow soon.

Euractiv.com: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/science/commission-presents-proposals-bold-new-rd-ventures/article-163805>

Cordis:

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN\\_NEWS\\_FP7&ACTION=D&DOC=9&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1181307054913&RCN=27685](http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS_FP7&ACTION=D&DOC=9&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1181307054913&RCN=27685)

Joint Technology Initiatives: Frequently asked questions:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/07/191&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

## Infrastructure Roadmap

Research Ministers have welcomed the European research infrastructures roadmap published last October and requested that ESFRI continue to update it on a regular basis to ensure it remains in line with the latest scientific and technological developments.

The Member States were also encouraged to develop their own infrastructure roadmaps and plan for long term investments in research infrastructures. The option of using a combination of regional, national and various European funds to finance infrastructure projects was also highlighted.

Speaking after the meeting, European Research Commissioner Janez Potocnik noted that

while it was up to Member States to implement the infrastructures, the Commission was committed to helping co-finance the preparatory projects. The first call for proposals for infrastructure projects closed recently, and according to the Commissioner, proposals have been sent in from almost all Member States of the EU.

### REACH Enters Into Force

The regulation on the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH) entered into force on 1 June. While the chemical industry appears ready to work with the new law, environmental groups continue to lament what they see as its shortcomings.

One of the longest sagas in EU legislative history, the drafting and adoption of REACH, took more than four years and was characterised by heavy lobbying from industry, environmental and consumer groups. REACH has an impact on a variety of industry sectors, from upstream chemicals manufacturers to downstream users of chemical products

REACH requires that a large number of chemical substances, from industrial- to household-use substances, go through a health and safety screening and registration process over an 11-year period. The European Chemicals Agency in Helsinki, which is conducting the screening process, became operational on 1 June 2007 and will begin accepting the first registrations one year later. It will take at least three to four years before the first substances are registered or, if they are considered too dangerous, replaced by less toxic substances.

Commission: REACH [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/reach/reach\\_intro.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/reach/reach_intro.htm)

European Chemicals Agency: [http://ec.europa.eu/echa/home\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/echa/home_en.html)

Euractiv.com: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/environment/eu-reach-law-enters-force-amid-controversy/article-164165>

### Parliament Doubles List of Toxic Chemicals

On 22 May, the Parliament voted to substantially increase an existing list of toxic substances governed by EU laws on water quality. Parliament also voted to upgrade a number of these substances to a higher category of toxicity, which would require member states to phase-out their use entirely by 2015.

EU water policies comprise a large body of legislation covering areas as diverse as flood management, bathing-water quality, chemicals in water, clean drinking water, groundwater protection and urban waste water. The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD), adopted in 2000, was introduced to streamline the EU's large body of water legislation into one overarching strategy.

As part of the Water Framework directive, the Commission in 2001 adopted a list of 41 substances, including 33 "priority substances" and eight other pollutants that are considered potentially hazardous to the aquatic environment. Of the 33 priority substances, there is a further sub-classification for "priority hazardous substances," which must be phased-out of use in member states in less than 20 years.

The Commission put forward a proposal upgrading several substances from "priority" to "priority hazardous" with 13 priority hazardous substances out of 33 priority substances. But the Parliament vote on 22 May pushes for 61 priority substances, 45 of which are to be priority hazardous. Parliament is also urging the Commission to present a report by 2015 on implementation of the directive, and to propose stricter measures in 2016 if progress is not satisfactory.

The Council will vote on the Parliament's first reading in a forthcoming meeting.

Euractiv.com: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/environment/parliament-wants-chemicals-water/article-163926>

Commission - 2006 proposal on priority substances: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006\\_0397en01.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0397en01.pdf)

Commission - List of proposed substances: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/priority\\_substances.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/priority_substances.htm)

## Commission Ducks Renewables Targets

Despite Commission promises in 2006 to propose binding targets for renewables on heating and cooling, these can no longer be expected. It will now be up to member states to decide on the targets as part of upcoming national action plans to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions by 20% in 2020.

The Commission is expected to propose a framework directive on renewable energy, with indications to guide member states for targets setting in late summer or autumn.

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/member-states-decide-renewables-heating-eu-homes/article-163997>

## Coal Subsidies Maintained Until 2010

A Commission report arguing for the preservation of state aid to the coal industry has been criticised by environmentalists but provides further hope for investment in "clean coal" technologies

Coal subsidies are a controversial issue, and the EU has been criticised for continuing to subsidise what is widely considered a "dirty" source of energy.

The EU has not expressed a commitment to phase out coal completely from Europe's energy mix. Instead, investment in "clean coal" technologies is considered vital for "continuing to benefit from the availability, proximity and flexibility of this abundant source of energy".

WWF has released its 2007 'Dirty Thirty' report, which ranks Europe's 30 worst power stations in terms of climate-polluting emissions. Combined, they account for 10% of all CO2 emissions in the EU. Germany and the UK each have ten plants on the list, all of which are coal-fired.

The Commission is due to propose a revision of the ETS later in 2007, with new rules to take effect in 2013.

Euractiv.com: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/coal-subsidies-maintained-2010/article-163880>

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/climate-change/dirtiest-power-plants-germany-uk/article-163709>

Commission - DG Energy: [http://ec.europa.eu/energy/coal/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/coal/index_en.htm)

WWF - 2007 'Dirty Thirty' report:

[http://assets.panda.org/downloads/european\\_dirty\\_thirty\\_may\\_2007.pdf](http://assets.panda.org/downloads/european_dirty_thirty_may_2007.pdf)

## Using the Framework Programme and Structural Funds

Commissioner for Science and Research, Janez Potocnik and his colleague responsible for Regional Policy, Danuta Hübner, have highlighted how coordinating the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) and the Structural Funds can better support research and development at the national and regional levels.

Addressing a conference in Brussels on 3 May, both commissioners urged national and regional authorities as well as relevant actors to make better coordinated use of the funds available through these channels in order to reach the aims of the renewed Lisbon Strategy.

Ms Hübner highlighted the potential use of structural funds to foster existing centres of excellence and enabling new ones to emerge as well as carrying out feasibility studies of major new research infrastructures, both physical and virtual. Where these would be linked to regional economic development, particularly in the convergence regions, they could then receive Cohesion Policy support, suggested the Commissioner.

Cordis:

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN\\_NEWS\\_FP7&ACTION=D&DOC=15&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1181307256087&RCN=27616](http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS_FP7&ACTION=D&DOC=15&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1181307256087&RCN=27616)

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN\\_NEWS\\_FP7&ACTION=D&DOC=5&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1181307054913&RCN=27746](http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=EN_NEWS_FP7&ACTION=D&DOC=5&CAT=NEWS&QUERY=1181307054913&RCN=27746)

EURAB: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/eurab/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/eurab/index_en.html)



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