

# SwissCore Synopsis Research

July - October 2005

2005 / 3

## ♦ Seen from Brussels

- What do the Specific Programmes tell us about what FP7 will really be about? 2
- Simplification under FP7? First indications on the FP7 Rules for Participation 3
- The European Research Council: the latest developments 4

## ♦ News in brief:

### *EU- Research Policy*

- Will there and should there be a European Institute of Technology? 6
- Following up from Lisbon: a European Action Plan for Innovation and Growth 7
- Supporting “brain gain” in Europe: the researchers’ package adopted 8
- European strategy in the field of nanotechnology 9
- Foresight Research beyond Lisbon 9
- i2010 – a framework for a new integrated EU Information Society approach 10
- New Technology Platforms in the field of ICT: launch of NESSI and EUROP 11
- First European Researchers’ Night 11
- Women and Science: latest developments 12
- Commission presents its third progress report on life sciences & biotechnology 12
- European Awards for prominent entrepreneurial spirit 13
- Start of the registration process for “.eu” domain names 13

## ♦ Publications

- 2004 Monitoring report of FP6 published 14
- R&D statistics in the EU: Key Figures 2005 available 14
- EUA report on doctoral programmes in Europe 15
- Eurobarometer Surveys: How do EU citizens perceive European researchers? 15
- A new EU Bookshop portal 15

## ♦ SwissCore Küche

- Swiss Science Briefing discussed instruments to support Social-economic Sciences and Humanities 15
- SwissCore celebrates 10 years in Brussels 16
- SwissCore Seminar to take place on 17-18 November 2005 17
- A “Stagiaire” for SwissCore 17

This edition of the SwissCore Synopsis Research as well as previous editions are available on our website.

SwissCore - Swiss Contact Office for Research and Higher Education, Rue du Trône 98, B-1050 Bruxelles  
Tel +32-2-549 09 80, Fax +32-2-549 09 89, [infodesk@swisscore.org](mailto:infodesk@swisscore.org), <http://www.swisscore.org>

## ♦ Seen from Brussels

### **What do the Specific Programmes tell us about what FP7 will really be about?**

A provocative answer could be: ... not very much! Indeed, the Commission's proposal on FP7 was put forward on 6 April 2005 requesting a doubling of the budget (see Synopsis "FP7 special edition", June 2005). Given that Heads of States and Governments were not able to strike a deal in June 2005 on the Financial Framework of the EU which corresponds to the years of implementation of FP7, the Commission was left in the dark for the preparation of the FP7 Specific Programmes - the document that outlines in more details the goals and scientific priorities of FP7 - and the FP7 Rules for Participation - the document defining the "technical" rules - that will apply to FP7.

Refusing to divulge a "Plan B" and to make early compromises on its FP7 proposal, the Commission presented on 21 September its proposal for the FP7 Specific Programmes building exactly on what it had announced in April.

The main points can be summarised as follows:

#### **I. Cooperation:** 44432 million € (for the total duration of the programme, i.e. 2007-2013)

- a) Principle: This part remains the core part of the Framework Programme (collaborative research in consortia).
- b) Research topics: The general approach, goals and activities planned for each of the 9 topics below are outlined in the Specific Programmes:
  - (a) Health; (8.316,788 €)
  - (b) Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology; (2.455,4 3 €)
  - (c) Information and Communication Technologies; (12.670,033 €)
  - (d) Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials, Production Technologies; (4.831,658 €)
  - (e) Energy; (2.930,678 €)
  - (f) Environment (including Climate Change); (2.534,640 €)
  - (g) Transport (including Aeronautics); (5.940,493 €)
  - (h) Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities; (792,075 €)
  - (i) Security and Space. (3.960,375 €)

#### **II. Ideas:** 11862 million €

- a) Principle: "The ERC will operate according to the principles of scientific excellence, autonomy, efficiency, transparency and accountability, and will support investigator-driven projects in "frontier research", carried out by individual teams competing at the European level, within and across all fields of research."
- b) Fields applicable: "The programme will support individual projects, which may be carried out in any field of basic scientific and technological research which falls within the scope of Community research under this Framework Programme, including engineering, socio-economic sciences and the humanities."  
(For more details see article below)

#### **III. People:** 7129 million €

- a) 4 main lines of actions:
  - Initial training of researchers (mechanism to help structure the first four years of researchers' careers through trans-national networks of complementary organisations from different countries engaging in research training along a pre-defined programme of activities);
  - Life-long training and career development (through European Commission individual fellowships for advanced researchers and the *co-funding* of similar national schemes);
  - Industry-academia partnerships;

- International dimension (outgoing international fellowships, with mandatory return and international reintegration grants for experienced researchers after an international experience).

As regards the European Charter for Researchers, the Commission is still working on the details of the incorporation of its principles into the “People” programme of FP7.

#### **IV. Capacities:** 7486 million €

##### a) Activities:

- Support to research infrastructures;
- Research for the benefit of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs);
- Support to the development of regional research-driven clusters;
- Support to the research potential in the EU’s convergence and outermost regions;
- Science in society;
- Horizontal activities of international cooperation.

b) New: “*Support to the construction of new research infrastructure* which will complement the continued support for optimal use of existing research infrastructure. The support for construction of new infrastructure will be implemented through a two-stage approach: a preparatory phase and a construction phase. Building on the work by ESFRI on the development of a European roadmap for new research infrastructure, the Commission will identify priority projects to which a possible EC support could be given under the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme.” (The European Commission especially plans to act as a facilitator towards loans by the European Investment Bank).

On 21 September, the Commission also put forward the following Specific Programmes:

- a) Direct research actions by the Joint Research Centre for non-EURATOM (1817 million €) – a list of their planned research activities is included in the document;
- b) EURATOM (2553 million €);
- c) Direct research actions by the Joint Research for EURATOM activities (539 million €).

The European Parliament is currently preparing its report (first reading) on FP7 and is not expected to adopt it before the end of the winter. In the meantime, the Council of Ministers is also preparing its position and will discuss FP7 at its next Competitiveness Council meeting on 28 November. Given that it is unlikely that an agreement on the budget question will be struck before the end of the year, all institutional players can currently only discuss the principles behind FP7. For that reason, the tone and direction of the debate might change as soon as a budget is known and the Commission revises its proposal accordingly...

The Specific Programmes can be found under:

<http://www.cordis.lu/fp7/>

#### **Simplification under FP7? First indications on the FP7 Rules for Participation**

How FP7 will be implemented and whether the discussions and efforts promised by the European Commission to simplify the participation (rules) in FP7 will bear their fruits depends on another document that should be published in the next few weeks: the FP7 Rules for Participation. According to drafts that SwissCore could access, the main elements of its contents are likely to be as follows:

##### Funding schemes (instruments):

These are not explained or mentioned in detail in the Rules for Participation (to be found in Annex 3 of the proposal on FP7). There is no mention of the balance between them or of their relative importance (for example, in terms of budget).

##### Article 17: Forms of grant

3 types of grants are foreseen:

- a) Grants based on the reimbursement of eligible costs (as it is the case under FP6);

- b) Lump-sums (for example for Marie Curie actions and Networks of Excellence);
- c) Flat-rate financing based on scale of unit costs for participants' direct costs (for example for the ERC projects). This model which is still under consideration would imply -at the beginning of FP7- the definition of the cost of each type of project in each field of research and a coefficient of correction mechanism would apply to compensate for differences between countries.

Article 18: Costs

"While ensuring the principle of co-financing at the level of the action, the Community financial contribution may reach: a maximum of 100% of the total eligible costs, limited to the difference between the total eligible costs and the total receipts of the action. The Community financial contribution provided to legal entities which carry out economic activities may only reach the following maximum ceilings of public financial support for:

- (a) research and technological development activities up to 75%;
- (b) demonstration activities up to 50%."

No ceiling for administrative costs is currently foreseen (in FP6: maximum of 7% of the EC's financial contribution).

Article 20: Audit certificates

Costs incurred during FP7 projects will still have to be "...certified by an audit certificate, the cost of which shall be reimbursed at 100% by the Community financial contribution".

"An audit certificate shall be provided by the participant where its requested Community financial contribution for the reimbursement of eligible costs exceeds 750,000 EURO".

"Public bodies are not obliged to submit audit certificates".

Art 24-33: IPR (Intellectual Property Rights)

Overall, IPR rules become more industry-friendly (for example "Pre-existing know-how" -that becomes "foreground"- is easier to exclude).

Specific IPR rules are foreseen for "Frontier research" projects (ERC), SME-specific actions and "Space and Security".

The FP7 Rules for Participation are currently being finalised by the European Commission and should be published around the beginning of November. They will then have to undergo a co-decision process between the European Parliament and Council of Ministers.

**European Research Council: the latest developments**

The idea to fund basic research at European level was announced for the first time in January 2004 in the Communication "Europe and basic research". Since then, the European Commission has constantly argued and consolidated its case for funding basic research at EU level.

Politically, the need for the creation of a European Research Council (ERC) to fund such research has become undisputed. The proposal on FP7 as well as the FP7 Specific Programmes have given the ERC a future legal basis and further defined its role and mission.

On 18 July, the "nomination committee" which the Commission had set up submitted the names of the 22 founding members of the Scientific Council of the future ERC. The role of these independent eminent scientists should not be to formally represent their Member State (only 16 of 25 Member States are represented). Still it is worth noting that Prof. Zinkernagel from Zurich is part of this group as the only non-EU Member State representative.

Statistically, this group of eminent scientists has the following characteristics:

- Composition with respect to disciplines:
  - Humanities: 2 (9 %)
  - Social Sciences: 3 (14 %)
  - Life Sciences: 5 (23 %)
  - Medical Sciences: 3 (14 %)
  - Physical Sciences: 4 (18 %)
  - Technical Sciences / Engineering: 5 (23 %)
- Sector of activity:

- 21 (95%) are currently employed in the public (academic) sector and
- 1 (5 %) in the private sector
- Gender ratio:  
5 women: 17 men.

This group will have the task to define the “scientific agenda” of the ERC (i.e. its thematic priorities, if any) and the practical foundation of the ERC (procedures, types of grants, etc). Their decisions will determine the ERC’s profile through decisions such as:

- How to limit oversubscription?
- Which researchers should get grants to the ERC?
- Will there -for example- be an age limit?
- To what extent will trans-national collaborations be required/possible?
- How many grants should be funded each year?
- What would be the level of these grants?
- Will there be fixed funding rates (lump sums)?
- What paperwork should be required?

Their first meeting took place on 18-19 October.

Although the Scientific Council is already preparing the practicalities of the ERC’s implementation, two major discussion points relating to the future ERC remain: a) the ERC’s budget and b) the ERC’s legal structure.

With regard to the budget, the only number that is clear for the moment is that proposed by the European Commission: approximately 1.6 billion € per year. However, the EU’s Financial framework for 2007-2013 is still under discussion between the Heads of States and Governments and it is unclear what Framework Programme (and thus ERC) budget will be possible under the future agreement. In spite of these uncertainties, rumours situate the unofficial threshold for a functioning and credible ERC at approx. 1 billion € per year. Should there be less money at the disposal of the ERC for the duration of FP7, a likely scenario might be that the ERC would only start operating in 2008 or 2009 to avoid spreading its money too thinly.

The second issue of discussion and debate is that of the legal status of the ERC. The Commission proposes that an Executive Agency will be set up in the short term - mainly to allow for a swift start of the ERC and avoid difficult discussions on the location. In the long term - and following an independent review of the existing model-, the Commission acknowledges the possibility to create an independent legal structure such as possible under article 171 of the EC Treaty. Although Executive Agencies are legally linked to the European Commission who is ultimately legally responsible for their implementation and financing activities, the Commission proposes different mechanisms to guarantee the ERC’s autonomy:

- a) A “dedicated implementation structure” (thus not the Commission services) will be created to take care of the administrative aspects of the ERC. This externalised structure will “implement the evaluation procedures, peer reviews and selection processes according to the principles established by the Scientific Council and will ensure the financial and scientific management of the grants.”
- b) The Commission - although ultimately responsible for the implementation of the programme- commits itself to only intervene if the implementation of the grants or the work programme do not “correspond to the objectives of the programme or do not conform to Community legislation”. In such exceptional cases, the Commission would have to publicly state its reasons and refer to a Programme Committee bringing together representatives of Member and Associated countries.

Still, some believe that these guarantees are not enough and that the ERC should “as quickly as possible” be set up as an independent legal body under art. 171. The Commission separates three main categories amongst those players:

- “Purists” who insist on total independence out of principle. The goal being an agency run by and for scientists.
- “Institutionalists” who believe that the ERC will be an institution too important not to have an independent legal structure.

- “Inter-governmentalists” who believe that under an art. 171 institution governments would have more say in running the programme and that a mechanism of “juste retour” might even be possible.

More information on the proposal by the European Commission in its Specific Programmes can be found under (mainly pages 7-9, 15-21 and 22-24):

[ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/fp7/docs/fp7sp\\_ideas\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/fp7/docs/fp7sp_ideas_en.pdf)

## ◆ **News in Brief** **EU-Research Policy**

### **Will there and should there be a European Institute of Technology?**

In its mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy in February 2005, the European Commission indicated that it was considering the creation of a European Institute of Technology (EIT) to help Europe bridge its research and innovation gap vis-à-vis the USA and to strengthen Europe’s “triangle of knowledge”: education-research-innovation. This very vague announcement, a brainchild of President Barroso, led to many rumours which eventually died down.

On 16 September, the Commission revived this topic by launching a consultation and asking stakeholders to provide the Commission with their views of what the added-value, mission and structure of the EIT might be.

Although the Commission insists that it has no precise view for the moment of what the EIT should or could be, it recognises that creating an institution from scratch and brand it as the “European Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)” would not be feasible. It therefore emphasises the probability of a “collaborative solution”. This could either be:

- a) a sort of umbrella for a network of “happy-few” universities and research institutes;
- b) a virtual network or;
- c) a set of ad-hoc networks depending on research topics).

According to the Commission, the EIT -although its goals would converge with those of FP7- would remain separate from the Framework Programme.

Contrarily to the European Commission, some Members of the European Parliament have a very precise idea of what the EIT could be. Led by German liberal Jorgo Chatzimarkakis (who is also rapporteur on the CIP), they underline that the EIT should be a central (physical) institution based on the MIT model and located.... in the European Parliament’s building in Strasbourg! MEPs who have been pushing for years to abandon the Strasbourg part of the Parliament in which they have to hold their plenary meetings one week a month, see the EIT as a chance to free themselves from this “burden”. Although these MEPs are very active in promoting their idea and have built up a very detailed case for it, it is a rather opportunistic scenario and many of their arguments are not credible. For example, arguing that the facilities of the European Parliament building are “comparable to those of the MIT” or that the EIT should largely be financed through the Ideas part of FP7 (that dedicated to creating the ERC) makes many research policy actors smile.

Many stakeholders in the field of research policy have issued statements on the possible creation of an EIT, most of them agreeing on the impossibility to set up a top-down institution. Helga Nowotny, Chair of the European Research Advisory Board (EURAB), made the following remark on this topic: “Europe does not need only one, but ideally many institutions like an EIT. The two already existing ones that can be compared to the US model [...] are Imperial College and ETH Zurich. We would like more of their kind to emerge throughout Europe”.

The consultation on the EIT will be closed on 15 November and the Commission will then decide whether to take the matter further. In that case, it would prepare a paper to be submitted in spring 2006 to the EU Heads of States and Governments. Should they approve the concept, the Commission estimates the possible start of the EIT’s activities in 2009-2010.

The consultation and all relevant Commission documents can be found under:  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/eit/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/eit/index_en.html)

The position paper by Jorgo Chatzimarkakis can be requested from SwissCore.

### **Following up from Lisbon: a European Action Plan for Research and Innovation**

On 12 October 2005, the European Commission launched the Action Plan “More Research and Innovation – Investing for Growth and Employment: A Common Approach (2005-2007)” which aims at implementing the Community Lisbon Programme (CLP). The CLP is based on the Lisbon Strategy that acknowledged the “need to invest more and better in research and innovation” and that was established at the Lisbon European Council in 2000. The objective of approaching 3% of GDP for research expenditure in the EU by 2010 was set by the European Council in Barcelona in 2002 and a number of policy initiatives have been taken in order to achieve it like the Commission’s Communication “More research for Europe – Towards 3% of GDP” (2002) and the Commission’s Action Plan “Investing in research” (2003). Although the latter has had a mobilising effect on the Member States and some increased their research investment targets, figures reveal that R&D investment in the EU is close to stagnation. If trends continue, investment would be at 2.2% of GDP in 2010 - considerably lower than the agreed objective of 3%.

This new research and innovation Action Plan builds on the Lisbon review and should serve to update Member States’ actions in this field. It aims at attracting more private capital into research in Europe to bring it up to two-thirds of all research capital (the other third coming from the public sector). Current private funding of research projects in the EU is 55%.

It is the first approach to integrate the full research and innovation spectrum, including non-technological innovation, “as together they cover issues affecting the genesis of new knowledge and ideas, their use and commercial exploitation”. According to the Action Plan, research policy should focus more on developing new knowledge and its applications and the framework conditions for research. Innovation policy should focus on transforming knowledge into economic value and commercial success.

The Action Plan detailing the measures is arranged around four strands:

1. Research and innovation at the heart of EU policies:
  - Better regulation for new technology;
  - Redeploying State aid towards research and innovation;
  - Improved efficiency and use of intellectual property;
  - An attractive single market for researchers;
  - Using public procurement to foster research and innovation;
  - Better and wider use of tax incentives.
2. Research and innovation at the heart of EU funding:
  - Mobilising public and private resources for key technologies;
  - European Structural Funds to drive research and innovation;
  - Improving SME access to finance;
  - Mobilising national programmes and other sources of funding for European research and innovation.
3. Research and innovation at the heart of business:
  - Intensified university-industry partnerships;
  - Innovation poles and research-driven and industrial clusters;
  - Pro-active business support services to stimulate research and innovation;
  - Innovation management and social change;
  - The potential of innovative services;
  - Establishing a European Industrial Research and Innovation Monitoring System and improving intellectual capital reporting.
4. Improved research and innovation policies:
  - Research and innovation as a priority of the National Reform Programmes for growth and jobs;

- Improved policy analysis instruments;
- Support to policy learning and cooperation.

In its conclusion, the Action Plan states that the “NRP should fully embrace research and innovation challenges (...) building upon the specific strengths of Member States and their regions”. The EU would support the NRP by focusing Community financial support for research and innovation activities of European interest, providing guidance for coordinated policy development and improving platforms for mutual learning in all areas where trans-national cooperation offers strong added value.

The Commission plans to report on the progress made “on increasing and improving research and innovation in Europe and the ongoing discussions on the Financial Perspective for 2007-2013”. Moreover, it wants to update the approach in the light of the implementation of the Partnership for Growth and Jobs.

The Action Plan can be found under:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/innovation/doc/com\\_2005\\_488\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/innovation/doc/com_2005_488_en.pdf)

### **Supporting “brain gain” in Europe: the researchers’ package adopted**

On 12 October 2005, the Council of Ministers adopted a package of measures designed to facilitate the mobility of researchers from third countries to and within the European Union. Supporting the mobility of researchers is one of the instruments for achieving the Lisbon objective of becoming the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge based society and economy. The Lisbon Council conclusions (2000) called on the Council and the Commission, together with the Member States, to take the necessary "steps to remove obstacles to the mobility of researchers in Europe (...) and to attract and retain high-quality research talent in Europe". In order to achieve these goals, the Lisbon Council launched the creation of a European Research Area (ERA) for a better coordination of research activities and the convergence of research and innovation policies at national and EU level. According to the Council, the researchers’ package should contribute to the building of the ERA and the smooth functioning of an internal market for researchers.

The package consists of a Directive and a Recommendation:

A) The Directive provides for a “fast track procedure for the admission of third country researchers” according to which “accredited research organisations will have to certify the status of the researcher in a hosting agreement” and confirm his/her involvement in a research project as well as his/her necessary scientific skills. A residence permit will then at the same time serve as a work permit to the researcher.

On the basis of the hosting agreement, the immigration authorities should accelerate the delivery of a residence permit. Once the researcher is granted such permit, he/she will enjoy equal treatment with nationals in a number of areas, for instance social security or working conditions, and the right to mobility within most Member States (Schengen countries and Ireland) to carry out the research project.

The Directive encourages the Member States to simplify the application process for third country researchers who are already legally within the EU: they should be allowed to move freely between Member States and, respectively, to apply for a residence permit directly to the national authorities, without having to return to their country of origin first.

B) The Recommendation covers several aspects of the same matter on which Member States are encouraged to take action. The Recommendation aims at anticipating the implementation of the Directive that is to be transformed by the Member States by 21 October 2007. Also, it recommends the facilitation of family reunifications.

Another Recommendation, already adopted in September 2005, considers the facilitation and rapid issuing of uniform short-term and multiple entry visas for non-European researchers and the adoption of a “harmonised approach on the supporting documents for research visa applications” as well as reinforced consular co-operation on these issues. The Recommendations should take immediate effect.

The Directive and Recommendation can be found under:

<http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st09/st09288.en05.pdf>

<http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st09/st09290.en05.pdf>

### **European strategy in the field of nanotechnology**

The field of nanotechnology is attracting more and more attention on the part of the European Union, the industry and the research community. The EU believes that such technology could have a big role to play in the future of Europe with markets worth “hundreds of billions of euros” within the next decade. Those high expectations are reflected in the Commission’s proposal for the FP7 where it proposes 4.27 billion € for research on Nanosciences and Nanotechnologies for 2007-2013.

On 7 June 2005, the Commission adopted the Communication: “Nanosciences and Nanotechnologies: An action plan for Europe 2005-2009” by taking into account the experience and results of preceding actions: the Communication “Towards a European Strategy for Nanotechnology” from 12 May 2004 (see SwissCore Synopsis Research 2004/2) and the extensive open consultation that closed on 15 November 2004.

In the Action Plan, the Commission defines a series of articulated and interconnected actions for the immediate implementation of a safe, integrated and responsible strategy for Nanosciences and Nanotechnologies (N&N). Those should help to “transform Europe’s world-class R&D in N&N into useful wealth-generating products”.

The Action Plan is based on seven priority areas. Each priority is described in three parts: an introductory part, a part stating the measures that the Commission is planning to undertake and a part “calling upon the Member States” for specific support actions:

1. Research, Development and Innovation: Europe needs knowledge;
2. Infrastructure and European Poles of Excellence;
3. Interdisciplinary human resources: Europe needs creativity;
4. Industrial innovation: from knowledge to the market;
5. Integrating the societal dimension: addressing expectations and concerns;
6. Public health, safety, environmental and consumer protection;
7. International cooperation.

The Commission’s aim is to intensify nanotechnology research, and also specific research into the impact on human health and the environment, notably through appropriate infrastructure and support for the training of research personnel. The Action Plan suggests stimulating the industrial exploitation of nanotechnology R&D, mainly through intellectual property protection and standardisation. In this respect, a library of data and a patent monitoring system are considered useful tools. Also, the Commission wants to foster technology platforms in certain key nanotechnology sectors such as nanomedicine, nanoelectronics and sustainable chemistry. The set up of the European Technology Platform on NanoMedicine has already been realised on the 6 September.

An eighth dimension is added outlining how the Commission strives to implement a coherent and visible strategy at European level to address the ethical, legal and social risks evolving from nanotechnology. By means of a broad dialogue with the public, the Commission aims at addressing their expectations and concerns and creating a climate of confidence in decision-making on the management of nanotechnologies.

The Action Plan for Nanotechnologies can be found under:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/industrial\\_technologies/pdf/nano\\_action\\_plan\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/industrial_technologies/pdf/nano_action_plan_en.pdf)

### **Foresight Research *beyond* Lisbon**

On 19 and 20 September 2005, the European Commission organised the conference “Key Technologies for Europe” in Brussels. Its goal was to present the expert reports and draft final report of the High Level Group (HLG) on Key Technologies that was set up by DG Research in December 2004. The HLG, chaired by Teresa de Lemos, included seventeen members representing a range of disciplines and sectors as well as a variety of EU Member States.

The Group had the following mandate: they were to provide an input on FP7 and its specific programmes by presenting an overview of key trends of research development in fifteen major areas of science and technology and their impact on EU competitiveness and society, while examining the possibilities for a unique European approach to exploiting these potential synergies. The fifteen reports assess where the EU stands in the particular field on a world level as well as providing a forward look in terms of 'Europe's research strategy beyond Lisbon' for 30-50 years.

Further on, the HLG proposed the introduction of permanent processes for developing long-term visions and short/medium-term strategies for research in key technologies by 2009/2010, when the 8<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme would be under discussion.

The Commission concluded the conference saying that Europe needs an optimistic, proactive approach based on strong differentiation when benchmarking itself with the United States and Japan. Cooperation with global partners is advisable when it comes to basic research, however "competition is more viable and efficient in the innovation area".

The key messages of the draft final report lead to recommendations for a EU R&D Action Plan with six pillars:

1. Global Vision
2. Engineering Creative System Disruption
3. Projecting a new long-term research agenda and culture
4. Foresight approaches
5. Exploiting Knowledge Creation *'Take science to the economy'*
6. Investing in Societal learning *'Bring society to science'*

The expert reports and policy paper are available on:

[http://www.cordis.lu/foresight/conference\\_2005.htm](http://www.cordis.lu/foresight/conference_2005.htm), the draft final report on:

[ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/foresight/docs/draft\\_final\\_conf2005.pdf](ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/foresight/docs/draft_final_conf2005.pdf)

### **i2010 – a framework for a new integrated EU Information Society approach**

On 1 June 2005, the Commission published a Communication entitled "i2010 – A European Information Society for growth and employment". In this paper, the Commission proposes a new strategic framework to promote open and competitive digital economy and emphasises ICT as a driver of inclusion and quality of life. In line with the re-launched Lisbon Strategy, this amounts to "a new integrated Information Society policy approach" by the European Commission.

The Communication outlines a number of measures to reach three main objectives:

1. Create a "Single European Information Space offering affordable and secure high bandwidth communications, rich and diverse content and digital services";
2. Achieve "world class performance in research and innovation in ICT by closing the gap with Europe's leading competitors";
3. Ensure an "Information Society that is inclusive, provides high quality public services and promotes quality of life".

With regard to the second objective, which is the most research-relevant one, the Commission will -in parallel to the measures funded under FP6 and FP7- work on complementary measures to encourage private investment in ICT research and invite Member States to increase their ICT research budget by around 80%. Other measures target the uptake of ICT tools by SMEs and enterprises in general.

The 19 measures defined should mainly be implemented by the European Commission itself and by Member States. However, industrial partners and other stakeholders are also encouraged to raise their investments and engage in an "open and constructive dialogue in support of an innovative knowledge society".

The Communication can be found under:

[http://europa.eu.int/information\\_society/eeurope/i2010/docs/communications/com\\_229\\_i2010\\_310\\_505\\_fv\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/information_society/eeurope/i2010/docs/communications/com_229_i2010_310_505_fv_en.pdf)

## **New Technology Platforms in the field of ICT: launch of NESSI and EUROP**

The concept of European Technology Platforms (ETPs) emerged in the last two years as strategic for a to discuss the R&D needs of the European industry. Set up at the initiative of the Commission and industry, they bring together companies, research institutions, the financial world and the regulatory authorities at European level in specific technology fields to co-ordinate their research and tailor it to a common “strategic research agenda” (SRA). A SRA sets out R&D goals, time frames and action plans for technological advances that are relevant to industry and society; it should mobilise a critical mass of – national and European – public and private resources. An ETP should involve all major stakeholders – including SMEs - that are willing to pool their knowledge and resources and possess the requisite R&D expertise. Stakeholders have to support the agenda financially and monitor its implementation.

Currently, there are six ETPs in the field Information and Communication Technologies: Networked and electronic media platform (NEM), Mobile and wireless communications technology (eMobility), European Nanoelectronics Initiative Advisory Council (ENIAC) and Advanced R&D on Embedded Intelligent Systems (ARTEMIS).

The two latest additions are:

- NESSI, the ‘Networked European Software and Services Initiative’, a project launched by thirteen European companies active in the telecommunications’ sector. It was presented at a conference on 7 September in Brussels. NESSI aims at facilitating European investment in research to encourage the development of software and IT products and services. Mr. Lepeytre, senior vice president of Thalès, emphasised that it should contribute to the creation of a “single European Information Space”. The latter is one of the objectives of the Commission’s i2010 initiative and aims at offering affordable and secure high bandwidth communications, rich and diverse content and digital services.
- EUROP - the European Robotics Platform was inaugurated on 7 October by European Information Society Commissioner Viviane Reding, as part of the i2010 initiative. The platform’s goal is to foster new technological applicants in the three robotics domains: industrial, service and security and space. Especially in the service sector, robotics are to serve European citizens directly in all aspects of life. By supplying networks and developing new companies, EUROP’s mission is to stay at the forefront of robotics developments, production and use. More than 50 participating companies and research centres will define strategic research goals and industrially-relevant priorities that should lead to an action plan and, then, could be considered in FP7.

More information about NESSI can be found under:

<http://www.nessi-europe.com/index.htm>

The EUROP platform can be found under:

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

## **First European Researchers’ Night**

On 23 September 2005, the European Commission organised the first European Researchers’ Night representing the height of the ‘Researchers in Europe 2005 Initiative’. This initiative, lasting from June until November 2005, aims at raising the awareness and recognition of European researchers by putting their profession in the spotlight. A wide range of scientific and academic organisations, laboratories and museums were engaged in the realisation of this simultaneous happening throughout 16 participating countries. The goal was to give the public and, in particular, young people the opportunity to meet researchers within the context of festive and ‘fun’ activities, and to highlight the appeal and fascination of pursuing a research career. Star guest at the Brussels’ Night was the next-generation ASIMO humanoid robot built by Honda (involving European researchers).

More information can be found under:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/researchersineurope/events/event\\_2214\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/researchersineurope/events/event_2214_en.htm)

## **Women and Science: latest developments**

Following the Research Council's Resolution on "Science and Society" and on "Women in Science" from June 2001, the Commission submitted a staff working document which gives an overview of Women and Science actions implemented at European level and of the results achieved. In particular:

- Activities of the European Commission to promote gender equality in science through the Research Framework Programmes and in the context of the Science and Society Action Plan, and
- Progress made in increasing the participation of women in science in the EU Member States since 1999, taking also into account the EU enlargement.

This report is the third of its kind - previous reports on Women and Science have been published in 1999 and 2001 - and should be considered in the light of the Lisbon objectives, the Barcelona target (increasing investment in European R&D with the aim of approaching 3% of EU GDP by 2010) and the Commission's Communication "Science and technology, the key to Europe's future – guidelines for future European Union policy to support research" from 16 June 2004.

As the Commission staff working document 'Women and Science: Excellence and Innovation – Gender Equality in Science', published in March 2005, revealed, the situation for women in science is still far from satisfactory. At EU level, women make up only 14% of top academics and 44% of science and technology graduates. The report includes data on the progress achieved in reaching the 40% participation of women at all levels in implementation and managing research programmes and in the Women in Industrial Research (WIR) initiative. On the basis of the knowledge gained through the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated statistics and in view of the preparation of FP7, the report identified a number of new and continuing future priorities for further action both at Commission and Member State levels:

- Improve scientific excellence by promoting gender awareness and fairness;
- Boost the number of women in decision-making positions;
- Research careers which allow for a reconciliation of professional and private life;
- Strengthen gender research and the gender dimension in research;
- Enhance the role of women in engineering and innovation;
- Gender monitoring in the Member States;
- More efficient gender monitoring of the Research Framework Programme.

It is in this context that the Commission decided to give 2 million € for a start-up period of 28 months to the European Platform of Women Scientists (EPWS) as a Specific Support Action within the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme. It should act as an umbrella organisation for national and regional networks of women scientists and individual women scientists by "networking the networks" as well as represent the structural link between women scientists and research policy makers.

The work of the Platform is supported by three pillars: a Secretariat, the members' Association (a group of senior women scientists) and an electronic communication platform (currently under construction). The EPWS, with headquarter in Brussels, has taken up work on 1 February 2005 and is going to have its official opening ceremony and General Assembly later this year.

To view the staff working document, click on:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/pdf/documents\\_women\\_sec\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/pdf/documents_women_sec_en.pdf)

For more information on the activities of EPWS, click on:

<http://www.epws.org>

## **Commission presents its third progress report on life sciences & biotechnology**

Following the adoption of the "Life sciences and biotechnology strategy for Europe" in January 2002, the Commission has presented its third progress report and future orientations of the strategy on 29 June 2005. The strategy was established to enhance sustainable and responsible

policies for biotechnology in the health, agriculture, food, chemical and environment sector, and will last until 2010.

In the third report, the Commission explains that several measures have been taken including: preparatory legislation, an ambitious cost-benefit analysis of the whole biotechnology sector, pushing for the implementation of the directive 98/44 on biotechnology patents and for increased investments into biotech companies. However, it calls upon more active cooperation among all stakeholders, the Member States in particular, to implement the policy actions in view to their contribution to the mid-term review in 2006-2007. The main challenge is to set up a timely, science-based regulatory framework to accompany biotechnology applications without creating extra burdens on industry, especially on SMEs.

The third progress report and future orientations document can be found under:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/biotechnology/DOCS/COM\(2005\)286finalEN.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/biotechnology/DOCS/COM(2005)286finalEN.pdf)

### **European Awards for prominent entrepreneurial spirit**

At the request of the Competitiveness Council, the Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission has developed a European Enterprise Awards to recognise outstanding support to entrepreneurship by European local and regional authorities. Commission Vice President Günter Verheugen will publicly launch the awards in the course of the UK Enterprise Week in London on 14 November 2005.

By celebrating success stories and placing the winners in the spotlight through media relations campaigns, the annual Awards aim at raising the awareness of entrepreneurial policy and initiative. The candidates have to show how their actions have benefited to their region's business and economy during the two-years prior to the Award year. The European Jury will award the prize in five categories:

1. Entrepreneurial Trailblazer Award;
2. Enterprise Support Award;
3. Red Tape Reduction Award;
4. Investment in People Award;
5. Responsible Entrepreneurship Award.

Additionally, they will award the Grand Jury prize to the entry that is considered the most creative and inspiring initiative promoting entrepreneurship. The competition is open to all local and regional authorities of the 25 Member States, the EFTA countries and the candidate countries as well as public-private partnerships, educational programmes, business organisations, and joint nominations from cross-boarder projects. Interested parties can obtain the entry forms from their national contact and will have to pass through a national selection process first before they can be considered at EU level. The first Awards ceremony is scheduled to take place in November 2006.

More information can be found under:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/entrepreneurship/smes/awards/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/entrepreneurship/smes/awards/index_en.htm)

### **Start of the registration process for “.eu” domain names**

Following the adoption of the Regulation on the implementation of the “.eu” top level domain on 25 March 2002, EURid - the European Registry for Internet Domains -, a private sector not-for-profit organisation, was selected by the Commission as the official body administering the “.eu” top level domain name for a period of five years. Six to nine months were needed for contractual procedures before the registration phase will start with the “sunrise period” from 7 December 2005 to 6 April 2006. This period is required by the public policy rules and allows owners of “prior rights” (e.g. trademark holders, public bodies) to register their names as eu.domain names before other eligible names to avoid so-called ‘cybersquatting’ – when individuals or companies register with someone else’s trademark with the aim to sell it then to the right holder for a profit. The registration period for holders from “other prior rights” will be from 7 February to 6 April 2006. From the beginning of April 2006, when the validation agent has checked the applicants on their

compliance with the sunrise rules, the floor will be open for any EU resident or company established in the EU desiring to have a “.eu” web or email address. Any party interested in the domain name should get in touch with an accredited registrar - an Internet Service Provider, a company or individual - who has signed an agreement with EURid. The Commission warned consumers against pre-registration offers as there is no legal basis for this.

The official “.eu” domain name website can be found under:  
[http://europa.eu.int/information\\_society/policy/doteu/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/information_society/policy/doteu/index_en.htm)

## ◆ Publications

### **2004 Monitoring report of FP6 published**

In August 2005, the Commission published the Monitoring Report 2004 of the activities undertaken under FP6 and EURATOM that year. The panel of experts particularly analysed the following issues: a) New initiatives (Technology Platforms, ERA-NET, etc.), b) Implementation processes on the side of the European Commission, c) Participation in FP6, d) Evaluation procedures.

Based on their findings, they formulated ten recommendations. Here are some excerpts:

- Within the European Commission, “the internal learning and sharing between scientific and financial officers and the sharing of experiences with stakeholders (...) should be carried out on a much broader scale”.
- “Despite the big efforts made, there are still different views and approaches to the definition and implementation of Networks of Excellence (NoEs).”
- “Confining support for ERA Nets to the thematic priorities of the Cooperation programme might endanger the current dynamic. Thus, the Cooperation programme should include a horizontal line dedicated to “institutional cooperation between member states”.
- “Both the thematic priorities of the Cooperation programme and the Ideas programme should develop specific NEST-like activities for areas of new and emerging science and technology, fostering in particular the interdisciplinary approaches”.
- “Budgets for the part of the INCO programme handled under thematic priorities should be clearly earmarked as such and publicised better to scientific officers and researchers.”

As for the points above, many of this report’s recommendations are designed to (hopefully) flow straight into the FP7 Rules for Participation. And as the authors put it: “As with any executive summary, this one cannot incorporate all the insights, comments and lessons laid out in the monitoring report. The Panel thus urges you to take time to read the whole report, especially as this should take little more than half an hour. The FP certainly deserves that much time being spent on what can be learned from 2004”.

The 2004 Monitoring Report can be found under:  
[ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/fp6/docs/monitoring\\_2004\\_final\\_v4.pdf](ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/fp6/docs/monitoring_2004_final_v4.pdf)

### **R&D statistics in the EU: Key Figures 2005 available**

The “Key Figures 2005” are a collection of the main indicators summarising the EU’s progress towards its goals of investment and performance as a knowledge-based society (especially in terms of R&D). They especially analyse the areas where the EU is acting in supporting collaboration between Member States (for example through benchmarking and the Open Method of Cooperation). According to the preface, the “results (of this study) are worrying (...). In fact most figures show that Europe is becoming less attractive for private R&D investment.”

The Key Figures 2005 (published on 19 July 2005) can be found under:  
[ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/indicators/docs/2004\\_1857\\_en\\_web.pdf](ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/indicators/docs/2004_1857_en_web.pdf)

### **EUA report on doctoral programmes in Europe**

EUA, the European University Association has published a report entitled "Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society". It is the result of a project that ran from 2004-2005 and whose goal was to contribute to the debate on research training in the European Higher Education and Research Areas, where doctoral programmes are a crucial source of a new generation of researchers.

Following an open call, the EUA project brought together 48 members organisations from 22 countries. Organised in six thematic networks, participants worked on identifying innovation and good practices across Europe for: a) the structure and organisation of doctoral programmes, b) supervision, monitoring and assessment of such programmes and c) mobility, European collaboration and joint doctoral degrees.

From March 2006, a follow-up report will be prepared on the relationship between doctoral training programmes and career development and employability prospects for doctoral candidates.

The report can be found under:

[http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Doctoral\\_Programmes\\_Project\\_Report.1129285328581.pdf](http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Doctoral_Programmes_Project_Report.1129285328581.pdf)

### **Eurobarometer Surveys: How do EU citizens perceive researchers in Europe?**

The surveys, published by the European Commission on 13 June, reveal that 71% of EU citizens support the collaborative research at EU level and 64% acknowledge the role of science and technology concerning economic competitiveness, especially in view to the US which they see still advanced, and industrial development. 59% support higher funding for scientific research. 87% of EU citizens feel that developments in science and technology have improved their quality of life and, asked for their opinion on the impact of new technologies, 94% believe that medicines and new medical technologies will have a positive effect on their way of life in the next 20 years. Despite this trust, they want the ethical limits of research more monitored by the authorities and claim that there is still an information gap between scientists and the society.

The survey on "Europeans, Science and Technology" (292 p.) can be found under:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_224\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_224_report_en.pdf)

The survey on "Social values, Science and Technology" (336 p.) can be found under:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_225\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_225_report_en.pdf)

### **A new EU Bookshop portal**

This new online service was presented by the European Publications Office on 6 April 2005, and offers a single and immediate access point to all EU publications. Thus, it provides for various publications of different EU institutions, agencies and other bodies in 19 languages under one umbrella. It permits online ordering and downloading and offers a catalogue and an archive, being regularly up-dated, under the same user-friendly structure.

Click below to visit the bookshop:

<http://bookshop.eu.int>

## **SwissCore Küche**

### **Swiss Science Briefing discussed instruments to support Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities**

Under the title "How about networks? Instruments to strengthen excellence in the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities", SwissCore and the Swiss Mission invited their Brussels counterparts and the European Commission to a discussion session on the best ways to stimulate excellence in

the Socio-economic sciences and Humanities in Europe and how to accommodate their “specific research culture”.

Basing himself on the 6 new Swiss National Centres of Competence in Research (NCCRs) in the field social sciences and humanities, Prof. Hanspeter Kriesi presented his own experience with the NCCR “Challenges to Democracy in the 21st Century”. There are different arguments why, according to some, networked research instruments are not fitted to the needs of social sciences and humanities. These arguments mainly stress the importance of the individual researcher in his/her individualistic disciplinary tradition and the then artificial nature of research networks. However, according to Prof. Kriesi, networks are important to provide critical mass, public visibility, support young researchers as well as provide data infrastructures that would otherwise be too expensive.

Ramon Marimon, the former Spanish Secretary of State for Science and Technology who had chaired the expert group who prepared the mid-term review of the “new research instruments” in FP6, stressed the importance of more and better funding for Social Sciences and Humanities at European level given that they address the main issues that citizen are nowadays concerned about.

This very successful event (around 80 participants) was timed to allow for the main conclusions to flow into the Commission preparation of the FP7 Specific Programmes.



Prof. Hanspeter Kriesi, University of Zürich



Prof. Ramon Marimon, Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona)



Jürg Burri, Swiss Mission to the EU, Martina Weiss, SwissCore, Beat Butz, SNF



A Cordis article on this Swiss Science Briefing can be found under:

[http://www.swisscore.org/events/ssb/cordis\\_Kriesi.htm](http://www.swisscore.org/events/ssb/cordis_Kriesi.htm)

### **SwissCore celebrates 10 years in Brussels**

On 12 October, SwissCore celebrated its 10th anniversary in the framework of its Annual Event. As every year, SwissCore used this opportunity to thank its Brussels partners for their good collaboration in the past year. This year's host was Prof. Dieter Imboden, President of the Swiss National Science Foundation's Research Council. In his address, he particularly underlined the importance of a future European Research Council but also of the need to take into account the

necessary subsidiarity in European science as well as the challenges posed by the increasing “politisation” of science.

On the occasion of its anniversary, SwissCore was also glad to welcome a large round of its Swiss partners in Brussels – especially the Swiss State Secretariat for Education and Research and Euresearch – as well as its former staff members. The good attendance (around 100 guests) as well as the spontaneous birthday wishes of the European Commission confirmed the achievements of SwissCore in its first 10 years of existence. And now, to the future!



Prof. Dieter Imboden, President of the Research Council of the Swiss National Science Foundation



Jürg Burri, Swiss Mission to the EU, Nicole Dewandre, European Commission, Paul Zinsli, SBF



Doris Kolly, Euresearch Fribourg, René Sennhauser, SICAP AG, Katelijne Kenis, SwissCore



Balz Abplanalp, EDA, Christine Simon, European Commission, Martin Penny, European Commission

### **SwissCore Seminar to take place on 17-18 November**

The 2005 edition of the SwissCore Seminar will be taking place on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> November in Brussels. This year's focus will be the retrospect of the FP6 and the changes in FP7. The participants will be informed about and are invited to discuss the latest developments, current status and simplification concerning the forthcoming 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme. Additionally, it offers the possibility to gain insights in the new State aid policy and the European Research Council and to get first-hand information on the part of key European Commission players.

The programme can be found under: [http://www.swisscore.org/fs\\_events.htm](http://www.swisscore.org/fs_events.htm)

To register to the Seminar or for any queries, please contact SwissCore: [infodesk@swisscore.org](mailto:infodesk@swisscore.org).

### **A “Stagiaire” for SwissCore**

On 12 September 2005, Steffi Rosenbusch joined the SwissCore team as a trainee and she will stay with us until the end of December 2005.

With her assistance, we can bridge the gap until our new colleague, Thomas Marty, will be taking up his post. During this time, Steffi will, especially, support us in the organisation of the Annual

Event, the SwissCore Seminar (where you can meet her) and Apéro. Furthermore, she will assist in all ongoing activities, such as the realisation of our Synopsis.

In August, she finished her BA studies in social sciences and pedagogics at Erfurt University in Germany. Previously, she spent the autumn term at Vilnius University in Lithuania where she got also acquainted with European institutions and policies during her internship with the Commission's Representation. That becoming, besides the interest for education policy, her main interest, she decided to settle as a new "expat" in Brussels.

Steffi has grown up in a small town in Thuringia, but she had lived in Hanover (vocational training as European Management Assistant) and Berlin as well. Besides German, she speaks English, French and Spanish; and she has good knowledge in Russian and Lithuanian.



Steffi Rosenbusch, Danièle Rod Wiesner, Katelijne Kenis