

SwissCore Synopsis Research

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UK Presidency's lukewarm compromise for the Financial Perspective

In the early hours of 17 December, the UK Presidency presented the final compromise for the Financial Perspective 2007-2013 all Member States had agreed on, after long and difficult negotiations at the European Council meeting of 15-16 December.

The Financial Perspective defines the framework for the EU's budget priorities over a period of 7 years. Different budget headings indicate the maximum amounts (ceilings) of 'commitment appropriations' (financial commitments) for each year. The Financial Perspectives are not a fixed multi-annual budget per se, since the annual budget procedure determines the actual level of expenditure and the breakdown between the various budget headings. The Financial Perspectives set a maximum frame for the budget and indicate the financial priorities of the EU.

Following the lack of an agreement under the Luxemburg Presidency in June, the UK Presidency was able to reach a "last-minute" agreement on a reduced budget, amounting to a total of €862 billion over 7 years, which represents 1.045% of the total national income ('GNI') of all Member States. The Commission had proposed a budget of €1025 billion, or 1.24%, which was already reduced to €871 billion or 1.06% in the Luxemburg Presidency's proposal of 15 June.

The financing of the research and development activities of the EU are grouped under the Subheading 1a 'Competitiveness for Growth and Employment', of which FP7 represents the main part. No changes were made in this subheading compared to the Luxemburg proposal of June and the total was kept at €72 billion. In the Commission's proposal, this subheading amounted to €133 billion. Therefore, the UK compromise amounts to 54% of the Commission's proposal. If the budget allocations under Subheading 1a remain as planned, one can expect the proposed €73 billion for FP7 to be reduced to €40-45 billion. If one adds the amount paid by Associated Countries as well as the likely increase of this "minimal budget" announced by the European Parliament, and considering its 7 year duration, this could represent an approximate 30-35% increase in budget for the 7th Framework Programme compared to FP6.

With a reduced financial framework, it is now up to the Commission to refine its priorities within FP7 - an overall cut seems unavoidable, possibly combined with the dropping of certain specific initiatives. Up to now, signals from the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament seem to indicate that the newly introduced initiatives, like the Joint Technology Initiatives or the planned contributions to new research infrastructures, are most likely to be cut. An exception to this tendency is the European Research Council, where the issue is not its existence per se, but rather whether the critical level of funding of €1 billion per year will be reached. Indeed, this amount of financing appears to be the minimum necessary to reach the goals set by the Scientific Council.

A provisional version of the UK Presidency's compromise for the Financial Perspective 2007-2013 can be found under:

http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/FinancialPerspective_16Dec.1.pdf

The EU revises its State Aid framework. What consequences for research?

It is well-known that the EU Member States decided in 2000 in Lisbon that they should take measures in order to become the world's most dynamic knowledge-based economy and that investing more and better into research and innovation is one of the main paths towards this goal. Member States therefore agreed that they should strive towards spending around 3% of their GDP on research activities and that 2/3 of this amount should be funded by private sources. One of the main ways to support more research and innovation in Europe is for the Member States and the European Union to co-fund research activities of academia and private firms through research programmes. Other examples of measures to stimulate innovation in Europe include facilitated access to risk capital, co-funding for demonstration activities or networking and information measures.

However, in terms of State Aid, the EU abides by a strict set of rules that define how much money can be granted by public sources to support such activities without distorting a fair market competition. Under the current rules, which will be extended until the end of 2006, Research and

Development activities are exempted from the general ban on State Aid because they fulfil objectives of common interest and can be regulated to have only little distorting impact on the market. In order to reduce possible distortions of competition, the allowed level of public support for R&D activities is inversely proportional to the distance to the market:

- Fundamental research up to 100%;
- Industrial research up to 50%;
- Pre-competitive development up to 25%.

Furthermore, a number of bonuses can apply on top of these categories: e.g. +10% for SMEs carrying out research, +5-10% in weaker areas, +10% for cooperation between private firms and public research bodies. The European Commission (DG Competition) is responsible to control that this framework properly is applied and that no subsidies are granted beyond the levels mentioned above.

In view of the Lisbon objectives, the Commission started in 2005 to prepare a reform of its State Aid rules, notably for the field of research and innovation. In this endeavour, the European Commission strives for “less but better targeted State Aid”, i.e. lower general levels but better-defined exemptions in areas that are of strategic importance to the EU.

In September 2005, the Commission opened a consultation to gather the reactions of different stakeholders to the measures that should be taken to allow the future EU State Aid rules to support the EU's research and innovation targets and to help address the EU's innovation gap.

Possible measures include:

- A revision of the above research categories and ceilings;
- Support for the creation and growth of innovative start-ups through tax exemptions and subsidies of up to €1 million over three years;
- Additional flexibility for risk capital in terms of State Aid;
- Expanding the scope of current State Aid rules for R&D and authorising State Aid for SMEs engaged in innovation activities (such as commercially-usable prototypes, technological design or feasibility studies);
- Subsidies for SMEs to buy services from innovation intermediaries who support innovative ventures through a series of services (strategic advice, training, networking, consultancy for IPR) and facilities (office space, data banks, testing and certification);

The consultation on the State Aid rules in the field of innovation was closed on 21 November 2005. The European Commission is currently compiling the answers and the result should be integrated into a proposal for the general reform of the EU's State Aid principles. The Commission's proposal should be put forward early next year.

All relevant documents can be found under:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/competition/state_aid/others/action_plan/

◆ **News in Brief**

7th Framework Programme (FP7)

Competitiveness Council approved a “partial general agreement” on FP7

At the European Competitiveness Council meeting on 28/29 November in Brussels, the EU Research Ministers reached a “partial general agreement” on FP7.

Given the slow process in the European Parliament and the uncertainties linked to the lack of a budget, Ministers decided to concentrate their preliminary discussions on the text, content and structure of the FP7 proposal, rather than the budget. They thus reached an agreement on the partial information at their disposal.

This “ad-hoc procedure” is quite unusual. The European Commission submitted its Proposal on FP7 on 6 April 2005 but the European Parliament, who should give its opinion first, is still waiting to see a draft legislative report prepared by rapporteur Jerzy Buzek. This uncertain situation was of course mainly caused by the lack of an agreement on the EU Financial Perspective 2007-2013.

The FP7 “partial general agreement” reached in the Council covers four main issues:

1. The Council accepted the Commission’s proposal regarding the legal structure of the European Research Council (ERC). It should be set up as an Executive Agency whose Executive Director and staff is recruited by and accountable to the European Commission. Sweden, Denmark, Hungary and France opposed this decision: they advocated the option of establishing it under Article 171 of the EC Treaty, which would make it directly accountable to the Council of Ministers, the Parliament and the Court of Auditors. This option was rejected due to the time required to implement it. However, the Council left open the possibility for changing the Executive Agency into a structure based on Article 171 following an independent revision of the ERC in 2010.
2. As in FP6, the Council went against the Commission’s proposal and put forward a non-binding minimum quota of 15% for the participation of SMEs in FP7.
3. A number of Member States (Germany, Italy, Austria, Poland, Malta and Slovakia) also announced their wish to re-discuss “in due time” the way ethical issues raised by stem cell research are dealt with in the Framework Programme.
4. The thematic area “Space and Security research” should be separated in two single priorities – “Space” and “Security”. Member States pushed this through against the will of the Commission as they want to decide separately on the eventual budget of each area.

The press release of the Competitiveness Council conclusions can be found under:

http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/intm/87210.pdf

European Parliament leaders reject small FP7 budget

After publishing a first working document on 26 June, Jerzy Buzek, European Parliament (EP) rapporteur for the 7th Framework Programme published a second working document concerning FP7 on 10 October 2005.

This document underscores that the European Parliament supports the FP7 budget as proposed by the European Commission (€73 billion). It states that “the rapporteur and the EP consider any reduction of EU budget on research unacceptable” and that a budget smaller than €50 billion would be “a total disaster”. Therefore, the UK’s compromise proposal was unanimously rejected by the leaders of the seven EP political groups before it even turned into an agreement, as the amount earmarked for FP7 would roughly amount to €40 billion.

Moreover, the document identifies a number of “sensitive points and priorities”:

a) Risk of fragmentation:

The rapporteur welcomes the new instruments proposed such as Joint Technology Initiatives and the European Research Council, as well as the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme. But the plethora of different initiatives could lead to fragmentation and overlap; to avoid this, the EP calls for efficient coordination.

Networks of Excellence are also praised as ideal tools for joint integrating activities and should have stronger contacts with the respective national research programmes and ERA-Nets.

b) New Proposals:

The EP wants Joint Technology Initiatives to be open for new partners such as SMEs, small research groups and participants from convergence regions.

The EP highlighted the importance of the independence of a European Research Council according to Art. 171 EC Treaty. Therefore, it advocates a fixed transitory period of only 1 or 2 years as an Executive Agency under the control and responsibility of the Commission.

c) Thematic Priorities:

Mr. Buzek pointed out that the debate on the financial allocation between nuclear and renewable energy research is still widely open. Moreover, research on radioactive waste should be strengthened.

Whether these points will find their way back into the draft report that is to be published any day now is uncertain. The draft report is scheduled for adoption in committee on 21 February 2006, and by the EP in first reading on 4 April 2006.

The second working document on FP7 by rapporteur Jerzy Buzek can be downloaded here:
http://www.eurec.be/FP7_2nd_working_doc_10Oct05.doc

FP7 is top priority for the Austrian Presidency

From 1 January to 30 June 2006, Austria will hold the Presidency of the European Council, taking it over from the UK.

In a nutshell, their top research priority is that the 7th Framework Programme should start on time. Austria wants to advance the legislative process on FP7 as much as possible by June 2006 in order to match the planned start of FP7 on 1 January 2007.

Other issues with high priority are also on the agenda:

- The preparation of the Lisbon Midterm Review for the Spring European Council;
- The discussion on a European Institute of Technology (EIT);
- An action plan on university based research;
- The conclusion of the international agreement and establishment of a European entity regarding the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) and
- A Commission communication on international cooperation in the field of science and technology with the likely setting up of a monitoring committee for the Western Balkans.

The dates for the Competitiveness Council meetings (dealing with issues related to the Internal Market, Industry and Research policies) have been set to 13 March, 20/22 April (informal meeting), 29/30 May and 29 June.

The Austrian Presidency is also planning a number of events on topics related to research and development:

- 26/27 January, Vienna: European Science: A modern interpretation of basic and applied research
- 22/23 March, Vienna: European ICT-Research and Innovation Policy – i2010; European IST Prize Award Ceremony
- 24/25 April, Vienna: New Frontiers in Evaluation
- 1/2 June, Vienna: A Researchers' Labour Market: Europe – a Pole of Attraction? The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their Recruitment as a driving force for enhancing career prospects
- 16 June, Vienna: ESFRI – Meeting of the European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures
- 22 June, Washington: The 7th Framework Programme and the new European Research Council

The Austrian Presidency website can be visited here:

<http://www.eu2006.at/info/en/>

Parliamentary rapporteurs for the Specific Programmes of FP7 determined

The following Members of European Parliament have been chosen to prepare the reports concerning the Specific Programmes of the 7th Framework Programme:

- Cooperation – Mrs. Teresa Riera Madurell (European Socialist Party, Spain);
- Ideas – Mrs. Angelika Niebler (European People's Party, Germany);
- People – Mr. Umberto Pirilli (Union for Europe of the Nations Group, Italy);
- Capacities – Mr. Romano Prodi (European People's Party, Italy);
- Joint Research Center – Mr. David Hammerstein Mintz (Greens, Spain);
- Euratom – Mr. Umberto Guidoni (European United Left, Italy) and
- Joint Research Center Euratom – Mr. Daniel Caspary (European People's Party, Germany).

According to the Amsterdam Treaty (1999), the Specific Programmes within the Framework Programmes are adopted by qualified majority in the Council of Ministers (consultation procedure); the European Parliament is simply being consulted and as a result will not have much of a say on those issues unless it links them with its overall approval to FP7.

FP7 Rules for Participation delayed again

First planned for November and then December 2005, the Commission proposal for the FP7 Rules for Participation will not be published before January 2006. This document, which will define the administrative, financial and legal implementation framework for FP7 will be the key to a much announced and hoped for simplification of procedures in FP7.

The current version of this paper, which at the moment is being discussed internally in the European Commission, contains a number of new elements such as:

- Elimination of the existing cost models;
- New funding ceilings for SMEs (75% of eligible costs) as well as for public institutions (up to 75% of eligible costs, possibly including the cost of permanent personnel);
- Provisions for creating a guarantee mechanism (fund) to allow for reduced financial checks towards project participants;
- Simplification of the Intellectual Property Rules.

Much of the delay in the publication of the Commission's proposal is due to the fact that some of the above issues are still heavily debated within the European Commission itself. We therefore hope to be able to give you more specific and definitive information on this topic in January. After adoption of the Commission proposal, the Rules will undergo a co-decision procedure between European Parliament and Council of Ministers.

EU-Research Policy

European Parliament passed Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation with Switzerland

On 13 December, the European Parliament approved to the renewal of the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation with Switzerland by the Council and the Commission. This Agreement allows the full association of Switzerland to the 6th Framework Programme and has already been provisionally in force since January 1st, 2004. The text of the agreement can be found below:

<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2005:0333:FIN:EN:PDF>

European Parliament preparing first reading of Competitiveness and Innovation Programme

The establishment of a new Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) was outlined by the European Commission in its proposal on the 7th Framework Programme (FP7) on 6 April 2005. It is to become the main legal basis for all Community actions in the field of innovation and competitiveness. Complementary to the future FP7, but more targeted towards "downstream" innovation, it is the main tool to ensure coherence and synergy among these actions, and is one of the main instruments to achieve the Lisbon agenda. For the period 2007-2013, the CIP budget should amount to €4.2 billion.

The CIP will be structured into three main blocks:

- The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme, particularly focussing on SMEs;
- The ICT Policy Support Programme, to support the adoption of Information and Communication Technologies in business, administrations and public sector services and
- The Intelligent Energy Europe Programme.

In the Parliament, the German Jorge Chatzimarkakis from the Liberal group was appointed rapporteur in charge of the CIP. This autumn, he issued a working document by and large welcoming the Commission's proposal but also hinting to a number of possible wishes for change:

- Budget:
The rapporteur regards the €4.2 billion as the absolute minimum and asks for a built-in flexibility mechanism to allow for the redeployment of budget resources as and where necessary according to the take-up. He also proposes to raise the amount of start-up and microcredit financing up to €25.000 in each instance.
- Structure of the CIP:

In addition to the nine programme committees, the CIP should also have an over-arching management structure.

- Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme:

It is hard for SMEs to obtain financing for “seed” or “pre-seed” phases of business start-ups. The GIF1 and the SMED Facility financial instruments should, therefore, be treated as a high priority.

- ICT Policy Support Programme:

The rapporteur criticised the ICT component for not being explicitly tailored to enterprises.

- Intelligent Energy - Europe Programme:

The rapporteur suggested extending the subprogramme’s name to “Intelligent Energy and Technologies - Europe” since energy efficiency should in the future be linked to other technologies and the DG Energy and Transport and CIP better coordinated.

- Miscellaneous:

The EP asks the Commission to reconsider whether three partners should be required in a project and favours a two-stage application procedure.

This working document serves as preparatory basis for the draft report on CIP that is likely to be adopted by the European Parliament at the first reading scheduled for March 2006.

At the latest Competitiveness Council on 28-29 December in Brussels, Ministers discussed the CIP for the first time. They welcomed the synergies created by the Programme; however, they insisted that the autonomy of the subprogrammes should be maintained. This reflects the discussion within the Commission during the preparation of the CIP proposal where the inclusion of the energy programme was highly disputed. Moreover, some Ministers also requested the relation towards FP7 be further clarified.

The working document by Jorge Chatzimarkakis can be found under:

http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/dt/580/580857/580857en.pdf

European Research Council: latest news

When the 22 founding members of the Scientific Council (SC) of the future European Research Council (ERC) were appointed on 18 July, their task was to define the “scientific agenda” and practical foundation of the ERC (procedures, types of grants, etc.). (See Synopsis Research 2005/3)

During their first meeting on 18/19 October, the SC:

- a) decided unanimously that the ERC should be established as an Executive Agency;
- b) decided that a Secretary General will be recruited to act as an interface between the SC and the Executive Agency;
- c) abandoned the idea of interviewing the Heads of Research Councils and, instead, chose to base themselves on their own experience;
- d) discussed the possibility to create a special category for young researchers;
- e) discussed the possibility to mix open calls (non-thematic) with projects of the thematic priorities;
- f) discussed the possible two-step evaluation system to reduce administrative burden;
- g) especially stressed the importance of interdisciplinarity and, therefore, prescind from having subgroups per discipline. However, the organisation and administration of this aspect still remains open.

The members of the Scientific Council appointed Professor Fotis Kafatos as their Chairman. He is currently holding the Chair of Insect Immunogenetics at Imperial College, London. Mr. Kafatos was born in Greece and studied biology in the US where he worked as a professor at Harvard for 30 years. Two terms as Director-General of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) then followed.

Professor Helga Nowotny and Dr. Daniel Estève were elected Vice-Chairs. Helga Nowotny from Austria is well-known to Europe’s research community as the Chair of the European Research Advisory Board of the European Commission (EURAB). She is Professor emeritus of Social Studies of Science at ETH Zurich and fellow at the Wissenschaftszentrum in Vienna. Dr. Daniel Estève has been Research Director at the French Commission for Atomic Energy (CEA) since

2001. He won the Europhysics prize in 2004 for his development of electronic circuits for the purpose of quantum computing.

The next meeting of the Scientific Council is scheduled for 24-25 January 2006.

Biographical information on the members of the Scientific Council can be found here:

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/265&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&quillanguage=fr>

European Commission reshuffled important positions at its Directorate-General

On 9 November, the European Commission announced a reshuffling of top management posts. As a rule, replacements of senior officials within the European Commission have to be made after five (exceptionally after seven) years of service in a single function. All changes mentioned here apply as of 1 January 2006:

- 1) Mr. José Manuel Silva Rodrigues (Spain) will become new Director General of DG Research. He was before Director-General of DG Agriculture.
A new function is being created for the current Director General, Mr. Achilleas Mitsos (Greece) who will remain at DG Research as “Hors Class Advisor”. It will be up to Commissioner Potočnik to make up specific work assignments for Mr. Mitsos.
- 2) Mr. Roland Schenkel (Germany), until now Deputy Director General, is taking up the position as Director General in DG Joint Research Center.
- 3) Mr. Nikolaus van der Pas (Germany) is transferred from his post as Director General of DG Education and Culture to the function of Director General of DG Employment. He is replaced by Mrs. Odile Quintin (France) from DG Employment.

The positions of Deputy Director General at DG Research and DG Education - still vacant at the moment - are being published internally within the European Commission. The latter post is reserved for the new Member States.

The organigramme of DG RTD can be found under:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/research/pdf/organisation_en.pdf#pagemode=none

The organigramme of DG EAC can be found under:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education_culture/organi_en.pdf

European Commission action plan pushing biomass and biofuel research

On 7 December, a Biomass Action Plan was adopted by the European Commission tabling three main goals, namely to guarantee a stable supply of electricity, protect the environment and boost employment in rural areas.

The Commission's proposal for FP7 already includes several actions with a biomass component such as “biomass for fuels, electricity, heating and cooling” with the objective of developing and demonstrating a portfolio of technologies and “life sciences and biotechnology for sustainable non-food products and processes”. The action plan provides for the development of an industry-led “biofuel technology platform”, the “bio-refinery” concept and research in second-generation biofuels, where a substantial increase in Community funding is expected.

To view the Biomass action plan, click on:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy/res/biomass_action_plan/doc/2005_12_07_comm_biomass_action_plan_en.pdf

European partnership to reduce animal testing

During a conference entitled “Europe goes alternative” organised by the European Commissioners Günter Verheugen (DG Industry) and Janez Potočnik (DG Research) on 7 November in Brussels, the European Commission and industry associations of the pharmaceutical, chemical, cosmetics and biotech sectors agreed on a voluntary “European Partnership to Promote Alternative Approaches to Animal Testing”. It aims at revising, reducing or replacing animal testing by alternative methods (3 Rs Declaration). It should above all help to stimulate the development, validation and implementation of alternative approaches via appropriate resources and financing tools, as well as their regulatory acceptance. The participants of the Partnership commit themselves to contribute to an Action Plan to be reviewed

every year that identifies short, medium and long term activities and appropriate responsibilities. In 2002, some 10.7 million animals were used in research and development.

The 3 Rs Declaration can be found under:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/events/animal_tests/conference/3rs_declaration.pdf

EU Descartes Prizes awarded to five European research networks

On 2 December, the EU Commissioner for Science and Research, Janez Potočnik, awarded this year's EU Descartes Prizes at a ceremony in London. The €1,000,000 Descartes Research Prize was shared between the following five pan-European teams:

- EXEL – Extending electromagnetism through novel artificial materials;
- CECA – Climate and environmental change in the Arctic;
- PULSE – Pulsar Science in Europe: The impact of European pulsar science on modern physics;
- ESS – European Social Survey – innovations in comparative measurement, and
- EURO-PID – European initiative on primary immunodeficiencies.

For the first time, prizes of €30,000 each were also awarded to the five runner-ups.

The Descartes Prize for Science Communication is awarded since 2004 for bringing science and technology to wider audiences in Europe. This year's awardees were Carl Johan Sundberg (Sweden), Anja C. Andersen (Denmark), Jos Van Hemelrijck (Belgium), Bill Bryson (USA/UK) and Michael Seifert (Germany). The five runner-ups also received a €5,000 prize each. Among them is George Szpiro for his stories "Maths for Sunday morning – 50 stories on mathematics and science". Born in 1959 in Vienna, he went to school in Zug, Switzerland, and studied mathematics and physics at the ETH Zurich. George Szpiro is writing a monthly column on maths for the NZZ Sunday edition.

A detailed description of the 2005 EU Descartes Prizes for Research Laureates, Science Communication Laureates and finalists from each Prize can be found under:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/press/2005/pdf/pr02122005_annex_winners_dp_research2005_en.pdf

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/press/2005/pdf/pr02122005_annex_winners_dp_scicomm2005_en.pdf

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/press/2005/pdf/pr02122005_annex_finalists_en.pdf

EU-Space Policy

Towards a Global Monitoring for Environment and Security system

On 10 November, European Space Ministers and the Council of the European Space Agency (ESA) adopted a Communication setting out a strategy for the EU-led initiative "Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES)". This system should help to anticipate and manage environmental crisis situations starting with emergency management, land monitoring and marine pilot services to be developed by the end of 2008. Its objective is also to support "public policy makers' needs by providing reliable and timely information". A number of tasks are shared between the European Commission and ESA, the former implementing related actions for identifying and developing services and the latter managing the implementation of the space segment. In terms of funding, the European Union has been spending about €100 million via FP6 and ESA about €130 million from 2003 to 2006. In the long run, services should however be funded by the users.

In future, the European Commission aims at raising public awareness of the GMES and at organising a GMES stakeholder summit in 2007 to discuss progress and experiences and to pave the way towards an integrated worldwide earth observation system.

The Commission Communication on GMES can be found here:

<http://www.gmes.info/library/files/Reference%20Documents/COM-2005-565-final.pdf>

First Galileo satellite to take off on 28 December

On 28 December, the first satellite in the Galileo constellation – the European Satellite Navigation System – is to be sent into orbit from the Baikonur space centre in Russia. The satellite, baptised GIOVE-A (Galileo In Orbit Validation Element), will be followed by a second one in spring 2006. These first two satellites should enable the verification of the functioning of key technology and provide measurements of the operational environment for the Galileo constellation to start from 2008.

Further information on Galileo can be found under:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/energy_transport/galileo/index_en.htm

Publications

OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard 2005 published

The seventh OECD report on science, technology and industry was published in November 2005. The Scoreboard looks at the interaction between knowledge and globalisation and reveals, for example, that investment in knowledge (comprising expenditure on R&D, software and higher education) in the OECD area reached around 5.2% of GDP in 2001, compared to 6.9% for investment in machinery and equipment.

In 2003, Sweden had the highest R&D intensity (4% of GDP), followed by Finland, Japan and Iceland (all over 3%). Switzerland (data from 2000) shares the fifth rank with the United States and Korea with 2.6%. When it comes to human resources in science and technology, Switzerland, together with Sweden, Luxembourg and Australia, are leading in terms of professional and technical workers (over 35% of total employment). According to the report, the ICT sector invests heavily in R&D. In 2002, ICT manufacturing industries accounted for more than a quarter of total business R&D expenditure in most OECD countries. The ICT sector, along with biotechnology, contributed most to the overall surge in patenting over the last decade.

Other chapters explore knowledge flows and the global enterprise and the impact of knowledge on productive activities.

It is worth noting that the data used to create the graphs is accessible via the StatLinks – a technology that the OECD is subsequently introducing for its publications. StatLink is an URL address provided on the bottom side of each graph or table that leads to the underlying Excel spreadsheets and that can then be used individually.

The e-book OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard is available under:

<http://www.sourceoecd.org/rpsv/scoreboard/>

The EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard published

In December, the European Commission's DG Joint Research Centre and DG Research have published the EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard 2005. It is a ranking of the top 700 EU and 700 non-EU corporate Research and Development investors. The Scoreboard, first published in 2004, provides comparisons between companies, sectors, and geographical areas, as well as a full picture of the competitive situation of EU firms in the global R&D environment.

According to the Scoreboard, Daimler Chrysler is the worldwide leader in terms of R&D investment and has outrun Microsoft (Scoreboard 2004). Daimler Chrysler's annual research budget amounts to €5.6 billion, which is more than the annual budget of FP6 of about €5 billion In this listing, the Swiss firms Roche and Novartis are ranked 19 and 20.

In 2004, the 700 European companies investing most in research raised their R&D investment by only 0.7% compared to 2003, when spending even decreased. Compared to the non-European companies that raised their R&D investment by 6.9%, this represents a widening gap. Nine out of the worldwide leading 25 investors are settled within the European Union.

The EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard, Volume I: Analysis (113p.) and Volume II: Company Data (199p.) can be found here:

http://eu-iriscorboard.jrc.es/docs/Scoreboard_%202005_vol_1.pdf

http://eu-iriscorboard.jrc.es/docs/Scoreboard_%202005_vol_2.pdf

Integrating socio-economic research into FP6

This autumn, the European Commission published a Mid-term Synthesis Report on the Integration of Socio-economic and Foresight Dimensions (SED) in FP6. Author of the report is Manfred Horvat, Professor of European and international research cooperation at Vienna's University of Technology and NCP coordinator for Austria. The report presents the lessons learned in FP5 and FP6 and promotes a better integration of the SED in the other Thematic Priorities. It calls for a multidimensional concept of SED to be included at all levels of FP7

The full report can be found under:

ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/citizens/docs/sed_report_final_050720.pdf

European Research Advisory Board issues agenda for Science and Society in FP7

This autumn, the European Research Advisory Board (EURAB) published a final report on "Science and Society: An agenda for a responsive and responsible European science in FP7".

The report suggests that the combination of a dedicated theme, an effort to integrate science and society issues across the Framework Programme and national co-operation and co-ordination is an effective mode of operation and should continue under FP7; it encourages the Commission to develop a more coherent strategy to this effect. The dedicated theme should support a critical mass of activities including, for example, the promotion of a strong scientific culture among young people and the provision of public "arenas for discussions and dialogues with the aim of increasing engagement with research at European level between representatives from society and science".

The EURAB final report on "Science and Society" can be found under:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/eurab/pdf/eurab_05_035_wg6_final_report-rev_160905.pdf

Impact Report on EUREKA

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, the pan-European (including Switzerland) EUREKA initiative to encourage innovative research has published an Impact Report on its achievements. This well-illustrated report summarises milestone developments, events and key statistics of EUREKA since 1985. It comprises also a foresight stating that EUREKA intends to further strengthen its image and contribution to the European Research Area through closer cooperation with the Seventh Framework Programme.

The French and German versions of the EUREKA report can be downloaded here:

<http://www.eureka.be/files/:873478>

<http://www.eureka.be/files/:1097638>

Europe in figures

On 24 November, Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, published the Europe in Figures - Eurostat Yearbook 2005. This compendium shows how benchmark figures have developed over the past decade in the European Union, the euro-zone and candidate countries. For international comparison, it also includes data of major trade partners and of a number of economic or geographic associations or areas. One of the seven chapters covers science and technology and more specifically research and developments (pp. 209-216) and in the spotlight of this year's edition, the information society (pp. 217-229). This is to monitor the implementation of the eEurope action plan launched this year by the European Commission.

The Eurostat 2005 Yearbook edition can be downloaded here:

http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-CD-05-001/EN/KS-CD-05-001-EN.PDF

SwissCore Seminar on latest developments in FP6 and FP7

As previously announced, the SwissCore Seminar took place on 17-18 November in Brussels and focused on the retrospect of FP6 and the novelties in FP7. Officials from the Commission presented the current state of the Framework Programme 7 and its thematic programmes as well as the new Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP).

Some insight was also given into the simplifications of the Rules for Participation. Presentations on the revision of the Rules on State Aid for research and development and on the European Research Council rounded up the seminar (see articles above). The presentations were always followed by a seemingly endless stream of questions, a proof of the interest of the participants in the presented subjects; the opportunity to discuss and ask questions directly to the experts of the Commission is one of the added values of the SwissCore Seminar.

The SwissCore Seminar was preceded on 16 November by a workshop on the legal and financial issues in the Marie Curie Actions. The participants were able to get first hand information from S. Ricci of DG Research on the sometimes complicated procedures pertaining to such issues as social security, additional income of researchers, university fees and audit procedures within the Marie Curie Fellowship schemes.



The SwissCore Seminar took place in KoWi's meeting room



Andrea Aeberhard from Euresearch Head Office and Christina Wandeler, from the State Secretary for Education and Research



Claus Haessig from EPFL and Sacra Tomisawa, from the State Secretary for Education and Research



Sasha Hugentobler from Euresearch Head Office and Maddalena Tognola from Euresearch Bern

Swiss networking in Brussels: 10th SwissCore apéro

For its traditional networking apéro, SwissCore welcomed on December 12 around 20 newly arrived and more established Swiss expats working for European institutions or lobbies. SwissCore and the Swiss Mission to the EU presented their activities to reinforce the presence and the visibility of Switzerland in the field of research and education in Brussels.

The SwissCore team again complete

Starting 1 December, Thomas Marty joined the SwissCore team as European Advisor. He holds a master's degree in biology from the University of Zürich and a doctorate in genetics from the Biocenter of the University of Basel. He has over ten years of experience in basic research, including three years as a Human Frontier Science Programme (HFSP) postdoctoral fellow at the

Skirball Institute of New York University and at the ETH Zürich. His research focused mainly on the molecular and cellular mechanisms of animal development. Prior to joining SwissCore, Thomas Marty was awarded a Science Policy Fellowship from the Council of the Swiss Scientific Academies (CASS) to act as a scientific advisor for the Swiss Parliament, where he worked specifically for the Committees for Science, Education and Culture and for Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy. At SwissCore, besides generally following the EU's research and innovation policy, Thomas Marty will mainly cover the life science and health subjects, as well as food safety, nanotechnology, sustainable development and the education policy and programmes.



The SwissCore Team: Thomas Marty, Danièle Rod Wiesner, Katelijne Kenis and Steffi Rosenbusch

