

SwissCore Synopsis

September 2008

2008 / 8

♦ Seen from Brussels

- Racing through autumn in second gear 2

♦ Research

7th Framework Programme – FP7

- The ERC sets the frame for its upcoming review 2
- First call results of Ambient Assisted Living 3
- Successful launch of ESASTAP II 3

EU Research Policy

- A pilot action in FP7 for Open Access to scientific articles 4
- EC points out ICT standardisation as priority field for International S&T Cooperation 5
- The Council first take on Joint Programming 6

Publications

- A Practical Guide to help stakeholders find their way 6
- Partnership for researchers' mobility finds Council's support 6
- Newsletter of the Clean Sky Joint Technology Initiative 7
- ERC Annual Report 2007 7

♦ Innovation

- European Institute of Innovation and Technology officially launched 7
- Enterprise Europe Network goes west 7

Publications

- Report recommends improvements for European Technology Platforms 8
- European Ambient Assisted Living Innovation Alliance 9

♦ Education

- Bruegel's proposal for reforming universities 9
- New Eurydice study on teachers' autonomy and working conditions 9
- International co-operation in education: moving closer to Israel and Palestine 9

Publications

- Public consultation to set up the future of youth policy 10

♦ SwissCore Küche

- Euresearch and SwissCore bring "Brussels lobbying" to Bern 10
- Internship at SwissCore popular amongst NCPs 11

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

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

♦ Seen from Brussels

Racing through autumn in second gear

After the usually quiet summer reserved for internal projects and reorganisations, Brussels has shifted gears to reach its normal cruising speed again: September has seen a lot of activity, as partially witnessed by the length of this Synopsis.

First, DG Research has issued 23 calls for proposals under FP7 on 3 September; these are the calls that were originally planned for July. Unfortunately, the deadlines for the calls have mostly not been changed, which leaves researchers with even less time to prepare their proposals. It therefore does not come as a surprise that the content of many a Work Programme was “leaked” before its adoption by the European Commission on 3 September.

A long expected Communication of the European Commission, the strategy for international cooperation in science and technology, finally came out on 24 September (p. 5). This is the fifth of the planned follow-up initiatives that were the result of the European Research Area (ERA) Green Paper exercise of 2007. Moreover, the Council of the EU has examined two of the five initiatives at its meeting on 25-26 September, namely the Partnership for Researchers (p. 6) and Joint Programming (p. 6).

On the front of the “flagship” initiatives, the Governing Board of the European Institute for Innovation and Technology (EIT) has held its first meeting on 15 September at its new seat in Budapest (p. 7). While mostly internal organisational issues (electing a Chair and choosing an Executive Board) were addressed there, the EIT’s main steering body will meet in rapid succession until the end of the year, in order to fit the tight schedule of having the first Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) selected before the end of 2009.

On the other hand, the European Research Council has used the summer to summarise its activities of the past year and to put forward the terms of reference for its upcoming review in 2009 (p. 2 and 7). Staff recruitment for the ERC Executive Agency is moving ahead, and an identification committee has been set up to replace the members of the Scientific Council that stepped down earlier this year. We will report in more details on this procedure and on the results of the Advanced Grants calls, in our next edition.

With all this and further developments to come, we look forward to an eventful autumn...

♦ Research

7th Framework Programme (FP7)

The ERC sets the frame for its upcoming review

On 26 August, the Directorate S of DG Research, which is formally responsible for the European Research Council (ERC), published a Communication setting out the terms of reference and the methodology to be applied in the upcoming review of the ERC scheduled for next year. This document, together with a formal report to the Council of the EU and the European Parliament about the ERC’s activities published in July, aims at setting the ground for a transparent review of the ERC’s structures and mechanisms, in the light of the four criteria of excellence, autonomy, efficiency and transparency. The main points of this methodology are:

- Reviewers: The review would be conducted by a panel of five experts in science policy and research management that will be appointed by the European Commission and helped by a rapporteur.
- Scope of the review: The review should take into account the various levels of legislation and administrative practice, particularly when identifying improvements to be made. In clear, this means that for example the financial regulations cannot just be creatively removed from the ERC’s shoulders. In addition, the review should distinguish between temporary challenges and structural issues. The process and criteria for the selection of the members of the Scientific

Council should also be reconsidered, and the current structure of an Executive Agency should be compared with other possible legal forms (e.g. under Art. 171 of the EU Treaty). Similar research funding agencies should serve as benchmarks.

- Working methods: The review panel should act as a “Commission of Inquiry” and therefore have access to written and oral evidence from all stakeholders, e.g. the ERC Scientific Council, the researchers’ community, Member States, DG Research as well as other EU institutions. Besides analysing existing data, the panel could also request ad-hoc analyses.
- Criteria: The four criteria of scientific excellence, autonomy, efficiency and transparency have been broken down in a set of “essential questions” to be addressed by the reviewers.
- Timeline: The experts should be nominated in February 2009 and a final report would be expected in the summer of the same year. The response from the Commission is foreseen for September 2009.

The cornerstones of this methodology have been submitted to Council and Parliament for opinion; their comments are expected by December 2008 in order to be taken into consideration. While these terms of reference seem all very sensible, it is to be questioned how much of the “essential questions” should have been spelled out beforehand and how much should have been left to the appreciation of the experts. Indeed, these highly experienced professionals could surely put the finger on the key topics to be addressed. Even more surprising is therefore the presence of an annex to the document, which defines “possible means to enhance the ERC’s performance without prejudice to the review of structures and mechanisms”. It seems as if the Commission services responsible for the ERC have not only provided the questions to be asked during the review, but have even given some of the answers for the experts...

The methodology and terms of reference for the ERC review can be found under:

http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/COM_2008_0526_F_EN_COMMUNICATION.pdf

The Commission’s official report on the ERC’s activities in 2007 can be found under:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0473:FIN:EN:PDF>

First call results of Ambient Assisted Living

The first call for proposals of the Article 169 initiative Ambient Assisted Living (AAL), closed on 21 August, resulted in a total of 117 projects, involving at least partners from three different AAL Partner States. All in all, 950 partners are counted, which means that in average 8 partners form one project consortium. Total costs of about €370 Million were indicated and €230 Million are requested as public funding. This means short below €2 million per project on average. As total funding for this call was fixed at €57.7 million, there is a four times oversubscription. It might be that the formal eligibility check which has to be performed at national level and according to national rules, will show that some partners are not eligible. The final selection of projects is planned for 20 and 21 October. Concerning Ambient Assisted Living see also the article below on the European Ambient Assisted Living Innovation Alliance (AALIANCE).

For more information on the AAL programme please go to the AAL website:

<http://www.aal-europe.eu/>

CORDIS, the Community Research and Development Information Service, has recently launched a new service providing information on the Article 169 initiatives. Apart from AAL there is also Eurostars already running, while a joint research programme in the field of Metrology (EMPR) and one on the Baltic Sea (Bonus-169) may be proposed in late 2008 and mid-2009 respectively. On CORDIS detailed background information can be found on all four Article 169-initiatives as well as links to their websites: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/art169/home_en.html

Successful launch of ESASTAP II

On 12 September 2008, a new phase of the science and technology collaboration between the European Union and South Africa was launched in Brussels. The aim of the European-South

African Science & Technology Advancement Programme (ESASTAP) II is the increasing integration of South African research activities in European initiatives and programmes.

The first phase of the ESASTAP started in 2005 as a Specific Support Action under FP6. The project's aim was to improve the collaboration between European and South African researchers and to anchor this collaboration firmly in the Framework Programmes. Given the promising results of ESASTAP (South Africa is by now the fourth largest non-EU collaborator in the Framework Programmes) the EU and the South African government had no difficulties in agreeing on a follow-up project after the original Support Action came to an end in October 2007: ESASTAP II was signed at the South Africa–European Union Summit, which took place in Bordeaux in late July 2008, and then launched by Dr. Phil Mjwara, the Director General of South Africa's Department of Science and Technology on the occasion of a sumptuous lunch in Brussels on 12 September.

South Africa with its excellent pool of researchers and its ambitious targets is thus steadily becoming a more and more important part of the European Research Area. Switzerland acknowledges the importance of this player by its own bilateral S&T agreement with South Africa, signed in December 2007. Given the dynamism of the South African S&T actors, Switzerland will do well to closely observe any further development of ESASTAP II.

Further information on ESASTAP can be found under: <http://www.esastap.org.za>

EU Research Policy

A pilot action in FP7 for Open Access to scientific articles

On 20 August, the European Commission announced a pilot action for better access to scientific articles resulting from EU-funded research. A special clause (Special Clause 39) will be introduced in the FP7 Grant Agreement, thereby committing project participants to make publicly available any publication stemming from research funded under FP7.

This so-called open access to research results had been the object of a large conference organised by the European Commission on 15-16 February 2007. Indeed, the public access to research results has recently been hindered by the high prices publishers of scientific literature charge libraries, notably those of universities. It is argued that such discrimination based on price would restrict the access of scientists to the results of their colleagues and therefore block scientific progress (see also link below). Based on the discussions held at the conference, the European Commission had foreseen to include open access provisions for FP7 projects (see Synopsis 2007/1). Moreover, in January 2008, the Scientific Council of the European Research Council (ERC) had decided that publications derived from research funded by the ERC should be deposited in open access repositories within 6 month after publication (see Synopsis 2008/1). There is, however, no legally binding clause in the ERC Grant Agreement to enforce this open access provision with the grant holders.

In the light of these developments, the European Commission decided to introduce a special clause on open access into the FP7 Grant Agreement, in order to make this provision binding for beneficiaries of FP7 funding. In this first pilot phase, the open access provision will apply only to the following themes:

- Health;
- Energy;
- Environment;
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT; only Challenge 2);
- Research Infrastructures (e-Infrastructures);
- Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities (SSH);
- Science in Society (SiS).

In the Special Clause, it is stated that the scientists must make their best efforts to deposit the final proof of their manuscript in a repository and that the manuscript should be made available

publicly within 6 months of publication. This embargo time will be of 12 month for the last two listed themes (SSH and SiS) due to the specificities of these themes.

It is planned that the European Commission will collect experiences with this first pilot phase; a full expansion of the open access provision to all themes is only foreseen for the next Framework Programme.

Special Clause 39 on open access can be found under:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/press/2008/pdf/annex_1_new_clauses.pdf

More information on the open access pilot can be found under:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.topic&id=1680>

More information on the Open Access debate can be found in the following handbook:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/open-access-handbook_en.pdf

EC points out ICT standardisation as priority field for International S&T Cooperation

A draft version of the EC Communication on International Cooperation has already been presented in the last Synopsis (2008/7). However, the final version, released on 24 September, contains some modifications. Unlike the draft, the final version stresses the role that industry and academia have to play when it comes to make choices of research topics and third country partners, stressing ICT as a priority technology field where cooperation with third countries should be in particular inspired by inputs from stakeholders such as European Technology Platforms (ETP). Unlike the draft, the final version of the Communication highlights ICT as a key area for international cooperation, underlining repeatedly the importance of regulatory cooperation and joint research in the field of information society. In particular the issue of divergent standards in ICT has to be tackled and pre-standardisation is mentioned as an important mean for spreading innovative technologies and fostering interconnection and interoperability. It is remarkable that fears concerning close to market research, which has been expressed in the draft version, are not much in the spotlight in the final version. Member States are called to take into consideration the i2010 Action Plan when developing priorities for ICT research cooperation. The ICT Policy Support Programme of the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) will gradually be opened for European Neighbourhood Partner Countries.

It seems that the strong emphasis on ICT and standardisation in the Communication results from another EC Communication, concerning the Ex-post evaluation of the ICT priority in FP6, published on 4 September 2008. This Communication takes into account the findings of the Aho report on EU ICT research (see Synopsis 2008/6). The high-level panel led by former Finnish Prime Minister Esko Aho recommended a strategic approach to standardisation in the field of ICT in order to repeat the global success of the GSM standard as well as the opening up of the EU Framework Programme for research to the world. Also on 4 September, a public consultation on future ICT priorities has been launched.

The text of the Communication “A strategic European framework for international science and technology cooperation” from 24 September can be found here:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/press/2008/pdf/com_2008_588_en.pdf

The Communication concerning the Ex-post evaluation of the Information Society Technologies (IST) Thematic Priority in FP6 from 4 September can be found on this website, which also provides access to the Aho report on IST and to related documents:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/information_society/evaluation/rtd/fp6_ist_expost/index_en.htm

The public consultation “A European research and innovation strategy for ICT: time horizon 2020” is open until 7 November 2008 and can be found here:

<http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=ICTRDI>

The Council first take on Joint Programming

On 25-26 September, the Competitiveness Council (Council of the EU) held a first policy debate on the European Commission's Communication "Towards joint programming in research: Working together to tackle common challenges more effectively", published on 15 July. This Communication aims at setting out a new approach to bring together national resources for research and development in order to address the major scientific challenges Europe is facing in a more concerted and efficient way (see Synopsis 2008/7).

At the Council meeting, the ministers of the EU Member States specifically addressed the following issues:

- How to apply the concept of joint programming in research in order to tackle the grand challenges stated in the European Commission's Communication.
- How to strike a good balance between the freedom of each Member State to participate and a long-lasting commitment to joint work performed by scientific communities.
- How to choose the priority themes for Joint Programming, ensuring an appropriate consultation of the scientific communities while leaving the decision procedure in the hands of the EU institutions.

These interesting issues were forwarded to the Council preparatory bodies (the Research Group and the COREPER) for further discussion and refinement; with the aim of drawing up draft conclusions that could be adopted at the Competitiveness Council on 1-2 December.

A summary of the Council's discussions on Joint Programming can be found under:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/intm/103101.pdf

Publications

A Practical Guide to help stakeholders find their way

On 8 September, the European Commission launched the "Practical Guide to EU funding opportunities for Research and Innovation" to help stakeholders find their way to the most appropriate sources of EU funding. This Guide provides information combining the three EU key funding instrument which support research and innovation (7th Research Framework Programme (FP7), Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) as well as the Structural and Cohesion Funds) and helps potential beneficiaries to quickly identify their funding possibilities at any stage of their project.

The full text of the Practical Guide can be downloaded by following the link below:

ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/practical-guide-eufunding_en.pdf

Partnership for researchers' mobility finds Council's support

On 26 September, the Competitiveness Council (Council of the EU) gave its approval to the Communication entitled "Better Careers and more Mobility: A European Partnership for Researchers" issued by the European Commission on 23 May 2008 (see Synopsis 2008/5). As a reminder, the purpose of this Communication is to create a partnership between the EU Member States and the European Commission to face the current obstacles and to improve the labour market as well as the mobility of researchers through four key areas (see Synopsis 2008/7). In its conclusions, the Council of the EU invites the Member States, the Associated Countries and the European Commission to adopt coherent as well as complementary measures both at national and European level to make use of the existing community supports to implement the undertaken actions.

The full text of the Council's conclusions can be found under:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/intm/103059.pdf

Newsletter of the Clean Sky Joint Technology Initiative

On 3 September 2008, the third issue of the newsletter for the Joint Technology Initiative (JTI) Clean Sky was published. This publication summarises on two or three pages the latest news regarding the implementation of this JTI. The current issue includes news on the work of the Clean Sky Governing Board, an announcement on the hiring of staff by the Clean Sky Joint Undertaking as well as a short report on the kick-off meeting of the Integrated Technology Demonstrator (ITD) "Smart Fixed Wings" (as a reminder, ITDs are the project consortia in Clean Sky that work towards a specific goal). The two previous issues of the newsletter came out on 20 December 2007 and on 8 February 2008.

The 3rd edition of the Clean Sky newsletter, as well as previous issues, can be found under:
http://www.cleansky.eu/index.php?arbo_id=33

ERC Annual Report 2007

Notwithstanding the official activities report of the European Commission to the Council of the EU and the European Parliament (see article p. 2), the Executive Agency of the ERC has prepared an annual report that is aimed at the general public, and is as a result far easier to read. Indeed, the report described here, prepared "under the authority of the Scientific Council", summarises the grant awarding activities of the ERC in nice colourful schemes, while the official report is filled with EU administrative jargon. The present ERC Annual Report 2007 will therefore come in handy for anyone who wishes to get a quick overview on the ERC's first year of activity, while some of the schemes could be used in presentations and brochures. Many of the statistics published throughout the last year by the ERC as well as information like budget distributions per domain, steps in the evaluation procedure and even the names of the panel chairs can be found in this resourceful document.

The ERC annual report 2007 can be found under:
http://erc.europa.eu/pdf/ERC_Annual_Report.pdf

Innovation

European Institute of Innovation and Technology officially launched

On 15 September, the 18-member strong Governing Board (for details see Synopsis 2008/7) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) held its first meeting, taking place in Budapest, the administrative headquarter of the institute. The Governing Board elected Martin Schuurmans, a professor of Physics and a former executive vice president of Philips Research, as its chairman. Additionally, the board discussed the selection of the first two or three Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC's), due to be chosen till the end of 2009. It is now up to the Governing Board to attract private sector money, as Commission President José Manuel Barroso pointed out at the opening ceremony taking place the same day. The contribution of the EU to the estimated budget of around €2.4 million for the first six year will only amount to €308.7 million.

For the names and CV's of the Governing Board members as well as for the latest news please refer to the following links:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eit>

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/08/1220&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Enterprise Europe Network goes west

The Enterprise Europe Network, a merger of the previous Innovation Relay Centre (IRC) and the Euro Info Centre (EIC), provides business and innovation services to SME's (see Synopsis

2008/2). Launched at the beginning of 2008, it comprises about 600 partner organisations in more than 40 countries, including Switzerland.

With the launch of the US-EU Match network on 10 September, the Enterprise Europe Network expands to the US. The new US-EU network will link up with the existing Enterprise Europe Network and will thus enable US companies to have European business support. The network will foster transatlantic trade, but also encourage the transfer of innovative ideas and technologies between US and Europe. According to the press release, services of the US-EU match network will include, among others:

- Dissemination of information, such as research calls for proposals, technology request or partner searches;
- Organisation of meetings in order to provide a forum for US business to meet European counterparts;
- Information and training workshops on the application process for European calls and research grants and the preparation of technology offers and requests;
- Network website;
- Organisation of on-demand support, responding to client needs.

More information on the US-EU Match network can be found on its website:

<http://www.us-eu-match.com/>

Publications

Report recommends improvements for European Technology Platforms

European Technology Platforms (ETP) have been designed by the European Commission in order to bring together relevant innovation stakeholders with various backgrounds, including research organisations, universities, public authorities as well as industry and SME's. So far, around 34 approved ETP's exist, covering very different industries, lasting from food industry to manufacturing. The Commission has mandated a study to evaluate the ETP's. The results have been published in August. Some of the main findings and recommendations are:

- ETP's stakeholders are fairly satisfied. Sector federations and governmental organisations are the most satisfied, whereas SMEs are the least satisfied;
- ETP's have in general difficulties in providing evidence about their activities and progresses achieved. This might also be due to the lack of a clear mandate and support on political level. ETP's should be better recognized as "open innovation platforms";
- More clarity is also needed with respect to the potential financial support provided by the Commission for the operational activities of the platforms;
- A merge of overlapping ETP's might be necessary. Alternatively, common working groups between different ETP's could also be a solution in order to change the overlap into synergies;
- ETP's should open up to the world and engage in international discussions and cooperation;
- ETP's should go beyond technological challenges and link to other mainstream policies such as education and training, labour, competition, the ERA etc. They should take more care of the societal impact and implication of technology in order to mobilise new stakeholders such as consumers and end-users;
- In particular the educational goals have been underachieved by the ETP's so far. The report says that ETP's are currently not suitable for the actual organisation of training and education sessions and that it is doubtful whether ETP's can contribute to a better skilled workforce in the future.

The link to the study on ETP's can be found here:

<ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/technology-platforms/docs/evaluation-etps.pdf>

European Ambient Assisted Living Innovation Alliance

The European Ambient Assisted Living Innovation Alliance (AALIANCE) is focusing on Ambient Assisted Living solutions based on ICT technologies. In AALIANCE European stakeholders are defining research and development priorities as well as timeframes and action plans on important issues in the field of Ambient Assisted Living. AALIANCE is a Coordination action, funded by DG Information Society and Media. It is publishing a newsletter.

The link to the newsletter can be found here:

<http://www.aaliance.eu/public/newsletter-1/aaliance-newsletter-01-2008.pdf>

More information on AALIANCE can be found here:

www.aaliance.eu

Education

Bruegel's proposal for reforming universities

On 21 July, the Brussels-based think tank Bruegel published a new education report entitled "Higher aspirations: An agenda for reforming European universities". This report is a contribution to the discussion regarding the priorities of higher education policy in Europe and is based on the results of a survey published in September 2007 (see Synopsis 2007/7). In this document, the five authors analyse the reasons behind the disappointing performances of higher education in Europe and provide suggestions to policymakers both at national and EU level on how to reform universities in order to meet the Lisbon goals.

The full report can be downloaded by following the link below:

http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/newsletter/BPJULY2008University.pdf

New Eurydice study on teachers' autonomy and working conditions

On 26 August, the education information network "Eurydice" published a new study on teachers' autonomy and working conditions in 32 European countries including EU 27, Turkey, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Lichtenstein, entitled "Levels of Autonomy and Responsibilities of Teachers in Europe". While the former Eurydice report published in May 2007 aimed at showing how European countries have adopted the higher education reforms outlined in the Bologna process (see Synopsis 2007/4), the current report classifies the European countries in three categories according to the level of centralisation of school programmes' elaboration. According to the authors, this classification indicates the level of political dependency of teachers, ranking them according to their possibility of autonomy and responsibilities in each country:

- First category: the central authority defines the main characteristics of curricula content, which is then filled out by local authorities and teachers.
- Second category: the state decides on specific goals to fulfil for each main stage, leaving schools to decide on the curricula content.
- Third category: the central government and local players co-operate to determine the curricula content, letting little freedom to teachers to determine the content of their lessons.

The general conclusion of the report is that teachers' responsibilities have increased in most European countries and reforms linked to school autonomy combined with decentralisation measures enable teachers to be actively involved in devising their school curricula.

The study can be downloaded following the link below:

http://www.eurydice.org/ressources/eurydice/pdf/0_integral/094EN.pdf

International co-operation in education: moving closer to Israel and Palestine

On 16 July, a Joint Declaration on co-operation and dialogue in education and training was signed between the European Commission and Israel, aiming at integrating the country into

European policies and programmes as previously agreed upon according to the objectives of the 2005 Action Plan under the European Neighbourhood Policy. The Joint Declaration plans to organise regular exchange on issues of common interest aiming at promoting the transferability and recognition of qualification as well as formal and informal training in the following fields:

- The updating of higher education
- The Bologna Process
- The Copenhagen Process
- Lifelong Learning
- School twinning
- Language study

The same day, the European Commission celebrated the opening of the first National Tempus Office in Jerusalem and the re-opening of the Tempus Office in Ramallah (Palestine), to increase inter-university co-operation between the EU and Third Countries.

More information regarding the Joint Declaration can be found under:

<http://www.delisr.ec.europa.eu/English/whatsnew.asp?id=1017>

The full text EU/Israel Action Plan can be downloaded following the link below:

http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/israel_enp_ap_final_en.pdf

Publications

Public consultation to set up the future of youth policy

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the EU's youth policy, the European Commission launched an online public consultation on 22 September. This consultation invites both individuals and organisations interested in the future development of youth policy to answer questions regarding the main challenges and opportunities in order to help European policymakers prepare concrete measures to improve and facilitate young people's integration into society.

To participate to the public consultation: <http://ec.europa.eu/youth>

SwissCore Küche

Euresearch and SwissCore bring “Brussels lobbying” to Bern

On 24 September, a workshop jointly organised by Euresearch and SwissCore in Bern focussed on the different ways stakeholders can influence the content of the Work Programmes of FP7. Dan André, Special Advisor to the Swedish Ministry for Education and Research, gave an overview on the way the FP7 Work Programmes are prepared by the European Commission services, and how this annual cycle of preparation impacts on the success of lobbying efforts by the stakeholders. Susan Gasser and Hervé Bourlard, both eminent Swiss scientists and members of thematic Advisory Groups (Health and ICT, respectively), gave a personal and detailed insight into their work as members of these groups. Stefan Nowak, a consultant in the field of photovoltaics, showed the influence the Technology Platforms can have on the content of the Work Programmes, while Christina Wandeler from the Swiss State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER) detailed her role as Switzerland's official delegate in several Programme Committees. The workshop was rounded off by Massimo Busuoli, an experienced lobbyist and Head of the Brussels office of the Italian energy research agency ENEA, who presented the multi-channel, broad focus and long-term approach his office is taking to support ENEA's interests in Brussels. The approximately 30 participants seized the opportunity to ask questions

and discuss with the presenters, also during lunch and coffee breaks, demonstrating the interest for this theme in the Swiss research environment.

Dan Andrée's report on the preparation of the Work Programmes can be found under:

<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/574/a/104458>

Internship at SwissCore popular amongst NCPs

An internship at SwissCore is a very attractive and efficient manner for any National Contact Point (NCP) to find out what is what and who is who in Brussels. After Juliane Sauer, NCP for Mobility and Research Infrastructures, completed her stage at SwissCore in April, it was the turn of Regina Schneider, the NCP for Security, the Socio-Economic Sciences & Humanities, Science in Society and Legal/Financial matters, to take advantage of this opportunity in September and spend a fortnight in 'Europe's town centre'. Regina participated in SwissCore's daily business and met various members of the Commission. "Such a personal contact with policy officers is invaluable. Just because FP7 means so much bureaucracy, getting to know the people behind the paragraphs is crucial for understanding their intentions. We need such insight, not just to interpret the text of the topics correctly, but even more so when 'selling' the Framework Programme as such to Swiss researchers" she says. Anyone who is interested in such an internship should contact the Head of Office, Maryline Maillard - and bring a good deal of patience: unsurprisingly, there is currently a substantial waiting list ...