

# SwissCore Synopsis

## November-December 2009

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## ◆ Seen from Brussels

### **President Barroso's new team brings some surprises**

Following the nominations of the Belgian Herman van Rompuy as Council President and the Briton Catherine Ashton as High Representative for Foreign Affairs on 18 November, the President of the European Commission (EC), José Manuel Barroso, presented his new team of Commissioners and their respective duties on 27 November. The composition of the new Commission is based on the candidates Member States had put forward a week earlier. While all the "important economic portfolios" (unsurprisingly) went to large Member States (Internal Market to France, Competition to Spain, Energy to Germany, Budget to Poland, Industry to Italy), some small ones managed to secure other crucial jobs, like Agriculture (Romania) or Trade (Belgium). The Research, Innovation and Science portfolio goes to Maire Geoghegan-Quinn, the Irish member of the European Court of Auditors, while Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth will be in the hands of Androulla Vassiliou, the former European Commissioner for Health from Cyprus. Entrepreneurship and Industry will be led by the Italian Antonio Tajani, former Commissioner for Transport. Janez Potocnik, whom many people have learned to appreciate as an excellent Research Commissioner, will be in charge of Environment, albeit stripped from the climate aspects, which will go to Connie Hedegaard from Denmark. Finally, DG INFSO (Information Society) will be overseen by the Dutch Neelie Kroes, well known as a tough Competition Commissioner in the previous team.

There are a few interesting, or even surprising aspects in the newly redesigned portfolios: first, Maire Geoghegan-Quinn is not only in charge of research and science like her predecessor, but also of innovation. However, DG Enterprise, which has so far been drafting the EC innovation policy, remains in the remit of Commissioner Tajani. Moreover, a distinction is made between entrepreneurship and innovation, as these two topics are under the responsibility of two different Commissioners. Strikingly, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), supposedly a flagship initiative for boosting innovation in Europe, will remain under the custody of the Education Commissioner, and not (as one might suppose) of the Innovation Commissioner. The transfer of two units managing the Marie Curie Programme to DG Education and Culture (EAC) also comes as a surprise. While the responsibility for the Research Executive Agency (REA), which is in charge of the grant management of Marie Curie under FP7, apparently stays at DG Research, the policy aspects of individual mobility (fellowships) and training of researchers (training networks) will be dealt with by DG EAC. It is questionable if such a separation will lead to a better articulation with the education and training programmes of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

All in all, it seems that President Barroso would like to achieve a better integration of the three corners of the "knowledge triangle" (education, research, innovation) by creating interfaces in the responsibilities of the Commissioners. This is somewhat mirrored in other portfolios, like Media (going from INFSO to EAC) or Climate Change (moving away from DG Environment). It remains to be seen if such "points of interaction" will lead to better coordination between the Commissioners, and eventually to more coherent policies and programmes.

The designated Commissioners will undergo the much storied hearings at the European Parliament between 11 and 26 January. The Treaty of Lisbon, which has been in force since 1 December, allows now for a dismissal of single Commission members instead of the whole team. It will be interesting to see if the proposed organisation will get the avail of Parliament. The new team is likely to take up its work on 1 February 2010 at the earliest.

A complete list of all 27 Commissioners and their duties can be found under:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1837&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN>

## ◆ Research

### *7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (FP7)*

#### **Two more JTIs go their own way**

After Artemis on 26 October, the European Commission passed over the reins of two more Joint Technology Initiatives (JTI), namely IMI and Clean Sky, during the course of November.

#### ***IMI Joint Undertaking gains independence and launches second set of calls***

*Eve Silfverberg, Euresearch Regional Office Basel*

On 17 November the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) Joint Undertaking hosted an information day in Brussels, to announce not only the launch of the 2nd Call for proposals but also to mark the start of a new era for IMI as an autonomous organisation which gained operational and financial independence on 16 November 2009.

The Executive Director of IMI, Professor Michel Goldman who was appointed in June of this year welcomed more than 400 participants eagerly awaiting the latest news from IMI and presented details of the 2nd Call for proposals. Fifteen projects were approved following the 1st Call and industrial, academic and SME partners from projects, already underway, presented their ideas.

For the 2nd Call, “Applicant Consortia” consisting of partners from academia, SMEs and non-profit organizations are invited to submit their proposals until 8 February 2010. Nine scientific topics – that cover two main pillars of the IMI Research Agenda (efficacy and knowledge management) – have been called for. Following a peer-review by independent experts and coordinators from the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA), the best proposal for each topic will be selected. Successful “Applicant Consortia” will then unite with EFPIA industry partners to form a “Project Consortia” and submit a full proposal, which will be evaluated by the independent peer review committee. Final evaluation is to be expected for September 2010 at the latest.

#### ***Clean Sky flies with its own wings***

On 19 November, it was the turn of the Clean Sky Joint Undertaking (JU) to attain administrative and operational autonomy. As a reminder, the JUs were thus far under the interim administration of European Commission officials, in order to allow these newly created structures to set up the necessary management and control systems, a prerequisite for their full independence. The newly appointed Executive Director of the Clean Sky JU, Eric Dautriat, will now be in charge of overseeing the contract negotiations of the first call for proposals, which came out on 16 June (see Synopsis 2009/6), as well as managing the second call published on 25 November. An information day for this call is foreseen on 15 December.

With their newly acquired autonomy, the JTI will now have to prove that the complex public-private partnership structures put into place over the last two years are delivering the added value that is expected from them since the design of the “JTI instrument” during the preparation of FP7.

More information on the IMI second call can be found under:

[http://imi.europa.eu/index\\_en.html](http://imi.europa.eu/index_en.html)

More information on the Clean Sky second call can be found under:

[http://www.cleansky.eu/index.php?arbo\\_id=83&set\\_language=en](http://www.cleansky.eu/index.php?arbo_id=83&set_language=en)

### *EU Research Policy*

#### **Council launches pilot joint programming initiative on neurodegenerative diseases**

This summer the European Commission tabled a proposal for a Council Recommendation on Joint Programming for combating neurodegenerative diseases (see Synopsis 2009/7). A previous Communication, published in July 2008, set out the framework for Joint Programming as a voluntary collaboration based on a variable geometry among Member States, bringing together their research capacities and funds to tackle major challenges in chosen research areas (see Synopsis 2008/7).

Following these actions, the Competitiveness Council launched on 3 December a pilot research initiative on combating neurodegenerative diseases, focusing especially on Alzheimer's disease. The pilot project aims at pooling resources and working together to increase knowledge, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of neurodegenerative diseases. As a first step, an action plan will soon be adopted regarding the exchange of information about national research programmes, developing new early diagnosis tools and putting neurodegenerative disease research centres online in a network for clinical trials.

Member States are invited to develop a Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) establishing medium to long term research needs and goals. The SRA should be further developed towards an implementation plan including priorities and timelines and specifying the actions, instruments and resources required for its implementation. The European Commission is asked to act as a facilitator, providing ad-hoc and complementary measures to support the pilot Joint Programming initiative. These measures could include support to the management structure and the establishment of the SRA, the provision of data, information and analysis on the state-of-the-art in this field in Europe.

Moreover, the Ministers identified three topics for future joint research: farming, food safety and climate change; health, food and prevention of nutrition-related diseases and cultural heritage, climate change and security.

The press release on the Council Conclusions can be found here:

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/111732.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/111732.pdf)

### **Parliament-commissioned report tackles ERA governance**

In a report commissioned by the European Parliament and presented at the Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) Committee meeting of 2 December, a team led by Professor G. Serrano of the Polytechnic University of Madrid addresses the open issues of the European Research Area (ERA) governance. Through an analysis of both the structures governing the ERA and the initiatives set up to realise it, the authors identify current challenges and make recommendations to address these. Regarding the ERA initiatives, they found "patched scenarios", where governance approaches are implemented by following a "learning by doing" process. While this results in a large accumulation of experiences and flexibility in the implementation, many issues are found to be inadequately resolved, leading also to a lack of policy coherence.

The report's recommendations are divided in three sections:

- High-level political recommendations to speed up the ERA construction: In this section, the authors recommend to accelerate legislative changes in Member States to allow a better participation in ERA initiatives, to readapt the composition of ERA decision or advisory bodies with a "knowledge triangle" view in mind, to better involve private and public stakeholders and to facilitate the participation of non-EU partner organisations in ERA initiatives.
- Common recommendations for ERA governance: Here, the simplification and speeding up of approval processes for ERA initiatives is proposed, as well as allowing structural changes in the governance of such initiatives after they have started. Moreover, transparency and equal opportunity, as well as an active role of all stakeholders should be ensured.
- Specific recommendations: In this section, the authors list a whole series of recommendations for specific ERA initiatives like ERA-NET Plus, Art. 169 and Art. 171 initiatives. While for the first one, a smoother transition from ERA-NET Plus to Art. 169 based on transparent success indicators is proposed, for the two others a common governance structure is advocated. In addition, more harmonised funding rules and more transparent access to participation and funding are recommended.

In general, this report contains several interesting proposals, based on a thorough analysis of the current state of the different ERA initiatives. In addition, the document contains a very useful glossary of terms commonly used in research policy, as well as a series of tables comparing the main characteristics of all current initiatives under Art. 169 and Art. 171. Anyone struggling with the current complexity of EU research funding instruments will be utterly grateful to the authors for this comparative overview.

The report "Evaluation of the European Research Area (ERA): Governance aspects" can be found under:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/itre/dv/era\\_governance\\_aspects\\_/era\\_governance\\_aspects\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/itre/dv/era_governance_aspects_/era_governance_aspects_en.pdf)

### **Women in Research: 2009 "She Figures"**

Published every three years by the European Commission (EC), the "She Figures" survey provides statistics and indicators on gender equality in science. The 2009 report was published in November and coincides with the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Helsinki Group set up by the EC with the aim to promote participation of women in science across Europe.

The Group has played an important role in pushing the issue of women in science up the political agenda and has succeeded in compiling the first statistics allowing for the publication of a report such as the "She Figures". However, the recently published version of this survey shows that the work of the Helsinki Group is far from being completed.

Although an increase of female researchers has been observed in Europe in all economic sectors in the last ten years, women still represent only 30% of European researchers. Despite the high percentage of female PhD students, the proportion of women attaining the top level of academic careers remains particularly low (19% in 2007), and only 13% of institutions in the higher education sector are headed by women. The EU is aware of this vertical segregation and should address structural obstacles causing it.

The survey also reveals that the issue of female representation seems more difficult to tackle in the private sector, where the male-female balance is even more unequal than in government and higher education positions. Finally, it is interesting that there is no major difference between the old and the new Member States. Whereas one might have imagined that countries where the issue has been addressed for a longer period would score better, this seems not to be the case. Switzerland for example is far from being exemplary: it is one of the three countries where the proportion of female researchers in the higher education sector is particularly low; less than 20% of board members are women; and Switzerland is at the very bottom of the ranking concerning the share of women scientists and engineers.

The EC is aware of this still too important gender imbalance in science, which was recently qualified by EU Research Commissioner Janez Potocnik as a "waste of opportunity and talent which Europe cannot afford". In order to have concrete goals achieved by 2012 (for the next publication of the "She Figures"), the EC launched two calls for proposal, one concerning an action plan to be designed by institutions to strengthen the role and image of female scientists and another one to support research and data collection on the situation in the Mediterranean region.

You can find the report "She Figures 2009 - statistics and indicators on gender equality in science" study under:

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document\\_library/pdf\\_06/she\\_figures\\_2009\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/she_figures_2009_en.pdf)

### **S&T cooperation agreements with Japan and Jordan signed**

On 30 November, the European Commission (EC) signed two new Science and Technology (S&T) Cooperation Agreements, with Japan and Jordan. These agreements will help to structure research cooperation with these countries and to identify areas of common interest:

- For Japan, such areas are energy, new materials and environment; in the first two, discussions leading to specific cooperative activities, like coordinated calls, seem already well advanced. Moreover, reciprocal participation in research programmes as well as exchange of researchers is foreseen.
- Jordan is an important partner in the EU's neighbourhood policy and the fifth Mediterranean Partner Country to sign such an agreement with the EC, after Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Israel. 19 Jordanian research organisations have participated in FP7 during the first two years, especially in environment, food, agriculture and biotechnologies. Thus, Jordan has identified energy, sustainable development, health and agriculture as priority for international research cooperation.

These two signatures bring to 19 the total number of S&T cooperation agreements of the EC. They will come into force once the ratification procedure has been completed by both parties, which is expected to happen in the course of 2010.

The complete list of S&T agreements can be found under:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/index.cfm?lg=en&pg=countries>

## **Publications**

### **Annual Report 2008 of the EU's R&D activities**

On 22 October, the European Commission adopted the Annual Report 2008 on "research and technological development activities of the European Union". All the research policy and funding activities of the EU in the year 2008 are summarised in the report; a more extensive description including detailed statistics can be found in two accompanying documents.

The Annual Report responds to the requirements set forth in Art. 173 of the EU Treaty. It provides a good yearly overview on the R&D activities of the Commission and the Member States and the accompanying documents are certainly very useful for detailed research policy work.

The Annual Report 2008 can be found under:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0558:FIN:EN:PDF#page=2>

The accompanying documents (detailed report and statistical annexes) can be found under:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2009:1380:FIN:EN:PDF#page=2>

and

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SEC:2009:1380:FIN:EN:PDF#page=2>

### **International Cooperation project compendium**

The European Commission has recently published two compendiums of International Cooperation projects for the 2007 call.

The first one lists the bilateral projects (BILAT), which have the aim to stimulate, encourage and facilitate the participation of Third Country organizations in FP7. These include projects to support National Contact Point organisations in such countries, for example ESASTAP (South Africa), Feast (Australia) and FRENZ (New Zealand). In addition to these, the first wave of projects also includes projects targeting the following countries: South Korea, Russia, Chile, Ukraine, Tunisia, Morocco, Mexico, India, China and Brazil.

In the second publication, the International Cooperation ERA-NET projects are presented; they address South Korea, Russia, India, the Black Sea Region as well as South East Europe (i.e. SEE-ERANET Plus).

These two publications will be a useful source of information for researchers and policy makers active in the field of international cooperation.

The project compendiums for BILAT and ERA-NET can be downloaded under:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/pdf/bilat.pdf>

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/pdf/era\\_net.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/pdf/era_net.pdf)

## **◆ Innovation**

### **EC wants to set an easier framework for Public Private Partnerships**

In line with the European Economic Recovery Plan, the European Commission wants to give a push to Public Private Partnerships (PPP). A Communication, published on 19 November, discusses in a broad way the issue of PPPs and the obstacles they encounter, pointing out Joint Technology Initiatives (JTI) as one particular case of implementing a PPP among all other forms

of PPPs (such as transport, public buildings, infrastructures etc.). Unlike other PPPs such as in infrastructure or services, the outcome of PPPs in the research and innovation field is often much less predictable and tangible.

In research and innovation the three PPPs Factories of the Future, Green Cars and Energy Efficient Buildings have started this summer (see Synopsis 2009/3). A fourth one called Future Internet is announced for 2010 (see Synopsis 2009/9). They all might become at a later stage Joint Technology Initiatives (JTI). The existing five JTIs were set up as “Community bodies”, subject to rules and procedures such as the Framework Financial Regulation for Community Bodies or the Staff Regulations, which in some cases proved to be heavy burdens for private partners participating in JTIs. Seen the difficulties that the private sector is facing when participating in the running JTIs, the Commission is almost obliged to consider new and easier options for JTIs. The Communication therefore proposes that the Commission should review, and if necessary, change the legal framework and the financial rules in order to make JTIs flexible enough to permit an efficient partnership with the private players.

A report including policy recommendations will be presented in the coming months. On the basis of this report, the Commission will later on propose a new framework for JTIs, “which could be based on private law bodies.” This new framework will be taken into account in the revision of the Financial Regulation, which will be presented during the first half of 2010 (see Synopsis 2009/9). Additionally, the Commission will check together with the European Investment Bank (EIB) how the financial instruments could be strengthened in order to improve the financing of innovation. They should also examine whether and how the participation by the EU in private law bodies could be facilitated as a mean to achieve EU innovation policy goals. The output of those considerations might be included in the European Innovation Act, which the Commission is preparing for spring 2010 (see Synopsis 2009/6 and 2009/8).

The text of the Communication on PPPs can be found here:

[http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/pdf/european-economic-recovery-plan/ppp\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/pdf/european-economic-recovery-plan/ppp_en.pdf)

### **Designing the post-Lisbon Strategy**

The European Commission (EC) has issued a consultation paper on EU 2020 (the post-Lisbon Strategy), in order to gather stakeholders’ views by 15 January 2010. On that basis, the EC will come up with a proposal for the EU Spring Council.

The EU should build on the achievements of the Lisbon Strategy and find best ways to recover from the economic crisis. On the long run, the eventual aim for 2020 is to achieve a genuine European Knowledge Area. The consultation paper clearly outlines that knowledge is the engine for sustainable growth and that education, research, innovation and creativity are the elements that build up knowledge.

Therefore, education at all stages must improve and mobility should increase. Supportive conditions for innovation and creativity must be secured and new technologies and eco-innovation should be encouraged. The EU clearly needs a new industrial policy emphasizing innovation capacity, new technology skills, fostering entrepreneurs and internationalizing SMEs. Furthermore, the EU should build an effective and well-resourced European Research Area (ERA) by better targeting the research and innovation budget, by defining “grand challenges” to better coordinate national research efforts, and by accelerating the benefits of research for Europe’s businesses and SMEs, among other things through major public-private partnerships. A real development of the ERA should now be enabled and speeded up thanks to the legislative support given by the Treaty of Lisbon.

Finally, the consultation paper on EU 2020 outlined above all the importance of achieving greater synergy between education, research, innovation and creativity in order make the 2020 vision of an European Knowledge Area come true.

You can find the Consultation on the Future EU 2020 Strategy under:

[http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/eu2020\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/eu2020_en.pdf)

as well as the link to submit your opinion under: <http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/>

### 2009 EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard

On 16 November the European Commission published the 2009 EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard, which compares R&D investments of the biggest 1000 EU and the biggest 1000 non-EU companies. Only two EU companies (Volkswagen and Nokia) are among the ten most important corporate R&D investors, whereas two Swiss companies (Roche and Novartis) made it among the top ten of the list of non-EU companies, making Switzerland a big power next to the US, Japan and the EU. However, it has to be considered that the Scoreboard also adds R&D investments abroad to the expenditure of a country, which in the case of the two big Swiss pharmaceutical companies might be substantial.

The report states that despite the economic crisis corporate investments in R&D has grown by 6.9% in 2008. In addition, European companies recorded a higher nominal rate of growth (8.1%) than companies from the US (5.7%) and Japan (4.4%) for the first time in seven years. However, companies from China (40%), India (27%), Taiwan (25%) and Brazil (19%) have the highest growth. The study notes that investments by European companies in China and India are growing considerably. R&D spending in the area of renewable energies technology is growing and is dominated by European companies.

The 2009 EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard can be found here:

<http://iri.jrc.ec.europa.eu/research/docs/2009/JRC54920.pdf>

### IPTS Working Papers on Corporate R&D and Innovation

The Institute for Prospective Technology Studies (IPTS), an Institute of the EU Joint Research Center (JRC), published a series of interesting thematic working documents on corporate research. The Working Papers are covering different aspects of corporate R&D, such as innovation in low-tech sectors, the success of EU policy in order to foster private R&D investments, R&D in SMEs, R&D in the service sector, the public-private nexus of R&D, the differences between the EU and the US, or corporate R&D strategies in the light of the economic downturn.

The papers are issued by the JRC-IPTS IRI Action, and, in certain cases, also in the context of the Industrial Research Monitoring and Analysis (IRMA) activities.

The IPTS Working Papers can be found here:

<http://iri.jrc.ec.europa.eu/papers.htm>

### Conference on innovation policies as a mean for economic recovery

The Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN) organised on 20 November a conference on innovation policies and the role that they can play in the context of the economic recovery and as an exit strategy from the current economic crisis. The conference brought together high-level speakers from international organizations, financial institutions, businesses and universities to discuss the relationship between finance, regulation, and innovation and the role of policies to sustain economic recovery and prolonged economic growth in Europe.

Presentations given at the Conference can be accessed here:

[http://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/events/event16077\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/events/event16077_en.htm)

## ◆ Education

### **EU Education reform: still a long way to go**

Published on the eve of the Education Council of 26-27 November, two new reports from the European Commission reveal that, despite general improvement, the reform of education and training in the EU is too slow.

The first report is a biennial report based on national contributions. In many countries, the European framework for key competences is used to assess school reform. Whereas overall progress in adapting curricula has been made, the EU still needs to better support teachers' development and to find ways to ensure that all learners benefit from innovative methodologies. Moreover, it still faces the broader challenges of truly implementing lifelong learning, increasing mobility and making education and training more relevant to the market and society needs. Finally, it was found that growth of spending per student in the EU was slower than elsewhere, especially in the US. The report was presented to the Education Council on 26 November and should be formally adopted in February 2010.

The second report, published every year, is accompanying the first report. It examines Member States' progress according to five benchmarks set in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy, out of which only one – increasing the number of graduates in science, mathematics and technology – was reached. The four others – adults participation in lifelong learning, reduction of early school leavers, increasing completion of secondary education and reading ability – will not be met. The report nevertheless highlights a number of improvements in sectors such as language learning in schools, students mobility in tertiary education or overall participation in initial training.

The key messages of those two reports should provide inputs for the debate on the future EU strategy for growth and jobs.

The first report "Draft 2010 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the "Education & Training 2010 work programme" can be found under:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0640:FIN:EN:PDF>

The second report "Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training - indicators and benchmarks 2009" can be found here:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/report09/report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/report09/report_en.pdf)

### **EUA exploratory study on university autonomy in Europe**

Although greater autonomy has been recognized as a key to successful reform of higher education and a guarantee for quality assurance, it seems that universities are in practice still strongly regulated by public authorities in a large number of European countries. This was highlighted in a new report of the European University Association (EUA) that analyzed and compared university autonomy in 34 systems across Europe.

The study identifies four dimensions of autonomy – organizational autonomy, financial autonomy, staffing autonomy and academic autonomy – that are then subdivided in more than 30 different indicators. In most countries, public authorities do not have a direct control on universities; however, universities still often lack autonomy and flexibility in some sectors, particularly in the financial sector. This lack of financial autonomy is a real problem at a time when public funding for higher education is falling. Moreover, the study reveals that, without financial autonomy, the other three examined dimensions of autonomy are very much likely not to exist either.

If some might argue that too great autonomy of universities could raise the issue of accountability, the EUA report made it clear that autonomy reforms are still needed in European universities. The conclusions of the study will help developing an Autonomy Scoreboard (Scorecard) that should be launched by winter 2011. This Scorecard will not only enable governments to benchmark their progress, give policymakers feedback on their reforms from an institutional perspective and give universities a wider view on European trends, but it will also contribute to the consolidation of the European Higher Education Area.

You can find the report “University autonomy in Europe” under [http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user\\_upload/files/Publications/EUA\\_Autonomy\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Publications/EUA_Autonomy_Report_Final.pdf)

## **Publications**

### **Report on teachers’ development**

For the first time, an international survey addresses the issue of the learning environment and the working conditions of teachers in schools. Published on 24 November, the report was produced jointly by the European Commission and the OECD and is based on the results of the 2009 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) conducted in 23 countries, among which 15 EU Member States.

The analysis highlights that engaging in professional development is essential. Although the share of teachers taking part in in-work professional training is important – which reveals a strong appetite to learn – conflicting schedules are too often still a barrier. Therefore, provision of in-service professional developments needs to be better targeted and adapted. Moreover, the report shows that policy of giving feedback as well as motivating school climate is extremely important and contributes to the wellness of professional development.

The report “Teachers’ Professional Development: Europe in international comparison” can be found here: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/doc1962\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/doc1962_en.htm)

### **Launch of a website on the first European Survey on Language Competences**

In 2005, the European Commission proposed a detailed strategic approach for the creation of a European Survey on Language Competences, which should eventually help design a European Indicator of Language Competence. The survey aims at providing reliable comparable data on foreign language competence and knowledge in the EU, as well as highlighting good practice and progress towards the objective of improving foreign language learning.

The survey will be carried out in 2011 by the SurveyLang Consortium – which is made up of 8 organizations all leaders in their area of expertise – and the final report will be delivered in the first quarter of 2012. The new website on the survey is available in English (French, German, Italian and German should be added shortly). It allows participating students and teachers to get familiar with the tests.

You can find more information about the methodology used for the survey on the SurveyLang website: <http://www.surveylang.org/>

### **New edition of the Thesaurus for Education system in Europe (TESE)**

TESE was designed by the Eurydice network to organize its publications by subject and to make them easier to retrieve in a search. This second edition of TESE builds on the 2006 edition and, thanks to the collaboration between international experts in education, it takes into account the most recent developments in education systems and policies in Europe. It is available in 15 languages – a new language (Latvian) is currently being added –, with French, English and German as interface languages. Therefore, it also proves very useful for translators.

You can discover TESE under:

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/TESEHome>

### First “multistage” at SwissCore

For the first time, SwissCore organized a “multistage” for three Euresearch collaborators coming from three different Regional Offices (RO): Eve Silfverberg from RO Basel, Rachel Jossen from RO Bern and Andreas Ledergerber from RO Zürich completed their stage during the same weeks, allowing for a common programme and thus joint visits to European Commission officials and Brussels based liaison offices. Beyond the obvious synergies that arise from such a grouped programme, the participants appreciated the fruitful interactions they had amongst each other and the fact that during external meetings, they could share their similar or sometimes different experiences with the people they visited, thus allowing for the latter to get a more complete picture of the Swiss system. As this pilot “multistage” proved to enhance the cooperation between the stagiaires beyond expectations, this format could be used more often in the future.

### SwissCore Seminar 2009

This year, the SwissCore Seminar took place in Brussels on 18-19 November. More than 45 Swiss participants were offered the opportunity to look back on the first years of FP7 and to get a glimpse on the future of FP7 and beyond.

After a brilliant opening speech on the new Lisbon Treaty by Thérèse Blanchet from the EU Council’s Legal Unit, officials from the European Commission presented the current state of FP7 and its upcoming mid-term review. This included aspects like monitoring and evaluation of past and current Framework Programmes, the ongoing simplification exercise as well as the revision of the Financial Regulation. In addition, specific sessions were devoted to international cooperation and the mobility actions under FP7 and their further development in the second half of the Programme’s running time. The second day focused on the following Themes of FP7’s Cooperation programme: Energy, Production Technologies, Health, SSH and ICT, always including both a backward and forward look. While discussions on FP8 have not yet officially started, a vision of the possible follow-up programme to FP7 was haunting the whole Seminar. As usual, the SwissCore Seminar gave participants the opportunity to discuss and address questions directly to the experts from the European Commission.



The SwissCore team wishes you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

