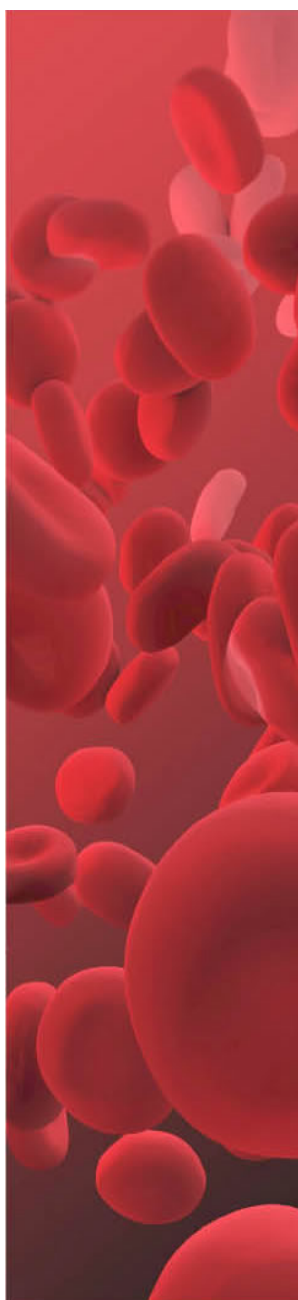


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SEEN FROM BRUSSELS

Putting the money where the focus is

On 19 October, the European Commission (EC) released its suggestions for a budget review. In its Communication the EC lays the ground for the targeted proposals for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) after 2014, due in spring 2011. The EC is cautious when it comes to spending in a period on which no one seems to agree whether it is still one of crisis or already one of recovery. Nevertheless the EC makes some concrete proposals for principles that should guide the EU's future budgetary priorities. Among other things, the EC proposes to extend the duration of the MFF from the current 7 years to 10 with a mid-term review after 5 years (see Synopsis 2010/8). That would mean that the next MFF will run from 2014 until 2024. This should give the EU's yearly budget planning more flexibility and allow for a **better response in cases of unforeseen events**. Problems, such as the current debates over finding extra funding for ITER could be avoided in a more flexible financial framework. Since the EU budget is only 2.5% of all public spending in Europe, the EC also recommends to find innovative leveraging mechanisms in cooperation with the European Investment Bank (EIB), which would allow EU spending to attract more financial commitments from other sources without having to increase itself. The Risk Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF), that targets research projects, is one such mechanism (see Synopsis 2008/4 and 2007/1). In its Communication of 19 October, the EC also gives **priority to the Europe 2020 Strategy** and its flagship initiatives, including the Innovation Union and Youth on the Move initiatives. The EC states that research and innovation, as well as industrial policy (see article p. 6), are key areas

where heavy EU investments have a strong added value. Although this budget review is only a preliminary step towards the next MFF, it does signal to the other EU institutions (i.e. the Council of the EU and the European Parliament) the importance of allocating the necessary funds in the right areas if the EU is serious about its focus on research, innovation and what it calls "smart growth".

On 12 October, research and industry Ministers of the 27 Member States (MS) met for the Competitiveness Council in Luxembourg. The points on the agenda were the EC's Communication on the Innovation Union, the simplification of the Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development as well as the launch of three Joint Programming Initiatives. Regarding the Innovation Union flagship initiative, adopted by the EC on 6 October, the Competitiveness Council welcomed it as of key strategic importance. The Brussels Minister for Economy and Research, Benoît Cerexhe, vowed that the Council of the EU should **guide the MS in aligning their research and innovation policies**. At the same time he urged the EC to monitor the progress made in each of the areas targeted by the Innovation Union, including non-technological innovation, which according to the Competitiveness Council had been somewhat ignored in the Innovation Union Communication.

On the matter of simplification of FP7, the Competitiveness Council issued conclusions that call on the EC to speed up its work on reducing the administrative burden and raising the attractiveness of the EU's research and innovation programmes. Concretely, the Council Conclusions call on the EC to accept as soon as possible the usual accounting practices of beneficiaries as

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BRUSSELS**

well as their methodologies to calculate average personnel costs. In addition, the obligation to establish interest-bearing bank accounts should be abolished without delay. In its Conclusions, the Competitiveness Council also asks the EC to increase efforts to reduce the time to grant, finalise the Participants' Portal by 2012 and to harmonise the interpretation of rules. Finally, the Competitiveness Council formally approved the launching of three Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs): Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change; Cultural Heritage and Global Change; and A Healthy Diet for A

Healthy Life. These three new programmes follow the first pilot JPI on Neurodegenerative Diseases and Alzheimer's (see Synopsis 2010/4). The Competitiveness Council also discussed the problematic issue of the EU patent. However, the attempt at finding a compromise on the language rules of the patent has failed yet again. The Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU has shown great perseverance on this issue and still hopes to find a solution before the end of its term on 31 December 2010.

[The EC Communication on budget review](#) 

[The Conclusions on simplification \(pdf\)](#) 

[The Conclusions on the JPIs \(pdf\)](#) 

RESEARCH

Results of the ERC's 3rd Starting Grant call

On 19 October, the ERC published the results of the 3rd Starting Grant call 2010. Out of a total of 2873 submissions, 427 proposals were selected for funding. This corresponds to an **overall success rate of about 15%**. This is a significantly higher rate of selected proposals than in the previous calls of 2007 and 2009, when the success rates for the Starting Grants were respectively 3% and 9%. The higher success rate is in line with an increased budget, which for this call was €580 million. The final number of grants for this call is likely to be corrected slightly upwards, as some additional proposals, which are currently on the reserve list, are expected to be selected. Regarding the number of grantees hosted per country, **Switzerland is among the top 4** with a total of 27 grantees from a Swiss research institution. However, compared to the other countries in the top 4, Switzerland has not managed to strongly increase the number of grants for this

call, maintaining a similar level as in the previous calls. With its 27 grants this year, Switzerland receives 6% of all 2010 ERC Starting Grants, slightly lower than in 2009 when it obtained 7% and slightly higher than in the 2007 call when it collected 5%. Meanwhile the progression for the other leading countries was much stronger. The UK almost doubled its number of grants, and Germany and France were even more successful and more than doubled the number of hosted Principal Investigators (PIs) compared to 2009. Between them, these **three leading countries share almost 50% of all ERC Starting Grants** in 2010 and have clearly distanced themselves from the rest of the countries.

In a similar trend as in the previous calls, the 2010 grantees in Swiss Host Institutions come from the domains of Life Sciences and Physical Sciences and Engineering, while the Social Sciences and Humanities are not represented. Regarding the Host Institutions in

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Switzerland, the EPFL and the ETHZ receive the highest number of grantees. A positive development is that two new research organizations from outside the university field have managed to attract

ERC Starting Grants in 2010: the IBM Research GmbH in Zürich and the Istituto Oncologico della Svizzera Italiana (IOSI) in Bellinzona.

[The Starting Grant 2010 results \(pdf\)](#) 

Reorganisation of DG Research and Innovation

The Directorate General in charge of research and innovation at the European Commission (EC) is planning important changes to its structure. During his visit to the ITRE Committee of the European Parliament, the Director General of DG Research Robert-Jan Smits announced that from 27 October onwards the **Directorate General's official name changed to "DG Research and Innovation"**. This reflects the strong focus on innovation that the EC is putting on its policies as part of the implementation of the Innovation Union. Besides the new name, several staff changes and a broader reorganization of the Directorates are apparently planned for January 2011. Among the likely changes there has been talk of merging former Directorates B and C, which are in charge of issues relating to the European

Research Area (ERA) into a new Directorate. In one possible scenario, the current Directorate L "Science, Economy and Society" would also be incorporated into this new Directorate. Another possibility would be to strengthen the activities in the field of innovation by regrouping several units under a single Directorate giving innovation a more coherent structure within the DG. In addition, the creation of a new special sector charged with the harmonized interpretation of rules and procedures has been announced. This new sector would be part of the simplification measures announced by the EC and should help coordinate the flow of information about rules and ensure a more coherent application of those rules.

[The current structure of DG Research and Innovation](#) 

Common principles for research funding

With the aim of improving access to financial resources and increase the variety of available funding sources, a platform of stakeholders set up by the European Commission (EC) has formulated a set of "common principles governing external funding of research". The stakeholders invited were the European University Association (EUA) and EARTO on the side of research performers; as well as TAFTIE, EUROHORCS and the EC on the side of the research funders. The common

principles were presented at a Conference on "Conditions for Achieving Excellence in Universities and other Research Organizations" held in Brussels on 14 and 15 October and organized with the support of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU. According to the stakeholders, the three underpinning common principles in external research funding should be: **excellence, sustainability and transparency.**

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The main goals of the initiators are to make external research funding manageable, efficient and effective, by:

- creating a sustainable and effective European Research Area (ERA)
- agreeing on a principle of joint responsibility
- ensuring consistent, appropriate and sustainable funding conditions
- simplifying procedures and removing legal obstacles

One key message is that excellence depends on the quality of management processes. Therefore the next steps announced by the initiators are to find a broad consensus on the common principles and to develop mechanisms to support the assessment of performance and share best practices. However, it should be kept in mind that common principles do not mean common rules, and should not generate additional red tape.

[More information about the Conference](#) 

> Publications

Realising the new Renaissance

On 20 October, the European Research Area Board (ERAB) presented its second annual report named „Realising the New Renaissance“. The report provides policy proposals, which according to ERAB should help develop a world-class research and innovation area in Europe by 2030. It outlines concrete ways to implement the recommendations contained in the first annual report aimed at “preparing Europe for a New Renaissance“. Around 60 participants including members of ERAB and major ERA stakeholders came together to hear and discuss the ERAB proposals. They are the result of a year’s work by its members and the discussions held during the ERAB conference, organised under

the Spanish Presidency in Seville in May 2010. Above all, ERAB highlights the importance of cooperation and global competitiveness and as recognised by European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, the recommendations contained in the report can also be used to support the Innovation Union flagship initiative recently proposed by the European Commission. The report’s recommendations and subsequent stakeholder reactions to them are expected to form a major component of the early stages of discussions on the next Framework Programme FP8.

[The full report “Realising the New Renaissance” \(pdf\)](#) 

Report on social security and pensions for researchers

An expert group on “social security, supplementary pensions and new patterns of mobility” has delivered a report on the social security and pensions of internationally mobile researchers. The report proposes concrete recommendations to remove the obstacles linked to researchers’ social security protection. The expert group was set up by DG Research of the European Commission (EC) and was chaired by Prof. Jos Berghman from KU Leuven. The report is based on a survey and interviews with researchers. Specific recommendations are made regarding Third Countries and third country nationals, which concern Switzerland. The main recommendation in

this case is that Third Countries and their citizens have to be given equal access to any schemes for social security and pensions for researchers. This would also mean that Third Countries could implement the recommendations and in some cases make the necessary changes to national legislation. Annex 3 of the report deals with the specific issue of a supplementary EU pension fund for researchers and makes the following recommendations acknowledging the recently published feasibility study mandated by the EC (see Synopsis 2010/7):

- To the European Commission: Establish an EU pension fund for researchers

- To the Member States, Third Countries and service providers: Ensure mutual recognition of insurance periods
- To all parties: Ensure transferability/portability of pension funds and grant the right to choose a "virtual pension home" irrespective of mobility

The full report (pdf) 

The European Commission will publish a Green Paper based on this report, which should eventually lead to a Communication on the subject at some point in the future.

INNOVATION

Focus: Flagship initiative on industrial policy

The Communication "An integrated industrial policy for the globalization era" is one out of seven flagship initiatives of Europe 2020 (see Synopsis 2010/2) and has been released on 27 October. It covers fifty (!) new measures to underpin the single market and includes a ten point plan to promote industry.

Top of the list is an **industrial policy for the space sector**, to be developed with the European Space Agency (ESA) and Member States, to create a solid industrial basis supporting the supply chain of space-related companies. According to the Communication, space and EU related flagship projects such as Galileo and Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) will be important drivers for innovation. Also, different measures to foster innovation performance in other sectors such as advanced manufacturing, construction, biofuels, pharmaceuticals, textiles, as well as in road and rail transport have been proposed in the Communication. The EC recommends for instance a clean and energy-efficient vehicles platform and the launch of related research initiatives, or a Strategic Transport Technology Plan (2011). **A strategy on raw materials** is also planned to be drawn up. Other measures mentioned to improve European innovation performance concern:

- the wide and timely deployment, take-up and commercialisation of

competitive Key Enabling Technologies such as industrial biotechnology and photonics;

- initiatives bringing together higher education and businesses to improve Europe's highly skilled workforce, such as an e-skills initiative focused on advanced ICT users in industry, and the Universities-Business Forum pilot action funding knowledge alliances between universities and businesses;
- new business concepts and related manufacturing technologies focused on the development of sustainable, user-driven design-based products in the textile and clothing sector as well as other large consumer markets;
- the support for the creation and growth of **start-ups** by making it easier for them to access credit and become international;
- policy approaches to foster the potential for greater cross-fertilisation between sectors, including traditional manufacturing sectors and SMEs;
- a new EU Strategy for globally competitive clusters and networks including specific actions to promote global competitive clusters and networks in both traditional and emerging industries (2011);
- the parallel notification of aid to cross-border collaborative R&D&I projects;
- the networking of Member State industry, education and employment

authorities to share information and best practice on labour markets and skill strategies;

- guidance principles on framework conditions for job creation, including investments in the development of

graduates in science, technology, engineering and maths;

- a new EU strategy for support to the internationalisation of SMEs with concrete measures building on policies set out in the Small Business Act (Communication planned in 2011).

The full text of the Communication (pdf) 

Innovation Partnership to increase life expectancy

According to the EU Commission, the **European Innovation Partnerships** will play an important role in future EU research and innovation programmes. The Innovation Partnerships have been recently proposed in the new EU Innovation Strategy (see Synopsis 2010/8). Partnerships will be challenge-driven frameworks that act across the whole research and innovation chain. The European Commission (EC) hopes that they can streamline, simplify and better coordinate existing instruments and initiatives mainly by:

- stepping up research and development efforts and by coordinating research programmes
- coordinating investments in demonstration and pilot actions
- anticipating and fast-tracking any necessary regulation and standards and
- mobilising demand, in particular through a better coordination of public procurement to ensure that breakthroughs are quickly brought to market.

Rather than taking the above steps independently, as it is currently the case, the aim of the innovation partnerships will be to design and implement them in parallel in order to cut lead times. Most of those steps and measures are not really new (and therefore the “new” EU Innovation Strategy might have disappointed some people), but according to the EC they can be improved. More a kind of novelty and maybe the biggest challenge of the

Innovation Partnerships however is the linkage of **supply side instruments** (such as R&D funding) with **demand side measures** (public procurement of innovative products or services). The EC stresses that Innovation Partnerships are **no funding instrument** but a framework for existing instruments.

The EC proposes a first pilot project on “**Active and Healthy ageing**” which is planned to start in 2011 and will provide some first lessons that could be used when drafting FP8. This pilot should also show whether the governance model proposed by the EC will work.

Why does the EC see an urgent need to step up efforts in the field of ageing related research? The rationale behind the proposal is given by the fact that the baby-boom generation is about to retire and will lead to a huge increase of older people of which many might be affected by neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer or Parkinson. The combination of smaller working age population and a higher share of retired people with health problems will place considerable strain on welfare systems. At the same time, the EC sees a huge market opportunity for innovative products and services in the field of healthy ageing. Developing new policies and business models could lead to more integrated health and social care systems for the elderly and help them to live longer independently at home.

A steering group will draft within six months a **strategic work programme** defining a research agenda and analyzing research needs and costs. This work includes mapping out priorities and

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instruments on how to fast-track research results to the market. So far three different work packages are foreseen for "Active and Healthy ageing":

- Treatment and diagnostics;
- e-health;
- ICT solutions for independent living of older people.

The latter might cover topics that are currently in the scope of Article 185 initiative "**Ambient Assisted Living**" (AAL) which is jointly financed by the EU, Member States and Associated Countries such as Switzerland. By bringing together existing initiatives and calls (such as from AAL, CIP, FP8, JP), the pilot initiative on ageing will probably not depend so much on fresh money. However, €15 to €20 million have been planned for the creation and the administration of the first Innovation Partnership.

"Active and Healthy ageing" will not be handled by Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn, but by Commissioners Dalli

(Health and Consumer Policy) and Kroes (Digital Agenda). The DG Research and Innovation might therefore lose some influence on a considerable part of the Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development to other DGs. In order to achieve the goal of streamlining existing initiatives and resources, the number of Innovation Partnerships shall be limited. However, apart from healthy ageing some preparatory work has been undertaken for five other initiatives: water efficiency, non-energy raw materials, smart mobility, agricultural productivity and sustainability as well as smart, liveable cities.

The EC seems to be confident on the Innovation Partnerships, but not everyone is convinced yet that toping-up meta-level initiatives like Joint Programming with another meta-level will succeed easily and really make things simpler.

[The annex of the "Innovation Union" \(pdf\)](#) 

> Publications

Enterprise Europe Network opens SME gateways to China and South Korea

Mid October, the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) has opened 15 contact points in China and South Korea, aimed at giving European SME's easier access to these markets (see also Synopsis 2010/3). The EEN, launched in February 2008, is a key part of the EU's Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP). It offers practical support and advice to more than two million European SMEs, helping them to make the most of international opportunities and start exporting. The network spans 47 countries, including EU Member States and Candidates Countries, Associated Countries such as Switzerland, the US, Russia, China, Mexico and

South Korea and provides its services through 589 specialist businesses and technology organizations with 3000 expert staff members.

According to European Commission Vice-President Antonio Tajani, SMEs need open markets and fair competition in order to be competitive, especially after the financial crisis. Further the Commissioner is confident that there are huge opportunities for SMEs in large trading partners like China and South Korea. At the EEN's third annual conference in Antwerp this October, four SMEs were honored with a special "Network Stars" award. These awards showcase inspiring stories of how the EEN helps companies to achieve their business goals.

[More information about EEN](#) 

> INNOVATION Roche becomes number two in R&D spending worldwide

On 26 October, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) released the 2010 EU Industrial R&D Scoreboard which presents information on the top global R&D investors (400 EU and 1000 non-EU companies). The data are drawn from the latest available audited companies' accounts (2009) and include also Swiss companies. The Scoreboard is published annually and is part of the Industrial Research Monitoring Activity carried out jointly by JRC-IPTS and DG Research and Innovation. The main messages from this year's Scoreboard are:

- Worldwide corporate R&D investment proved to be resilient to the global recession. The 1400 Scoreboard companies invested €402.2 billion in R&D in 2009, 1.9% less than the previous year even though their sales and profits fell much more, by 10.1% and 21.0% respectively. This is a clear signal that R&D investment remains a top priority of the largest R&D investors.
- However, EU companies reduced their R&D investment by 2.6%. This is roughly half of the reduction of their US counterparts (-5.1%), despite showing similar drops in sales (around -10%) and significantly higher drops in profits (-13.0% versus -1.4%).
- Japanese firms maintained their high level of investment. Major companies headquartered in other Asian countries continued the high R&D growth of previous years e.g. China (up 40.0%), India (27.3%), Hong Kong (14.8%), South Korea (9.1%) and Taiwan (3.1%). However, these increases concern countries whose companies have relatively less weight in the Scoreboard.

- Japanese car maker Toyota retains the first place as top R&D investor, followed by the Swiss pharmaceutical company Roche. The other Swiss pharmaceutical giant Novartis, on 6th position, is also among the global top ten. Three EU companies feature in the top ten as well: Volkswagen, Nokia and Sanofi-Aventis. Companies headquartered in Switzerland increased their R&D investment by 2.5%.
- The overall R&D figures mask significant differences in individual industrial sectors. R&D investment in the pharmaceuticals sector continues to rise whereas the automobiles and IT hardware sector show a substantial decrease.
- The sectoral composition of R&D investment worldwide has remained broadly the same, with the US dominating in high R&D intensive sectors and the EU in medium-high ones.
- R&D performance of EU based companies is weak in key high-tech sectors. The US companies invested nearly five times more than EU companies in semiconductors, four times more in software and eight times more in biotechnology.
- The very nature of the Scoreboard is concentration of the R&D investment in some top companies. The top 50 companies account for almost half of the total R&D investment by the 1400 companies.

This year's report also includes a special chapter on the age analysis of the Scoreboard companies which highlights the smaller number of younger companies in EU high R&D intensity sectors.

The 2010 EU Industrial R&D Scoreboard 

EDUCATION

New recommendations on doctoral education

The "Salzburg Principles", ten basic principles approved by European Higher Education Ministers to underpin the development of doctoral education in the context of the Bologna Process, were launched in 2005. Now, five years later,

the European University Association Council for Doctoral Education (EUA-CDE) has prepared new recommendations on doctoral education in European universities. The five new recommendations, named "Salzburg II",

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are the result of a wide consultation among 185 member universities of the EUA-CDE. They have been adopted and presented on 21 October at the Annual EUA Conference in Palermo. As the number of universities setting up dedicated doctoral schools has more than doubled in the last three years, there has been a "mini revolution" within European doctoral education. According to EUA Secretary General Lesley Wilson, **Europe is emerging as a global leader in reforming doctoral education.** Wilson is confident, that the reform has been central to both the European Research Area (ERA) and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in the last years. The new recommendations confirm the "Salzburg I" principles but integrate new elements more adapted to the current situation of universities. These new elements cover several subjects, ranging from research capacity to ensuring quality in universities. Nonetheless they all converge on three major points of broad consensus at the European universities:

- The doctorate should be based on research activities, so courses must be structured in a way that provides doctoral students with a high quality, inclusive research environment
- The individual aspect of doctoral education must be stressed, as researchers and doctoral candidates have highly individual paths and this requires significant structural flexibility

- As European universities have been the main driver of the reforms and can well be said to be at the forefront of doctoral education globally, it is important to give them the autonomy necessary to continue developing

The EUA names training for doctoral candidates in transferable skills as a priority, including understanding the ethics of research. Further it highlights the **importance of internationalisation**, used as a tool to enhance the quality of doctoral education and develop institutional research capacity. According to EUA-CDE the recommendations cement the basis of the doctorate as based on the practice of an original research project and thereby underline clearly that it is separate from the first (bachelor) and the second (master) cycle.

Above all, the "Salzburg II" recommendations not only address universities but also call on governments and funding organisations to remove a number of obstacles to the future development of European doctoral education. The EUA warns that **universities and doctoral candidates are still underfunded.** Institutions must be able to keep up and build links with the non-academic sectors to create awareness about the qualities of doctoral holders and build trust across sectors via flexible research collaboration between industry and universities.

The Salzburg Principles on doctoral education 

Bologna Process and professional qualifications



On 14 October, the European University Association (EUA) organised an event at the European Parliament to debate on the interaction between the Bologna Process and the Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC) which entered into force in

2007. The meeting brought together representatives from EUA, DG Internal Market and Services (DG MARKT) and from the European Parliament Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Affairs to discuss which relations could be fostered between the Directive and the

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Bologna reform, as well as other parallel reforms such as the implementation on European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF). The discussion questioned in particular whether and how these reforms can further promote **automatic recognition of professional qualifications** and thus facilitate the mobility of professionals within Europe. The event was also the opportunity for DG MARKT to make the Directive more visible to the education world, so that it would facilitate a translation of competences also at the university level. Currently the Directive 2005/36/EC is under evaluation. On 22 October, different experience reports on its implementation at Member State level were published for certain professions such as doctor, nurse, midwife, pharmacist or architect. One main

conclusion of these reports is that automatic recognition of qualifications is overall a positive achievement for professionals and for authorities. Nevertheless, a number of issues merit further consideration such as extending the implementation of the proactive alert mechanism on malpractice between Member States and the training requirements in general. The European Commission intends to launch a public consultation by the end of 2010 in order to obtain reactions from professionals, employers and citizens on how they use the Directive in practice. In autumn 2011, a final evaluation report on the implementation of the Directive will be published by DG MARKT, which should be followed by a Green Paper outlining possible options for a review of the Directive by the end of 2012.

[More information on the Directive 2005/36/EC](#) 
[Experience reports of the current evaluation](#) 

Grundtvig Programme celebrates 10th birthday

The European Commission (EC) is celebrating the 10th birthday of Grundtvig adult education programme. The programme is part of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) with a total of €415 million for 2007-2013. Over the past decade, the programme provided **17'000 grants for organizations involving around 500'000 participants** across Europe. According to Education Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou, who took part in the events celebrating the programme's existence in Copenhagen on 22 and 23 September, Grundtvig is needed more than ever to overcome the crisis and to unlock Europe's growth potential. The programme gives adults of all ages a second chance to gain skills and qualifications, which will improve their job prospects and personal development,

said the Commissioner. Grundtvig supports a wide range of organisations, as well as teachers, trainers and other staff in adult education, and has a strong focus on disadvantaged adults who left school with basic or no qualifications. Further, the programme provides financial support for training courses and learning mobility.

On 16 November 2010, Grundtvig co-organises a public conference to discuss current trends on mature and older adult's education and to contribute to the new generation of learning strategies. As a vital part of the EC's strategy for lifelong learning, Grundtvig should also contribute to the Youth on the Move initiative and the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

[More information about Grundtvig](#) 
[The public Conference on mature and older adults education](#) 

> Publications

Lifelong Learning Call for Proposals 2011

On 27 October 2010, the European Commission published the Call for Proposals 2011 for the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). The programme runs from 2007 to 2013 and the new call includes Multilateral Projects, Networks, Accompanying Measures and Studies under the sub-programmes (such as Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci) and the Transversal Programme (Key Activities). The possibility of applying for Networks within the Transversal Programme is a new action in the call for 2011. Likewise new is the possibility of

participating for organizations established in Switzerland, as by 2011 Switzerland will be associated to the LLP (see Synopsis 2010/2). Provided that the formal steps for participation are completed in due time, Swiss organizations will be able to apply fully under the same conditions as the other 31 LLP countries by the academic year 2011-2012. The deadlines for the sub-programmes and the Transversal Programme are set for end of February and end of March respectively, and the results are foreseen in summer 2011.

[The call and other official documents on LLP](#) 

Court of Auditors reports on Leonardo da Vinci

On 27 September, the European Court of Auditors (CoA) published a performance audit report assessing whether the design and management of the Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) mobility programme is likely to lead to effective results. As part of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), the LdV scheme is designed to implement the European Union's vocational education and training policy, by supporting and complementing Member States' actions. The largest part of the programme are the Mobility projects, which enable organisations involved in vocational education and training to send participants to another European country. The CoA states in its report that the European Commission (EC) has started but not yet completed the establishment of a comprehensive system for the measurement of the impact of the Leonardo programme. As a result, after the first three years of Leonardo - approximately half its lifespan under the LLP- the EC was unable to assess measures set in place to attain the objectives set. Further, the Court notes that although the operational elements of the programme, including publicity, promotion and the annual programming cycle, were generally

well managed, the EC has not addressed the difficulties of applicants in finding host partners and has not yet ensured the quality of National Agencies' assessments of grant applications. Therefore the CoA makes a series of recommendations to the EC, amongst others that it should explore options to ensure a user-friendly and effective host partner search tool as well as finalise its work on setting SMART objectives (i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) and performance indicators without further delay. In its response to the report, the EC points out that improvements made at a later stage, in particular in 2010, were not taken into consideration by the CoA. It explains that it has already begun work and made progress on several points highlighted by the Court, such as qualitative feedback regarding the annual programming of work, the assessment of applications and improvement of the IT tool. While the Court identifies the design and management of the LdV mobility programme as instrumental for achieving effective results, the EC on the other hand is confident that it is already producing them.

[The full report \(pdf\)](#) 

INTRA MUROS...

A meeting point for new Swiss arrivals in Brussels

For the second time this year, SwissCore and the Mission of Switzerland to the EU hosted their traditional informal reception for the newly arrived Swiss in Brussels. The event is a good opportunity to inform a wider audience about the Swiss activities in the field of research, innovation and education in Brussels. Maryline Maillard, Head of the SwissCore office and Balz Abplanalp, the Science and Technology Counsellor at the Mission of Switzerland to the EU, gave short briefings on the main areas of cooperation between the two organisations before inviting the

participants to enjoy a glass of Swiss wine and get to know each other. The event addresses the Swiss stagiaires at the European Commission, as well as new collaborators and trainees at Swiss organisations and European institutions located in Brussels. In addition to the new arrivals a fixed crowd of the Swiss community in Brussels as well as Swiss Erasmus students and students at the College of Europe in Brugge regularly attend the event. These are ideal conditions for an evening of interesting conversations and making new contacts.

SwissCore

Contact Office for European Research
Innovation and Education

SwissCore is the contact office in Brussels of the Swiss National Science Foundation, of the State Secretariat for Education and Research and of the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology. The office is also linked to the Euresearch information network.

SwissCore follows up on the latest developments in European research, innovation and education programmes. SwissCore supports Swiss researchers in their participation in European research programmes, advises them in making contacts in Brussels and offers them a local working infrastructure (meeting rooms and offices).