



# Brussels News Update

## September 2010

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#### European Research Council – Scientific Council Nominations

The ERC Scientific Council will be appointing new members including a new Secretary General. The Committee is consulting the main representative organisations of the European research community and other representative organisations, who wish to propose names of candidates. The deadline for nominations is 29<sup>th</sup> October.

The ERC Scientific Council sets the scientific policy of the ERC. It represents scientific excellence and act on behalf of the whole scientific community in Europe. The Council should promote creativity and innovative research. It directs the scientific strategy and establishes methodologies and procedures for the peer review evaluation of proposals and scientific reporting and monitoring. The Scientific Council members are appointed by the European Commission, on the recommendations of an independent Identification Committee.

**Source:** <http://erc.europa.eu/12>

### EuCheMS response to the Mid-term Evaluation of FP7

EuCheMS submitted a response to the mid-term evaluation on the performance of FP7, the consultation consisted of eight very broad questions. The mid-term evaluation allows the Commission to make proposals for adaptation and changes in the FP7 programme. The MTE takes place as the Commission is making its initial drafts on the future of the Research Framework Programme, this is expected at the beginning of 2011, it is also the time when the Commission will make proposals for a new EU budget for 2013 – 2020, called the Financial Perspectives.

EuCheMS underlined the importance of supporting excellence in basic research, as the foundation for innovation and welcomed the creation of the European Research Council under FP7. The response also underlined the importance of Chemistry as the most pervasive science, central to resolving the 'Grands Societal Challenges' outlined by the Commission. The response also addressed the question of simplification and greater coherence with other funding programmes.

The consultation has closed but the debate is on-going.

**Source:** [www.euchems.org/News/FP7](http://www.euchems.org/News/FP7) <http://ec.europa.eu/13>

### EuCheMS response to Raw Materials Consultation

EuCheMS submitted a response to the European Commission's consultation on the implementation of the Raw Materials Initiative (RMI), adopted in 2008, at the end of 2010. The RMI focuses on non-energy and non-food raw materials. The RMI has received renewed impetus from the Europe 2020 Strategy, which is the EU's guiding vision for the next ten years. In particular, RMI is relevant to the 'Industrial policy for the globalisation era...(that looks at all aspects of the) international value chain from access to raw materials to after-sales service'. It is also linked to the related flagships of Innovation Partnership and Resource Efficiency.

EuCheMS was supportive of moves to review the list of those materials considered to be critical and suggested that EuCheMS should be involved in working groups to assess the impact of emerging technologies on demand for raw materials. EuCheMS also called for greater support through the current and future EU RTD programmes for more research on substitution and more effective use of critical materials.

**Source:** <http://www.euchems.org/News/RMI.asp>

### Innovation Flagship and the Structural Funds

On 15 September 2010 the General Electric published a report called 'Innovation Barometer', the results were based on a poll of 240 individuals (including MEPs, Commission officials and business executives and academics). According to the report, the majority felt that greater Research funding was needed and 91% of the respondents want the EU Structural Funds to be used to commercialise innovative products and services. Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, the Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science, spoke at the launch and underlined the importance of public procurement, the Commission has already prepared its Innovation Flagship plan, it will be launched in October. The Innovation Union document is one of the EU's seven flagship initiatives for the 2010 – 2020 period, called Europe 2020. The European Competitiveness Council will discuss the plan mid-October and EU leaders are expected to adopt the Research and Innovation plan on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

**Source:** <http://www.gereports.com/eu-innovation-survey>

### EU Patent in trouble (again)

In July the *EuCheMS Brussels News Update* reported that the Commission had proposed to grant an EU Patent, as long as it is in one of the three official languages of the European Patent Office (English, French or German) and the claims are translated into the other two languages. The EU patent would then be valid throughout the EU. The Commission hoped that this would greatly reduce cost. At the moment a patent validated in 13 Member States is estimated to cost €20,000, compared to the US equivalent of €1,850. However, even with the proposed changes, the Commission estimate that the average EU patent will cost €6,200. The proposal has been challenged by certain EU countries and the European Parliament. Sources in the Commission say that the proposal is unlikely to be successful and regret the impact this will have on the EU's innovative capacity. Nevertheless, the Belgian Presidency remains determined to get the measure through during its Presidency.

**Source:** Meeting with Commission official.

### Update of Researchers' Night Website and Information Day 2011

The Researchers' Night website has been updated with information on this year's activities. The 2010 Researchers' Night will take place on 24 September in over 600 venues of 250 European cities, in 33 countries. An information day on funding for Researchers' Night 2011 will be held in Brussels on 13<sup>th</sup> October, it will not be webcast, whilst it would undoubtedly be useful for prospective applicants, it is not essential to attend.

**Source:** <http://ec.europa.eu/research/researchersnight/>

### Cloning in Food Production

The Commission has made a statement to the European Parliament on the use of cloning for food production. The Commission underlines that there is no evidence of food safety concerns for these products, however, the Commission think that animal welfare issues require some further consideration. The Commission noted Parliament's opposition to the use of cloning technology, the Commission feels that concerns will be allayed by widespread use. The Commission is putting together a report which will cover all aspects of the use of cloning for food production. This is expected in November. In a recent review by the European Food Safety Agency, EFSA confirmed that mortality rates and the number of animals born with developmental abnormalities are higher in animal clones than in conventionally bred animals. They also confirmed that there was no indication that differences exist for meat and milk of clones and their progeny compared with those from conventionally bred animals. They also say that information is limited and concerns clones from pigs and cattle.

**Source:** <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/>

### New Directive on Animal Testing

On 8 September 2010 the European Parliament adopted new legislation that limits animal testing, particularly on non-human primates. The new rules will have to be applied in all Member States within the next two years. According to the text, the use of certain primates will still be authorised if it is scientifically demonstrated that the goal of the test cannot be achieved without using these species. The Directive places emphasis on the use of alternative methods. Every Member State will have to ensure that whenever an alternative method is recognised by EU law, it is used instead of animal testing. In addition, approval should be granted only to tests that use humanitarian methods, while still providing scientifically satisfactory results.

**Source:** <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleases>

### **Nanofutures: local mirror groups and presentations**

NANOfutures is a second generation cross ETP (European Technology Platform) platform created with the support of the European MINAM Micro- and Nano Manufacturing Community and several other related ETPs, including SusChem. It addresses challenges and opportunities as offered by these technologies to a broad range of Industry, SMEs, NGOs, financial institution, research institutions, and civil society. The platform has now established contacts for each working group, including : nanosafety; regulation; and, education and skills.

NANOfutures is interested in creating local and regional mirror groups and are encouraging those who are interested to contact email [networking@nanofutures.eu](mailto:networking@nanofutures.eu) .

NANOfutures can also be contacted if you would like a NANOfutures presentation at your event. For further information, please contact: [communications@nanofutures.eu](mailto:communications@nanofutures.eu)

**Source:** [www.nanofutures.eu](http://www.nanofutures.eu)

### **Carbon Capture and Storage Network**

The European Commission has recently launched an EU network of CCS demonstration projects, which aim to be operational by 2015. The goal is to create a prominent community of projects united in the goal of achieving commercially viable CCS by 2020. The CCS Project Network will foster knowledge sharing amongst the demonstration projects and leverage this new body of knowledge to raise public understanding of the potential of CCS. It is hoped that this will accelerate learning and ensure that CCS can safely fulfil its potential, both in the EU and in cooperation with global partners. The European Commission is coordinating the work of the Network and is hoping to developing the Network into a leading community for CCS deployment.

**Source:** <http://www.ccsnetwork.eu/>

### **European Parliament endorse Pharmacovigilance websites**

MEPs have recently made amendments to the EU pharmacovigilance regulation and medicines code directive to require that EU and national web portals be set up to give information on medicinal products and their proven side effects. Patients will be able to report any adverse effects or medicines directly to national authorities. The EU and Member States will set up pharmacovigilance web sites, and medicines that need special monitoring after being placed on the market will be marked with a black symbol.

MEP Linda McAvan (S&D, UK), who steered the draft legislation through Parliament, said during the debate that "it is very clear that we need to work together. With a pool of 500 million people, it is much easier and quicker to pick up an adverse reaction than when working alone at national level".

**Source:** <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/2>

### **New report: Education at a glance 2010**

The OECD has launched the 'Education at a Glance 2010' report, the report has been welcomed by the European Commission. Covering 21 EU countries presenting information collated jointly by the Eurostat and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The report looks at what is spent on education, how education systems operate and what results are achieved. For the European Commission, the report provides evidence and data in support of its Europe 2020 education targets to reduce early school leaving and to boost university education. One of the main outcomes shows that on average, 34 per cent of 25-34 year-olds across EU countries covered have completed tertiary education (the OECD equivalent is 35 per cent. The best performing EU country is Ireland, where 45 per cent of 25-34 year olds have tertiary qualifications, but it lags behind global

leaders including Korea, Canada and Japan and the Russian Federation, all with over 50 per cent. The EU's Europe 2020 strategy sets a benchmark of 40 per cent of young people with university level qualifications.

**Source:** <http://www.oecd.org/>

### Water stewardship standard

The European Water Partnership (EWP) is a non-profit organisation structured as an open and inclusive member association. The EWP coordinates initiatives and activities in international water issues and undertakes worldwide promotion of European expertise related to water. The EWP Water Stewardship Program has formulated the first draft version of the European Water Stewardship Standard. The standard aims to provide water users in Europe with a tool to verify, certify and to award their efforts towards Sustainable Water Management (SWM).

Companies, agriculture and urban areas are piloting the draft standard with the aim of testing its applicability under on-site conditions. Both BASF and Coca Cola are involved in pilots.

**Source:** <http://www.ewp.eu/public2>

## CHEMICALS UPDATE

### Deadlines for Chemicals Registration

The European Commission has issued a reminder on the deadlines for registration of chemicals under the REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemical substances) Regulation. The regulation places responsibility on industry to manage the risks that chemicals can pose to human wellbeing and the environment. Therefore, companies are obliged to table a document on how they control such risk to the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). Companies also need to share this data with other companies producing or importing the same substance, in so-called Substance Information Exchange Fora (SIEFs). The deadline for registration is 30 November 2010 for: substances produced or imported in volumes of 1000 tonnes per year or more; substances that are carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic to reproduction and produced or imported in volumes of 1 tonne per year or more; substances that are very toxic to the aquatic environment and produced or imported in volumes of 100 tonnes per year or more. For other substances, the deadlines for registration are 2013 and 2018.

**Source:** <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleases2>

### Biocidal products

The European Parliament have adopted a report on a new regulation aimed at unifying and updating existing legislation on biocides. These products range from insect repellents to water treatment chemicals, though agricultural pesticides are covered by separate legislation.

Ms Klass MEP who wrote the draft report commented that biocides will now be regulated in a way that will allow Europe to maintain high hygiene standards and prevent disease, whilst also protecting against possible dangers. Parliament has voted to ban the most toxic chemicals - especially those that are carcinogenic, harmful to fertility or interfere with genes or hormones. It also tightened up requirements to gradually replace other hazardous substances with less harmful alternatives. Nevertheless, the Parliament also recognised that some highly toxic substances, such as 'difenacoum' a commonly used rat poison, should be protected. MEPs want the ECHA (European Chemicals Agency) to have responsibility for assessing risk.

**Source:** <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/3>

### Persistent organic pollutants

At the end of August, a number of amendments of the EU Regulation on Persistent Organic Pollutants entered into force. The amendments were made by international agreement at the Stockholm Convention in 2009. The new dangerous chemicals added to the EU Regulation on POPs have already been subject to prohibition or severe restrictions in the EU. Certain restrictions go further than before

The new chemicals listed are: 4 types of polybromodiphenyl ether (PBDEs), alpha hexachlorocyclohexane, beta hexachlorocyclohexane, perfluorooctane sulfonic acid, its salts, perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride, and pentachlorobenzene.

The original POPs were mainly pesticides but certain of the new substances have been widely used in consumer products, such as perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) which is used for example in metal plating and fire fighting foams but also in stain repellents.

**Source:** <http://ec.europa.eu/environment>

### FUNDING UPDATE

#### LERU (League of European Research Universities) criticises innovative medicines initiative consultations

LERU which represents some of the more research intensive universities, has published a letter that is critical of the public-private funded Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI), claiming their participation is at risk unless major changes are made to financial and intellectual property arrangements. The initiative was launched in 2007 and represents €2 billion worth of funding, €1 billion from the EU, €1 billion from industry (the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industry Associations - EFPIA) The letter has been led by Oxford University, but has widespread support within LERU. There are two main criticisms levelled at the IMI, the main objection is that IMI does not cover the full costs of research and that researchers shouldn't be expected 'to give away all their IP [intellectual property] for free, whilst not receiving full funding for their research activities.

In IMI's defence, Michel Goldman, executive director of IMI, has said that the intellectual property régime developed for the initiative was drawn up to accelerate discovery and development in the pharmaceutical sector, applicants who favour exclusive licences may disagree, but this will remain a basic principle of IMI. Mr Goldman, has said that there has been no shortage of applicants for IMI.

**Source:** <http://www.leru.org/index.php/public/news/imi/>

### CONSULTATIONS

#### Public consultation on next-generation EU programmes – education, training and youth policy

The European Commission has launched a public consultation on 3 planned programmes, due to replace 3 existing programmes from the beginning of 2014. The programmes are : an education and training programme – consultation to replace current Lifelong Learning programme; a youth programme – consultation to replace the current Youth in Action programme; and finally, an international higher education programme – consultation (more details) to replace current Erasmus Mundus programme. The Commission are seeking views on the development and design of the programmes and how they can contribute to the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth – and especially two of the strategy's flagship initiatives: Youth on the move and An Agenda for new skills and jobs. The consultations will be open until 30 November 2010. Organisations can respond directly.

**Source:** [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture)

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### October

11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October, Competitiveness Council

13<sup>th</sup> October, Environment Council

13<sup>th</sup> October, Researchers' Night, Information Day, Brussels

20<sup>th</sup> October, Calls for Proposals expected for the following parts of the FP7 PEOPLE Specific Programme

#### Career Integration Grants ((CIG)

Call Reference FP7-PEOPLE-2011-CIG

Call opens : 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010

Call deadline : 8<sup>th</sup> March 2011 + 16<sup>th</sup> September 2011

#### Co-funding of Regional, National and International Programmes (COFUND)

Call Reference FP7-PEOPLE-2011-COFUND

Call opens : 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010

Call deadline : 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011

#### International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES)

Call Reference FP7-PEOPLE-2011-IRSES

Call opens : 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010

Call deadline : 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011

22<sup>nd</sup> October, Innovative Medicines Initiative Open Day, Brussels



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