



## EU Policy Update 28<sup>th</sup> January 2009

### Lancashire Brussels Office

For an explanation of European jargon visit: [the EU's Eurojargon Guide](#),  
For explanations of technical and legal terms see: [the EU's Technical Glossary](#)

<b>Editorial</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Review &amp; Outlook</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Funding Opportunities and Consultations</b> .....	<b>3-5</b>
European Charlemagne Youth Prize.....	3
Call for proposals: EU- US Atlantis Programme.....	4
Call for proposals: integration of third country nationals.....	4-5
<b>Partner Searches</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Consultation search from Huddinge municipality, Stockholm region.....	5
<b>Conferences</b> .....	<b>6</b>
European Sustainable Energy Week.....	6
2 <sup>nd</sup> European University-Business Forum.....	6
<b>EU General</b> .....	<b>6-7</b>
Institutional changes.....	6
Czech Presidency.....	6
Euro.....	7
2009 - Year of Creativity.....	7
<b>Agriculture and Rural Affairs</b> .....	<b>7</b>
New legislation on pesticide.....	7
<b>Education and Culture</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Parliament votes on vocational education and training instruments.....	8
<b>e-Europe and Information Society</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Employment and Social Affairs</b> .....	<b>9</b>
More help from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.....	9
UK's opt- out from the 48 hours maximum working week under threat.....	9
<b>Enterprise</b> .....	<b>10</b>

Public contracts in fields of defence and security.....	10
<b>Environment.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Health and Consumer Protection .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Justice and Home Affairs .....</b>	<b>11</b>
New biometric passports for European citizens.....	11
<b>Regional Policy .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Lancashire assessed in the 'Regions2020' report.....	13
<b>Research .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Transport.....</b>	<b>13-14</b>
FIA Clubs to influence the EU Road Safety Action Programme 2011 -2020.....	13
In 2012 - Less nitrogen oxide and particulate matters from trucks and buses.....	14
New maritime transport strategy 2018.....	14
<b>Diary.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Contact Details .....</b>	<b>15</b>

## Editorial

Welcome to the first edition of the Lancashire Brussels Office Policy Update of 2009, which also marks my first editorship. On 5<sup>th</sup> of January I replaced Anthony Monks as Assistant European Liaison Officer. I can be contacted on the same e-mail address and phone number, so if you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

This edition covers the main results of the recent plenary session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg as well as some interesting developments from the European Commission.

The next Policy Update is due on 6<sup>th</sup> February; if you have any queries before then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Justyna Wojtczak  
Assistant European Liaison Officer  
28 January 2009



## Review & Outlook

### Review

The major event in the first weeks of January was the inauguration of the Czech Presidency of the European Council and the launch of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation.

The plenary session of the European Parliament ended with several key votes, including votes on the Working Time Directive and a ban on the use of certain pesticides.

### Outlook

The next two weeks will see a number of European Parliament Committee meetings. Among the issues discussed will be proposals to tighten controls on industrial pollution in the EU, energy security, crisis management and the future role of nuclear power.

Also, the European Commission will publish a Communication on its proposals for a global agreement to tackle climate change and how it should be financed.

## Funding Opportunities and Consultations

### ***European Charlemagne Youth Prize: New deadline for the submission of applications***

The deadline for the submission of applications for the Charlemagne Youth Prize has been extended to 16th February. This will give more candidates the opportunity to participate in the second edition of the Prize. The procedure for the submission of applications is simple and straightforward.

The Charlemagne Youth Prize targets young people aged between 16 and 30, who have been involved with projects helping to promote understanding between citizens of different European countries.

Organised by the European Parliament and the Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen, the Charlemagne Youth Prize winners will receive funding of €2,000 - €5,000 for existing projects that foster a shared sense of European identity and cooperation.

In particular, the organisers are looking for practical examples of Europeans living together. The projects can focus on the organisation of youth events, youth exchanges or Internet projects with a European dimension.

For more information, please contact: Dermot Scott, Director of the European Parliament UK Office, on tel: 020 7227 4300

And see the website: <http://cyp.adagio4.eu/>



## ***Call for proposals: EU-US ATLANTIS Programme***

The European Commission, together with the US Department of Education, has launched a new joint call for proposals covering a series of actions - grouped under the common title of "ATLANTIS".

The 2009 ATLANTIS Call for Proposals covers the following actions:

- **Transatlantic Degree Consortia Projects**  
This Action provides support for consortia of EU and U.S. higher education institutions to implement dual/double or joint degree programmes.
- **Excellence Mobility Projects**  
This Action provides funding for international curriculum development projects that involve short term transatlantic mobility not directly related to the award of a joint or dual/double degree.
- **Policy Oriented Measures**  
This Action provides support to multilateral EU-US projects and activities designed to enhance collaboration in the higher education and vocational training field.

The budget available is approximately EUR 5 million.

The application deadline is 23 March 2009.

For more information, please follow the link:

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/extcoop/usa/2009/call\\_us\\_eu\\_2009.htm](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/extcoop/usa/2009/call_us_eu_2009.htm)

## ***Call for proposals: Integration of third country nationals***

The European Commission has issued a new call for proposals for Community Actions of the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals 2007-2013.

The general objective of the Fund is to support EU Member States in facilitating the integration of third- country nationals into European societies. The projects should aim at the following:

- Putting into practice the Common Basic Principles for immigrant integration policy in the European Union;
- The development of indicators and evaluation methodologies to assess progress and to facilitate co-ordination of comparative learning;
- Policy capacity building, co-ordination and intercultural competence building in the Member States across the different levels and departments of government;
- The exchange of experience, good practice and information on integration between Member States

The call for proposals is open to national, regional and local authorities, Non-Governmental Organisations, public or private bodies (including university departments, research centres).



Actions should be implemented through the coordination of a trans-national partnerships from at least five different Member States (the partnerships with third countries are also allowed but under different conditions).

The predicted budget of the Fund for the UK is £129.49 million

The application deadline is: 9 March 2009

For more details, please see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/funding/integration/docs/call\\_for\\_proposal\\_2008/call\\_proposals\\_2008\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/integration/docs/call_for_proposal_2008/call_proposals_2008_en.pdf)

## Partner Searches

If you would like to circulate your own partner search, please [contact us](#)

### ***Consultation search from Huddinge municipality, Stockholm region***

The social department of Huddinge municipality (Sweden), working in the field of employment support, is looking for contacts in similar departments and related employment support offices in Europe. The department's overall goal is to support individuals to become more independent through employment.

The staff of the social department would like to exchange knowledge and experiences in the fields of competence improvement, methods of communication, systems used for registering clients, as well as learning about different ways to develop cooperation between different actors in the community. The social department is also interested in the use of different methods used in job services, with a focus on the matching of employers and the unemployed.

For more information, please contact: Ms. Gunilla Vikström

E-mail: [gunilla.vikstrom@huddinge.se](mailto:gunilla.vikstrom@huddinge.se)

[www.huddinge.se](http://www.huddinge.se)

[Back to contents](#)



## Conferences

### ***European Sustainable Energy Week***

The third European Union Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW) will take place between 9 – 15 February. Most of the EUSEW events will be held in Brussels and the key topics will highlight the multi-sectoral nature of sustainable energy development and the need for everyone to work together to achieve sustainable and secure energy supplies.

For more detailed information about the programme of the EUSEW, please see:  
<http://www.eusew.eu/>

### ***2<sup>nd</sup> European University- Business Forum***

On 5<sup>th</sup> of February in Brussels the European Commission will hold the 2<sup>nd</sup> European University-Business Forum. The objective of the Forum is to create a platform for dialogue and to exchange best practice and expertise between university academia and businesses to improve education and training systems across Europe.

If you would like to get more information about the Forum, please see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/business/forum\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/business/forum_en.html)

## EU General

### ***Institutional changes***

This year is election year for the European Parliament, with voters across Europe going to the polls in early June. The coming months will also see the appointment of new Commissioners, who start their 5-year mandates in November.

2009 also sees the general reform of the EU's budget. All of this will take place in an international context marked by the economic crisis, tensions in the Middle East, and a new US administration taking office.

### ***Czech Presidency***

On 1 January 2009 the Czech Republic took over the rotating Presidency of the European Union from France. The main priorities of the Czech Presidency, which will drive the legislative and political decision-making process in the EU for the next six months, can be summed up as the "3E's" : Economy, Energy and External Relations. For more information on the Czech Presidency, see: <http://www.eu2009.cz/en/>



## ***Euro***

January 2009 marks the 10th anniversary of the launch of the Euro currency in the EU. In the first plenary session of 2009, the European Parliament discussed the impact the single currency has had since its launch. The Euro is now legal tender in 16 European countries, including Slovakia which joined the Eurozone on 1 January 2009.

## ***2009 - Year of Creativity and Innovation***

2009 has been designated the 'European Year of Creativity and Innovation'. The main objective of the year is raising awareness of the importance of creativity and innovation in personal, social and economic development. The Year will focus on such actions as the dissemination of innovative and creative practices, stimulation of education and research, and promoting policy debates and development. More details can be found on: <http://create2009.europa.eu/>

[Back to contents](#)

## **Agriculture and Rural Affairs**

### ***New legislation on pesticides***

The European Parliament agreed new legislation with regards to the Plant Protection Products Regulation. The new Regulation introduces more stringent requirements on the production and licensing of pesticides. It will also ban the use of certain dangerous chemicals in these products.

The measures aim to increase the protection of human health and the environment, and it is the first of this kind in the world.

The new legislation has to be formally approved by the Council of Ministers (the forum for member state ministers) before it can come into force.

For more information, please contact us.

Source, European Commission

[Back to contents](#)



## Education and Culture

### ***Parliament votes on vocational education and training instruments***

The European Parliament has approved a new scheme called The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). This new scheme will ensure that the outcomes of individual learning activity gained outside formal education systems or in another country can be better understood, transferred and recognised.

The ECVET system will help learners and workers to take full advantage of the opportunities in education and training across Europe, and will support individual learning pathways.

The European Parliament also supported a European Quality Assurance Framework (EQARF), which will give Member States a new tool for promoting and monitoring the improvements in their vocational education and training systems.

Both instruments are due to come into force in all EU Member States by 2010.

For further information on the schemes, please see:

ECEVET: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc50\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc50_en.htm)

EQARF: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/qualitynet\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/qualitynet_en.html)

[Back to contents](#)

## e- Europe and Information Society

Sorry, no articles in this edition

[Back to contents](#)





## Employment and Social Affairs

### ***More help from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund***

The European Commission has published new proposals aimed at improving the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF).

The EGF provides one-off, time-limited support in cases where large groups of workers are made redundant as a result of globalisation. Its objective is to reintegrate workers into the labour market by improving their skills and employability, and helping the redundant workers to find new jobs as quickly as possible. The recent proposal to revise the EGF is part of the Commission's European Economic Recovery Plan launched on 26 November 2008.

The proposed changes will extend the scope of the EGF by:

- lowering eligibility thresholds for EGF applications from 1000 to 500 redundant workers;
- extending the duration of EGF support from 12 months to 24 months;
- increasing the EU's financial contribution from 50% to 75% (the remaining being paid by the Member States);
- and temporarily broadening the scope of eligibility for EGF assistance to encompass workers who not only lose their jobs as a result of changes in world trade patterns but also those who are adversely affected by the current economic and financial crisis.

The proposal is now awaiting the agreement from the Council and the European Parliament.

Source, the European Commission

### ***UK's opt- out from the 48 hours maximum working week under threat***

The European Parliament voted to prohibit national opt-outs to the Working Time Directive which provides that workers must not work more than an average of 48 hours a week.

Since the Working Time Directive was introduced in 1993, it has attracted disagreement from some EU Member States. One of the most active opponents was the UK which argued for 'flexible arrangements' to be allowed by the Regulation. The insertion of this exception means that workers could work up to 60-65 hours per week.

However, the European Parliament has rejected this opt-out, or 'flexible arrangements' clause, with an absolute majority of 421 votes to 273 stating that these opt-outs will have a negative effect on health and safety at work and people's ability to balance work and family life.

The current directive which allows the flexibility will remain in place until the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers can reach an agreement on the way forward. The European Parliament is expected to undertake a third reading vote on this directive in May 2009.

Source, European Parliament



## Enterprise

### ***Public contracts in fields of defence and security***

The European Parliament has voted on a new directive for defence procurement, which aims to create a uniform system of licences applicable throughout the EU and coordinate national defence equipment markets.

Small and medium sized businesses in particular are expected to benefit from the new directive, as it introduces new rules on subcontracting with the aim of promoting transparency and fair and open access to contracts.

The new legislation also provides for tight security measures in contracts involving highly sensitive information, materials and services.

The proposed directive will need the formal endorsement of the EU member states through the Council of Ministers. If this is given, Member States will have two years to implement the new rules.

Full details of the directive can be found on:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2009-0016+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

[Back to contents](#)

## Environment

Sorry, no articles in this edition

[Back to contents](#)

## Health and Consumer Protection

Sorry, no articles in this edition

[Back to contents](#)



### ***New biometric passports for European citizens***

The European Parliament has voted to adopt a Regulation which requires biometric data, such as the holder's fingerprints, to be included in passports and other travel documents. The new passports are being introduced with the aim of combating fraud and falsification more effectively.

Biometric passports will be introduced across all EU member states, plus Iceland, Norway and Switzerland, on the 29 June this year.

The UK is excluded from participation in this Regulation as it is a development under the Schengen agreement of which the UK is not a signatory. However, the UK has stated its intention to keep in step with the Regulation to ensure that UK passports are not seen as 'second class' compared with those issued by other Member States.

Source, European Parliament

[Back to contents](#)



### ***Lancashire assessed in the 'Regions2020' report***

The European Commission has published the findings of the 'Regions 2020' report. The report assessed all European regions, including Lancashire, against a "vulnerability index" which indicates the degree of vulnerability faced by the regions to such challenges as globalisation, demographic change, climate change and energy security.

The 'Regions 2020' report analyses the potential patterns of regional disparities which these challenges will generate. It concludes that the results of the report will influence the European policy framework and that the regions themselves will also need to find local solutions tailored to the combination of challenges which they face.

The findings with regards to the Lancashire region are highlighted below (lower scores indicate lower vulnerability):

- On **Globalisation Vulnerability Index** - based on factors such as levels of future labour productivity growth, employment and education- Lancashire scored 44. In comparison Cheshire and Limousin (France) scored 13 and 42 respectively.
- On **Demography Change Vulnerability Index** – based on the estimated share of people aged 65 and over in total population, share of working age in total population and population decline in 2020- Lancashire and Cheshire both scored 34. Limousin achieved 59.
- On **Energy Vulnerability Index**- based on regional energy consumption by households (incl. Private transport), estimated energy consumption by freight transport, industry, services and agriculture, national carbon intensity, national energy import dependency- Lancashire scored 27. In comparison Cheshire scored 30 and Limousin 16.
- On **Climate Change Vulnerability Index** – based on change in population affected by river floods, population in coastal areas below 5m, potential drought hazard, vulnerability of agriculture, fisheries and tourism, taking into account temperature and precipitation changes. - Lancashire achieved 21, Cheshire 24 and Limousin 20.

Background papers for each of the indicators will be published shortly on the European Commission website.

For more information on Regions 2020 Report, please see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/working/regions2020/pdf/regions2020\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/working/regions2020/pdf/regions2020_en.pdf)

To see detailed information about the results for other European regions, please follow the link below:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/08/1910&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr>

[Back to contents](#)



## Research

Sorry, no articles in this edition

[Back to contents](#)

## Transport

### ***FIA Clubs to influence the EU Road Safety Action Programme 2011 - 2020***

The FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile), a worldwide federation of Motoring and Touring Clubs, is currently drawing up a comprehensive road safety policy package which it will then present to the European Commission. This is in anticipation of the Commission's plan to adopt a new Road Safety Action Plan (2011-2020) later this year.

The FIA is expected to propose that the EU's new road safety policy should include such actions as:

- Greater European harmonisation of laws on road construction and maintenance
- Traffic education programmes in schools and driving license legislation reform
- Permanent investment in road safety and more financial resources
- Recognition by the EU that offences such as not keeping a safe driving distance, reckless overtaking and driving under the influence of drugs are also serious threats to road safety
- More safety measures for rural roads, bicycles and motorcycles
- Increased deployment of e-Safety technologies in passenger vehicles and on the roads
- Better and more harmonised statistics

For more information about FIA in Europe, please follow the link below:

<http://www.fiabrussels.com/en/welcome.htm>

### ***In 2012 - Less nitrogen oxide and particulate matters from trucks and buses: EP supports new EURO VI norm***

The European Parliament has accepted the European Commission's proposal to reduce emissions from trucks and busses by 2012. The emission limits would mean a reduction of nitrogen oxides emissions by 80% and particulate matter (small dust particles) by 66% compared to the Euro V standard. The agreement also introduces world-wide harmonised test procedures and standards.

The agreement also means that existing legislation will be repealed and replaced by regulations which are directly applicable. In addition to more stringent limit values, this



Regulation also lays down rules for in-service conformity of vehicles and engines, durability of pollution control devices, on-board diagnostic (OBD) systems, measurement of fuel consumption and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions and accessibility of vehicle OBD and vehicle repair and maintenance information.

The proposals require final approval from the Council (forum for Member State ministers), which is expected soon. For additional information on the new regulation with regards to the EURO VI norm, please visit:

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/automotive/pagesbackground/pollutant\\_emission/eurovi\\_1612\\_2008.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/automotive/pagesbackground/pollutant_emission/eurovi_1612_2008.pdf)

### ***New maritime transport strategy 2018***

The European Commission has announced a comprehensive ten year strategy to promote safe, secure, clean and efficient shipping. The objectives of the strategy are to ensure the long- term competitiveness of European shipping and related maritime industries in world markets.

The strategy represents an all-inclusive approach and reflects the core principle of sustainable development, economic growth, fair competition and high environmental and social standards.

#### **Background**

Over recent years, increasingly globalised trade connections and the development of world trade, energy markets, climate change concerns and security threats have highlighted the importance of maritime transport for the prosperity of Europe and its citizens. In Europe, being a major world exporter and the second biggest importer, shipping and related services are essential in helping EU companies to compete globally.

The full text of the Policy Strategy will be available soon via:

[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/maritime/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/maritime/index_en.htm)



## Diary

16 January	Infoday on Lifelong Learning Programme to find out about funding opportunities and application process. For more information, please contact <a href="mailto:assistant@lancashire-brussels.org">assistant@lancashire-brussels.org</a>
19 January	Meeting with Cllr. Jean Yates and Oliver Starkey (Environment Directorate) to discuss Polis transport issues including the joint statement on the Urban Mobility Action Plan, the Environment and Health Working Group and future meetings. For further information, please contact: <a href="mailto:tanja.siggs@lancashire-brussels.org">tanja.siggs@lancashire-brussels.org</a>
20-22 January	In Preston to meet with colleagues about European-level developments and opportunities. For further information, please contact <a href="mailto:tanja.siggs@lancashire-brussels.org">tanja.siggs@lancashire-brussels.org</a>
21 January	Briefing on European Competition Policy, please contact <a href="mailto:jayesh.patel@lancashire-brussels.org">jayesh.patel@lancashire-brussels.org</a> for further information.
21 January	Event on Connecting Theory and Practice - R&D in European Universities of Applied Sciences to find out about the role of the applied research and development in the European education system. For more information, please contact <a href="mailto:assistant@lancashire-brussels.org">assistant@lancashire-brussels.org</a>

[Back to contents](#)

## Contact Details

Lancashire Brussels Office North West of England House Rue du Marteau 21B-1000  
Brussels Belgium Fax: +32 2 229 5383  
Tanja Siggs +32 2 229 5371 [tanja.siggs@lancashire-brussels.org](mailto:tanja.siggs@lancashire-brussels.org)  
Jayesh Patel +32 2 229 5372 [jayesh.patel@lancashire-brussels.org](mailto:jayesh.patel@lancashire-brussels.org)  
Justyna Wojtczak +32 2 229 5398 [assistant@lancashire-brussels.org](mailto:assistant@lancashire-brussels.org)

