

University Newsletter

October 2008



Part I: Policy

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](#)

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the October edition of the Lancashire Brussels Office EU policy University Newsletter.

This week saw MEPs in Strasbourg debate the conclusions of the last EU summit held on 15-16 October. The debate included the current financial crisis and the outcome of the EU summit on climate change. French President, Mr. Sarkozy, stressed the paramount importance of ongoing access to credit for both citizens and SMEs, investments in EU infrastructure and that the EU's climate change package must not be over-shadowed by the current economic crisis.

Moreover, during this week's plenary session, MEPs agreed on a common charge system for EU airports. Other debated issues were the 'safer internet' programme and the new rules regarding 'timeshares'.

Additionally, this week marked Baroness Catherine Ashton's first official activity as the new EU trade commissioner, as she faced questions from MEPs.

For further information on any of the issues or topics, please [contact us](#).

I hope the **policy** information contained within the first half of the newsletter and the **funding** information contained within the second half of the newsletter will be of use to you and if you require any further help, such as assistance finding trans-national project partners or anything else the Lancashire Brussels Office may be able to help you with please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

Best Wishes,

Anthony Monks
Assistant European Liaison Officer



EDUCATION POLICY NEWS

The Commission welcomes the adoption of Erasmus Mundus II by the European Parliament

The European Commission has welcomed the vote from the European Parliament in favour of establishing the second phase of Erasmus Mundus (2009-2013) programme.

This allows the European Union to continue to support joint programmes in Europe, with grants to the most highly-talented students and professors from third countries. It also extends the scope of the programme to the doctoral level and gives more financial support to European students.

Erasmus Mundus is a European co-operation and mobility programme in the field of higher education which promotes the European Union as a worldwide centre of excellence in learning.

By the end of its first phase (2004-2008), more than 6,000 students from outside Europe will have received an Erasmus Mundus scholarship to obtain a degree in Europe, and more than 1,000 teaching staff from third countries will have been given a scholarship to actively contribute to Master's courses in teaching or research activities.

Erasmus Mundus II will have a budget of € 950 million, four times more than was available for the first phase of the programme (€ 230 million for 2004 – 2008.)

For further information on the new programme follow the links below:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/doc72_en.htm

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/extcoop/call/index.htm>

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European Commission launches "Study in Europe" website to promote European higher education

The European Commission has launched a new web portal called 'Study in Europe' to promote the attractiveness of European Higher Education to students from other parts of the world.

The portal, www.study-in-europe.org, is part of a wide-ranging campaign to increase the number of students from outside Europe who study in the EU.

'Study in Europe' provides clear and up-to-date information about the range of courses on offer in European higher education institutions in thirty-two EU countries covering factors such as:

- Admission procedures
- Costs
- Scholarships
- The higher education environment in Europe

Potential students will find help to decide which country they should go to, which university they should choose, what they may need before they leave home and what will happen when they arrive at their chosen campus.

Europe has more than four thousand higher education institutions, from top-level research establishments to small, teaching-focused colleges. Since the adoption of the Bologna Declaration in 1999, higher education in Europe has entered a new phase of reform, aligning degree structures and opening the door to the mutual recognition of qualifications and cross-border periods of study.

Background

The 'Study in Europe' campaign has been devised under terms of reference established by the European Commission to build on the success of the Erasmus Mundus programme. Its main objective is to promote the attractiveness of European Higher Education to students from other parts of the world.

The site is an international, non-bordered portal that aims to make European Higher Education more easily accessible to students outside the EU and can be easily used by those within the EU.

Source – European Commission

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Commission launches EU school milk campaign

European Commissioner for Agriculture, Mariann Fischer Boel, has launched an EU-wide campaign to promote the re-launched School Milk Programme.

Under the slogan "Milk – Drink it up", the information campaign aims to raise awareness of the benefits of milk consumption and the availability of EU funds to schools.

The newly expanded EU School Milk Programme aims to encourage children to consume dairy products as part of a balanced diet and provides subsidies for distribution of dairy products in schools and other educational establishments.

The programme is now granting to secondary schools the same full and guaranteed access as primary and nursery schools. The new rules of the programme came into force at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year.

Background

A new regulation published on 11 July this year provides for a larger range of products covered by the subsidy, thus responding to requests from the European Parliament and the Council.

Included on the list are milk and its flavoured variants (including lactose-free milk drink), a larger assortment of cheeses (including low-fat cheeses), yoghurts and fermented milk products, such as buttermilk. Along the lines of the School Milk Scheme, the European Commission has recently also proposed to establish a European Union-wide scheme to provide free fruit and vegetables to school children (see Policy Update from August for info).

Additional information on the campaign can be found at the website below:

www.drinkitup.europa.eu

Additional information on the European Commission's nutrition policy can be found at the link below:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/nutrition_en.htm

Source – European Commission

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RESEARCH POLICY NEWS

Sorry, there is no research news for this edition.

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CONSULTATIONS

State aid: Commission consults on three year extension of film support criteria

The European Commission has launched a public consultation on plans to extend the state aid assessment criteria of its Cinema Communication (see [IP/01/1326](#)) until 31 December 2012. Under the current criteria, state support for film production can be exempted from the EC Treaty's ban on state aid under certain conditions.

In particular, such support must concern cultural films, while respecting certain thresholds regarding territorial requirements and aid intensity. Schemes must also comply with the EC Treaty rules and cannot focus on specific film-making activities.

The Commission proposes to extend the validity of these criteria for three years and invites interested parties to submit their comments by 30 November 2008.

The proposed text of the extension is published on the Commission website

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/state_aid/reform/reform.cfm

Comments should be sent by 30 November 2008 to the following mailbox:

Stateaidgreffe@ec.europa.eu

http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/info_centre/library/studies/index_en.htm#finalised

Across Europe, an estimated €1.6 billion is spent on national film support each year. This mainly takes the form of direct grants or tax incentives. Around 70% of the support is focused on film production.

There is also support given at European level through the MEDIA programme and by the measures on the promotion of European works in the Audiovisual Media Services Directive. The European MEDIA 2007 programme (2007-2013) has a budget of €755 million. It supports the development and distribution of films as well as training activities, festivals and promotion projects throughout the continent.

Call for proposals: Researchers' Night 2009

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Research has published a call for proposals for the 'Researchers' Night 2009' event.

This call is designed for organisations in European Union Member States and associated countries. Proposed projects should have a duration of no more than seven months, and the indicative budget amounts to £3 million.

'European Researchers' Night' is a pan-European event involving a wide range of



scientific and research organisations, including museums, laboratories and academic institutions, which host a variety of entertaining and fun events planned to run late into the night.

The aim is to give the public, particularly young people, the opportunity to meet researchers within the context of festive and 'fun' activities and to highlight the appeal of pursuing a research career.

Contact person: please consult the following web address:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/calls/>

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Broadband: Commission consults on regulatory strategy to promote high-speed Next Generation Access networks in Europe

The European Commission has launched a public consultation on the regulatory principles to be applied by EU Member States to Next Generation Access broadband networks (NGA). NGA optical fibre-based networks enable bit-rates several times higher than those currently available on traditional copper wire networks.

NGAs are required to deliver high-definition content (such as high definition television) and interactive applications. The objective of a common regulatory framework for NGA is to foster a consistent treatment of operators in the EU and thereby ensure the necessary regulatory predictability to invest.

The Commission is consulting on the basis of a draft Recommendation, addressed to the regulators in the 27 EU Member States and suggesting definitions for harmonized categories of regulated services, access conditions, rates of return and appropriate risk premiums. The public consultation will be open until **14th November 2008**.

The Commission will then finalise the Recommendation in the light of comments received and formally adopt it in 2009.

Background:

Broadband access is currently regulated by national regulators. The objective of the Commission's Recommendation will be to foster the application of consistent access remedies on dominant NGA operators. It builds on the European Regulators Group ("ERG") opinion on regulatory principles of NGA submitted to the Commission on 1 October 2007.

There are 229 million copper lines in the EU (source: Idate, Digiworld yearbook 2008), against slightly more than 1 million fibre connections. Analysts forecast a further €20 billion spending on NGA by 2011.



The Commission's public consultation document can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/ecomm/library/public_consult/nga/index_en.htm

For you information, the work of the ERG on NGA is available at:

http://www.erg.eu.int/doc/publications/erg07_16rev2_opinion_on_nga.pdf

http://www.erg.eu.int/doc/publications/erg_07_16rev2b_nga_opinion_suppl_doc.pdf

To contribute to the Commission's public consultation can be sent to:

info-b1ext@ec.europa.eu

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EVENTS

Towards Future Media Internet - Networked and Electronic Media Summit

13 October 2008 - 15 October 2008 Saint-Malo, France

The first Networked and Electronic Media (NEM) Summit is organised by the NEM European Technology Platform under the aegis of the European Commission and with the support of the Region Bretagne during the current French Presidency.

This summit aims to emphasise the importance for Europe of Networked Electronic Media as an undisputed driver towards a "Future Media Internet", reaping the full benefit of convergence and digitalisation. During the event many EU-funded collaborative projects will also showcase their results in areas such as new user-centric media applications and devices, new media delivery platforms, 3D visualisation and electronic cinema.

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