



February 2003

# EBLIDA Hot News

The EBLIDA newsletter on EU library & information society issues

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- EBLIDA annual Council meeting on 9 and 10 May 2003, p. 2
- [elearningeuropa.info](http://elearningeuropa.info), new portal for information and exchange, p. 6
- Parliament report on commercial re-use of public sector information, p. 9

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## Education

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### The eLearning programme

eLearning involves using new multimedia technologies and the internet to improve the quality of learning. The eLearning programme (2004-2006), which is currently being adopted, aims at promoting the effective integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in education and training systems in Europe, with a proposed budget of € 36 million.

It will promote, amongst others, the development of lifelong learning. Parliament committee on culture

considered MEP Mauro's draft report on eLearning on 17 February. It is now awaiting vote in plenary, scheduled for April. The rapporteur proposes a multi-annual budget of € 54 million for the programme.

The Commission proposal COM(2002)0751 (19 December 2002) is available from: <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>; Parliament draft report, [www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/committees/cult/20030217/487787EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/committees/cult/20030217/487787EN.pdf).

## EU Research and Development

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### How to participate in FP6

Those interested in participating in the EU's sixth Framework Programme (FP6) can download the official guide from [http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/pdf/how-to-participate\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/pdf/how-to-participate_en.pdf).

This guide explains in detail how FP6 works, its priorities, who can participate, how to find and react to calls for proposals as well as providing a reference section with contacts.

## Information Society

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### eEurope 2005, an information society for all

Parliament adopted on 12 February, a resolution based on MEP Paasilinna's own-initiative report (A5-0013/2003) on the information society for all.

Parliament wanted the Commission to consider the development of adult education dealing with the skills required in the information society, as well as of a common European diploma to measure these skills. Parliament also emphasised the need for:

- additional support to SMEs in "going digital";
- studying opportunities for establishing national funds to help marginalized groups and socially excluded citizens;
- innovative broadband services promoted through tax concessions;
- promoting the development of European-specific operating systems and software;
- supporting state-of-the-art encrypting, confidentiality and data security projects.

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## Lobbying for archives and libraries

### EBLIDA annual Council meeting on 9 and 10 May 2003 Celebrating Europe!

EBLIDA will be soon celebrating its eleventh annual Council meeting in the beautiful Swedish traditional village of Uppsala, on the 9 and 10 May.

This year the EBLIDA Executive Committee will undergo important changes as a result of the elections' process that will be taking place during the Council meeting.

The full members of EBLIDA will vote to elect a new EBLIDA President and Vice-President. They will lead the managing board of our association for the next two years. Along these two days of gathering in Uppsala, EBLIDA members will also have, among others, a special guest: Ms Lena Hjelm-Wallén, Deputy Prime

Minister of Sweden and Representative of her country for the European Convention (see the following internet address for a complete Curriculum Vitae <http://european-convention.eu.int/CVs/pdf/Hjelm.pdf>)



The coincidence of the celebration of the EBLIDA Council meeting with the celebration as well of the Day of Europe (9 May) will give the presence of Ms Hjelm-Wallén a further relevance as European Union issues of interest for the libraries, archives and museums communities will be particularly tackled.



*María Pía González Pereira*  
EBLIDA Director

A review of the EBLIDA *Strategy for the future* (for further information visit

[http://www.eblida.org/strategy/ma\\_in\\_strategy.htm](http://www.eblida.org/strategy/ma_in_strategy.htm)) will be submitted by the new Director, María Pía González Pereira, in order to allow a discussion and update of EBLIDA's direction and focus along the coming years.

For further information on the Council meeting please visit: <http://www.eblida.org/eblida/meetings/Council/council03/index.html>.

## Audiovisual

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### Greek Presidency priorities in the audiovisual sector

During the Greek Presidency, the Ministry of Press and Mass Media will focus on:

- Promoting debate on the review of the *Television Without Frontiers* Directive (1989)
- Promoting debate on extending the Media programme until 2006.
- Medium-term economic trends in advertising;
- Media concentration and its impact on advertising;
- New technologies and advertising techniques;
- Viability and the social role of the media.

In addition, the Ministry will hold a conference on audiovisual media and advertising in Corfu next May. The conference will focus on:

The conclusions will be presented at an informal ministerial meeting on culture to be held in Thessaloniki on 24 May.

## Consumer Protection

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### Processing of Personal Data

Member states have presented a working document on the processing of personal data by means of Video Surveillance, to provide an initial analysis regarding the application of Directive 95/46/EC. It is available at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal\\_market/en/dataprot/wpdocs/consultation\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/en/dataprot/wpdocs/consultation_en.htm).

The document has been drafted by a group composed of European Data Protection

Commissioners.

The public consultation aims at collecting the opinion of interest groups. A recommendation will then be adopted.

Please send your comments or position papers **before 31 May 2003** by email to [MARKT-E4@cec.eu.int](mailto:MARKT-E4@cec.eu.int). The results will be published on the DG Internal market website.

### Green paper on alternative dispute resolution

The Legal affairs parliamentary committee unanimously adopted on 20 February, the report by MEP Wallis (A5-0058/2003) welcoming the Commission's Green Paper on alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in civil and commercial law (COM(2002)0196). The committee felt that ADRs should be encouraged as a non-binding option, although member states should retain the right to propose ADR to both parties as a preliminary

option to access to courts, whilst not undermining parties' rights to take action through the courts if necessary.

Parliament report, which is awaiting vote in plenary, can be downloaded from [www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default_en.htm), under latest reports. Commission documents are available from <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>.

## Co-operation with third countries

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### Scientific and technical cooperation agreement with Switzerland

The Council adopted on 20 February a Decision for the Commission to renew the agreement on scientific and technical cooperation between the EC and Switzerland. Visit Council, Agriculture and Fisheries, 2486<sup>th</sup>

Council meeting at <http://ue.eu.int/newsroom/newmain.asp?lang=1> (Brussels, 20 February 2003 (6160/03 Press 40).

### Association Agreement between the EC and Chile

On 12 February, Parliament gave its assent to the conclusion of the EC-Chile Association Agreement (COM(2002)536) by adopting a resolution drafted by MEP Salafranca (A5-0017/2003). Signed on 18 November 2002, the agreement is the outcome of ten rounds of negotiations. It consists of three main components which are political dialogue, cooperation (science, information society, culture, education, audiovisual, social) and trade. It also includes general and institutional provisions to sustain those components.

Parliament report, which is awaiting final decision by the Council, can be downloaded from

[www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default_en.htm), under latest reports.

Furthermore, a new Commission proposal (COM(2003)0082) for a scientific and technological cooperation agreement with Chile was adopted on 20 February. Commission documents are available from <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>.

### European Parliament publishes draft accession Treaty

On 19 February, the European Parliament made available online the draft accession Treaty of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia to the European Union, see: [www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement/access\\_draft\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement/access_draft_en.htm).

For resolutions, reports, opinions and hearings of the European Parliament on enlargement topics adopted in 2001 visit

[www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement\\_new/positionep/pdf/annex1\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement_new/positionep/pdf/annex1_en.pdf); resolutions and reports adopted in 2002 (January to June) are available at:

[www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement\\_new/positionep/pdf/annex2\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement_new/positionep/pdf/annex2_en.pdf).

For further information on enlargement visit the Parliament website,

[www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement/default_en.htm).

### Signature and ratification of the Accession Treaty

The Parliament committee on Foreign affairs started its deliberations on 19 February and is expected to take its vote on 19 March. The European Parliament will vote to approve accession of ten new member states on 9 April in Strasbourg.

Under Article 49 of the EU Treaty, the accession of any new country requires the assent of Parliament voting by an absolute majority e.g. 314 out of 626 votes. All but one Cyprus will hold a referendum on EU membership.

Current member states and candidate countries will sign the Accession Treaty in Athens on 16 April. Parliament will then welcome to its ranks 162 parliamentary observers from Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

These ten countries are set to become members of the EU on 1 May 2004.

### New neighbours after enlargement

Following enlargement, the EU will have new neighbours in Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. With this in mind, the Commission will adopt in March a communication on a wider Europe proposing a framework for EU relations with its neighbouring regions, which may lead to a set of proposals or action plan for

future co-operation with these countries.

EU relations with Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and the Southern Mediterranean countries are already strong through a number of regional and bilateral agreements.



## Culture

### Greek Presidency priorities on culture

The Cultural Affairs committee of the EU Council intends to organise two seminars relating directly to cultural issues:

- Development and enhancement of cultural heritage of European significance;
- EU market in books following enlargement.

In addition, the Greek Presidency submitted on 29 January to the Cultural Affairs

Committee three draft resolutions:

- Horizontal aspects of culture - increasing synergies with other sectors and Community actions and exchanging of good practices with regard to social and economic dimensions of culture;
- Accessibility of cultural infrastructure and cultural activities for people with disabilities;
- Archives in the Member States.



<http://www.eu2003.gr>

### The Culture 2000 programme

The first phase of the 2003 selection of call for proposals (verification that projects comply fully with the criteria) is now complete. 409 out of 661 projects submitted have been pre-selected and were submitted to panels of independent experts in Brussels from 27 to 31 January. A list of experts is available at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/2002/experts.pdf>.

In December 2002, the European Commission gave its support to two pilot projects designed to increase cooperation between member states and the information provided for professionals in the cultural field. The first, run by the European Music Office (<http://www.musicineurope.org/>), aims at

studying the feasibility of networking national export structures in the music industry; the second, IETM *on the move* (<http://on-the-move.org/>), is a website for artists and performing arts professionals from the EU and its surrounding countries. Moreover, in 2003, under its action 3 -cultural events with a European or international dimension, Culture 2000 programme will co finance four projects in St Petersburg with more than € 300 000 ([europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/projets\\_petersbourg\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/projets_petersbourg_en.pdf)). Projects selected under the Culture 2000 programme in 2000, 2001 and 2002 can be consulted at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/c2000/activity/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/c2000/activity/index_en.html).

### Own-initiative report on VAT exemption for artists rejected

On 28 November 2002, MEP Echerer requested to the Parliament committee on culture its authorisation to draw up an own-initiative report on reduced rates of VAT for the categories in Annex H of the relevant EU Directive 77/388/EEC concerning cultural and artistic goods and services.

This own-initiative report has however not

been authorised by the Conference of Presidents in the face of opposition from Mrs Randzio-Plath. MEP Echerer will draw up instead a report on funds for the film sector (i2i evaluation).

In turn, the PPE-DE Group will draw up a legislative own-initiative report on town twinning, authorised on 28 November 2002.

### Cultural cooperation in Europe, call for expressions of interest

Following a restricted call for expressions of interest, the European Commission decided to award the contract for carrying out a feasibility study on setting up a monitoring centre on cultural cooperation in Europe to [Ecotec](http://www.ecotec.com/), <http://www.ecotec.com/>.

The Commission selected the bid submitted jointly by the [Interarts Foundation](http://www.interarts.net)

([www.interarts.net](http://www.interarts.net)) and [EFAH](http://www.efah.org), European Forum for the Arts and Heritage ([www.efah.org](http://www.efah.org)), to carry out a study on institutional cultural cooperation, and the bid from [GMV Conseil](http://www.gmv-conseil.com/) ([www.gmv-conseil.com/](http://www.gmv-conseil.com/)) for the final evaluation of the former Community programmes Raphael, Ariane and Kaleidoscope.

## Education

### elearningeuropa.info, new portal for information and exchange

On 4 February, at the "Learntec 2003" trade fair (Karlsruhe, Germany) the European Commission launched its website on [eLearning](http://www.elearningeuropa.info) (<http://www.elearningeuropa.info>).

This portal will provide information on Community initiatives in this field as well

as links with national public and private initiatives and contributions from experts. Moreover, the Parliament public hearing on eLearning which was scheduled for 19 and 20 May has been cancelled and replaced by a public hearing on cultural industries in Europe. If possible, a hearing on minority languages will also be held.

### The role of the universities in the Europe of Knowledge

On 5 February, the European Commission presented its communication on the role of universities in the Europe of knowledge ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/com\\_2003\\_0058\\_f\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/com_2003_0058_f_en.pdf)). On the same day, the Commission launched a consultation process to initiate a debate on the subject and the conditions under which they will be able to fill that role effectively.

The debate will provide European policy makers with valuable information and strategies in preparation for the spring summit and the summit of European higher education ministers to be held in Berlin next September. Send your comments before 30 May 2003 via online at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/consultations/list\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/consultations/list_en.html).

### Council debate on education and training in the knowledge society

Education ministers held on 6 February, a debate on the importance of education and training in the knowledge society, following the Commission's presentation of two communications - "Investing efficiently in education and training: an imperative for Europe" and "The role of universities in the Europe of knowledge" as well as the synthesis report to the 2003 spring summit on the Lisbon strategy "Choosing to grow: knowledge, innovation

and jobs in a cohesive society". The Council asked to address the implications of the shift towards sustainable employability and the need for greater strategic coherence at Community level between the area of education and training and other policy areas.

The Council also approved conclusions as part of the Council's contribution to the Spring summit in March.

### Benchmarks in education and training

Education ministers held on 6 February, a debate on European benchmarks in education and training on the basis of a discussion paper prepared by the Presidency and the Commission communication on "European benchmarks in education and training: follow-up to the Lisbon European Council" (COM(2002)629). Conclusions on this subject may be adopted at the next Council meeting on 5 and 6 May.

There was broad agreement on the initial selection of European benchmarks in five areas, which **should be adopted**

**no later than May 2003** to be taken into account in the interim report on the implementation of the work programme on the "Follow-up of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe", which is to be submitted to the spring summit in 2004.

The communication can be found at: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/kydoc/2002/bench\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/kydoc/2002/bench_en.pdf). For access to a wide range of benchmarking exercises currently in use in different EU policy areas, visit <http://www.benchmarking-in-europe.com/>.

#### Benchmarking areas

- early school leavers
- graduates in mathematics, science and technology
- population having completed upper secondary education
- key competencies (reading, mathematical and scientific literacy)
- lifelong learning

## Education

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### Tempus 2002 joint European projects

From 10 to 14 February, DG for Education and Culture welcomed for the first time 90 experts charged with assessing Tempus 2002 joint European projects. Over 500 project proposals were received by the deadline of 15 December 2002. The experts come from

programme's partner countries – Tacis, Cards and Meda as well as from member states and candidate countries. For further information visit

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/tempus/home.html>; <http://www.etf.eu.int/tempus.nsf>.

### Language teaching and learning...

The project database of the European Label for innovative projects in language teaching and learning contains projects that have received the Label since 1999.

It is intended to inspire practitioners, stakeholders and policy makers by presenting best practices in the field of language teaching and learning.

### ..Agency to promote linguistic diversity

The European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages ([EBLUL](http://www.eblul.org)) calls on the EU to create an agency responsible for the promotion of linguistic diversity and language learning. EBLUL's third edition of its vademecum offers an overview on international documents relating to languages and cultures of European linguistic minority communities. Visit <http://www.eblul.org>.

### Meeting with the Social Partners

Education ministers noted on 6 February, the preliminary report by the Presidency on the outcome of the meeting between the Education ministers Troika (Denmark, Greece and Italy), the Commission and the social partners (labour and management representatives).

The meeting, held in Brussels on 5 February, allowed for an exchange of views on the role of education and training in achieving the objectives of competitiveness and growth set by the Lisbon European Council (March 2000).

### Erasmus, EUSC 2003 Student Barometer launched

On the occasion of reaching its one millionth student, the European Union Student Council (EUSC) launched on 25 February, a major survey to find out what EU students think about and expect from European mobility programmes.

such as student mobility, credit transfer systems, recognition of qualifications and the use of information technologies.

The survey will be carried out during March and April. It presents 13 questions covering issues

The EUSC 2003 Student Barometer is available at <http://www.eusc.net/portal/news.asp?id=24>. The results will be analysed by the EUSC by the **end of May 2003**.

## Enterprise

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### www.NewApproach.org, Accessing Europe's standards on the Web

[www.newapproach.org/](http://www.newapproach.org/) represents the joint efforts of CEN, CENELEC and ETSI in delivering standards using a harmonised presentation and technology.

the three organisations is responsible for the standards applicable to the products.

This site provides SMEs with the facility to determine the appropriate standards for the products manufactured irrespective of which of

CEN, CENELEC and ETSI, together with the European Commission and EFTA are working together to promote awareness of the role that standards play in developing the single market, and making the standards more accessible.



## Enterprise

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### SMEs in Europe

*SMEs in Europe: Competitiveness, innovation and the knowledge-driven society* is the first in a series of detailed tables which focus on topics related to SMEs. This publication analyses the structure, performance and conduct of SMEs in Europe.

Visit Eurostat at  
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/>.

In addition, the Observatory of European SMEs has published four reports based on its research during 2002 related to business demography; high-tech SMEs; administrative burdens and highlights of 2002 survey. Visit

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/enterprise\\_policy/analysis/observatory.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/enterprise_policy/analysis/observatory.htm).

## EU Information Policy

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### Information and communication strategy for the EU

The Parliamentary Culture committee tabled on 17 February, the draft own-initiative report by MEP Bayona de Perogordo (A5-0053/2003) on an information and communication strategy for the EU. Its adoption at plenary is scheduled for April.

In his report, the rapporteur suggests that the info points, precincts and other information centres together with local bodies, universities, schools, sports and cultural associations are extremely useful

elements in the strategy.

Two communications on the subject have been submitted by the Commission in two years. Parliament expressed its views on the first in its resolution (13 March 2002); the second was published on 2 July 2002 (COM(2002)0350) and is awaiting Parliament consultation. Through the contribution of a working group, the Council has expressed its appreciation. The Committee of the Regions adopted its opinion on 23 January.

### eDemocracy to vote for the EU you want

The Greek Presidency is launching eDemocracy on its website. During the next six months, a variety of interactive eDemocracy projects designed to give the citizens of Europe their say will be launched. The project began with an eVote launched on 10 February.

Every month, a new vote will be launched on an issue of topical interest, with an

additional section focusing on the six main priorities of the Greek Presidency. Parallel polls on critical, topical issues will be added in accordance with current affairs and international developments. Results will be presented to European leaders before issues are discussed and decided at summits and council meetings. Visit

<http://evote.eu2003.gr/EVOTE/en/index.stm>.

## EU Research and Development

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### Pre-registrations for FP6 proposals on CORDIS

CORDIS provides future applicants to the FP6 with a new online form to pre-register for a given call.

The pre-registration forms are available on each call page. They cover the identity of the co-ordinator, FP6 activity area details and basic information on the proposal as

well as the consortium composition.

This will help the European Commission to plan evaluations. Over 300 registrations have been received since late January 2003. Visit

[www.cordis.lu/fp6/pre\\_registration.htm](http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/pre_registration.htm).

## EU Research and Development

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### EFTA States agreement to include the FP6 programme

The European Economic Area (EEA) committee has concluded an agreement extending scientific cooperation between the EU and three EFTA states to include the FP6 programme.

With the entry into force of the decision (10 January) Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein secured equal participation status under the FP6.

The three EFTA states will be able to

participate fully in the first call for proposals and have representatives on the programme's management committees. Switzerland, the fourth EFTA state, is not a member of the EEA, and is currently involved in separate negotiations with the EU on FP6 participation. The process should be concluded before this summer.

For further information on EFTA visit <http://secretariat.efat.int/>.

## Information Society

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### Parliament report on commercial re-use of public sector information

On 12 February, the European Parliament adopted (first reading) the report drafted by MEP van Velzen (A5-0025/2003) making several amendments to the Commission's proposal (COM(2002)207) on a directive on the re-use and commercial exploitation of public sector documents. The proposal aims at establishing a minimum set of rules governing the commercial and non-commercial exploitation of existing documents held by public sector bodies of member states which are generally accessible.

Parliament favours the proposed directive to cover information held by public sector bodies, whereas the Commission proposal

simply refers to "documents". Parliament also made a distinction between "basic" and "other" information. Another amendment adopted calls for lists of main content assets e.g. major databases held by public sector bodies to be accessible online, free of charge and including, where relevant, information on the conditions for re-use. These lists must show by category whether the generally accessible information is basic or other information.

The Commission has reached a partial agreement with the Parliament amendments. The draft directive is now awaiting Council common position, scheduled for 27 March.

### Commission report on eEurope 2002 action plan

The Commission presented its final report on the eEurope 2002 action plan on 12 February. The action plan set out 64 targets to be achieved by the end of 2002, most of which have been achieved.

The key targets under the next action plan, eEurope 2005, are to continue bringing

interactive public services online and to address the gaps among different groups and regions, amongst others.

Full report, [http://europa.eu.int/information\\_society/europe/news\\_library/documents/acte\\_eEurope\\_2002\\_en.doc](http://europa.eu.int/information_society/europe/news_library/documents/acte_eEurope_2002_en.doc).

### eEurope 2005 action plan

*Continued from Page 1*

Furthermore, the Council resolution on the implementation of the eEurope 2005 action plan (18 February), was published in the OJ no 2003/C 48/02, p. 2 of 28 February.

COM(2002)0263 and the follow-up document (COM(2003)066) adopted on 11 February 2003 can all be found at: <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>.

*Procedure terminated*

### Council Resolution towards a culture of network and information security

The resolution on a European approach towards a culture of network and information security was initially proposed by the Commission on 6 June 2001. Parliament adopted its resolution (Paciotti report, A5-0311/2002), without debate, at first reading on 22 October 2002.

The resolution was approved by Telecom ministers on 5 December 2002 (B Item) and by the ECOFIN Council on 18 February (A Item) and published in the OJ of the EU of 28 February (2003/C 48/01, p.1), available in all official languages at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>.

### MODINIS programme, good practices and network security

On 12 February, Parliament adopted a resolution (first reading) on dissemination of best practice and improvement of networks and information security, subject to a number of amendments (MEP Read report, A5-0007/2003), available at [www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default_en.htm), under latest reports.

the fields of IT networks and network security. The duration of the programme shall be 3 years (2003-2005) with a budget of € 25m. After the entry into force of the Nice Treaty on 1 February, Modinis will be subject to co decision. Although there is a partial agreement between the Commission and Parliament, the Council is now to present its common position.

The resolution introduces a new article which grants the EEA and candidate countries with participation in the Modinis Programme.

Moreover, the DG Information Society launched on 10 February, a proposal to establish a European network and information security agency which would act as a single contact point for national agencies working in this area. Full text of the proposal is available at: [http://europa.eu.int/information\\_society/europe/news\\_library/documents/nisa\\_en.doc](http://europa.eu.int/information_society/europe/news_library/documents/nisa_en.doc).

Commission proposal (COM(2002)0425), published in OJ C 291E of 26 November 2002, p. 243, is available at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>. The programme aims at sharing best practice in

### Structural actions in support of the information society

[Nordic.Regions@Information.society.eu](mailto:Nordic.Regions@Information.society.eu) is a brochure from the DG Regional Policy which presents a collection of case studies of 17 projects funded by the EU Structural Funds. They are linked to the information society in Denmark, Finland and Sweden.

The progress of ICT has been an important factor in the development and competitiveness of their regional economies in these countries. Visit <http://www.euro-op.eu.int/>.

## Internal Market

### General report on the activities of the EU in 2002 available online

The general report on the activities of the EU is published annually by the Commission. The 2002 report, <http://europa.eu.int/abc/doc/off/rg/en/welcome.htm>, was presented to Parliament in February. Further information is available at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat\\_general/sgb/droit\\_com/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgb/droit_com/index_en.htm)

Detailed information on the infringement proceedings instituted during the year and on the situation regarding transposition of Community directives into the national laws of member states will be given in the 20<sup>th</sup> annual report on monitoring the application of Community law, which will be published this year.

In 2002, the Commission started 1,604 infringement proceedings (1,050 in 2001).

*Co decision procedure  
First reading*

## Internal Market

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### 2002 review of the Internal Market strategy

Parliament adopted on 13 February, a resolution drafted by MEP Harbour (A5-0026/2003) on the 2002 review of internal market strategy. Parliament expressed its concern in relation to the gap between the Council's support for the goals established at the Lisbon summit and member states' reluctance to implement reforms.

The highest priority must be given to a major initiative to bridge this gap, engaging all European institutions, consumer, employees' and business organisations in an effective partnership.

On the question of Member States failure to implement legislation, the Commission should improve the speed and efficiency of its handling of infringement cases.

On specific actions in support of the internal market strategy, the Commission is asked to simplify the burdensome VAT system; with regard to services, member states should review their legislation affecting service providers and eliminate protectionist, discriminatory and discretionary practices and heavy or non-transparent procedures.

### Council Regulation on the Community Patent

The Greek Presidency presented a new compromise on the Community patent to the COREPER to reach a compromise agreement on the last outstanding issue after three years of negotiations: the relevant jurisdiction for disputes.

According to the compromise, the Court of Justice would have exclusive right to jurisdiction for court action infringement proceedings or requests for damage. Last November, the Council failed to define a common approach with Germany and Italy

against it. Germany wants the competence of its specialised courts to be safeguarded whereas Italy on its part wants all member states to have decentralised courts.

The Greek proposal takes up the agreements drafted last year on the languages to be used, the role of national patent offices and the breakdown of receipts.

The draft regulation is awaiting final decision by the Council.

## Internet

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### Community action plan for safer use of the Internet

The Citizens' freedoms and rights Parliamentary committee adopted on 18 February, the report by MEP Newton Dunn (A5-0029/2003) on the proposal amending Decision no 276/1999/EC adopting a multiannual Community action plan on promoting safer use of the Internet (COM (2002) 152).

The committee adopted compromise amendments agreed with the Council working group to speed up the new plan which place particular emphasis on protecting children and minors and on closer cooperation with accession countries.

One amendment also specifies that cooperation with third countries where illegal content is hosted or produced should be enhanced. MEPs also want measures to increase public awareness of the hotlines.

Moreover, the second phase should promote take-up of self-rating by content providers and inform users about European filtering software and services. While the proposed regulation is awaiting vote in plenary, the Council common position is expected on 27 March. The full text of the report can be downloaded from [www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default_en.htm), under latest reports.

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*Co decision procedure  
First reading*

## Telecommunications

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### Electronic communication networks and services

The new regulatory framework for electronic communications networks and services will be applied in all member states from 25 July 2003. Member states must adapt national legislation implementing the directives by 24 July 2003 with the

exception of the Data Protection directive, for which the date is 31 October 2003. It outlines the rules that network operators and service providers need to follow when dealing with other operators, providers and customers.

### Recommendation on relevant markets

The European Commission adopted on 11 February (COM(2003)497), a recommendation on relevant product and service markets within the electronic communications sector susceptible to ex ante regulation in accordance with Directive 2002/21/EC on a common regulatory

framework for electronic communication networks and services.

Full text of the recommendation can be downloaded from

[http://europa.eu.int/information\\_society/topics/telecoms/regulatory/maindocs/documents/recomen.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/telecoms/regulatory/maindocs/documents/recomen.pdf).

### Electronic Communications: the Road to the Knowledge Economy

On 12 February 2003, the European Commission identified 18 markets in the electronic communications sector that national regulators will have to investigate in order to decide whether these markets continue to justify sector specific regulation.

markets where the Commission considers that regulation may be justified, the recommendation seeks to roll back regulation where it is no longer required and provides greater legal certainty for suppliers of communications networks and services. For further information visit

[http://europa.eu.int/information\\_society/topics/telecoms/regulatory/new\\_rf/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/telecoms/regulatory/new_rf/index_en.htm).

The list of the markets is a key element of the new regulatory framework for electronic communications in Europe. By listing the

### Final piece of new framework for electronic communications

The European Commission adopted on 12 February, a communication (COM(2003)65) on the state of the electronic communications sector. The report identifies broadband and 3G as the main drivers of the sector. The Commission has invited all member states to commit themselves to a comprehensive broadband strategy by the end of 2003.

In addition, by 2005 all public administrations should be connected to broadband; and by 2005, half of all internet connections in Europe should be broadband connections. Visit [http://europa.eu.int/information\\_society/europe/news\\_library/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/information_society/europe/news_library/index_en.htm). Press release IP/03/219, <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/>.

### Public Consultation on the eTEN programme launched

The Commission launched on 21 February a public consultation on proposals for further updating and improving the scope and focus of the eTEN programme (TEN-Telecom).

which is available at <http://www.ten-telecom.org/orientations.doc>, can be sent before **28 March 2003**. Results will be the work programme of eTEN for 2003 and at further evolution of the programme in 2004.

Comments on the paper 'Orientations and priorities for eTEN programme 2003-2004',

Visit [http://www.ten-telecom.org/public\\_consultation.asp](http://www.ten-telecom.org/public_consultation.asp).



## Trade Policy

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In November 2001, the WTO agreed in Doha to launch a new round of trade negotiations that would lead to further trade liberalisation and new rule-making.

For the EU, the most important aspect of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) is to achieve coherence between trade, development and the environment.

On 11 February, the Commission reported on the progress of the WTO negotiations under the DDA.

The WTO hopes to conclude negotiations in some chapters this year, including the TRIPs agreement and a set of rules for competition, investment, procurements and trade facilitation. The EU has also supported special treatment for developing countries under WTO rules so that their industries can compete on a level playing field in the international marketplace.

Read all about trade in services at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/services/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/services/index_en.htm).

### Commission submits draft offer on WTO services to Council and Parliament

On 5 February, the Commission approved the initial offer to improve third countries access to the EU services market, in the ongoing negotiations under the Doha Development Agenda (DDA). The document has been transferred to the Council and Parliament for consideration before being tabled in Geneva at the end of March this year, at which time it will be made publicly available.

The draft offer responds to requests made by other WTO members in the negotiating process, and in particular those submitted by developing countries. In preparing the draft offer, the Commission launched in November last year, a public consultation, and - following widespread public interest -

extended the deadline for comments until end January 2003. The new version (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/services/imas.pdf>) takes account of comments and additional third country requests received since.

Third country nationals temporarily moving to the EU to provide services will see their access to the EU improved under the proposed deal (so-called **mode 4**). The requests do not seek to dismantle public services, nor to privatise state-owned companies. No requests are being made on health services or audiovisual services to any country, and only the US has received a request limited to privately funded higher education.

### WTO services , concrete examples of draft offer

On **professional services**, the Commission is proposing improved market access for non-EU nationals in sub-sectors of interest to many partners, notably developing countries. This proposal will allow e.g. foreign architects and engineers will also be able to provide plans, designs, projects, specifications or cost estimates to their clients in the EU.

On **Mode 4** (i.e. temporary movement of natural persons) the proposal improves EU commitments in several respects. It is an important means of supplying a service when personal contact with the client is necessary

- in providing various consultancy services for example - or when services are provided on-site - such as when installing or repairing an IT system or providing interpretation at conferences.

See more concrete examples at: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/services/pr050203b\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/services/pr050203b_en.htm).

A summary of the Commission's proposal for the EU's Services offer can be found at: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/services/servof.pdf>. All EU GATS Cards on the Table, <http://www.gatswatch.org/requests-offers.html>.

## EBLIDA, European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations

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### Information sources used include

Bulletin Quotidien Europe  
Council Press Office Newsroom,  
<http://ue.eu.int/newsroom/newmain.asp?lang=1>  
EUR-Lex: European Union law <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>  
Europa, <http://europa.eu.int/>  
European Parliament Press Service  
[http://www.europarl.eu.int/press/index\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/press/index_en.htm)  
RAPID - Press and Communication Service of the European Commission,  
<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/welcome.htm>  
Various mailing lists

Calls for Tenders are published in the **S** series of the OJ as well as in the Tenders Electronic Daily database TED, <http://ted.europa.eu.int/CD/application/pif/resources/shtml/common/home/home.html>.  
EBLIDA Hot News electronic provides links to calls and programmes!

Calls are in general published in the **C** series of the Official Journal (OJ) of the European Communities, which comprises information and notices issued by the institutions of the Union, such as preparatory legislative documents and questions put by Members of Parliament to the Commission and Council.

The **C** series is available on-line via EUR-Lex, <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>. Please note that the **C E** edition of the Official Journal, which is only available online, now publishes the explanatory statement for all Commission proposals. Henceforth the two-column presentation of the amended proposal will be replaced by two columns of continuous text. The text that has been deleted in the amended proposal will be struck through with a line, and new or replacement text will be underlined.

EBLIDA encourages dissemination of our information. However, we would ask that the source be acknowledged. Documents are available at the EBLIDA Secretariat.

### About EBLIDA...

EBLIDA is the European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations. We are an independent umbrella association of national library, information, documentation and archive associations and institutions in Europe.

Subjects on which EBLIDA concentrates are European information society issues, including copyright & licensing, culture & education and EU enlargement. We promote unhindered access to information in the digital age and the role of archives and libraries in achieving this goal.