



May 2004

EBLIDA Hot News

The EBLIDA newsletter on EU library & information society issues

Highlights:

§ Commission opens proceedings into collective licensing of music copyrights for online use, p.1

§ EBLIDA Annual Council, Estoril, Portugal, 14-15 May 2004, p. 2

§ Info-Points Europe and Rural Information and Promotion Carrefours, p. 9

§

EBLIDA
PO Box 16359
NL- 2500 BJ The Hague
Tel.: +31 70 309 05 51
Fax: +31 70 309 05 58
<http://www.eblida.org>

Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

Commission opens proceedings into collective licensing of music copyrights for online use

On 3 May, the European Commission warned sixteen organisations which collect royalties on behalf of music authors that their so-called **Santiago Agreement** (April 2001) is potentially in breach of EU competition rules, because the cross-licensing arrangements that collecting societies have between themselves lead to an effective lock up of national territories, transposing into the Internet the national monopolies the societies have traditionally held in the offline world.

The Santiago Agreement allows each of the participating societies (all except for Portuguese SPA) to grant to online

commercial users 'one-stop shop' copyright licenses which include the music repertoires of all societies and which are valid in all their territories.

While the Commission supports the 'one-stop shop' principle for online licensing, it also believes that there should be competition between collecting societies to the benefit of companies that offer music on the Internet and to consumers that listen to it. This reflects only a preliminary position and the collecting societies have two and a half months to present their views in writing and at an oral hearing.

Culture

New audiovisual and culture programmes

On 27 May, Culture ministers held a debate to help the Commission on its suggestions on the objectives, design and content of the future **Audiovisual, Culture, Civic Participation and Youth** programmes (see *COM (2004)0154 of 9 March 2004* at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>). The current

programmes will end in 2006; thereby the Commission intends to submit, later this year, legislative proposals aimed at replacing **Media-Plus and Training**, by a new unique audiovisual programme, and **Culture 2000**, by a new programme covering patrimonial preservation as well as creative activities.

Cultural employment in Europe

The Statistical Office of the European Communities, Eurostat, released on 26 May some key data on cultural employment, comparing its characteristics with total employment. This information is based on the 2002 labour force survey and covers the EU member states – except for Malta and Poland, Iceland, Norway, Bulgaria, and Switzerland.

In the EU25, cultural employment - both

employment in cultural occupations in the whole economy and all employment in cultural economic activities, was estimated at 4.2 million people and accounted for 2.5% of total employment in 2002. The cultural employment ratio ranged from 1.4% in Portugal and Slovakia and 1.8% in the Czech Republic, Latvia and Luxembourg, to 3.7% in Estonia, 3.5% in Finland, 3.3% in the Netherlands and Sweden, and 3.2% in the UK.

Continued on Page 5

Table of Contents

Commission opens proceedings into collective licensing of music copyrights for online use	1
New audiovisual and culture programmes	1
Cultural employment in Europe	1
EBLIDA Annual Council, Estoril, Portugal, 14-15 May 2004	2
Review of the Television without Frontiers Directive	3
Commission recommendation on the protection of minors and human dignity	3
Cannes Film Festival	3
Study on public audiovisual policies in the candidate countries released	3
The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive	4
European Neighbourhood Policy	4
Conclusions after Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs meeting	4
EU/Latin America and the Caribbean Summit, Guadalajara Declaration	5
First Global Congress on Combating Counterfeiting	5
European Capitals of Culture	6
French Memorandum on cultural cooperation in Europe	6
FIRST closing symposium on Digitisation of Film Archives	6
Culture 2000, music industry calls for a music action plan in new culture programme	7
Euro pass, a single framework for qualifications and competences	7
Resolution on Guidance throughout life in Europe	7
Council conclusions on quality assurance in VET	8
Council conclusions on validation of non-formal and informal learning	8
Council conclusions on education and training programmes	8
CEDEFOP, Centre for the Development of Vocational Training	8
Texts of the Acts of the Institutions and of the European Central Bank	9
ETF monographs on education and training in the new Member States	9
Info-Points Europe and Rural Information and Promotion Carrefours	9
Third-country Researchers in the EU	9
Commission amended proposal on the eContent Plus programme	10
MODINIS work Programme for 2004 has been adopted	10
Commission launches a database on women and men in decision-making	10
Financial Perspectives for 2007-2013	10
Recognition of Professional Qualifications	11
Council agreement on computer-implemented inventions directive	11
Community Patent	11
One step closer to ".eu"	12
EURID as the Registry for the .eu Top Level Domain (TLD)	12
Connecting Europe at High Speed, National Broadband Strategies	12
COST launches new Actions	12
Touch & Turn - Rare Books over the Internet, project of the month	13
WTO Dispute Settlement, US Foreign Sales Corporation	13
Council debate on Youth	13

Lobbying for archives and libraries

EBLIDA Annual Council, Estoril, Portugal, 14-15 May 2004

EBLIDA has just celebrated its twelfth annual Council meeting in Estoril (Portugal) on 14-15 May 2004. The Council meeting was especially relevant this year as, amongst other important issues, the members were reviewing a new EBLIDA Strategy for the next three years. The [EBLIDA Strategy 2004-2007](#) was drafted by the Executive Committee and the Director, and submitted to the members who discussed and eventually approved it in Estoril.

Also other important EBLIDA internal documents were discussed and approved, such as the [annual Activity Report 2003-2004](#), the [annual Work Programme 2003-2004](#), the [Financial Statement for 2003](#) and the estimated [Budget for 2004](#) (see [Item 8 of agenda at http://www.eblida.org/eblida/meetings/Council/council04/agenda_internal.htm](#)).

The EBLIDA members were requested by the President to comment on the structure and effectiveness of the Council meetings. It was decided by the members that in next meetings time would be provided for discussing complex matters in small working groups in order to allow for a more in-depth analysis of the current issues. Results will be put forward to the Council plenary afterwards.

This year EBLIDA wanted to devote special attention to a relevant policy issue for our community: the Professional Education. As announced before in *Hot News*, a seminar was organised under the title "[Libraries, Archives and Information sectors facing the European Higher Education Area](#)".



Director, M Pía González Pereira,
President, J E van der Putten
B M Häggström, Executive Committee (Sweden)

From left to right



Members at Estoril Council 2004

Outstanding representatives from different fields involved in this matter were counted among the speakers. A complete summary of the event will be recorded in a document that will be issued and uploaded on the EBLIDA website for public dissemination.

EBLIDA wishes to thank once more the speakers who attended, our Portuguese colleagues from [BAD](#) (Portuguese Association of Librarians, Archivists and Documentalists), and especially Antonio José

da Pina Fação, member of the EBLIDA Executive Committee, for their exceptional support and the excellent organisation of this successful meeting.

The Secretariat wishes to also thank the EBLIDA members for their constant support and active involvement. We are looking forward to meeting all of you again in Cork in May 2005! Further information will be regularly posted on the EBLIDA website at <http://www.eblida.org>.

Audiovisual

Review of the *Television without Frontiers Directive*

On 27 May, Culture ministers, following their discussions held at an informal meeting on broadcasting policy in March, debated the future of European audiovisual policy and the review of the “Television without Frontiers Directive”. The main points referred by the different delegations concerned:

§ the scope of a revised Directive, above all the distinction between broadcast and IS services;

- § the role of broadcasting regarding cultural and linguistic diversity;
- § the maintenance of having “meaningful regulation” at national level;
- § the challenges caused by new advertising techniques;
- § accessibility of broadcast services to people with disabilities;
- § the viability of co- and self-regulation in a future regulatory environment.

Commission recommendation on the protection of minors and human dignity

http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/regul/new_srv/pmhnd_en.htm#2

On 30 April, the European Commission followed up on its second evaluation report on the 1998 Recommendation (12 December 2003) by proposing an additional recommendation on the “Protection of minors and human dignity and the right of reply in relation to the competitiveness of the European audiovisual and information services industry” (see *COM (2004)0341* at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>).

The recommendation aims at ensuring effective cooperation between member states, the industry and other interested parties, notably viewers’ bodies. Some member states have published very detailed reports on the challenges the Internet poses

to their regulatory framework e.g. France, Ireland.

The proposal calls for action to enable minors to correctly use online audiovisual and information services, “for the encouragement of cooperation and the sharing of experience and good practices between self-, co- and regulatory bodies which deal with the rating or classification of audiovisual content, for action against discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in all media, and combating such discrimination and for member states to consider the introduction of measures into their domestic law or practice e.g. right of reply across all media”.

Cannes Film Festival

11 feature films which received assistance under the **MEDIA** programme for their development and/or distribution were presented at the Cannes Film Festival from 12 to 23 May.

Furthermore, Commissioner Reding awarded the **MEDIA New Talent Prize of**

the EU to British writer Duane Hopkins at the European Cinema Day in Cannes, for his script “Better Things”. Awarded for the first time as part of the **MEDIA Training** programme, the prize consists of a full-length screenplay developed by a writer under 35 years-old.

<i>La mala educación</i> (P Almodovar)	<i>Mondovino</i> (J Nossiter)	<i>Je suis un assassin</i> (T Vincent)
<i>Clean</i> (O Assayas)	<i>Salvador Allende</i> (P Guzman)	<i>L'après-midi de Monsieur Andesmas</i> (M Porte)
<i>Comme une image</i> (A Jaoui)	<i>Terres et cendres</i> (A Ramihi)	<i>Or</i> (K Yedaya)
<i>Zivot Je Cudo</i> (E K)	<i>Nelly</i> (L Duthilleul)	

Study on public audiovisual policies in the candidate countries released

http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/stat/studi_en.htm#7

Interested in the economical and cultural implications of establishing a common broadcasting market, DG EAC requested in 2002 a study to enhance the understanding of the individual, existing broadcasting formats operated within each of the thirteen

candidate countries, in addition to the public policies under which they operate.

The selected contractor, **IMCA** (France) released the final report on 2 March 2004 (see Survey # DG EAC 59/ 02, call of tender – *OJ S159-127413* at <http://www.imca.fr>).

Consumer Protection

The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive

*Co decision procedure
Second reading*

The Competitiveness Council reached on 18 May a political agreement by a qualified majority on its common position on the draft Directive concerning unfair business-to-consumer (B2C) commercial practices in the internal market. The directive aims at eliminating internal market barriers caused by divergent national laws while providing a high common level of consumer protection. Once it has been formally adopted, it will be submitted to Parliament for second reading.

The key features of the agreed text were:
§ deletion of the "country of origin clause" on the understanding that other provisions ensure maximum harmonisation (Article 4);
§ possibility for member states to apply

national provisions more prescriptive or restrictive than the directive, which implements minimum harmonisation clauses for six years from its transposition;
§ revision clause ensuring that the situation will be revised on the basis of a Commission report to be submitted four years after transposition accompanied, if necessary, by appropriate proposals on which Parliament and Council should act within two years (Article 17a).

See *COM (2003)0356* at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>; Parliament report (A5-0188/2004) at http://www.europarl.eu.int/plenary/default_en.htm, under latest reports.

Co-operation with third countries

European Neighbourhood Policy

http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/index_en.htm

The European Commission proposed on 12 May concrete steps to ensure that enlargement does not create new dividing lines between the EU and its neighbours. The policy is designed to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours and to offer them the chance to participate in various EU activities, through greater political, security, economic and cultural cooperation.

The "Strategy Paper" proposes to extend the benefits of enlargement e.g. peace, stability and prosperity to the neighbours of the enlarged Union. Reports assessing the situation in some of the countries concerned are also available.

The Council is now invited to draw up conclusions on how to carry this initiative forward.

Conclusions after Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs meeting

A Euro-Mediterranean mid-term Ministerial meeting was held in Dublin on 5 and 6 May 2004. See Presidency Conclusions at http://ue.eu.int/cms3_fo/index.htm. The Euro-Mediterranean ministers will next meet during the Netherlands Presidency on 29 and 30 November 2004.

Education

Ministers took note of the implementation of the TEMPUS programme and of progress made e.g. the launching of the **EuroMed Youth Platform**; the preparation of phase II of **EuroMed Audiovisual** and the implementation of **EuroMed Heritage** phase III. According to the Naples conclusions, Ministers confirmed their willingness to create a Euro-Mediterranean area of higher education.

Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures and Civilisations

Ministers accepted the offer of Egypt and Sweden that "**The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue of Cultures**" should have its headquarters in Alexandria Library. The Foundation would be particularly supportive to events in Cyprus, Italy and Malta.

Information Technologies

A conference to accentuate the importance of ICT will be held in June in Dublin. It is proposed that, as a follow up, Ireland will host a Euro-Mediterranean ICT Ministerial meeting in 2005. Both events will provide an important **contribution to the Information Society Summit** (Tunis, December 2005).

Co-operation with third countries

EU/Latin America and the Caribbean Summit, Guadalajara Declaration

An EU/Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Summit was held in Guadalajara, Mexico on 28 and 29 May.

Ministers agreed to reinforce the link between **culture and development**. They recognised the insoluble link between development, culture, science and technology and agreed to promote, on a bi-regional basis, cultural dialogue in sectors which reflect cultural identity, as well as cultural and linguistic diversity, and which benefit human development, as a contribution to sustainable development, stability and peace.

Ministers supported the ongoing negotiations on the **UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity**.

With regard to **cultural industries**, Ministers reaffirmed their conviction that cultural industries contribute fundamentally to promoting cultural identity and cultural and linguistic diversity and recognised the important contribution of cultural industries to the promotion of sustainable development. They agreed on exploring means to enhance EU-LAC cooperation and interaction in this area.

Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

First Global Congress on Combating Counterfeiting

<http://www.wcoomd.org/ie/En/en.html>

The first Global Congress on Combating Counterfeiting, held in Brussels on 25 and 26 May, highlighted the real threat to public security, health and safety posed by counterfeiting, in addition to the loss of revenue to legitimate businesses and governments. Steps need to be taken at national, regional and global levels to ensure appropriate legislation is in place.

The Congress recommended action in four main areas:

- § substantially increased cooperation and communication among all stakeholders;
- § better enforcement and stiffer penalties to deter counterfeiting;
- § extended training and resources for law enforcement;
- § increased public awareness of the full impact and costs of counterfeiting.

A second Congress will be held in 2005 to establish the progress made and to identify what additional actions are required.

Culture

Cultural employment in Europe

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/Public/datashop/print-product/EN?catalogue=Eurostat&product=3-26052004-EN-BP-EN&type=pdf>

...continued from Page 1

Specific characteristics of cultural employment can be observed when comparing educational attainment and security of employment; however no major difference appears at EU level between cultural employment and total employment as regards gender or age.

Cultural occupations - defined as a subset of the ISCO (International Standard

Classification of Occupations) classification, are professional activities with a cultural dimension e.g. **librarians, writers, performing artists, architects**, etc. **Cultural activities** - defined as a subset of the NACE (Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the EC) classification, include e.g. publishing, motion picture and video activity, wholesale and retail of cultural goods.

*Co decision procedure
Second reading*

European Capitals of Culture

Culture ministers took a number of decisions on 27 May relating to the European Capital of Culture initiative; the Council designated Luxembourg and Sibiu (Romania) as European Capitals of Culture for 2007 and Liverpool (UK) and Stavanger (Norway) for 2008.

In addition, the Council nominated Mr Charlie Hennessy and Mr Bert van Meggelen as Council's representatives on the selection panel for European Capitals of Europe. Under the rules for the appointment of the members of the selection panel, the two member states holding the Presidency during a given year each nominate a leading independent expert from the cultural sector

to be appointed by the Council. Moreover, the Council agreed on the text of a draft Decision adapting Decision 1419/1999/EC to enable the participation of the new EU member states; it will enable them to participate before 2020. Moreover, as preparations for the event can take several years, it makes no changes to the existing order and will apply only from 2009.

The text as agreed is to be adopted in the form of a common position, without further discussion, at a forthcoming session of the Council, after its finalisation in all Community languages and be sent to Parliament for second reading.

French Memorandum on cultural cooperation in Europe

Culture ministers heard, under "Other business", at their meeting on 28 May, a presentation by the French delegation on a **Memorandum on cultural cooperation in Europe** (see <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/04/st09/st09657.en04.pdf>, 19 May 2004). The Memorandum presents five political priorities and sixteen proposals for European cultural cooperation.

Cultural diversity

Culture within WTO, international legal framework for culture under the auspices of UNESCO, external cultural cooperation

Funding for culture

Developing the budgetary resources allocated to culture by the Union, legitimising the national systems for aiding the cultural sector, ensuring the security of audiovisual public sector funding

Cultural industries

Applying **reduced VAT rate to CDs**, making the European art market more attractive, combating counterfeiting and piracy, supporting the European music and publishing sectors

European specific aspirations in the audiovisual sector

Maintaining the guarantees offered by the Television without Frontiers Directive, developing the **MEDIA Plus** programme, encouraging the international dissemination of European cinema

Cultural exchanges in Europe

Renewing the **Culture 2000** programme, encouraging mobility in Europe of professionals in the cultural sector and of works of arts, enhancing the value of our common heritage, Europe

FIRST closing symposium on Digitisation of Film Archives

<http://www.film-first.org/first/>

The Film Restoration and Conservation Strategies (FIRST) Symposium on Digitisation of Film Archives was held in Brussels on 1 June. FIRST is a project of the European Film Archives (ACE), supported by the Commission, which has been focussing on the digitisation of movies to conserve the film patrimony and amplify its diffusion.

The symposium aimed at promoting the exchange of ideas, policy-matters and visions among the industry's principal stakeholders and to present conclusions. It covered issues related to technological transformation, new distribution opportunities, better access to film heritage, the cultural role of Europe, and policy perspectives on the future.

Culture

Culture 2000, music industry calls for a music action plan in new culture programme

http://www.emo.org/events/bourges2004/manifesto_en.pdf

The European Music Office (EMO) and the Centre National de la Chanson, des Variétés et du Jazz (CNV) held a round table entitled "What European music policy? Live music and circulation of artists in Europe", on 23 April in Bourges (France), aimed at informing European professionals of the work undertaken by the European Commission in the music domain, expressing their wishes in accordance with the new cultural programme to be started in 2007. The Culture 2000 programme is not open to the cultural industries.

The first direction given to the cultural programme after 2006 does not mention any specific action in the cultural industries sector; this has started to worry many professional organisations.

The round table concluded with the adoption of a Manifesto entitled "Towards a European music policy", with which the music industry professionals expect priorities and an action plan for music to be included in the future cultural programme.

Education

Euro pass, a single framework for qualifications and competences

The Council reached on 27 May political agreement on the draft Decision on "Euro pass", a single portfolio of documents reflecting the qualifications and competences of citizens looking for a job or for admission to a lifelong learning scheme in Europe.

The draft Decision is aimed at improving transparency and mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications, and at contributing to enhancement of mobility within the European labour market. Euro pass will include a set of documents with a common brand name and a common logo, to be linked to the European CV. The

decision provides for Euro pass Mobility (periods of learning in other countries), Euro pass-Diploma supplement, Euro pass-Language portfolio and Euro pass-Certificate supplement (vocational training). The portfolio may also include further documents. Citizens would be free to use any single document or the whole portfolio.

After finalisation in all Community languages, the draft Decision will be adopted in the form of a common position, without further debate, at a forthcoming session of the Council and then sent to Parliament for second reading.

*Co decision procedure
Second reading*

Resolution on Guidance throughout life in Europe

Education ministers adopted on 27 May a resolution in the context of **lifelong learning**. The Council reaffirmed as priority the development of high quality guidance provision for all European citizens, accessible at all stages of their lives. The need for further cooperation in the area of guidance through actions and policies developed primarily in the context of the follow-up to the **Lisbon Strategy** in the field of education and training, **Education and Training 2010** and also taking into account the **European Employment Strategy**, the **Framework Strategy and Gender Equality** and European policies for **Social Inclusion, Mobility, and Services of General Interest**.

The Commission was invited to enhance cooperation at international level with e.g. OECD, ILO, UNESCO in the development of policies and actions for guidance; to ensure cooperation between providers of guidance at national, regional and local levels to widen access and to ensure provision; to encourage schools, institutes of further and higher education, training providers to promote reflective learning techniques and autonomous learning; to identify areas, together with appropriate key players e.g. ministries, service providers, education and training institutions, parents and youth, where cooperation and support at European level can enhance national developments in the area of guidance.

Education

Council conclusions on quality assurance in VET

The Council adopted on 27 May conclusions on **quality assurance in vocational education and training (VET)** and invited the member states and the Commission to promote a 'Common Quality Assurance Framework' (CQAF) on a voluntary basis while making best use of national and Community policy instruments; to develop practical initiatives to assess its added value in improving national or regional systems; to

coordinate activities at national/regional level between the main actors to encourage coherence with the Copenhagen Declaration and the Joint Interim Report; to promote the creation of cooperative/voluntary networks on an experimental basis to enable the trans-national exchanges of best practices; to explore the use of common measurement tools to assist member states to evaluate their own systems.

Council conclusions on validation of non-formal and informal learning

The Council adopted on 27 May conclusions on the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning and invited the member states and the Commission to disseminate and promote the use of the common European principles as well as encouraging the European social partners and non-governmental organisations engaged in providing lifelong learning opportunities to use and adapt them for the specific needs of the workplace; to support the exchange of experiences and mutual learning including the development of a European Inventory on the identification and validation of non-formal and informal

learning; to strengthen cooperation with international organisations; to develop ways of presenting the results and consider how the existing instruments in the Euro pass framework can contribute; to consider how the common European principles could support ongoing work on credit transfer and accumulation, quality assurance and guidance; to support the development of quality assurance mechanisms and consider how to promote the professional development of those who carry out assessment through e.g. support networks, good practice.

Council conclusions on education and training

On 27 May, the Council adopted the following conclusions: it endorses the adoption of an integrated approach covering education and training; it underlines the need to ensure that the programmes better support policy developments at European level in education and training; it notes that the final form and level of the programmes will largely depend on the outcome of the negotiations on the financial perspectives for 2007-2013. The Council invited the Commission to propose necessary measures

as part of the draft programme Decisions and as amendments to the financial regulation and implementing rules as appropriate for administrative and financial simplification in the new programmes.

The timetable for adoption of the programmes by end 2005 was confirmed at the Brussels European Council of March. The Council thus called on the Commission to transmit its legislative proposals as soon as possible.

Cedefop, Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

On 27 May, the Council reached political agreement on a draft Council Regulation aimed at rationalising the functioning and increasing the effectiveness of the EU 'Centre for the Development of Vocational Training' (Cedefop).

The draft Regulation provides for an

adjustment in the composition of the Cedefop Board to take the EU10 new member states into account. Parliament voted in favour of the Commission proposal on 31 March, thus the draft regulation will be adopted without further discussion at a forthcoming session of the Council, once finalised in all Community languages.

Enlargement

Texts of the Acts of the Institutions and of the European Central Bank

<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/accesion.html>

A special edition of the OJ of the EU containing the **texts of the Acts of the institutions and of the European Central Bank adopted before accession** will be published in the Czech, Estonian,

Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Slovak and Slovene languages. The volumes of this edition will be issued gradually between 1 May and the end of 2004.

ETF monographs on education and training in the new Member States

[http://www.ef.eu.int/WebSite.nsf/Pages/F82C95EC268390AFC1256DDC005FBA6B/\\$FILE/ENL_MON_13YEARS_03_EN.pdf](http://www.ef.eu.int/WebSite.nsf/Pages/F82C95EC268390AFC1256DDC005FBA6B/$FILE/ENL_MON_13YEARS_03_EN.pdf)

The European Training Foundation (ETF) has worked with the acceding and candidate countries for the last ten years. Monographs have been produced for Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia; see in a series of "Monographs candidate countries – VET

and employment services". A working draft is available for Romania.

The main results emerging from the monographs have also been collected in a cross-country report called 'Thirteen years of cooperation and reforms in VET in the acceding and candidate countries'.

EU Information Policy

Info-Points Europe and Rural Information and Promotion Carrefours

The Commission adopted on 20 April a communication on implementing the **information and communication strategy for the EU** (see COM (2004)0196 of 20 April 2004 at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex>).

The strategy will apply in full in EU25 in 2005. The Commission authorised in November 2003 for one final year (2004) the funding of the host structures of the Info-Points Europe (IPEs) and the Carrefours by means of operating grants. It is proposed that a call for proposals (direct management) be launched for EU15; for EU10 it is proposed that only indirect centralised management be used, so that in each new

member state it will be possible to draw on the national authorities' knowledge of their specific requirements for the purpose of setting up these new relays and networks. These two systems would be launched at the same time for a similar period of four years, after which they would be reviewed in the light of experience.

The host structures of the 266 Info-Points Europe and Rural Information and Promotion Carrefours received additional support from the Commission, up to and including 2003, in the form of a flat-rate direct operating grant of some €20 000 a year.

EU Research and Development

Third-country Researchers in the EU

The Competitiveness Council debated on 17 May the Commission proposals on the admission of third country nationals to carry out scientific research in the EU. The proposed Directive and the two Recommendations present key messages to be further examined by the Justice Council. The proposals are relevant for Europe's performance within the Lisbon process, in which context the Commission maintains

that 700, 000 additional researchers are needed in Europe by 2010, and achieving the Barcelona target for investment in research of 3% GDP.

Further work is required regarding the role & responsibilities of the host organisation and the need for a fast procedure for entry of third-country researchers and their immediate families into the Union.

Information Society

Commission amended proposal on the eContent Plus programme

*Co decision procedure
Second reading*

The Commission submitted to Parliament the proposal for a Decision establishing a multi annual Community programme to make digital content in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable in February (see *COM (2004)0096, 13 February 2004*). The proposed programme, awaiting Council common position, aims at facilitating the creation and diffusion of information and knowledge - in areas of public interest - at the Union level. It intends to create better conditions for accessing and managing digital content and services in multilingual and multicultural environments.

Parliament voted at first reading on 22 April (see *A5-0235/2004, 6 April 2004*). The Commission in turn, adopted its opinion on the amendments adopted by Parliament on 30 April (see *COM (2004)0367, 30 April 2004*). All the changes made by Parliament make useful clarifications for the

implementation of the eContent Plus programme; thus the Commission accepted them all.

- § Amendment 1 (recital 15a new) clarifies the **reference to digital content stakeholders**;
- § Amendments 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 clarify the text related to the specific objectives;
- § Amendments 6, 8, 9, 10 propose revised text to ensure the consistency of the annual appropriations with the financial perspective;
- § Amendment 7 proposes to forward the results of the quantitative and qualitative evaluations to Parliament and Council together with any appropriate proposals for the amendment of the Decision before presenting the draft general budget of the EU for the year 2007 and 2009 respectively.

MODINIS work programme for 2004 has been adopted

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/europe/2005/index_en.htm

The Council and Parliament approved on 4 May the MODINIS work programme for 2004, which provides financial support for the implementation of the eEurope 2005 action plan. One of the main objectives will be to measure progress towards the key

targets of the action plan.

The work programme has a budget of € 12,8m out of € 22,4m, estimated to be effectively the total financial resources of the programme.

Commission launches a database on women and men in decision-making

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/women_men_stats/index_en.htm

The Commission has launched a new database on women and men in decision-making to serve as a tool to keep track of progress towards the goal of balanced representation of women and men in all levels of decision-making. The database has been created by independent experts.

banks, major NGOs, social partners and more. The database covers women and men in decision-making positions in the EU15, most of the new member states as well as Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

It shows the gender distribution in European governments and parliaments, the gender balance in national central administrations, top 50 publicly quoted companies, central

Data collected confirms that women are still far from taking an equal part in the decision-making process generally, but their position is better in some countries and in some sectors. The database can be used to support the development of new policies.

Financial Perspectives for 2007-2013

The ECOFIN Council was briefed on 11 May on work by COREPER on the EU financial perspective for 2007-2013 as a contribution to the preparation by the Commission of its legislative proposals to be presented in June or July. A report will be

prepared by the Presidency prior the European Council on 17 and 18 June, which will be called on to provide guidance for the next phase of work in the second half of 2004.

Internal Market

Recognition of Professional Qualifications

The Competitiveness Council reached on 18 May political agreement by a qualified majority (QMV), with the German and Greek delegations voting against, on the proposal for a Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications. Once the text has been formally adopted it will be submitted to Parliament for second reading.

Discussions focused on the arrangements for cross-border provision of services on a temporary and occasional basis (Articles 5 to 9); in particular on the information to be given by the service provider (Art. 7.2) to the

authorities of the host member state (required declaration) as well as on the question of determining professions in respect of which the host state could conduct a prior verification of the service provider's qualifications for the first cross-border provision of services.

The proposed Directive also consolidates and simplifies existing legislation concerning the recognition of professional qualifications, as well as simplifying the structures for managing the system set up under earlier Directives.

*Co decision procedure
Second reading*

Council agreement on computer-implemented inventions directive

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/en/indprop/comp/index.htm

The Competitiveness Council reached on 17 May a political agreement on a common position concerning the proposed Directive on the patentability of computer-implemented inventions, by a QMV with the Austrian, Italian and Belgian delegations abstaining and Spain voting against.

The proposed directive aims at ensuring that those investing in new products that depend on computer-implemented technology can get a fair reward without sealing off the software market to new initiatives and new inventions.

The agreed text contains provisions for patentability of computer-implemented

inventions stipulating, inter alia, that a computer programme as such cannot constitute a patentable invention. It seems to restore the balance between the interests of the right holders and other parties e.g. competitors, consumers struck by the original Commission proposal (*February 2002*).

Once the text has been formally adopted by the Council, it will be submitted to Parliament for second reading. However, there are still differences between the Council and Parliament positions and both institutions must agree before the measure can become EU law.

*Co decision procedure
Second reading*

Community Patent

On 18 May, Competitiveness Ministers did not reach agreement by unanimity, as required, on the proposal for a Regulation on the Community patent. Germany, France, Spain and Portugal voted against and Italy abstained. The only outstanding issue concerns the translation of patent claims; thus the Presidency will refer this back to the President of the European Council.

The main differences between a Community patent (Compat) and existing patents relate to the unitary nature of the Community patent, the different translation requirements and maintenance arrangements, with the

possibility of corresponding cost savings, and the litigation of disputes before a single Community court instead of in potentially several individual member states.

The Council of the EU needs to adopt the Regulation, under discussion since autumn 2000.

Once adopted, implementing regulations can be taken forward. A separate series of negotiations will set up the Community patent court (CPC) and the patent appeal chamber at the Court of First Instance (December 2003). The Court should be in place by 2010.

*Co decision procedure
Second reading*

Internet

One step closer to .eu

The Commission Regulation (EC) no 874/2004 (28 April 2004) on the implementation and functions of the .eu Top Level Domain has been published in the EU OJ (see *OJ no 2004/L 162/40 of 30 April 2004* at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>). This regulation sets out public policy rules for a wide range of issues e.g. eligibility, accreditation, language provisions, reservation of geographical and geopolitical

names, and a dispute resolution procedure. Pre-registration or reservation of .eu domain names is not yet possible.

The contract with the **.eu Registry** should be signed shortly; a four month period in which names can be registered that correspond to prior rights or public bodies should start later this year.

EURID as the Registry for the .eu Top Level Domain (TLD)

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/ecomm/all_about/todays_framework/public_resources/names_addresses/eu_creation/index_en.htm

The European Commission has designated the European Registry for Internet Domains (EURID, <http://www.eurid.be/>) as the Registry for the **.eu Top Level Domain (TLD)**. The .eu is intended to become the distinctive pan-European identification of websites and email addresses. The three founder members of EURID are currently managing the country codes .be (Belgium), .it (Italy) and .se (Sweden). Two associated members are from acceding countries.

contract with EURID and then appropriate steps will be taken with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) for the inclusion of .eu in the global Internet Domain Name System.

At the same time the Commission, together with member states and the Registry, will establish public policy rules to deal with speculative and abusive registrations of domain names, intellectual property rights, issues of language and geographical concepts and the extra-judicial settlement of conflicts.

The Commission is now to conclude a

Telecommunications

Connecting Europe at High Speed, National Broadband Strategies

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2004/com2004_0369en01.pdf

The Commission adopted on 12 May a communication which aims at providing an overview of broadband developments and of national broadband strategies drawn up by the EU15. It focuses on the situation in the EU15 and proposes to extend that commitment to the EU10.

benefits and the role of content, services and applications. Further actions on the supply and the demand-side of the broadband market have been proposed.

The overview is developed in three parts, the first (Section 2) looks at technological developments, the nature of broadband

EU15 should complete an update by the end of 2005; EU10 should adopt national broadband strategies by the end of 2004. The Commission in turn will review progress and developments in the first half of 2006 as part of the evaluation of eEurope 2005.

COST launches new Actions

Towards Digital Optical Networks (Greece)

The main objective of the action is to focus on novel network concepts and architectures exploiting the features and properties of photonic technologies, to enable future telecommunication networks to accommodate all kind of end-to-end services (COST 291).

Semantic Multimodal Analysis of Digital Media (UK)

The main objective of this Action is to push forward the frontiers of current research on semantic analysis, inference and conceptualisation for high-level annotation and retrieval of digital audiovisual content (COST 292).

Telecommunications

Touch & Turn - Rare Books over the Internet, project of the month

The Touch & Turn Virtual Library (project reference: eTEN-28038) won the First Prize for the best web based/virtual application in the Nordic Conference NODEM (Nordic Digital Excellence of Museums), held in Helsinki, Finland on 4 and 5 May.

The project - which ends on 30 June, develops and validates the mediation service of rare books and manuscripts at libraries and other cultural/private institutions through the technology and business model of T&T. The official opening of The Virtual Library on 22 April was a big success (<http://www.touchandturn.com>).

The NODEM Award for best digital museum application is a yearly award which aims at stimulating creativity and professional development among Nordic museums, where digital ICT is used to interpret and communicate cultural, arts based and scientific content, for the benefit of audiences and public users.

From 50 entered projects the NODEM Jury selected 11 nominated projects. The conference participants were then given the mandate to vote for best digital museum application 2004.

Trade Policy

WTO Dispute Settlement, US Foreign Sales Corporation

In a further step towards US compliance in a long standing trade dispute between the EU and the US, the US Senate adopted on 11 May the JOBS Act, a bill which repeals the FSC/ETI (Foreign Sales Corporation). A FSC/ETI repeal bill also needs to be taken up and passed in the House of Representatives, reconciled, if necessary, with the Senate-passed bill and signed by the US President in order to become US law.

On 1 March, the EU imposed countermeasures consisting of an additional customs duty of 5% on a list of US products, followed by automatic, monthly increases by 1% up to a ceiling of 17% to be reached on 1 March 2005, if compliance has not happened in-between. The moment that WTO-compliant legislation becomes law, the EU will immediately repeal the countermeasures.

Youth Policy

Council debate on Youth

Social integration of young people

The Council adopted on 27 May a resolution to ensure that a greater synergy among different Community instruments for young people e.g. Socrates, Leonardo, Youth programmes and, where appropriate, the EU Structural Funds and that there is better coordination between youth policy and other important sectors e.g. education, employment.

Declaration on racism and intolerance

Moreover, the Council adopted a declaration on racism and intolerance in relation to young people and called for concrete measures by the Commission and member states for providing young people with

opportunities of playing an effective role in combating racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism as well as related intolerance and all forms of discrimination.

Youth programme

In addition, the Council held an exchange of views on the design and content of the new Youth programme. The Commission intends to submit, later this year, a legislative proposal for a new programme (2007-2013), focusing on Youth for Europe, European voluntary service, Youth of the world, Social-educational instructors and support systems, and support for political cooperation actions.

European Youth Portal

http://europa.eu.int/youth/index_en.htm

EBLIDA, European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations

We're on the Web!
Visit www.eblida.org

For further information
contact:
Carmen Morlon
EU Information Officer,
morlon@debibliotheken.nl

PO Box 16359
NL-2500 BJ The Hague
The Netherlands
Tel.: +31(0) 70 309 05 51
Fax: +31(0) 70 309 05 58

Information sources used include

Bulletin Quotidien Europe
Council Press Office Newsroom,
<http://ue.eu.int/newsroom/newmain.asp?lang=1>
European Parliament Press Service
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>
EUR-Lex: European Union law <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/>
Europa, <http://europa.eu.int/>
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.