

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH UPDATE

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION, DG RESEARCH AND INNOVATION,
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MONTHLY INFO FLASH ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

POLICY

New Chair for SFIC

On 25 February the Strategic Forum for International Cooperation (SFIC) held its 9th meeting and elected Ms Leena Vestala, Director of the Higher Education and Science Division, in the Finnish Ministry of Education, Culture and Science as the new Chair for the period 2011-2013. The Forum also discussed its draft work programme for the next two years, endorsed the programme for the workshop on S&T cooperation strategies and policies with China to be held in May 2011 and continued discussions on its pilot initiatives with and vis-à-vis India and the USA.

For more information, contact Heiko Prange-Gstoehl

AGREEMENTS

Moldovan Association to FP7

The Commission will shortly open negotiations with the Government of Moldova on a Memorandum of Understanding for the association of Moldova to the 7th (EU) Framework Programme. A key element of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is the opening of EU programmes to the ENP countries. It is envisaged that Moldova will be associated to FP7 from 1 January 2012 – i.e. including the calls issued in the 2012 work programmes. Moldova will be the second ENP country, after Israel, to be associated to FP7.

For more information, contact Martin Penny

BILATERAL RELATIONS

Visit of Russian Government to the Commission

A Russian delegation, headed by Prime Minister Putin and involving 12 Russian Ministers met with the College of Commissioners on 24 February. The visit included 'cluster' meetings between groups of Commissioners and their Russian counterparts, including a meeting between Commissioners Geoghegan-Quinn and Vassiliou with Ministers Andrei Fursenko and Igor Shchegolev, Russian Ministers for Science and Education and Communication and Mass Media respectively. The visit was concluded with a plenary meeting involving the College and the full Russian delegation during which Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn highlighted the strong EU-Russian cooperation in research, the synergies between EU and Russian policies and initiatives for innovation, and the potential for increasing collaboration in these areas.

For more information, contact Martin Penny

Research cooperation with Turkey

Turkey's compliance with EU *acquis* research and innovation policy was monitored at a meeting of the EU-Turkey Subcommittee on Innovation on 9 February. It was noted that Turkey had increased the number of scientists more rapidly than planned in the last two years but that further efforts are required to increase investment in research, which stood at 0.85% of GDP in 2009. Turkey is committed to reaching 2% investment in research by 2014. Turkey also wishes to increase actions in innovation and contribute to the Innovation Union. Turkey will also undertake further efforts to increase its participation in FP7 and will propose a

draft updated Action Plan in preparation for the second meeting of the Joint Research Committee, which will be held in Ankara on 7 April. It was also confirmed that Turkey will seek participation in FP7 Euratom on a project basis, rather than through association for the time being.

For more information, contact Tania Friederichs

Review of research cooperation with FYROM

The first meeting of the Joint Research Committee between the EU and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia took place in Skopje on 25 February. The main purpose of the meeting was to monitor the progress in EU-FYROM research cooperation since their association to FP7 on 1 January 2007. For a small country, participation is good, but the Commission highlighted the need to strengthen administrative capacities, to take measures at national level on research and innovation policy to strengthen research capacity, and to consider as a priority how to increase involvement in the FP7 Marie Curie Actions and the involvement of SMEs in research.

For more information, contact Tania Friederichs

S&T dialogue with Peru and Colombia

In conjunction with an EU Memorandum of Understanding with Peru and Colombia on establishing a framework for regular dialogue, a Joint Declaration was signed with both countries on engaging in S&T dialogue in May 2010. The opening dialogue was conducted with Peru by video conference on 10 February. The Peruvian delegation comprised 20 senior representatives from a cross-section of Peruvian Institutions and networks interested in developing cooperation with Europe. The Peruvian Research Council (CONCYTEC) is in the process of nominating thematic FP7 contacts to step up support for participation in FP7. A video conference has been scheduled for 28 April to brief these new FP7 contacts. There is a lively public debate in Peru about developing the government's S&T policy and increasing resource allocation in a significant manner, whilst also encouraging international cooperation to strengthen excellence.

For more information, contact Cornelia Nauen

Cooperation with ASEM

As a follow up to the 8th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM 8), the Informal ASEM Senior Officials' Meeting for Trade and Investment (SOM-TI) was held in Brussels on 15–16 February. The meeting was attended by more than 150 participants from ASEM and EU Countries, and was structured

around four sessions, one of which focused on ['Technology Cooperation'](#). In this session, DG RTD stressed the relevance of scientific cooperation for achieving the common objectives of sustainable development and growth. Attention was drawn on the importance of increasing scientific cooperation among the ASEM Countries with particular consideration for those having fewer resources dedicated to research and innovation. It was noted that technology innovation hubs could foster sustainable development and growth whilst respecting environment and socio-cultural potentialities. The very constructive debate in the session allowed for the definition of a range of actions that ASEM SOM-TI could pursue jointly with the EU Institutions.

For more information, contact Jean-Michel Sers or Mario Catizzone

Progress on cooperative systems research with the US and Japan

Delegations from DG INFSO and the Research and Innovative Technology Administration of the US Department of Transportation met in Washington in late January during the annual meeting of the Transport Research Board of national academies. Significant progress in research cooperation on cooperative systems was made, with actions agreed for harmonising research activities and standardising cooperative systems. Considerable progress was also made in defining three high-priority applications based on vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communication, namely forward collision avoidance, red light (and stop sign) violation warning and energy efficient intersection control. Japan was also present in the discussions as the cooperation is moving towards a trilateral approach. A specific Memorandum of Cooperation on cooperative systems research is currently under negotiation between DG INFSO and the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. Further meetings are scheduled for Lyon and Florida, in June and October respectively, in the margins of the Intelligent Transport Systems European and World Congresses.

For more information, contact Wolfgang Hoefs, DG INFSO

Meetings with the Australian and New Zealand Research Ministers

On 10 March Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn will meet separately with both Wayne Mapp, the New Zealand Minister for [Defence and for Science and](#)

[Innovation](#) and Kim Carr, Australian [Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research](#). In both meetings, discussions will focus on increasing bilateral and multi-partner and global research cooperation, such as the KBBE bio-economy forum and the Global Research Alliance on greenhouse emissions from agriculture. Potential areas of mutual interest include research in health, ICT, food and biotechnologies, as well as cooperation in the areas of research infrastructures and mobility of researchers. Despite being remote from the EU, both Australia and New Zealand are active partners in FP7 and, similar to the Commission, recent restructuring has placed innovation in a more central role in the government and administrative research structures in both countries.

For more information, contact Pierrick Fillon-Ashida

PROJECTS

EU-Russia call for innovation projects

As an 'international ERA-NET', the FP7 ERA.Net RUS project aims to enhance EU-Russia S&T cooperation through the coordination of the S&T activities of EU Member States and FP7 Associated Countries towards and with Russia. A call for innovation projects was published by ERA.Net RUS on 15 February. Six countries are participating in the call: Germany, Greece, Israel, Russia, Switzerland and Turkey. ERA.Net RUS innovation projects are joint R&D projects designed to lead to innovative products, services or processes of significant economic and/or societal value of mutual interest. The deadline for applications is 15 April. Full information on the call is available on the [project website](#). A second call for collaborative S&T projects is expected to be launched in March 2011.

For more information, contact Yves Maisonnay

International cooperation projects with India

Project meetings of the three EU-India international cooperation projects - [EUINEC](#) (EU-India Enhanced Cooperation Framework for Improved Bilateral Dialogue in S&T), [INDIA_GATE](#) (Increasing EU-India Dialogue by Improving EU Awareness and Access to Indian R&I Programmes) and [NEW INDIGO](#) (Indian 'international' ERA-NET) - were held back to back in Delhi on 17-19 January. The events offered the opportunity to bring together EU and Indian participants in on-going successful initiatives, to share information and best practice. An information day on FP7 and

water research was also held in an international conference on sustainable water resources management and treatment technologies, organised by the Indian Environmental Engineering Research Institute in Nagpur on 20-23 January. Coverage by the local media of the information day contributed to the visibility of the initiatives and of the EU RTD policy to a wider audience.

For more information, contact Michele Genovese

EVENTS

The EU at the AAAS

The Commission services (DG RTD, INFSO, SANCO, JRC, ERC and REA) were present at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in Washington DC (17-21 February), which this year focused on the theme 'Science without Borders'. Both Directors General Smits and Ristori participated. Major EU events at the meeting, which gathers thousands of researchers and research policy makers together every year, included: 14 JRC or RTD-organised scientific symposia and a press breakfast, where R-J. Smits presented recent research and innovation policy developments in Europe, the mobilisation of resources for research and innovation (e.g. healthy ageing), and Europe as a global partner.

A symposium chaired by R-J. Smits on the topic: 'When Borders Dissolve, Which Standards and Mechanisms Prevail?' sought to highlight some of the issues where increasing international cooperation in S&T may require development of a common approach to ensure fairness, trust and mutual benefit: IPR, ethics, publishing, virtual research environments. The EU was also strongly represented at the AAAS exhibition with a stand which covered all research activities.

In addition to his participation in the AAAS, R-J. Smits made bilateral visits to the National Institutes of Health and to the Department of Energy, met with the leadership of the AAAS and spoke at a lunch event hosted by the European Institute in Washington DC on the topic 'Prospects and Challenges for the European Innovation Union'.

For more information, contact Mary Kavanagh, Errol Levy or Patrick Vittet-Philippe (Dir. A)

The ERC at AAAS 2011

The ERC participated once again in the AAAS annual meeting, running a symposium in which

Professor Helga Nowotny, the President of the ERC, and other speakers including the President of the Canadian National Sciences and Engineering Research Council and an ERC Advanced Grantee offered their perspectives on the ERC and on the importance of funding frontier research. They provided insight into upcoming challenges and the ERC's possible future direction as well as the internationalisation of science. Examples of funded projects were highlighted. The ERC also held a press briefing, a stand at the EU booth, and a separate workshop, targeted at early-career researchers, which also covered Marie Curie and EURAXESS, and where testimonials were given by an ERC Starting Grantee and a Marie Curie Fellow.

For more information, contact Samantha Christey or Madeleine Drielsma, ERC Executive Agency

EU-US Nanotechnology research workshop

DG RTD together with the US National Nanotechnology Coordination Office and the EU Delegation in Washington will organise a joint transatlantic workshop in nanotechnology research in Washington DC on March 10-11. The objectives of this initiative are: to engage in an active discussion about environmental health and safety questions for nano-enabled products; to encourage programmes for joint work that would leverage resources; and to establish communities of practice, including identification of key contact points/interest groups/themes between US and EU researchers and the principal US and EU funding sources for short-term and future collaboration.

For more information, contact Georgios Katalagarianakis, DG RTD, Dir G. or Astrid-Christina Koch, EU Delegation, Washington

Materials research with South East Asia

A successful EU-South East Asia workshop was held last November in Hanoi, Vietnam, sponsored by the [SEA-EU-NET](#) project and supported by the Institute of Materials Science in Hanoi, the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Materials S&T and the European Commission. The workshop brought together Asian and European experts working in the areas of catalysis, environment and health to identify potential areas of mutual research interest. Four potential research topics in the area of photocatalytic materials were identified. These will be submitted and proposed along with the [final workshop report](#) to EU and ASEAN authorities for consideration as potential future research topics for action in FP7.

For more information, contact Helge Wessel, DG RTD, Dir G

Eastern Partnership countries: Cooperation in high temperature materials

A workshop involving high-level experts from the EU and the six countries of the Eastern Partnership group of countries was held in Kyiv on 25-26 November. The workshop which was jointly organised by the Commission and the Ukrainian State Committee on Science, Innovation and Informatisation, served to exchange ideas and views on potential areas for future research cooperation in advanced high-temperature materials for core and novel engineering. The workshop was very successful: highlighting that there is indeed common ground for possible co-operation research in the fields of materials for energy conversion, energy transfer and storage. Full information is set out in the [final report](#) from the workshop.

For more information, contact Achilleas Stalios, DG RTD, Dir. G

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS (MARCH – JUNE 2011)

Joint Committee Meetings			Other Meetings		
22 March	China	Brussels	2 March	SIRIC Meeting	Brussels
1 April	India	Brussels	Regional Meetings		
7 April	Turkey	Ankara	28-29 March	EU-LAC Senior Officials Meeting	Brussels
29 June	Russia	Brussels	5 May	Eastern Partnership Platform Meeting	Brussels