



NEWSLETTER

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EASIER targets SMEs in regional ICT clusters to join European research activities

The EASIER project, launched in October 2005 is embarking on an exercise to engage with SMEs in regional ICT clusters and encourage them to get more involved in European level research, primarily under the Seventh Framework Programme, the EU's research funding programme.

Working in 16 European regions and 12 countries the project will catalyse EU RTD projects by drawing on the strengths of existing regional networks and building a new transnational partnership. The partners – a mix of consultancies, business incubator organisations, national research councils, EICs and technology transfer offices – will target SMEs from their network of contacts and invite them to participate in a variety of EASIER training and support events and activities. For more information please download the leaflet at: www.eti-easier.org

SME- brokerage event in Istanbul, January 2007

EASIER partners will organise a brokerage events in Istanbul in January 2007 just after the launch of Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). The event, which will focus on the ICT thematic area of FP7, will target SMEs, universities, research institutions, authorities, FP6 project coordinators or other interested.

The purpose of the event is to create a meeting point for technology request, offers and exchange. You will also meet coordinators and potential partners for EU Framework programme 7 projects from all over Europe. One of the main aims of the event is to facilitate the foundations for FP7 projects within the thematic areas of ICT. Please contact one of the EASIER partners for more information.

Agreement on budgets for FP7 sub-programmes 'within reach', says Presidency

An agreement on how the 54 billion euros budget for the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) will be allocated is 'within reach', according to Austrian Minister for Education, Science and Culture, and current chair of the EU's Competitiveness Council, Elisabeth Gehrler. Ms Gehrler spoke at a press conference following an informal meeting of the Competitiveness Council in Graz. 'Following today's meeting, I am very confident we will get an agreement among the Member States in June,' said the minister. For more information, please visit <http://cordis.europa.eu/int/austria/>

Court of Auditors calls for increased simplification and flexibility in FP7 rules for participation

The European Commission's proposal on rules for participation for the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), 'misses [an] opportunity for a radical change', according to the European Court of Auditors.

The main weaknesses in the Commission's proposal concern the transaction cost per Euro spent, excessively cumbersome grants and a lack of flexibility. 'Whilst it is recognised that a certain degree of complexity is inevitable, the Court considers that the Commission proposal misses the opportunity to bring about radical changes to the administrative and financial rules for the Seventh Framework Programme,' states the Court's opinion.

For news articles please visit: <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/>

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eGovernment: Commission calls for ambitious objectives in EU for 2010.

Hundreds of billions of euros could be saved for European taxpayers every year as a result of administrative modernisation in the 25 EU Member States, outlined recently in the European Commission's eGovernment Action Plan. Information and communication technology is the key to modernising government services: making them more efficient and more responsive. 100% take-up of electronic invoicing and electronic public procurement is predicted to save 300 billion euros every year. The new eGovernment action plan adopted recently by the European Commission addresses five priority areas for 2010: 1) No citizen left behind, 2) Raising efficiency, 3) Implementing e-Procurement, 4) Safe access to services EU wide, 5) Strengthening participation and democratic decision-making. For further information http://europa.eu.int/information_society/activities/egovernment_research/index_en.htm

Call for proposal under the Preparatory Action in the field of Security

A third and final call for proposal under the Preparatory Action in the field of Security Research (PASR) was published on 10 February 2006. Its aim is to develop, demonstrate and validate technology solutions for security problems in five target areas. The Call, identified as PASR 2006, focuses on: Situation awareness; Protection of networked systems; Protection against terrorism; Crisis management; Interoperability of control and communications systems. Closing date is 10 May 2006. For full information on the call, see the Security Research Calls page on the CORDIS website.

eTEN

eTEN is the European Community Programme designed to help the deployment of telecommunication networks based services (e-services) with a trans-European dimension. It focuses strongly on public services, particularly in areas where Europe has a competitive advantage. The European Commission and the European Economic Area (EEA) have signed on 10 March a Memorandum of Understanding for participation of the three EEA EFTA States (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) in the eTEN programme. The three countries concerned will be able to participate in the eTEN call for proposals 2006. [More eTEN documentation in our Library.](#)

eTEN call for proposals

On 17th of February the call for proposals 2006 was published in the Official Journal. The call for proposals is the main action under the work programme. The closing date of the call is 19 May.

EUREKA is a pan-European network for market-oriented, industrial R&D

Created as an intergovernmental Initiative in 1985, **EUREKA** aims to enhance European competitiveness through its support to businesses, research centers and universities who carry out pan-European projects to develop innovative products, processes and services. Through its flexible and decentralised Network, **EUREKA** offers project partners rapid access to a wealth of knowledge, skills and expertise across Europe and facilitates access to national public and private funding schemes. The EUREKA project's focus is on bringing products to market, and tends to look to innovative small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

CELTIC is a **EUREKA** cluster programme, which initiates and runs privately and publicly funded R&D projects in the field of telecommunications. The initiative is supported by most of the major European players in communication technologies. CELTIC projects are focusing at telecoms networks, applications, and services based on a complete-system approach. CELTIC is the only European R&D programme fully dedicated to complete system-integrated telecommunications solutions. The size of the CELTIC budget is in the range of 1 billion euros
CELTIC website: www.celtic-initiative.org

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IST 2006 - Strategies for Leadership

This year's edition of the most important European event in the field of Information Society Technologies will coincide with the launch of the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development. IST 2006 includes a high-level conference, an exhibition of cutting edge research results from across Europe and a programme of networking sessions and workshops. Three strands, but one overriding aim: to help achieving Europe's innovative potential in developing and rolling out Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). The preliminary conference programme is now live.

Contribute to the "3% race"!

If you want to contribute to the progress of science and technology in the EU, whether you are a student looking for future perspectives or an enterprise looking for funding for one of its innovation projects, you should have a look at the new "Investment in Research website", also called "3% website".

The new website offers you a wealth of precious information, amongst which:

- Latest news and events
- EU proposals and initiatives to promote investment in research
- EU funding schemes
- National and regional policies
- Coordination of policies

European Technology platforms (ETPs)

The purpose of the platforms is to ensure an adequate focus of research funding on areas with a high degree of industrial relevance, by covering the whole economic value chain and by mobilising public authorities at national and regional levels. The platforms will provide a framework for stakeholders, led by industry to define RTD priorities, time frames and action plans. The platforms address technological challenges that can contribute to a number of key policy objectives and can be powerful actors in the development of European research policy and in particular FP7. Currently there are 29 ETPs among those several ICT related like MEN, eMobility, ARTEMIS, NASSIR. Individual presentations can be found at http://cordis.europa.eu.int/technology-platforms/individual_en.html

More about EASIER:

The main aim of the project is to increase the competitiveness of SMEs involved in ICT RTD tasks in Europe. To tackle some of the problems faced by smaller enterprises wishing to take part in European research projects and networks.

EASIER covers sixteen European regions from south, east, west and north in Europe: Turkey, Greece, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Portugal, Spain, UK, Denmark, Poland and Norway.

How?

Identify and engage motivated ICT related SMEs through regional networks. Through company visits and audits, events at regional level, transnational brokerage events and a number of new tools in order to assist SMEs. A database of interested and potential candidates of SMEs into European research projects. Identification of research opportunities for SMEs in European, or other non-FP7 RTD funding opportunities like EUREKA/Celtic. Also national or regional opportunities can be screened. EASIER partners will assist in the process from idea to engagement in European research and innovation activities.

You are welcome to visit the web site at www.eti-easier.org

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