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Ministers of the G8 nations. **Share** The World's Resources.

As the meetings in Heiligendamm come to an end, may we ask you to pause and remember those you are called to represent. Now is the time to leave aside the fixation with economic dominance, military strength and corporate welfare, and instead prioritise the rights of the majority world, 50,000 of whom die needlessly every day having been denied the essentials of life.

Ministers, as you continue to discuss the fate of Africa, let us not forget that after decades of pledges the continent is more impoverished than it was in 1980 when the Brandt Report was published.

May we point out that the current system of international aid is largely ineffective, insufficient, and incapable of ending poverty. As civil society repeatedly condemns your broken promises for more aid, may we remind you that the Millennium Development Goals, even if reached by 2015, will still leave 900 million people living on less than one dollar a day.

For how much longer will you believe in the ability of market forces to create wealth and prosperity for all? For how long must we point out that your priorities are based on competitive self-interest, that the endless pursuit of economic growth is leading us toward ecological disaster?

Ministers, must we remind you that enough food, water and medicine exists in surplus for every person on the planet, that honouring your commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a foremost duty which you have neglected to fulfil.

Will you ever concede that the WTO, World Bank and IMF, armed with biased neoliberal ideology, have failed to represent the majority and function principally to sustain your financial hegemony and the power of multinationals?

As you conclude your private summit, we would like to tell you that the rest of the world is faced with two distinct choices. Either we continue on the path of commercialisation, over-consumption, and geo-political instability – or else we work towards a sustainable future in which competition is replaced with cooperation and resources are more equally shared.

Sharing is not an 'ism' or an ideology but a natural law of economy, a simple process that, when implemented in world affairs, can transform the way resources are distributed and lead to peaceful international relations.

The campaign for global economic reform based upon the principle of sharing is gathering momentum. It calls for essential resources such as food, water, medicine, land and energy to be cooperatively owned by the public and shared internationally under the auspices of a reformed United Nations.

**Ministers of the G8, our message is clear –
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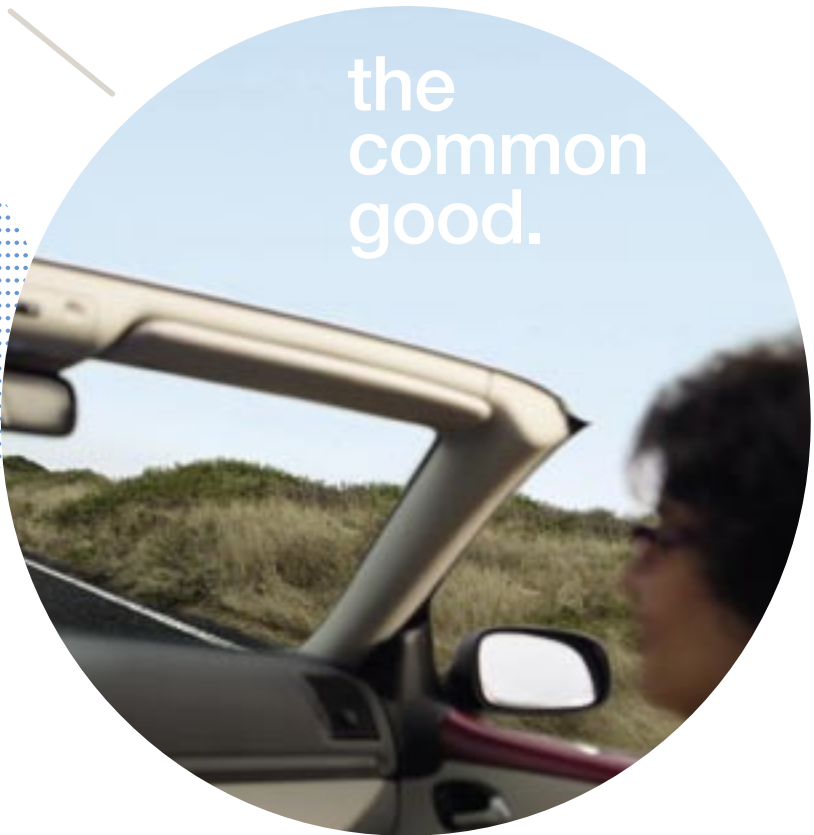
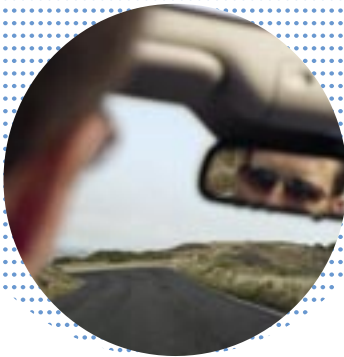
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Along with other industry leaders, we've helped establish a research centre at Stanford University in California, dedicated to finding new technologies that meet the world's growing energy needs, whilst dramatically reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It's called the Global Climate and Energy Project, a pioneering low greenhouse gas energy research initiative. Programmes now include research awards to a number of institutions in Europe. It's challenging the world's best minds to develop new thinking and new energy solutions. Which is good news for all of us.

Editor's comment

Strasbourg is a beautiful Alsatian town but the monthly commute blights the lives of MEPs and their staff. Some deputies have to leave as early as Sunday in order to arrive for meetings. Which member state would allow their national parliaments to work from two sites? The European parliament is the only parliament in the world which has no say over where it sits. The decision rests with the member state governments and this has to change.

The campaign for parliamentary reform (CPR) has just conducted a poll of MEP opinion on the one-seat issue. 306 MEPs voted and the results confirm that 89 per cent of MEPs



not only want one permanent seat for the European parliament but that 81 per cent want the seat to be in Brussels and to end the monthly trips to Strasbourg. 84 per cent also believed that parliament should be able to decide on its own location. To date this poll marks the most extensive survey of MEPs on the one-seat question. There is no doubt that

MEPs would welcome change.

So will the French finally say "au revoir" to Strasbourg? The new president of France has an opportunity to show his true European credentials. As someone not afraid of sticking his neck out he would gain a huge amount of political kudos if he allowed the European parliament to choose its own home.

After the "no" vote in France, he could show that he was pro-reform of the EU and was willing to take the practical step of allowing the EU to work more effectively and efficiently by having one site for the parliament. He could send a clear message on climate change and carbon foot prints by ending the Strasbourg sojourn.

The timing could not be better as discussions over the demise of the constitution and the debate on treaty changes provides prime ministers and presidents with an ideal opportunity to end the Strasbourg travelling circus once and for all. The political climate is right, the timing is right and the opportunity is there. For the sake of the EU and its legitimacy, please stop Strasbourg!

Catherine Stihler MEP

"Strongly held ethical or religious beliefs are all well and good – indeed, we are constantly being reminded of the important role such beliefs played in the creation of the EU – but political considerations have to take precedence in parliament"



"Cell therapy can also be used to repair heart tissue damage after a heart attack – heart disease is on the increase, and more than 1.5 million people in the EU die every year from it, despite a wide number of pharmaceutical treatments"



"Every day, almost 10 people die in Europe while waiting for an organ transplant. The mortality rate of patients waiting for a heart, liver or lung transplant is between 15 and 30 per cent"



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"The effectiveness of national market liberalisation openings has depended on the manner in which these directives have been implemented. Major differences still exist between member states on this issue"

"The European elections in Bulgaria demonstrated that neither the BSP nor the old right-of the centre parties such as UDF have recognised that the electorate needs if not new ideas, then at least new faces"



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EDITORIAL TEAM

Managing editor
Brian Johnson

Deputy editor
Chris Jones

Anne-France White,
Martin Banks,
Anthony Fletcher

International Press Centre
Boulevard Charlemagne 1
Box 2 Brussels 1041

Tel +32 (0) 2 285 0828
newsdesk@eupolitix.com

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor
Catherine Stihler MEP

Editorial board
Johannes Blokland MEP, Astrid Lulling MEP
Struan Stevenson MEP, Manuel Medina Ortega MEP

PRODUCTION
Jeanelle Wolhuter
Leslie McCutcheon

Advertising production
John Levers
Tel +44 (0) 20 7091 7529

COMMERCIAL AND SALES

Director
Andrew Oliver

Anna Idoyatova, Obe Seddiq, Nicola Joubert
Tel +44 (0) 20 7091 7660

Subscriptions
Alexandra Stanislavjevic
Tel +44 (0) 20 7091 7664
www.theparliament.com

PUBLISHER & MANAGING DIRECTOR

Martin Beck
Dods Parliamentary Communications

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Philip Beausire Tel +44 (0) 20 7091 7661

PRINTER

Corelio Printing Vorst, Brussels
Tel +32 (0) 2 210 0100

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Hearing condemns US missile base plans

Plans to install an anti-missile shield system in Europe have been condemned by the mayor of Trokavec, the tiny Czech Republic village where it will be based. Speaking in parliament, Jan Neoral criticised the move, saying it will contribute to a new arms race and create divisions between member states. Neoral was in Brussels last week to attend a hearing – organised by the EUN/NGL group – on US plans to build a huge radar station less than one kilometre from the village.

The White House says the ballistic missile defence system will protect the US and some allies from nuclear attack. But some European officials worry it would make the continent more of a target and that deteriorating relations with Russia would harm Europe. Speaking at a news conference on Tuesday, Neoral, a retired electrician, said he objected to the move. “The main reason is health and the negative effect of radiation from the radar facility on the inhabitants of mine and other villages,” he said. “But there are also political reasons. Building this radar station will help create a new arms race, new mutual suspicions and will violate agreements that existed when the Czech Republic joined Nato.”

Pat Cox says EU must regain citizens' trust

EU citizens are more interested in what Europe can do for them rather than the intricacies of how it works, according to former parliament president Pat Cox. This is the conclusion of an extensive public consultation exercise unveiled on 12 June as part of the European commission's Plan D strategy. Cox used a motoring metaphor to sum up public opinion on the protracted debate over a European constitution. “People are not especially interested in the car engine but, rather, are more focused on its ability to travel to the desired policy destinations,” he said. “In short, they are results and not process oriented.”

The project, coordinated by the European Movement International (EMI), is designed to learn how ordinary people view the EU's future and will conclude with a trans-national poll in the autumn. “Political leaders need to regain citizens' trust and confidence in the European project,” said Cox, who is the president of EMI. MEP Jo Leinen, meanwhile, called on EU heads of state attending the 21-22 June summit in Brussels to avoid a “low-level” compromise that would “significantly” dilute the existing constitutional text.



Caring for the carers

A new group designed to raise awareness of the work done by carers throughout Europe has been launched in the parliament. The “interest group on carers” will work alongside Eurocarers, a new European organisation comprising representatives from different member states. MEP Kathy Sinnott, acting chair of the interest group, said at the launch on 12 June that unpaid caring will become the “bedrock” of community care in future.

“Across Europe, there are millions of carers providing unpaid care by looking after an ill, frail or disabled family member, friend or partner,” she said. “Therefore, it is time for the EU to consider the role and contribution of unpaid care to health and social care systems. If carers are to continue to care, measures need to be taken to safeguard their rights and interests.”



Experts call for better science teaching

An expert group led by MEP Michel Rocard has called for a new approach to science education that breaks with traditional pedagogical methods. In a report delivered on 12 June to commissioners Janez Potočnik and Ján Figel', Rocard said that change was vital. “For more than 15 years, the numbers entering sciences and mathematics have been diminishing strongly,” he said. “This is true of North America and Europe, and there are signs of this in Asian countries.”

Rocard's report calls on policy makers across Europe to implement change and sets out what this change should be – the adoption of inquiry-based science education. The report also observes that effective collaboration at the European level is being translated into actions at the local level, but the scale is insufficient, and articulation with national programmes should be greatly improved.

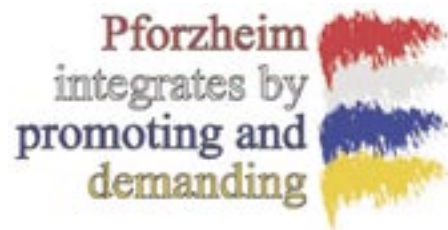
MEPs vote on single seat

A poll of MEPs conducted by the Campaign for Parliament Reform has revealed that an overwhelming majority want one permanent seat for the European parliament. The survey found that 89 per cent favour a single seat and 81 per cent want the seat to be in Brussels, and so end the regular trips to Strasbourg. The monthly commute to the Alsace city, which is enshrined in an EU treaty, costs an estimated €200m a year. Of those who responded to the poll, a further 84 per cent also believed the parliament should be able to decide on its own the location of its seat. Of the 785 ballot papers sent out to deputies last week, 306 were returned.

This represents 39 per cent of all members and, according to CPR, gives them a representative result. ALDE deputy Alexander Alvaro, who is the chair of CPR, welcomed the results. “This is the first time MEPs have properly been given the opportunity to vote on this issue and it is quite clear that they have spoken loud and clear,” he said. “With the results of this poll, coupled with one million citizens signing the oneseat.eu petition, one hopes the member states will take notice and begin a real dialogue on changing the treaty.”

His comments were echoed by UK ALDE MEP Chris Davies, the CPR member who initiated the poll. “Whatever the arguments of the past a huge majority want the parliament to be a strong and democratic voice for the people of Europe firmly located at the heart of the EU institutions.” Parliament Magazine MEP editor Catherine Stihler said it was time for national governments to “bite the bullet and end the wasteful monthly commute and to give the European parliament a long overdue permanent home in Brussels”.

The successful implementation of European employment strategy in Pforzheim



The city of Pforzheim, known locally as the "Gateway to the Black Forest" has approximately 115,000 inhabitants. This southern German town is integrated into the European Union through a variety of activities and trade relations (jewellery, watches, mail order companies, design) and through town twinning.

For many years now, Pforzheim has been undergoing a process of economic and structural change. Although the city has a relatively high rate of unemployment when compared to the rest of Baden-Württemberg, many of the long-term unemployed whose prospects would otherwise be extremely poor receive in-depth support which enables them to find their way back on to the job market. This policy is being successfully implemented in Pforzheim by virtue of the city's overall integrated concept. The orientation towards the European strategy on employment is underlined by the staffing and task-related ties between the European Coordinator and the city's employment promotion department. The European employment strategy is implemented primarily with the following three priorities in mind:

1. Improvement of human capital through selective measures aimed at young people of low educational achievement at the transition from school to work
2. Improvement of job opportunities for and integration of disadvantaged persons by means of active and preventative measures aimed at reducing long-term unemployment; improvement of employability through accompanying measures; activating and supporting local potentials for social integration.
3. The promotion of alliances and networks, the combating of racism and xenophobia,

the promotion of equal opportunities for men and women and targeted support for people with special needs are treated as interdisciplinary topics in the context of employment promotion activities.

For its employment promotion programme the city of Pforzheim enjoys the support of the European Social Fund, the German government and the federal state of Baden-Württemberg. One example of good practice is the implementation of the Community's "EQUAL" initiative. Here sub-projects for disadvantaged target groups are developed, starting with the school-work transition through the long-term unemployed to people with special needs. The ESF is offering the long-term unemployed the chance to integrate into the job market by piloting a combined wage model (KOLIPRI Pforzheim). Older unemployed persons of over fifty years of age ("silverstars") are given new opportunities through a competence centre and through links to younger persons (the "Perspective 50+" programme). Since lack of opportunity and unemployment are unevenly distributed throughout the community, advantage is taken of the ESF-sponsored programme "Local Capital for Social Purposes". In the key area of supporting the transition from school to work the examples of the production school and the job shop should be mentioned alongside the sub-project in the "EQUAL" programme. The production school is intended for young people who can not cope with the school system and offers them an alternative combining learning with work. The job shop was developed as a means of integrating unemployed migrants whose cases are handled by social workers in the field.

A key factor in the strategy of all projects is the promotion of local networks in which the relevant players such as chambers of commerce, trade

unions and public bodies offering services and job-finding resources for the unemployed are involved along with the education authority. Similarly, academic bodies and research organisations are involved in the planning and implementation of projects. The "EQUAL" Development Partnership "Pforzheim integrates by promoting and demanding" is an illustrative example of success: the network is governed by a contract and institutionalised. By this key innovations are quickly integrated into the mainstream. The accompanying evaluation of the projects contributes to the regular process of assessment and thereby enhances efficiency and effectiveness.

The city's employment promotion programme makes the European Union visible to people in Pforzheim through its transnational activities and public relations work in the context of specific projects.



Gemeinschaftsinitiative
Equal



Supported by the German Federal Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs and the European Social Fund

PIFF GbR
Blumenhof 4, 75175 Pforzheim
email: equal@stadt-pforzheim.de
Home page: <http://equal.pforzheim.de>

General Manager
Herr Andreas Hammer
tel: ++ 49 (0)7231 39 32 51
Project coordination
Frau Sabine Happel-Tominski
tel: ++ 49 (0)7231 39 20 90

Safer, more portable pensions?



The key debate in Strasbourg will focus on a report by Dutch MEP Ria Oomen-Ruijten on the setting of minimum standards for supplementary pension rights. Wednesday's debate will look at how measures allowing workers to transfer their pension rights from country to country could facilitate mobility within and between EU member states.

With Europe's rapidly ageing population putting increasing pressure on state-run pension schemes, many companies, at least in western Europe, have opted for private pensions, but these often come with restrictions obliging workers to have completed a minimum number of years of employment or to have contributed a certain amount to the scheme before being able to benefit from it. Few schemes are completely transferable from one job to another, and fewer still can be carried by workers from one country to another.

Oomen-Ruijten's report broadly endorses the European commission's proposal to set minimum standards

across the EU to allow employees to benefit fully from pension rights acquired wherever they have worked. But parliament's employment committee went a step further, insisting that the rules should apply to all pension schemes, however they are funded – the commission had limited the scope to just certain types of scheme.

The committee also set out new rules for acquiring the pension rights – in particular giving workers the right to take their pensions with them after five years of service or once they have reached 25. If workers leave a job before either of these conditions is fulfilled, they should be reimbursed for any contributions made to pension schemes.

Dormant rights – acquired by paying into a company scheme – should also be protected once the employee has left the company, the committee stressed, a procedure considered easier by MEPs than allowing those rights to be transferred, as the commission suggests, since pension and taxation legislation

is so divergent across the EU that this would become too complicated.

In a related issue, MEPs will on Tuesday debate the findings of the temporary committee into the crisis at UK-based Equitable Life, which collapsed with the loss of millions of pounds from private pension schemes. The committee-backed recommendations by rapporteur Diana Wallis for tougher rules to prevent such collapses happening again are expected to be endorsed by MEPs, as will its strong criticisms of the way the affair was handled by London, including poor transposition of EU life insurance rules, and even poorer administration of the company by UK regulators.

Britain will be called on to establish a compensation fund for the many investors who lost everything as a result of the company's collapse, while the European commission will be urged to play a far greater role in monitoring the way in which pension companies are run in order to prevent similar crises from happening in the future. →



Spirited debate

Controversial proposals on the definition of alcoholic beverages will be debated by MEPs at the June plenary session in Strasbourg. Deputies are divided in particular over the rules affecting vodka, with a lobby from traditional vodka-producing countries in Scandinavia and Poland pushing for a restricted definition in line with that for whisky, rum, Cognac and most other spirits made in the EU. Producers in these countries – backed by their MEPs – have pushed for the name vodka to be limited to products made only from grain or potatoes. The drink is also currently made from other ingredients such as molasses or sugar beet.

MEPs on parliament's environment committee voted last week to back the grain/potato lobby after lengthy talks with member states, leaving some deputies angry that products made from other ingredients would now have to be labelled differently. Some British MEPs in particular were concerned that popular UK vodka brands made from molas-

ses would have to carry an additional warning stating that the drink was made from the ingredient, a move they claimed could confuse consumers and potentially give the drink a "second-class" image. The committee had originally voted to allow grain, potatoes and molasses as acceptable ingredients, but bowed to pressure from council to reword the report at second reading.

The report by German MEP Horst Schnellhardt also sets new rules on the addition of flavours to spirits, with the environment committee voting to ban the use of flavourings in rum, whisky, grain spirits, wine spirits, brandies and others. The addition of sweeteners will also be regulated. But given the numerous rewrites of the report – which now differs substantially from the initial commission proposal, which merely updated existing rules to bring them into line with internal trade legislation – any number of new amendments could be tabled before the debate on 18 June, not least from the molasses lobby, which is determined to fight its corner to the last.

Cats, contracts and civil liberties

The rest of the Strasbourg session contains a truly mixed bag of reports up for debate and endorsement. Rules that would ban the trade in cat and dog fur in the EU will be discussed on Monday, with parliament expected to back proposals to close a loophole that currently allows trade in such fur provided the animals concerned were "not bred or killed for fur production".

Monday will conclude with a debate on multiple sclerosis. Tuesday will feature debates on public procurement legislation, with a call to tighten up the rules on awarding public sector contracts, as well as the controversial subject of mercury use and storage, which saw the environment committee call for a complete import and export ban by 2010. Funding for Galileo, progress towards the millennium development goals and a review of the G8 summit in Germany also feature on Tuesday.

Wednesday will see discussion of the recent decision to extend the euro-zone to Cyprus and Malta from 2008, as well as the thorny issue of EU aid to Palestine. Wednesday afternoon centres on civil liberties issues, including combating racism and xenophobia. Thursday kicks off with a debate on the awarding of contracts, and will also include a vote on a resolution on the situation in the Middle East.



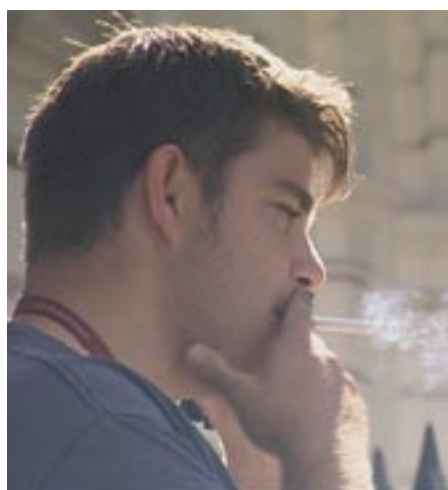
Pfizer supports complete smoking ban in public areas and improved access to smoking cessation treatments across Europe

- Smoking Causes 15% of EU Deaths
- Daily cost of Cardiovascular Diseases estimated €463 Million

As the world's leading life sciences company, Pfizer welcomes the European Commission's Green Paper on smoke free environments¹, which was put for public consultation earlier this year. In time for World No Tobacco Day (May 31st), Pfizer submitted its recommendations on the questions raised in the Commission's Paper. The Consultation was due to conclude on June 1st.

To effectively support millions of Europeans in their efforts to stop smoking, improve their health and prolong lives; to protect non-smokers from the damaging influence of passive smoke; and to prevent young people from taking up the habit, European decision-makers should endorse the following measures:

- A total ban on smoking in public places as the most effective way to encourage quitting and discourage taking up smoking.
- The introduction of binding EU legislation to implement such bans, as the most appropriate way to ensure compliance across the EU.
- The implementation of supportive measures, such as awareness raising campaigns and increased access to cessation therapies, including funding of therapies, to maximise the impact of smoking bans.



The WHO-sponsored "World No Tobacco Day" also focused on smoke-free environments this year. On its website, the World Health Organization stated that the evidence demands immediate, decisive action to protect the health of all people. "100% smoke free is the only answer."² This is further supported by Article 8 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC): Protection from exposure to tobacco smoke,² which has been signed and ratified by the European Community.

Tobacco is the single largest cause of avoidable death in the European Union accounting for over half a million deaths each year and over a million deaths in Europe as a whole³. It is estimated that 15% of all deaths, 25% of

all cancer deaths³, and 16% of all deaths from cardiovascular diseases (CVD)⁴ in men in the Union can be attributed to smoking.

Smoking, however, does not only kill, it costs money to EU citizens and governments: CVD alone is estimated to cost EU Member States €463 million per day, mostly due to direct healthcare costs (62%) and productivity losses (21%)⁴.

"There is a tremendous urgency for EU Member States to introduce a comprehensive and holistic set of policies aimed at protecting their citizens by reducing tobacco use and preventing tobacco related diseases in Europe", said MD Jack Watters, Pfizer's Vice President of International Medical Affairs. The urgency of these policies are recognized worldwide⁵ including the introduction of smoking bans as well as improved access to smoking cessation therapies for smokers motivated to quit.

In the field of smoking cessation, measures based on compromise are destined to fail. Pfizer welcomes the important process the Commission has set in motion by issuing this Green Paper. "The European Union and Member States should now show the political courage to endorse the most comprehensive and all-inclusive policy options", said Watters. "Pfizer will strongly support every effort that leads to better health and disease prevention in Europe."

Footnotes

1 "Towards a Europe free from tobacco smoke: policy options at EU level", published on January 30, 2007.

2 <http://www.who.int/tobacco/communications/events/wntd/2007/en/>

3 European Commission (http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/Tobacco/tobacco_en.htm)

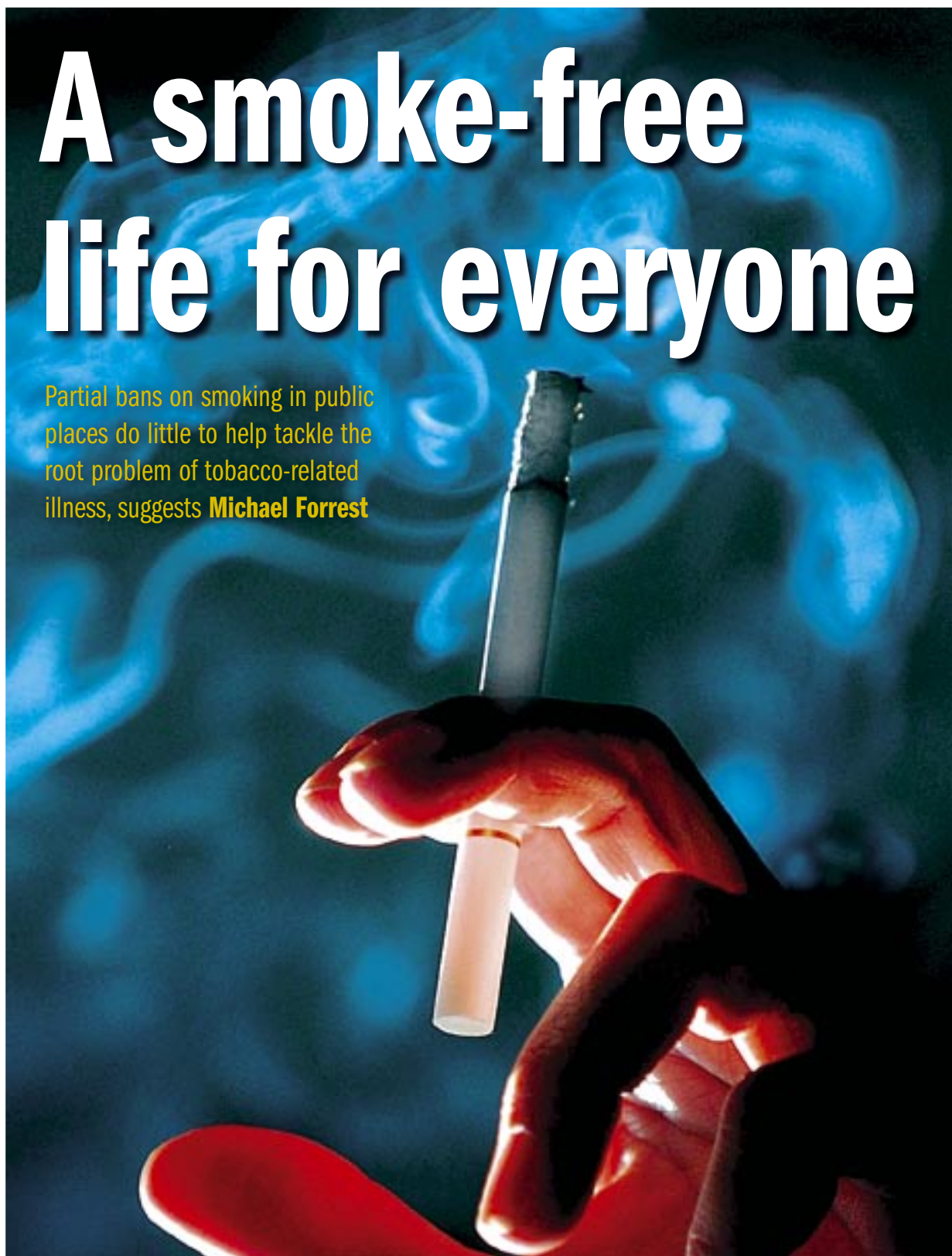
4 British Heart Foundation, European Heart Network, "European Cardiovascular Diseases Statistics", February 2005 - <http://www.ehnheart.org/files/statistics%202005-092711A.pdf>, accessed April 2007

5 See WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on the WHO Website <http://www.who.int/tobacco/framework/en/>



A smoke-free life for everyone

Partial bans on smoking in public places do little to help tackle the root problem of tobacco-related illness, suggests **Michael Forrest**



Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (or passive smoking) is an important cause of illness and death in the EU. In fact, tobacco smoke contains more than 4000 chemical compounds, including more than 50 known carcinogens, as well as numerous toxic substances. Many studies have demonstrated the health risks, such as respiratory disease.

Tobacco smoke is also a major irritant to people suffering from asthma, allergic illnesses and other chronic diseases, leading to social and work exclusion and unnecessary illness. In its green paper published on 30 January 2007, the European commission stressed that one of its priorities was to move towards a smoke-free Europe. The European Network for Smoking Prevention (ENSP) clearly supports this objective wholeheartedly and works towards strengthening moves in all member states to introduce comprehensive smoking bans in public places and workplaces.

At present regulatory measures take a multitude of forms. There are comprehensive bans on smoking in all public and workplaces (including the hospitality sector), such as those introduced in Ireland (March 2004), Scotland (March 2006), Wales (April 2007), Northern Ireland (April 2007) and England (on 1 July 2007). There are also bans featuring certain exemptions, as is the case in France, Italy, Malta, Sweden and Finland, as well as bans in all enclosed public places and workplaces with the exception of the hospitality sector (where partial bans are in force), as in Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Netherlands, Slovenia and Spain. Most EU member states have some form of smoking ban or restrictions on smoking in most public places. ENSP actively supports a comprehensive ban on smoking in all public places and workplaces, as this is the only way to reduce exposure to tobacco smoke.

Partial bans, particularly bans in the hospitality sector, do not work and only result in confusion and non-compliance. Everybody deserves the same level of protection. Offering protection from a known carcinogen to some workers, while at the same time excluding others, cannot be justified under any existing principles of occupational health and safety. This is particularly the case for workers in the hospitality sector, who are known to be exposed to some of the highest levels of passive smoking and toxins and are also most likely to be denied the protection given by workplace smoking bans if exemptions are granted. Partial bans are economically unfair because they can lead to an uneven playing field.

When employers were given the choice, as was the case in Spain, where bars and restaurants under 100m² have the right to remain smoking premises or to become non-smoking venues, fewer than 10 per cent of establishments became non-smoking after Spanish smoke-free legislation came into force on 1 January 2006. The aim of a total ban is to protect everybody (including hospitality sector workers, technical and

cleaning personnel) from second-hand smoke. Furthermore, smoking bans are the most effective way to “denormalise” smoking in society, also helping to reduce active smoking.

The green paper opened up the public debate on the best way to achieve protection from passive smoking in the EU by asking all stakeholders to submit their responses by 1 June 2007. ENSP has consulted with all its members (more than 600 organisations actively involved in tobacco control in Europe) and the policy option agreed upon by the majority of members was to support binding legislation on the European level while at the same time not excluding the option for a strong commission or council recommendation. ENSP believes that strong and clear legislation is the only way to adequately protect European citizens from exposure to passive smoking.

Many countries have already provided evidence that this policy is both viable and enforceable. The latest Eurobarometer reveals that an overwhelming majority of people (some 88 per cent) support smoke-free offices, indoor workplaces and public spaces. A majority of Europeans are also in favour of smoke-free bars (62 per cent) and restaurants (77 per cent). Support for smoke-free policies is highest among citizens in countries where such policies have already been introduced, such as Ireland, Sweden and Italy. However, no member state should wait for EU regulations but should start the process of implementing smoke-free environments as quickly as possible. ★

“Offering protection from a known carcinogen to some workers, while at the same time excluding others, cannot be justified under any existing principles of occupational health and safety”



Michael Forrest is information officer for the European Network for Smoking Prevention

Czechs check new ways in soft skills development



“Competencies for Labour Market” EQUAL Project in the Moravian-Silesian Region of the Czech Republic has been confirmed a good practice model in LED: Local Employment Development. RPIC-ViP and 20 partners prepare a unique programme for soft skills development within the life-long learning process from primary schools to senior age.

Project Rationale

Development of key competencies demanded by employers increase opportunities of students, unemployed and employees to succeed on the labour market. Key competencies, however, do not play an important role in the school curricula and in the training programmes for adults. Based on the analysis of more than 2.000 interviews with employers the Competence Model was identified which includes the following 14 key competencies:

1. Communication
2. Co-operation
3. Entrepreneurship
4. Flexibility
5. Customer orientation
6. Efficiency
7. Independence and decisiveness
8. Solving the problems
9. Organizing and planning
10. Life-long learning
11. Proactive approach
12. Stress resiliency
13. Exploring and orientation in information
14. Communication in foreign languages

Within the “Competencies for Labour Market” Project the training programmes have been developed in a form of training toolkits. These include manuals for trainers and trainees, DVD-video programmes, tools for testing competency level, tools for training and certification of competency trainers etc.



International dissemination and mainstreaming of the good practice

“Competencies for Labour Market” initiative co-operates with 8 other partnerships in 7 countries. The partners tested Czech tools with an interest to transfer them into their countries. In February 2007 a “demo training” of competencies took place in Barcelona for Catalan, Portugal, German and Polish partners. In May 2007 a demonstration training for education professionals from U.K. and Belgium was held in the Moravian-

Silesian Region. All these trainings received a highly positive feedback resulting in negotiations for their transfer and adaptation to other countries.

Mainstreaming the good practice: Ostrava – Czech Republic – European Union

Development of key competencies of individuals and integration of this approach into education systems have been a part of the relevant strategies on different levels, i.e. from Lisbon strategy of the European Union through national to local strategies. There is a common understanding on WHAT should be done but, as always, the HOW to do it is a major challenge. “Competencies for Labour Market” offers an innovative and relatively “easy-to-be-mainstreamed” solution. A confirmed interest of partners from other countries in the programme for soft skills development supports an idea to “internationalize” the whole Key Competencies Programme in the European Union. The first step is a transfer of all 14 toolkits from Czech to English language in the next months.

RPIC-ViP team wants to continue as a national Centre of Excellence for Key Competencies beyond the framework of the 2nd round of EQUAL.

The whole programme will be presented during the Employment Week in 2008. By this time everyone can find more information including self-evaluation tests of your soft skills in English version on the internet:

www.mamenato.cz

www.keycompetencies.eu

www.globalskills.eu

Contact details:

Zdenek Karasek
(Project Manager)
karasek@rpic-vip.cz,
++420 602 718 026



Laying down the law

ERA is gearing up to celebrate 15 years of training and debate for Europe's legal practitioners. **Wolfgang Heusel** reviews the academy's history and role

If lifelong learning has become the key to success in a knowledge-based world, then practitioners of European law clearly need the opportunity to train, debate and refresh their knowledge throughout their working lives. European law today is a fast developing, integral component of the law of each member state. Its effective application depends on its implementation by national authorities and courts and their guidance and inspiration by lawyers.

Mutual trust between the dispensers of justice in the EU member states is the essential requirement for mutual recognition – the governing principle of judicial cooperation in a European area of freedom, security and justice. Such mutual trust can only arise if there is mutual acquaintance with, and knowledge of, the different legal systems in the EU. Indeed the application of European law in general can only be effective if all legal players are aware of and understand existing EU legislation.

The Academy of European Law was established in the German city of Trier 15 years ago this month in order to meet this need for continuing professional training in European law and to provide a forum for debate and exchange at European level among legal practitioners – be it judges, prosecutors, attorneys, solicitors, barristers, in-house counsel or civil servants.

The genesis of the academy (known by its German acronym ERA) was associated with the rapid pace of European integration following Jacques Delors' single market initiative in the late eighties. With the Single European Act in 1986 and the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the scope of European legislation became wider than ever. The European parliament saw the need for practitioners to keep updating their knowledge of European law and in 1990 formally recommended that the European commission invest in a centre for the continuing education of lawyers.

Then in a 1991 report drafted by Dutch MEP James Janssen van Raay, the parliament endorsed the proposals of MEPs Horst Langes and Willi Rothley together with Peter Caesar, Justice Minister of the German Land of Rhineland-Palatinate, to establish an Academy of European Law in Trier. This ancient city, once the capital of the northern Roman Empire, was regarded as a particularly appropriate location due to its proximity to Luxembourg, the EU's judicial capital, which lies just half an hour away over the border. →



Delegates attend a recent ERA conference on tax fraud

The vogue for creating new agencies had not yet taken hold, however, so a “coalition of the willing” was needed to get the project off the ground. An association for the promotion of the Academy of European Law – known today as the “friends of ERA” – was established to turn the idea into reality. The Luxembourg government lent its support and the commission agreed to the parliament’s decision to provide the academy with regular funding. On 22 June 1992, the academy was formally established as a foundation, with the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the land of Rhineland-Palatinate, the city of Trier and the friends of ERA as founding patrons. Since then, 19 of the now 27 member states have joined (the latest being Slovenia on 25 May 2007). ERA moved into a modern purpose-built conference centre in Trier in 1998.

The academy’s work takes many forms. At the core of its programme are some 50 conferences and seminars each year for which any practitioner of law can register. These take from two days to a week and focus on different aspects of European law, from anti-discrimination legislation to the rules on VAT. Some are more basic training courses for practitioners just entering the field, others are more in-depth and focused on a specific issue, whilst others are regular events held each year to enable lawyers to keep up-to-date on the latest developments in their area.

ERA also organises legal policy debates which allow law-makers to hear the views and concerns of practitioners on draft legislation or to learn lessons from its implementation. Recent examples include a conference on minimum common standards in criminal proceedings in the framework of the German EU presidency and a series of seminars on European contract law as part of the joint network on European private law.

In addition to its programme of open events, the academy organises tailor-made training for both public institutions – in particular the EU institutions – and private firms.



“European law today is a fast developing, integral component of the law of each member state. Its effective application depends on its implementation by national authorities and courts and their guidance and inspiration by lawyers”

Since 1999, it has regularly organised seminars for the parliament’s legal service on a range of subjects from private international law through the charter of fundamental rights to WTO law and the legal aspects of the common foreign and security policy. Another tool in ERA’s kit for raising awareness and understanding of European law is its publications, in particular its quarterly journal ERA Forum, which contains a selection of the best papers presented at recent conferences. The academy is also investing in new e-learning technologies to enhance the quality and expand the reach of its training activities.

It has become commonplace to observe how European law today touches every aspect of our lives. The academy plays a special role as a European institution – if not an EU institution – in ensuring that this law is understood and applied correctly by practitioners, a role expressly recognised by the commission in its communication on judicial training of

29 June 2006. As it celebrates its 15th anniversary, the need for ERA’s work just keeps growing. ★



Dr Wolfgang Heusel is director of the Academy of European Law

Legal eagles

- The Academy of European Law (ERA) marks its 15th anniversary this year.
- ERA promotes the awareness, understanding and good practice of EU law by providing legal professionals with training and a forum for debate.
- It was founded in 1992 on the initiative of the European parliament.
- To celebrate its anniversary, the academy will present an exhibition in the parliament building in Brussels on 25-29 June on “ERA 1992-2007: 15 years in the service of European law”.

INTERCULTURAL CENTER FOR VOCATIONAL ADAPTATION (MCAZ)

Warsaw Poland



The Intercultural Center for Vocational Adaptation was established in 2005 as a partnership within the EFS EQUAL programme geared at the integration of immigrants and refugees in the EU labor market. The PL-8 partnership is led by the Institute of Social Prevention and Re-socialization at the Department of Applied Social Sciences and Re-socialization at Warsaw University, and it comprises the National Center for Support of Continuing and Vocational Education in Warsaw, Warsaw Center for Family Assistance, Foundation Against Trafficking of Women – La Strada and The Center for Education and Rehabilitation in Konstancin. The objective of the MCAZ is to promote an open labor market by means of facilitating the access to the market for those immigrants, refugees and minorities who are entitled to work in Poland. The other objective of the Partnership is to eliminate or at least minimize discrimination of culturally diverse people in the Polish labor market.

The activities of MCAZ are four-pronged:

- Organization of specialized trainings and courses
- Operation of the Intercultural Center for Vocational Counseling for Refugees and Immigrants
- Intervention assistance in crisis situations
- Organization of intercultural communication courses and post-graduate studies for professionals

Courses and training sessions are addressed to two groups of recipients. Culturally diverse beneficiaries participate in courses on Polish language and culture, and small business activities.

Polish professionals who deal with immi-

grants and refugees in the labor market (vocational counselors, social workers, education managers and employers) take courses in intercultural communication and post-graduate study provided by Warsaw University. The Vocational Counseling Center provides vocational, legal, psychological and cultural counseling plus the application of tests applicable to people of diverse cultural background. The Center promotes multicultural working teams and helps with the recognition of diplomas and qualification papers.

Intervention and help in crisis situations is the third area of the Center's activities. It focuses on vocational rehabilitation of the disabled as well as assistance to victims of human trafficking and social exclusions. As a partner of MCAZ, La Strada Foundation conducts a Vietnamese Help Line for women from Vietnamese diasporas.

MCAZ is a partner in two transnational partnerships dealing with the same issues: CEED and CONCENTUS.

The CEED Partnership involves four partners: Beyond Face Value in Lancaster UK, NOBI from Hamburg, Germany, INMEX from Extremadura in Spain and MCAZ.

The main objectives of the CEED partnership is to combat inequalities and disadvantages in the labor market faced by people as a result of their ethnic or cultural background by providing information, advice, counseling and training to disadvantaged individuals, stimulating business start-ups as well as raising general awareness within the host population.

The CONCENTUS Partnership also involves four partners: ASPIRE from Birmingham, UK, BRUEKE from Berlin/Germany, INCLUSION REFUGEES

NETWORK in Venice, Rome and Parma in Italy and MCAZ. The objective of CONCENTUS is to undertake a parallel comparison of national, legal and social frameworks in order to assess the impact and consequences of these on Asylum Seekers and Refugees, and to explore the possibilities for development of innovative ways of integrating Asylum Seekers and Refugees in the host countries.

On a more general and strategic level the activities and objectives of the two transnational partnerships are the identification and development of the good practices found in all member countries and, through the process of practical selection and refinement of those practices, to provide greater awareness in the host societies of the potential benefits immigrants and refugees can bring. As an even more general and strategic objective, the partnerships understand that those good practices and experiences will contribute to a general framework of immigrant and refugee legislation that will be adopted by the European Union as a whole. It is a deep conviction of the participants in the partnerships that issues related to the social mobility of people from countries outside of the EU will constitute a great challenge to the countries of united Europe.

Compiled by Marek Szopski –
Transnational Coordinator
and Katarzyna Szyniszewska –
Project Assistant
MCAZ Warsaw Poland
www.mcaz.org.pl

Respect for the law

Two prominent MEPs tell Parliament Magazine why, after 15 years, the Academy of European Law is more vital to Europe's future than ever

As a parliamentarian and as a lawyer who has long enjoyed and respected the work of the Academy of European Law, it is a delight to celebrate 15 years of the academy at the service of European law. This also comes at a time in the European Union's history when we have reason to celebrate fifty years since the signing of the treaty of Rome, but also to look forward and ask what comes next. It is therefore entirely apposite that the academy should be organising a big event this year to celebrate its own fifteenth birthday entitled "The future of legal Europe". The academy is uniquely placed to lead the discussion on this topic.

The time has now come to take notice of the pressures building up in the wake of Europe's citizens and businesses being increasingly active over the full geographical stretch of the enlarged EU. The question remains whether or not we have created a legal edifice that can assist and protect them when things go wrong. We need to look anew at what is necessary to provide a real Europe of justice along the lines originally set out at Tampere.

Are we also prepared to have a political rather than a technical discussion within the EU about civil and commercial law, so as to create a transparent structure that people can understand how to access, and that will not confront them with impossible costs and contradictions? It seems to some of us that we need an holistic vision of Europe's civil law system and indeed we need the courage to be able to call it that, not hide bits here and there either within internal market legislation or elsewhere in a piecemeal fashion.

There can be no doubt that the academy will celebrate its fifteenth year of operation at a critical time for the future development of the union's civil law. Unquestionably it will continue to bring together many participants from across "legal" Europe and send us away with much food for thought, and hopefully action.



Diana Wallis is a member of the academy's governing board and is vice president of the European parliament

"The time has now come to take notice of the pressures building up in the wake of Europe's citizens and businesses being increasingly active over the full geographical stretch of the enlarged Union"

Over the last 15 years, the Academy of European Law has made an immeasurable contribution to ensuring that practitioners of law across the EU understand and apply European law properly – and also to helping the European legislator to take account of practitioners' experience when drafting or amending legislation.

It is a unique institution in that it provides a genuinely European forum for lawyers from all member states to meet and exchange experiences. It is also unique in the sense that it caters for all the legal professions – both the judiciary and counsel, both academics and practitioners. This makes it an extremely valuable resource for the European parliament and the other European institutions because we can be confident that ERA will provide training and acquire expertise across

the national and professional spectrum. As chairman of ERA's executive board and as an MEP, it has been my pleasure to be associated with a number of activities in which the academy has provided a neutral platform for legal experts, legislators and stakeholders to discuss the future development of European law. This has been particularly valuable in terms of the debate on a common frame of reference for European contract law.

As it marks 15 years of hard-earned success, the demand for ERA's work has never been greater and the need for it to grow to meet that challenge is clear. It is not only in the new member states that practitioners need to learn continuously about the latest developments of European law. Without the sort of training provided by ERA, the concept of Europe as a community of law will never be realised. ★

"As chairman of ERA's executive board and as an MEP, it has been my pleasure to be associated with a number of activities in which the academy has provided a neutral platform for legal experts, legislators and stakeholders to discuss the future development of European law"



Klaus-Heiner Lehne is chairman of ERA's executive board and a member of the committee on legal affairs

Opening Doors to Diversity



© Skillset

Flexicurity is the new EU employment policy buzzword. It encapsulates the challenge facing European labour markets to achieve more flexible working arrangements whilst maintaining protection for workers.

Nowhere is this concept more relevant than in Europe's Audio Visual Industries. It is a sector dominated by micro businesses, sole traders and freelancers, many of whom take on short term work with a high turnover of contracts.

Europe plays host to recognized global market leaders in film, TV & interactive media and boasts one of the most highly skilled workforces in the world. Getting a foothold in the industry can be tough as the main entry routes are via networking and practical, often unpaid, work experience. Disadvantaged groups continue to be heavily under-represented in this sector, both on and off screen, despite the fact that it is an attractive career option for many.

Over the past 2 years the Audio Visual Entrepreneurship partnership (AVE – part-funded by EQUAL) has run over 20 different projects which, together,

have aimed to break down some of these barriers and change the culture of the industry.

Through placements, practical industry exposure, mentoring, tailored training, brokerage and other forms of support AVE has succeeded in boosting individual career progression for many and in demonstrating the business case for diversity across the sector.

The focus throughout has been on testing new approaches. 'Timeshift' was run by Skillset, the UK's Sector Skills Council for the Audio Visual Industries. It supported film professionals seeking greater flexibility in their working hours to help them balance work with childcare responsibilities and training by developing a job sharing programme for production roles.

'Move on Up', a BECTU project, ran a series of large events allowing new talent to pitch to industry insiders. It brokered an unprecedented number of matches between employers and participants. This was particularly impressive in a sector which has a labour-surplus and is dominated by informal networking.

Having major industry players, like the BBC and Channel 4, in the partnership has made a huge difference and will help AVE have a lasting legacy. Not only have they been involved in masterclasses and programme events but they have also taken an active role in the projects themselves – e.g. in hosting high value placements through the Graduate Fellowship Programme and providing mentors for aspiring Black and Minority Ethnic professionals.

Although the EQUAL funding ends during 2007, the partners hope to continue developing initiatives to change industry practice so that everyone has an equal opportunity to sustain secure and flexible work in this sector.

"We know how much untapped talent is out there. Our projects have helped individuals from under-represented groups, such as BME, disabled and older people, to get that crucial break into the industry. As their careers take off we all benefit from a more diverse workforce, which reflects today's world, and enriches programme content for audiences."

John Prescott,
AVE Partnership Manager.

AVE is part of a community programme called Equal – a European Social Fund initiative which tests and promotes new means of combating all forms of discrimination and inequality in the labour market. The GB Equal Support Unit is managed by ECOTEC.

Read more about AVE and diversity at <http://www.eupolitix.com/EN/Forums/Audio+Visual+Entrepreneurship/home.htm>

Contact John Prescott
AVE Partnership Manager
JohnP@skillset.org
+44 1484 480 980

Making things happen

There is no need for new measures to complete the liberalisation of EU gas markets, just the correct implementation of existing rules, argues **Jean-Paul Gauzès**

Since the entry into force of the 1998 energy liberalisation directive, the first of many legislative measures intended to open up gas markets within the EU, numerous questions have been raised about the way in which EU energy markets function and the real benefit the legislation brings to consumers. In its analysis, the European commission quite rightly underlines difficulties faced by the sector: access to resources in the gas sector is difficult, with only a few major operators having the financial base large enough to negotiate with the main producers; national markets are closed by technical barriers, such as the different measurements of gas quality or the diverse network operating systems in each member state; regulation requirements differ considerably from one country to another; and investment needs cannot be anticipated because of the market's short sightedness. Moreover, many member states have not fully implemented the second gas directive of 2003, making it harder still to carry out a clear analysis of what is actually needed to improve the present situation.

In its observations, the commission places considerable emphasis on the lack of independence of electricity and gas network operators, many of which form part of fully integrated groups. The commission believes that giving these activities over to subsidiaries, as imposed by the second directive, is not enough for companies with both competitive activities (energy production, sales and purchasing) and regulated activities (operating transmission and/or distribution infrastructures). In order to resolve this issue, the commission proposes two solu-



tions. First, a complete ownership unbundling of transmission network companies, which means that integrated businesses would be obliged to sell off their transmission infrastructures. Secondly, the commission proposes setting up independent system operators (ISOs), whereby incumbent groups would retain ownership of their infrastructure, but with the network operated by third parties. This system already exists in the US and in Scotland, but only for electricity.

It is important to note that member states failed to reach an agreement on these two proposals at the last energy council meeting on 15 February, and that so far no detailed agreement has been made on how to meet the objectives of energy market liberalisation. Nevertheless, an agreement has been found on the principle that networks should be operated independently, in an appropriate regulatory framework, to ensure fair access to networks and independence in investment decisions.

If correctly transposed, the two directives should allow effective competition on gas and electricity markets. Structural modifications have already been made in the gas and electricity sectors at the end of the 1990s, and I believe that these directives should provide a sufficient legal basis for ensuring non-discriminatory third-party access to the networks, setting up powerful national regulators and introducing an investment-friendly framework. But the effectiveness of national market liberalisation openings has depended on the manner in which these directives have been implemented. Major differences still exist between member states on this issue, making harmonisation necessary in order to get the most out of the framework provided by the directives before imposing new measures.

Problems also exist in countries that have implemented ownership unbundling, however. Ownership unbundling became effective in the UK in the late 1990s and gas supplier Centrica recently repeated its view that investment in the national grid was deplorably under-funded. In the US, the birthplace of liberalisation, the regulator has never imposed ownership unbundling on integrated system operators, nor has it imposed the ISO system, which has always remained the choice of the operators. I believe that ownership unbundling in the EU gas sector would threaten the security of European supply, since European gas operators would be weakened and their financial base considerably reduced, since networks represent between 30 and 70 per cent of the net fixed assets of a gas group.

This would further encourage non-European producers to operate in upstream markets. Financing natural gas supply infrastructures would be more difficult, since the investments are considerable and have to be financed in part by own funds, so producers that also control gas resources, such as Gazprom in Russia and Sonatrach in Algeria, would be encouraged to operate directly on European gas markets owing to the absence of contacts solid enough to ensure a reliable outlet for their resources.

If we want Europe's gas market to function efficiently, more relevant measures need to be proposed. For example, proper implementation of the measures in the directive – such as the creation of strong regulators that could set network access tariffs and approve investment programmes as is already the case in the UK and France – or the creation of efficient systems to improve transparency, foster investment and encourage the development of new capacities. We also need measures that go beyond the short sightedness of the markets by developing a forward-looking view on investments both nationally (constructing multi-year programmes for investment) and on a European level. Finally, we need a Europe-wide regulatory authority to impose identical technical standards and network operating conditions, to sanction disparities between member states (such as the power of regulators) and identify priority interconnections and ensure that they happen. ★

“The effectiveness of national market liberalisation openings has depended on the manner in which these directives have been implemented. Major differences still exist between member states on this issue, making harmonisation necessary in order to get the most out of the framework provided by the directives before imposing new measures”



Jean-Paul Gauzès is a member of parliament's economic and monetary affairs committee



The EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION FOR DISABLED PEOPLE – an EQUAL project

The Social Integration Centre (SIC) is a state-run agency which was established in 1991 and is the only one of its kind in Latvia.

The SIC was established to :

- provide professional rehabilitation services which include testing the professional aptitude of disabled people, vocational training programmes, psychological and social-psychological assistance aimed at stimulating the learning process and the provision of leisure activities;
- provide social rehabilitation services which seek to improve and rehabilitate the capacities of people with functional disorders
- organise and run a driving school which specialises in providing training for disabled people and adapting cars to the specific needs of disabled people

The SIC is a leading partner in the EQUAL project The EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION FOR DISABLED PEOPLE which began on January 2005 and will end on 31 December 2007. The project addresses the issue "Employability - (Re-) integration Into the Labour Market". The project budget is 2,000,000 EUR.

11 national and 5 international partners are taking part in the project.

To achieve the goals of the project 2 international agreements have been signed within the framework of project. They are:

- The AQUA agreements with partners from Germany and Poland
- The Workability agreement with partners from the United Kingdom, Spain and Hungary.

The project has already resulted in

- design a methodology for testing the

professional aptitude of people with mental and visual disorders

- producing a training methodology for people with mental disorders
- innovative professional training methods, including methods for working with people with visual disorders
- 10 short-term professional training programmes for people with low level educational or low professional skill levels
- a system for the early diagnosis of disability which will ensure the continuity of medical, social and professional services
- the distribution of information and publicity via the media
- recommendations to the Ministry of Welfare of Latvia regarding methods of improvement to methods and systems of employment regarding disabled people



CONTACTS:

71 Dubultu Prospect, Jurmala, Latvia
tel.: +371 67146149, +371 67769890 • fax: +371 67769495
e-mail: sic@sic.gov.lv, home page: www.sic.gov.lv



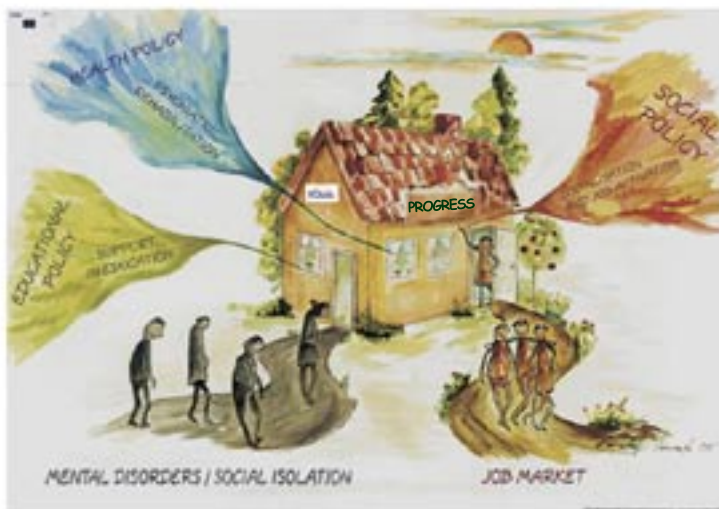
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SOCIETY AND ON THE LABOUR MARKET FOR YOUTH SUFFERING FROM MENTAL DISORDERS

The project is focused on:

- *Reinserting the target group into society
- *Increasing their chances of getting the first job
- *Improvement of rehabilitation and support efficiency and cost-effect ratio due to holistic approach

The model assumes:

- * Cooperation of different partners
- * Co-financing from different sources
- * Establishing international network of strategic contacts



DP PROGRESS

Mazovian Centre
05-462 Wiązowna
Poland
domus@people.pl
www.progres-equal.eu
+48 515 174 588



*Long-term Project plan foresees development of a network of PROGRESS centres.

*Systemic solutions in sociopsychiatry for youth are needed and strongly recommended in Poland.

Model of holistic support

PROGRESS CENTRE for youth suffering from schizophrenia and other severe mental disorders tested in Zagórze, Poland.

the Project is funded by EFS within the framework of EQUAL Community Initiative

CREATE Health – a strategic centre for translational cancer research



LUND
UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Medicine
Faculty of Engineering
Faculty of Natural Sciences

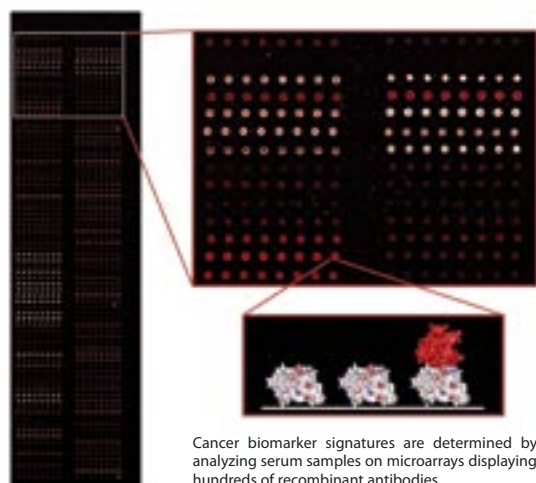


CREATE Health is a centre for translational cancer research focussing on the early diagnosis and prediction of cancer, using cutting edge 'omics technologies, located at the Biomedical Centre at Lund University, Sweden. The centre has physically brought together investigators from diverse fields, such as bioinformatics, nanotechnology, proteomics, transcriptomics, cancer genetics and tumour cell biology with clinical oncologists from Lund University hospital, in order to create a unique environment to address these new challenges.

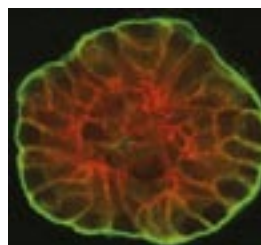
By using the latest equipment within the 'omics area we are focussing on defining protein signatures that can differentiate between different cancer types and stages at an early phase, says program director Carl Borrebaeck, and continues - Our goal is to improve the early differential diagnosis of cancer to improve the selection of an optimal, individually-based, cancer treatment. Our vision is that our research will have a substantial impact on how cancer is diagnosed and treated within the next 10 years.

The most important achievements of CREATE Health during 2006 are:

- The discovery of a novel histological marker for cyclin D1 positive and negative mantle cell lymphomas that will improve the diagnosis of this important group of lymphomas
- The discovery of a novel gene profile of breast cancer, which is far more effective than previous markers, as an indicator for the selection of the most effective treatment
- The definition of several antibodies which can distinguish malignant from benign ovarian cancer. The antibodies have been tested in tissue microarrays and been proved useful for direct clinical usage. They are now used to develop a serum-based screening assay.
- The definition of the first serum protein signatures which can distinguish between pancreatic cancer patients and healthy individuals as well as predicting survival in these patients
- The definition of distinct subtypes of sporadic and hereditary breast cancers, using gene expression profiling of samples from 650 patients. In addition tiling BACarray CGH analysis shows that gene expression subtypes of breast cancer also have distinct genomic aberrations



Cancer biomarker signatures are determined by analyzing serum samples on microarrays displaying hundreds of recombinant antibodies

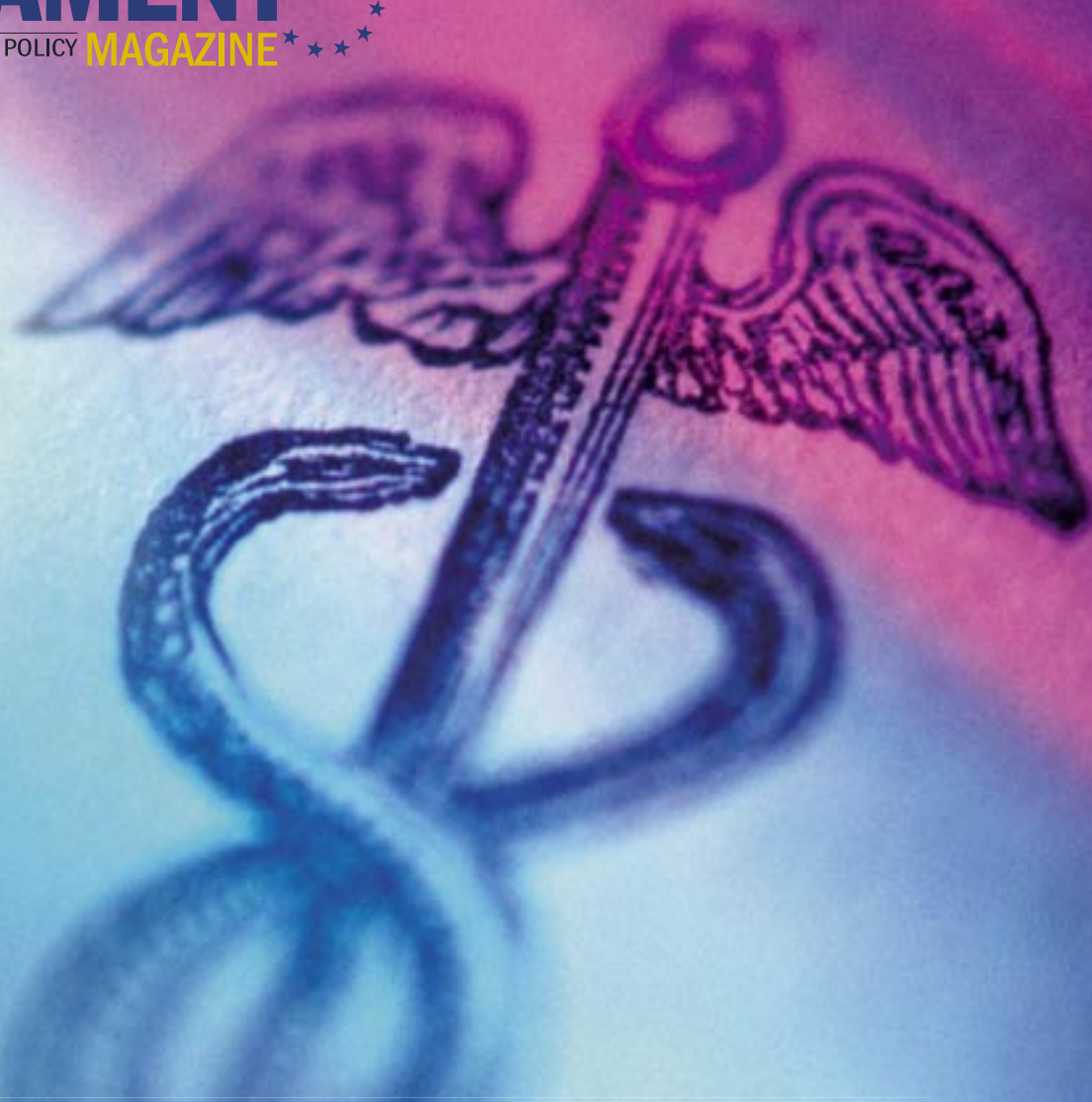


Immortalized, non-transformed, mammary epithelial cells, grown in Matrigel. The cells polarize and form spheres with a central lumen.
Green: alpha 6-integrin
Red: Phalloidin/actin

For further information please visit www.createhealth.lth.se

Contacts:

Prof. Carl Borrebaeck,
Phone: +46-46-222 9613,
carl.borrebaeck@immun.lth.se
Dr. Ulrika Ringdahl,
Phone: +46-46-222 8659,
ulrika.ringdahl@rektor.lu.se



COVER STORY: MEDICAL RESEARCH

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Ethics vs. politics

The controversy surrounding April's vote on advanced therapies shows the difficulty of reconciling ethics with the opportunity to provide vital treatment. Chris Jones reports

April's plenary session in Strasbourg saw MEPs finally give their backing to controversial proposals on the regulation of advanced therapies using cells, genes and tissue after a lengthy process of negotiation with both council and commission. But the proposals, backed by MEPs, were unusual in that they were essentially the work of the shadow rapporteur, German Socialist Dagmar Roth-Berendt, and not of the lead MEP Miroslav Mikolasik. The root cause of this 'revolution' was Mikolasik's insistence – apparently under pressure from some of the more conservative members of his EPP group – that stem cell technology be excluded from the scope of the regulations.

The advanced therapies regulation is designed to harmonise and coordinate research into new forms of treatment for some of the world's most serious medical problems, including cancer, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases. These therapies are at the cutting edge of European research, and in some cases involve using embryonic stem cells to 'grow' new, healthy cells that can be used as treatments or even as replacements for diseased cells.

But embryonic stem cell research is not permitted in several EU member states, and any attempt, perceived or otherwise, to 'impose' its use on countries that dissent on ethical grounds is always the subject of heated exchanges in parliament. This was clear from last year's debate on whether stem cell researchers should benefit from EU research funding under the FP7 programme – since every member state contributes to the EU budget as a whole, some countries feared they would be indirectly funding research with which they did not agree – and similar fears were raised about the advanced therapies proposals, especially among the more orthodox deputies from the newer member states.

A Christian Democrat from Slovakia, Mikolasik surprised no-one when his initial report on the commission's proposal to harmonise the rules on the assessment and approval of gene therapies suggested that stem cell research be excluded. But member states and the commission, in the heavyweight form of enterprise commissioner Günther Verheugen, made it clear that they would not accept any proposal that opted to exclude any technology, as this would essentially leave it outside the



law and therefore prone to potential abuse. Furthermore, they made it abundantly clear that they would hold Mikolasik personally responsible for delaying the approval of hundreds of potential treatments that could benefit patients across the EU – clearly a heavy burden for one man to bear.

Burying his personal convictions, Mikolasik, Roth-Berendt and other MEPs agreed on a compromise with council, including stem cell research within the scope of the regulation but allowing countries to opt out of permitting its use on their national territory, thus allowing centralised control of the

new therapies without obliging countries to compromise their ethics. But by the time MEPs came to vote on the proposal, Mikolasik had had his now infamous change of heart, arguing that the wording of the proposals would leave them open to challenge at the European courts and, ultimately, to a de facto approval of all gene therapies throughout the EU.

“This would mean that countries that currently ban stem cell and other genetic research would be obliged to allow it, a situation that is unacceptable,” he told journalists ahead of the Strasbourg vote, denying suggestions that removing stem cell research from the scope of the regulations would leave them unregulated in the “wild west”. Under fire from other MEPs for apparently deliberately attempting to scupper the compromise deal, Mikolasik launched his own attack. “I strongly oppose the action of the shadow rapporteur and other colleagues, which is undermining the role of parliament,” he said, commenting on Roth-Behrendt’s decision to put forward her own proposals, based on the text agreed with member states.

MEPs voted overwhelmingly to support Roth-Behrendt’s amendments, leaving the rapporteur playing an embarrassed and humiliating second fiddle to his understudy. To add insult to injury, there was little or no sympathy or support for Mikolasik’s stance from any other source, with national governments – including those that in theory oppose the use of stem cell research – giving their backing to the proposals on 31 May. Verheugen – whose primary interest appeared to be the boost that the agreement should give to the many small and medium-sized companies working to develop new treatments rather than any particular concern for the health of patients – also welcomed the decision. “Both patients and the industry have been waiting for it, as it unleashes an EU potential for innovation, often driven by small and medium-sized enterprises, whilst respecting decisions of member states on ethical concerns,” he said.

While the plenary debate on advanced therapies was, to the casual observer, an entertaining piece of parliamentary business – with, for example, rapporteur and shadow rapporteur forcefully putting their points across to each other in English so as to avoid “misunderstandings” caused by poor interpretation – the root cause of the spat is rather more worrying. Strongly held ethical or religious beliefs are all well and good – indeed, we are constantly being reminded of the important role such beliefs played in the creation of the EU – but political convictions have to take precedence in parliament.

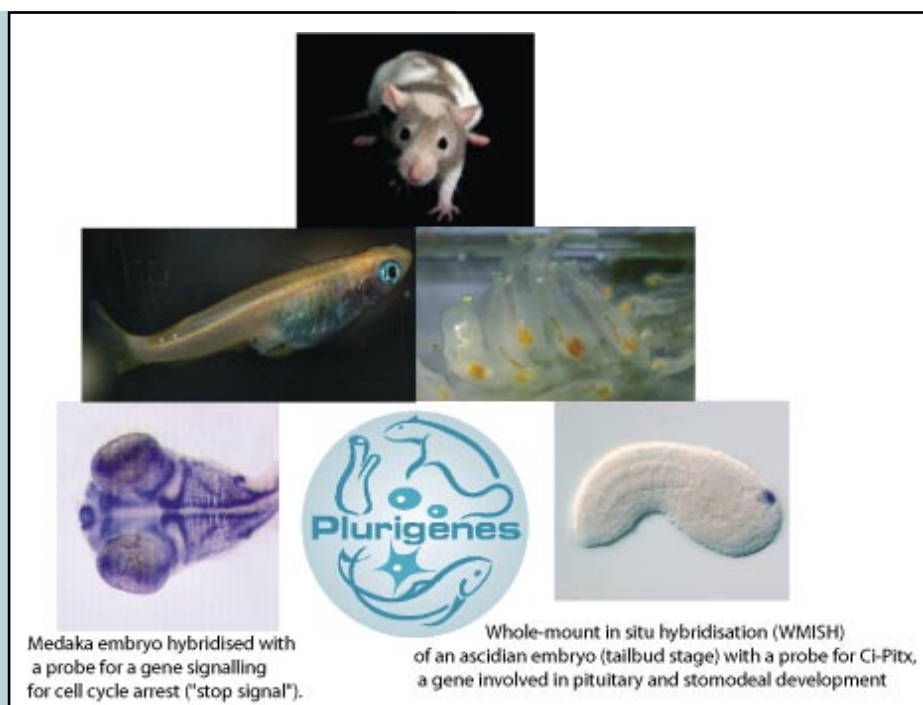
President Hans-Gert Pöttering, himself a Christian Democrat and keen to stress the importance of religion within the EU, has a fine line to tread between embracing and supporting the beliefs of an increasingly large number of MEPs – including many from the new member states in particular – and allowing those beliefs to hijack normal parliamentary process, especially when, as in this case, the lives of thousands of Europeans are at stake. ★



“Strongly held ethical or religious beliefs are all well and good – indeed, we are constantly being reminded of the important role such beliefs played in the creation of the EU – but political considerations have to take precedence in parliament”

The PLURIGENES Project

How to de-differentiate neural cells?



Embryonic or neural stem cells are key tools for future studies on Parkinson's disease or other degenerative diseases. So far, the only way to obtain embryonic stem cells implied the destruction of an embryo. Moreover, to get cells genetically matched to those of a patient would necessitate steps of cloning, which raise difficult ethical questions.

Research reported last week in *Nature* by three different groups shows that normal skin cells can be reprogrammed to an embryonic state in mice. This is a revolutionary proof of concept that opens researches on other cell types. In this context, the Plurigenes project is aimed at discovering how to control the de-differentiation of neural cells with the purpose to generate pluripotent neural stem cells, i.e. cells that could potentially become any of the brain's cells.

The Plurigenes project provides the unique opportunity to bring specialists in the field of developmental genetics and oncology of model organisms together with one recognized human neural stem cell biology specialist, Professor Vescovi, working at the University of Milano. A multi-organism approach using several model animals from

the Chordate phylum was chosen in order to unravel the basic and strongly conserved mechanisms acting in this process: ascidians, medakafish, mice compared to human.

During the course of the project, six scientific work packages will first identify candidate genes putatively acting on stemness state. First, results from large scale screens performed on whole-mount embryos and adult brains will be compared with results from micro-arrays on neural stem cells. The consortium will also address important aspects of pluripotency associated gene functions with a large panel of in vitro methods: siRNA, morpholinos, RNA injections, and electroporation. In animals models, in vivo analyses will be performed to understand the functions of genes in fish eye (Jochen Wittbrodt's group) and midbrain (Franck Bourrat and Jean-Stéphane Joly's group), and mice forebrains (François Guillemot's group). Plurigenes objectives will also contribute to the improvement of gene transfer methods and will involve the development of new imaging techniques.

This project is supported through the Life Sciences, Genomics and Biotechnology for Health priority of European Commission's FP6

Full Title

PLURIGENES: Pluripotency-associated genes to de-differentiate neural cells into pluripotent cells

Coordinator:

France : Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, Franck Bourrat, Jean-Stéphane Joly,

Partners :

- Italy : University of Milano Bicocca, Angelo Vescovi
Stazione Zoologica Anton Dohrn, Filomena Ristoratore
- Germany: European Molecular Biology Laboratory, Jochen Wittbrodt
University of Wuerzburg, Manfred Scharl
- France : Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Patrick Lemaire, Nadine Peyrieras
ONCODESIGN, Philippe Genne
- UK: National Institute for Medical Research, François Guillemot

Duration:

36 months

Contract type:

STREP

EC Funding:

€ 2,5 M

Other funding:

€ 30,000 from the Ile-de-France region

Project Reference:

LSHG-CT-2005-018673

For further information:

Please visit: <http://www.plurigenes.org/>

Dr Jean-Stéphane JOLY

Plurigenes Coordinator

INRA U1126 « Morphogenesis of the Chordate Central Nervous System»
UPR 2197 DEPSN, CNRS

Institut de Neurosciences A. Fessard
1 Avenue de la Terrasse

91 198 GIF-SUR -YVETTE, FRANCE

Phone: +33 1 69 82 34 31

Fax: +33 1 69 82 34 47

Email: joly@iaf.cnrs-gif.fr

<http://www.iaf.cnrs-gif.fr/eng/depsn/3/index.html>

Medical breakthrough

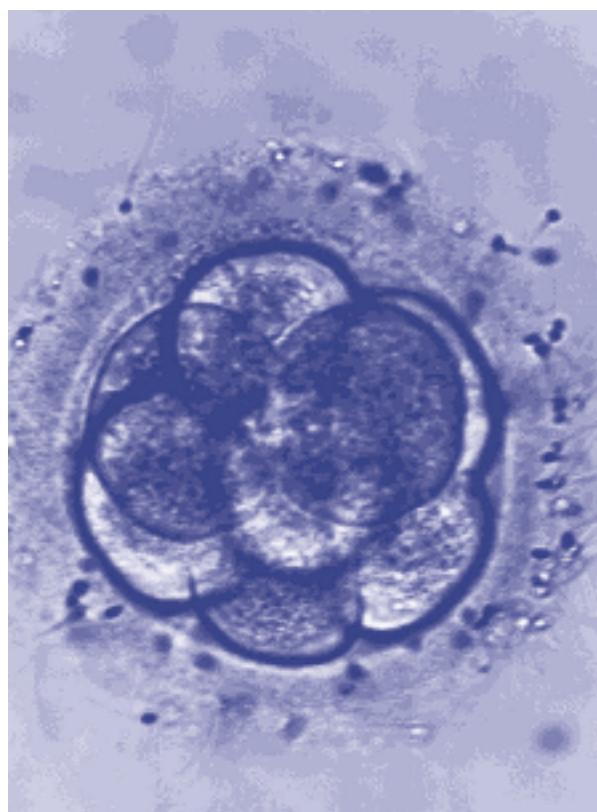
New rules harmonising the way in which advanced therapies are assessed and approved will be good for both patients and business, says **Stefanie Pingitzer**

On 31 May 2007, EU health ministers adopted a new European-wide legal framework to facilitate and harmonise the marketing authorisation of gene, cell and tissue-based therapies. The new advanced therapies regulation will create, for the first time, a single, harmonised European market for these products, which could offer revolutionary treatments for a number of diseases or injuries, such as cancer, Parkinson's disease, skin replacement for burns victims or serious cartilage damage.

These new treatments are targeted at very specific processes inside and between cells in the human body, and will require highly specialised manufacturing procedures to ensure quality and safety. The new regulation will provide one single, centralised procedure for the whole of the EU, run by the European Medicines Agency (EMA), for assessing the safety, efficacy and quality of advanced therapies. While a single procedure under the EMA already exists for cell- and gene-based products, the regulation will now bring tissue engineering into the system for the first time, allowing all advanced therapies to be covered by a single, integrated and tailored European regulatory framework.

The lack of an EU-wide framework to date has meant divergent national approaches to the products, with differing legal classifications, testing requirements and authorisation pathways. This, ultimately, negatively affects the EU's innovative capacity and competitiveness in this key, emerging area of biotechnology. With so many different national systems, companies making the new treatments face enormous problems in bringing them

→



"It is important for the safety of patients that no 'side-stepping' of the rules occurs. Smaller companies should be helped to reach the highest standards and these highly specialised and innovative advanced therapies will be evaluated by the best European scientific expertise in the field"

onto each national market. This leads to an unfair situation where patients in some countries miss out on treatments that could save their lives. It also puts the European advanced therapy industry at a competitive disadvantage vis-à-vis the US, whose manufacturers have a single home market to support them. To address these problems, in November 2005 the European commission proposed a centralised marketing authorisation procedure under the European Medicines Agency, the creation of a new expert committee comprising experts from across the EU, strengthened requirements for risk management and traceability and a series of incentives and support mechanisms for smaller companies..

The products covered by this new regulation are all at the leading edge of medical discovery, and there are many challenges in judging whether they are safe to use, and whether they work as claimed or do what they say they will do. Standards need to be set and the expertise required for such evaluations needs to be highly specific. In the interests of patient safety, all manufacturers preparing products routinely will have to comply with the same standards of quality, safety and efficacy as provided for in the new regulation. It is important for the safety of patients that no “side-stepping” of the rules occurs. Smaller companies should be helped to reach the highest standards and these highly specialised and innovative advanced therapies will be evaluated by the best European scientific expertise in the field, provided via the new committee for advanced therapies (CAT). The three-year transition period for cell- and gene-therapy products, which extends to four years for tissue engineered products, aims at allowing companies – particularly small and medium-sized enterprises – enough time to comply with the new rules. This will ensure that patients currently accessing existing, nationally authorised products will not have their treatment interrupted.

Advanced therapies stand to benefit a broad range of patients, from the very young to the very old and for diseases that are both commonplace and very rare. Some children are born without a functioning immune system due to a genetic problem, which means that they have to live the rest of their lives in a highly controlled environment. Even so, they run the risk of dying from a relatively harmless disease, simply because they have no immune system to fight it off. Gene therapy is being developed to repair these children’s immune systems which could help them to live normal lives. Cell therapy can also be used to repair heart tissue damage after a heart attack – heart disease is on the increase, and more than 1.5 million people in the EU die every year from it, despite a wide number of pharmaceutical



treatments. By using cell therapy, doctors could actually repair the heart by restoring function to the heart muscle that has been damaged by the heart attack. Gene therapy could also be used to create engineered replacements for damaged joints. The degeneration and destruction of cartilage can lead to pain and joint dysfunction, and may develop spontaneously or as a consequence of injuries. It is a major cause of morbidity in many countries, since cartilage does not regenerate. But by using tissue-engineered products, replacement for that cartilage can be grown. Similar approaches are being researched for repairing bones, skin, tendons, ligaments and even nerves.

Some advanced therapies are and will be based on embryonic stem cell lines – and for ethical reasons some countries will not want to have products based on these available in their health systems. The regulation deals with this issue by observing the subsidiarity principle: whatever the EMEA evaluation, it will be up to individual member states to decide whether these particular products should be placed on their own markets. This fully respects article 30 of the European Treaty, which explicitly allows member states to retain the right to prohibit or restrict goods based on the grounds of public order or morality. Additionally, the commission will create and maintain a public register of such prohibitions or restrictions by member states, updating it on an annual basis. This will ensure transparency, enable patients to know where they may or may not find certain types of treatment and facilitate business planning for companies.

The advanced therapies regulation will benefit European patients by giving them access to new treatments across the EU, by ensuring that treatment made available to European patients fulfills high standards of safety, efficacy and quality and by supporting competitiveness and jobs in the European biotechnology sector – comprised mostly of SMEs – by laying down clear rules for advanced therapy products. ★



Stefanie Pingitzer is manager of the healthcare unit at EuropaBio, the European bioindustry association



MYORES and European muscle research: current status, achievements and plans



Why should muscle research have high priority in European health research?

Muscular diseases and degeneration are a health problem of increasing importance in Europe. Patients can be affected not only by inheritance, but also as a result of aging and immobility. To date over 300.000 patients suffer from inherited myopathies and 15 million people suffer from muscle degeneration in Europe with a steady increase due to the aging population. Intensified basic research and a joint European effort in this field is a pre-requisite to understand effectively the process of myogenesis and to design efficient therapies for myopathies and for muscle wasting.

MYORES and the European integration of muscle research

MYORES is the first and the largest EC-funded (2005-2009) muscle-oriented Network of Excellence. MYORES has a dual objective of improving the basic knowledge and integrating the muscle research field. To reach its scientific objectives, the network exploits the particular strength of different biological systems to study the various aspects of normal and aberrant muscle development, function and repair. The final purpose is to improve the basic knowledge to develop new therapeutic treatments for muscular pathologies and muscle weakening. The major MYORES achievement is the creation of **Myobase**, a database relevant to muscle biology and the **"high-end" Technological Platform** dedicated to the testing of the function of muscle genes. Regarding the integration, MYORES, from its creation, has greatly strengthened European ties in this field it is now focusing on its next challenge: to keep the momentum of integration at all levels of the muscle community.



MYORES plans

Basic science: The multiorganismic functional approaches carried within MYORES allow global understanding of the function of networks of genes (rather than a single gene). We will further develop this area by the design of **systems biology projects** to enhance our understanding of the biology of muscle.

Clinical research: The MYORES Network includes nearly all of the most prominent European research groups in the field of fundamental myology, whereas the recently launched TREAT-NMD Network associates the best European experts in clinical muscle research. The two Networks have already initiated interactions. This provides a unique opportunity to design new **fundamental to muscle disease/muscle regeneration translational projects**, in which the basic and the clinical researchers work together.

Technology: Several invaluable tools have been created by MYORES such as the first Muscle-centered database (Myobase) and the Technological Platforms (RNAi Gene Attenuation Platform, Drosophila Microinjection and Transgenesis Platform, In Vivo Electroporation Platform). They represent a unique scaffold on which an **"Integrated Infrastructure Initiatives" - I3** proposal can be built. We expect that a number of successful collaborative research projects should result from such a strong Muscle-dedicated Integrated Infrastructure.

The future: a European Muscle Research Institute?

Our long term objective is to use tools and links created within MYORES and other Muscle-oriented Networks and Institutions to organize a **European Muscle Research Institute (EMRI)** for integrated fundamental and clinical muscle research. The **EMRI** will maximize the scientific potential of European research in muscle biology and medicine by promoting data- and research tools'-sharing, by enhancing exchanges of personnel between laboratories and through the organization of muscle-oriented PhD and Postdoc training programmes.

MYORES Coordinators:

Krzysztof Jagla
christophe.jagla@u-clermont1.fr
Christophe Marcelle
marcelle@lgpd.univ-mrs.fr

Management:

Anton Ottavi
ottavi@lyon.inserm.fr



The gift of life

The Big Donor Show used controversy to highlight the shortage of suitable organs for transplant

The European public widely supports organ donation, so why is there still a lack of coordination between member states on this issue, asks **Frédérique Ries**

European awareness about the shortage of organs for donation is growing. As a special Eurobarometer showed last month, 81 per cent of European citizens are in favour of a donor card. Yet at the same time, a Dutch TV channel BNN was roundly criticised by politicians for an organ donation show broadcast on 1 June in which terminally ill Lisa had to decide which of the three selected patients would receive her kidney. Viewers could vote by text message on who they thought should get the organ. At the end of the broadcast it was revealed that the programme was a spoof, and Lisa was an actress. The three patients, however, were real and waiting for an organ.

The Dutch government and parliament dubbed the Big Donor Show “inappropriate” and “unethical” while the European commission also voiced harsh criticism of the programme, questioning “the taste of making a reality show about such a serious topic”. But according to BNN, the show had helped to raise awareness of the shortage of organ donors in the Netherlands – a claim that was clearly substantiated: following the broadcast, no fewer than 12,000 requests for donor cards were registered in the Netherlands.

The recent death of 23-year-old Grégory Lemarchal, a popular French singer and victim of cystic fibrosis, has also contributed to raising awareness of the shortage of organs. Every day, almost 10 people die in Europe while waiting for an organ transplant. The mortality rate of patients waiting for a heart, liver or lung transplant is between 15 and 30 per cent. Currently, there are around 40,000 patients in Europe on waiting lists for an organ transplant.

European public opinion has a decisive role to play in increasing organ donation. The EU cannot miss the opportunity to show its “added value” on this issue. This is the reason why I welcome the communication from the commission on the creation of a European organ donor card indicating the willingness of the holder to donate organs. The communication follows on from the 2004 directive on EU tissues and cells, which sets standards of quality and safety for the donation, procurement, testing, preservation and distribution of human tissues and cells. The commission wants to promote

cooperation between member states to increase public awareness, and the creation of such a donor card, or its incorporation into the existing European health insurance card, should be decisive in this context.

Another decisive element is the quality and safety of organs. Every year, a number of organs are exchanged between hospitals in different EU member states, carried out by hospitals or professionals falling under different national requirements with regard to safety and quality. These quality and safety measures currently vary widely. A European directive on quality and safety of organ donation, based on article 152 of the EC Treaty, would create common standards for quality and safety at every stage of the transplant process across the EU. The directive, expected to be proposed in 2008, would establish oversight authorities in member states, a common set of quality and safety standards and a system to ensure the traceability and reporting of serious adverse events and reactions. It would also establish inspection and control measures, and incorporate a mechanism to characterise organs, so that the transplant teams can undertake the appropriate risk assessment.

Last but not least, transplant systems should be more efficient. Large differences in transplant rates exist within the EU, ranging from 34.6 donors per million people in Spain to 13.8 in the UK, six in Greece and 0.5 in Romania. It is clear that some organisational models are performing better than others. Cooperation between member states should focus on identifying the most efficient systems, sharing experience and promoting best practice as well as supporting member states whose transplant systems are not yet sufficiently developed. Moreover, hospital transplant coordinators should be promoted all over the EU.

These coordinators, present in some member states have clearly helped to motivate the professionals and produce more efficient results.

However, there is still a big gap between the acceptance of organ donation cards and the take-up of such cards in the EU, meaning that there is still huge potential to increase the availability of organs for donation, especially in those member states that have joined the EU since 2004 where the use of organ donation cards is extremely limited. However, the overall attitude towards organ donation in these countries is positive and the general level of support is close to the EU average. An enhanced public debate on this question would have very positive consequences on the population's acceptance of organ donation, especially considering that a shortage of legally-donated organs encourages trafficking in human organs. ★

“Every day, almost 10 people die in Europe while waiting for an organ transplant. The mortality rate of patients waiting for a heart, liver or lung transplant is between 15 and 30 per cent”



Frédérique Ries is a member of parliament's environment, public health and food safety committee

Coimbra, City of Everyone

The Coimbra City of Everyone project creates adjusted solutions to the Roma people's problems and needs in the field of social and professional inclusion, as well as adjusting methodologies of social intervention towards social, economic, cultural and political integration of disfavoured populations and ethnic minorities.



**COIMBRA
CIDADE
de TODOS**



The Coimbra City of Everyone project is part of the Department of Habitation of the City Hall of Coimbra and it has these main purposes: to proceed to a survey of the habitation weaknesses of the Municipality; to promote the re-accommodation of poor families, considering and executing the measures that aim for the humanization of the welfare state.

In these ways, the City Council of Coimbra, achieved the re-accommodation of eleven Roma families in what it is called *Nomads Park*.

However, the delivery of a habitation does not solve for itself the problems of social exclusion, poverty or attitudes of xenophobia. Thus, the development of this project, within EQUAL, is a chance to perfect methodologies of social intervention towards social, economic, cultural and political integration of disfavoured populations and ethnic minorities.

It has a Development Partnership composed of another 9 national and 3 transnational entities in order to overcome not only the difficult access of Roma people to labour market, but also the lack of adjusted responses of services and professionals to Roma people's problems and needs.

This project developed 'Training for Roma Women and Men', which endowed them with primary education and professional skills needed for the labour market. After about a year of training, which included training in a real work context, trainees went to local services to an insertion course where they had the opportunity to show society that they are prepared to work at local enterprises and services.

At the same time it developed 'Training Addressed to Inter and Multicultural Insertion Professionals' to help specialists to develop inter and multicultural skills and other useful tools which enabled them to provide more effective and adjusted answers to the reality and needs of Roma people.

Coimbra City of Everyone is a project that creates conditions for training and professional insertion of Roma women and men, and fights racism and xenophobia in the labour market.

Furthermore, several seminars and exchanges occur, involving national and transnational partners, to transfer knowledge and experiences in thematic fields of empowerment, gender equality, social housing, Roma women's rights.

From this project has resulted an *Integrated Model of Action for Roma People's Insertion*, so that other municipalities, NGOs and/or training centres can adopt similar methodologies to the ones that were used, as well as adapt and adjust already existing tools, methodologies and programs towards Roma people's inclusion.

For further information please contact the Project Coordinator:

Rosa Santos
Câmara Municipal de Coimbra
Departamento de Habitação
Rua da Sofia, 47
3000-390 Coimbra
Portugal

rosa@cm-coimbra.pt

Phone: +351239852550

Fax: +351239852555

www.cm-coimbra.pt



The 3rd Annual Obesity Europe Conference

Incorporating the European Health & Wellness Expo

26th & 27th June (pre conference workshop 25th June)
Residence Palace, Brussels

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The 3rd Annual Obesity Europe Conference 2007 is the leading cross-sector event for stakeholders in the European obesity debate, and will bring together many of the top experts and decision makers in Europe to examine and evaluate current and future strategies relating to obesity and nutrition and best practice in the continuing EU-wide battle against obesity and its related diseases.

We look forward to welcoming you to the event in June.

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Conference Rapporteur:

Neville Craddock

Director, Neville Craddock Associates

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Ms Paola Testori Coggi

Deputy Director General, DG SANCO, European Commission

Ms Sabine Nafziger

Director, Consumer information - Diet & Health Issues, CIAA

Dr. Laura Fernandez

Scientific Affairs Manager, EUFIC

Dr. Pilar Rodriguez

Head of Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies, EFSA

For further information please contact Gideon Harries:

E: gharries@epsilonevents.com T: +44 (0) 2920 894 757

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The 3rd Annual Obesity Europe Conference 2007 is the leading cross-sector event for stakeholders in the European obesity debate, and will bring together many of the top experts and decision makers in Europe to examine and evaluate current and future strategies and best practice in the continuing EU-wide battle against obesity and its related diseases.

The framework for the event continues to be the current regulatory landscape and this year there will be a fresh look at not only the various actions being taken by the EU Commission, industry and NGO's within the context of policy implementation and scientific innovation, but also the fundamental importance of the social and environmental perspectives that impact upon consumer's abilities when making various lifestyle choices.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Current strategies and methods to encourage physical activity both within the work place, school and in general will be examined, and the event will also look at the importance of considering the promotion of active living when planning and creating new urban environments and transport networks.

In addition to this, there will be a focus on consumer protection issues such as food and nutritional labelling, health claims and the various European regulations affecting the food and drink industry - an area which will be complemented by the option of a pre-conference workshop run in partnership with McKenna, Long & Aldridge LLP. 'New Labels for Food - Challenges and Opportunities' will be held on the day before the main conference, and will examine the regulatory issues in relation to marketing foods under the Food Supplements Directive, the Fortified Food Regulation, the Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation, the Novel Food Regulation and the new EU nutritional labelling legislation.

Sessions at the main conference include and will discuss:

- **Current and future opportunities for industry**
- **Social and environmental perspectives - More to obesity than food**
- **Sport and leisure**
- **Scientific innovations - what does the future hold?**
- **Self-regulation and advertising - Redressing the balance**
- **Health claims and the workability of the regulatory framework for special foods**
- **Nutritional profiling**

What's new for '07?

In previous years, the Annual Obesity Europe Conference has seen the discussion and development of policies relating to the marketing and advertising to children of so called "junk foods", the presentation of pioneering schemes such as PORGROW, and the strengthening of debate between industry, NGO and regulators.

The 3rd Annual Obesity Europe Conference will go further this year in the development of cross sector dialogue. Whilst maintaining the framework of the current regulatory landscape, the structure of the conference has been revamped, and specifically tailored to encourage greater audience participation, through increased time for debate. This has been created in view of the experience of previous years and is achieved through the use of panel discussions and the "Question the Panel" sessions. The thread running throughout the whole conference is solutions based with the emphasis placed on knowledge exchange and networking.

In addition, the 2nd Annual European Health and Wellness Exhibition 2007 which is attached to the Obesity Europe Conference continues this year as a further platform for actors from around Europe to communicate their ideas, innovations and positions, to regulators and stakeholders from across the EU and indeed the world.

Supported by many of the leading bodies participating in the EU and worldwide obesity debate, the 3rd Annual Obesity Europe Conference represents an opportunity to develop not only a greater appreciation of the broader issues and to network with peers, but to also engage with the policy-makers in Brussels responsible for the creation and implementation of regulation relating to this area of health and wellbeing.

We look forward to welcoming you and your colleagues to this event!

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

'New Labels for Food - Challenges and Opportunities' Mon 25th June 2007

The first EU-wide controls on food labelling were introduced in 1979 with the adoption of Directive 79/112 (now Directive 2000/13), which established general requirements for food labelling and specified certain specific requirements for certain types of food. Since then, numerous additional controls and amendments have been added to this original directive on a fairly regular basis, and recent years have seen an unprecedented acceleration in this, with nine new instances of amendments or related new directives released in the past four years alone. This means that industry today is faced with a highly complex and detailed legislative maze to navigate when considering labelling requirements, composition and claims for their products. In response to this situation, a workshop session will this year be running alongside the main Obesity Europe conference, which will look to address some of the issues. 'New Labels for Food - Challenges and Opportunities' will focus specifically on the complex regulatory issues related to the marketing of foodstuffs under the wide array of different regulations that exist today, including:

- **The Food Supplements Directive**
- **The Fortified Food Regulation**
- **The Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation**
- **The Novel Food Regulation**
- **The new EU nutritional labelling legislation**

Held in collaboration with international law firm McKenna, Long & Aldridge, the workshop will examine the differences between these various regulations and the specific products that are affected by each. It will offer delegates practical advice on working within the current legislative framework, and will look to the future and examine potential new legislation that is in the pipeline, and the potential implications of this to business.

Workshop - Programme

Speakers: Ursula Schliessner / Ruxandra Cana / Peter Kugel, McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 13:00 – 13:30 | Registration |
| 13:30 – 14:30 | First Session – Types of Products <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The different types of food products: supplements vs fortified foods vs novel foods vs special dietary foods.- Remaining competences of Member States.- Implications of the product category for the level of fortification. |
| 14:30 – 15:30 | Second Session – Types of Labelling <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The different types of claims (health vs nutrition vs children development claims vs simple nutritional information)- Considerations for the introduction of GDA labelling on products (advertising, liability)- Outlook - Implications of the potential new EU nutritional labelling scheme |
| 15:30 – 16:00 | Refreshments |
| 16:00 – 16:45 | Third Session – Procedures and Rights <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Comitology- Procedural rights- Rights to contest Community decisions |
| 16:45 - 17:00 | Q&A and Final Discussion |
| 16:45 | End of Workshop |



Ursula Schliessner is a partner in the Brussels office of McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP. Her practice focuses on European Community regulatory law, with an emphasis on environmental, food, biotech, workers' health & safety and product safety regulatory matters.

Ursula advises companies on regulatory compliance issues, product authorizations, circulation and labeling across the European Union. Ursula represents individual corporations and trade associations across numerous industry sectors, including food, chemicals, minerals, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, electronics, medical devices, textiles and toys.

Ursula has over 14 years experience in EU regulatory matters. She also handles product recalls, assists in the environmental aspects of acquisitions, and assists in advocacy strategies.



Ruxandra Cana is partner in the Brussels office of McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP. She specializes in European Community law, with special emphasis on chemicals regulation and the future European chemicals policy, and on the regulatory framework for biocides and pesticides. Her practice also includes counseling on food and drug and cosmetics regulations.

Ruxandra advises clients on legal and business strategies for the marketing of their products in the EU, looking at both EU and national legislation.

Ruxandra has been involved in several projects commissioned by the European Commission, including a legal analysis and assessment of the implementation of the EU acquis on food and food contact materials in national legislation in ECE countries. She has also counseled clients on the application of EU legislation on food (labeling, nutrition, food additives, GM food and feed) and advised and actively participated in the formation of an ICCA consortium for the submission of data within the HPV Chemicals Initiative.



Peter Kugel is an associate in the Environmental & Regulatory practice at the Brussels office of McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP. He came from a leading Dutch law firm where he specialised in administrative - and environmental law and in state liability. He also assisted in preparing cases before the European Court of Justice and he gained experiences in EU comitology-procedures defending his clients' interests.

Peter focuses on the relationship between EU law and domestic law in a wide range of practice areas. His activities cover particularly compliance with environmental regulatory requirements concerning food, feed, chemicals, pesticides, biocides and textiles. As a legal practitioner Peter appears in various courts.

Peter earned his law degree at Leiden University in 2002. He continued his post-graduate studies at the College of Europe, Bruges, where he completed his LL.M and wrote his prize-winning thesis on EU environmental law in 2003. He also holds a diploma from the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris.

Peter is admitted to the Dutch bar (Breda) and the Brussels bar (E-list). Furthermore he is member of various professional associations. Peter teaches on EU judicial remedies in Community law.

26th & 27th June 2007, Residence Palace, Brussels

DAY 1

09:00 – 09:30 Coffee and Registration

09:30 – 09:40 **Introduction by Conference Chair**
Neville Craddock, *Director*, Neville Craddock Associates

I. Keynote Presentations

09:40 – 10:05 **Keynote Presentation**
Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health
Paola Testori Coggi, *Deputy Director General*, DG SANCO, European Commission

10:05 – 10:30 **Keynote Presentation**
Dr Susan Jebb, *Head of Nutrition and Health*, MRC-HNR

10:30 – 10:50 Morning Break

10:50 – 11:15 PORGROW - Summary of results and findings
Erik Millstone, *Professor in Science and Technology Policy*, University of Sussex

11:15 – 11:40 **Keynote Presentation: "What is Industry doing?"**
Sabine Nafziger, *Director*, Consumer information - Diet & Health Issues, CIAA

11:40 – 12:30 Panel Discussion:
Update of the EU Platform for action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.
Panellists: This morning's speakers

12:30 – 13:40 Lunch

II. Scientific Innovations – What does the future hold?

- Recent scientific innovations
- Balancing food quantity and quality
- Nutrigenomics and personalised diets – the future of weight control

13:40 – 14:00 Presentation – "Overview of the way forward"
Stephanie French, *Nutrition Strategy Consultant*, Nutrition Directions Ltd

14:00 – 14:20 Presentation – The development of BVI and the Body Benchmark Study
Richard Barnes, *Managing Director*, Select Research Ltd

14:20 – 15:00 Panel Discussion:
Panellists:
Dr. Marvin Edeas, *President*, ISANH
Anne Heughan, *European External Affairs Director*, Unilever
Stephanie French, *Nutrition Strategy Consultant*, Nutrition Directions Ltd
Richard Barnes, *Managing Director*, Select-Research

15:00 – 15:15 Question the Panellists

15:15 – 15:30 Afternoon Break

III. Social and Environmental Perspectives – More to obesity than food.

- Is enough being done by schools to help prevent child obesity?
- Sport for All Initiative.
- How important is urban environment?

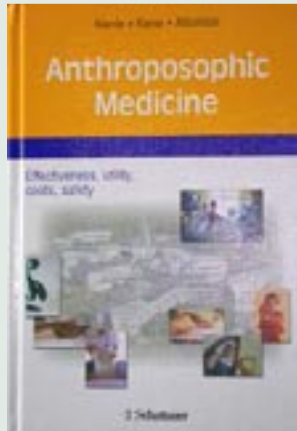
15:30 – 15:50 The Commission's White paper on Sports for all - is enough being done?
Dr Gernot Wainig, *Chairman*, ENGSO EU WG

Anthroposophic Medicine

Effectiveness, utility, costs, safety

Kienle GS, Kiene H, Albonico HU

Stuttgart, New York: Schattauer; 2006.
350 pages, 893 references
ISBN 3-7945-2495-X



Anthroposophic Medicine is a distinct and important complementary medical system, extending conventional medicine by applying the cognitive results of anthroposophy.

This book provides the first comprehensive overview of the available scientific literature on the effectiveness, utility, costs, and safety of Anthroposophic Medicine. Its exhaustive presentation of the available clinical studies, but also its many summary tables make this report a precision tool; moreover its scientific structure enables quick orientation and effective referencing. In order to write this book, the authors, G.S. Kienle, MD, H. Kiene, MD (Institute for Applied Epistemology and Medical Methodology, Freiburg/Bad Krozingen, Germany) and H.U. Albonico, MD (Department of Complementary Medicine, Emmental Regional Hospital, Langnau, Switzerland), have expanded and updated their work, that was commissioned by the Swiss Government as part of the Complementary Medicine Evaluation Programme (PEK). This study has the format of a Health Technology Assessment Report (HTA Report),

presenting data and research results on medicinal products and therapies and will assist making political decisions in the medicine field as well as in the Public Health sector.

The book begins with information on background and objectives of the HTA report and then introduces the basic concepts of Anthroposophic Medicine, examines its practical application and its institutions, and provides a brief survey of the relevant basic research. This is followed by a special chapter on central questions regarding the methodology of clinical research, which, in the context of Anthroposophic Medicine, has been the subject of intense discussion for decades. In total, 195 clinical studies have been carefully assessed and evaluated. Concerning effectiveness 127 studies are described as systematic reviews in 4 categories, including for example 3 randomized controlled trials (RCT) concerning pain conditions and wound care, and 15 RCTs on the anthroposophic mistletoe treatment of cancer. Frequency of side effects and complications were also studied and economic evaluations are commented on. Furthermore, a total of 68 studies, which were not included in the reviews, were classified by the disorders concerned and summarised in the appendix. Anthroposophic Medicine is provided all over Europe and worldwide in 65 countries in general and specialised medical practice, in hospitals, medical centres and homes for the elderly. Particularly in Germany and Switzerland, Anthroposophic Medicine is also integrated in conventional medical facilities in several hospitals of Public Primary Healthcare and used both by patients within Primary Healthcare structures, and those with a special interest for the anthroposophic therapeutic approach. Several elements of Anthroposophic Medicine are widely used alongside conventional medicine (e.g. art therapy, special nursing techniques, and medications such as mistletoe therapy in cancer). According to this report Anthroposophic medical therapies may also be cost effective through lower rates of referrals to hospital-treatment and lower costs for medication, particularly in chronic diseases. Anthroposophic Medicine has fostered decisive initiatives towards a more pluralistic approach in healthcare. It is supported by EFPAM, an organisation which unites patients' associations from over 15 European countries.

Cyrile-Anne Curat, PhD

More information about Anthroposophic Medicine and about this publication is available at the website of the IVAA: www.ivaa.info



Internationale Vereinigung Anthroposophischer Ärztegesellschaften
International Federation of Anthroposophic Medical Associations
Fédération Internationale des Associations Médicales Anthroposophiques



EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF PATIENTS' ASSOCIATIONS
FOR ANTHROPOSOPHIC MEDICINE

More information about Anthroposophic Medicine and their patients is available at the website of EFPAM: www.efpam.org



- 15:50 – 16:10 Case Study: The MEND Programme, Overcoming Child Obesity
- 16:10 – 16:30 Creating environments for healthy travel choice: The UK National Cycle Network
Philip Insall, *Director, Active Travel, Sustrans*
- 16:30 – 17:10 Panel Discussion:
Panellists:
Dr Gernot Wainig, *Chairman, ENGSO EU WG*
Paul Sacher, *Research Director, The MEND Programme*
Philip Insall, *Director, Active Travel, Sustrans*
- 17:10 – 17:20 Question the Panellists
- 17:20 **END OF DAY 1**

DAY 2

- 08:45 – 09:00 Morning Coffee
- 09:00 – 09:10 **Introduction by day 2 Conference Chair**

IV. Keynote Presentations

- 09:10 – 09:40 **Keynote Presentation**
- 09:30 – 10:10 “The Potential for a Creative Industry”
- 10:10 – 10:40 The balance between Genetics and Environment.
Dr Eric Ravussin, *Chief, Division of Health and Performance Enhancement, Pennington Biomedical Research Center*
- 10:40 – 10:55 Morning Break

V. Health Claims - The workability of the regulatory framework for special foods.

- What is the purpose of Health Claims from a public health perspective?
- The availability and gathering of intake data for safety assessments of food and ingredients.
- How to deal with the special regimes for novel foods, fortified food and supplements on the one hand, and the equally applicable Claims Regulation on the other hand?
- How do you scientifically validate nutrition and health claims?

- 10:55 - 11:15 Presentation
Pilar Rodriguez, *Head of Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies, EFSA*
- 11:15 - 11:55 Panel Discussion:
Panellists:
Susanne Logstrup, *Director, EHN*
Representative from Industry
Ursula Schliessner, *Partner, McKenna Long and Aldridge*
Pilar Rodriguez, *Head of Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies, EFSA*
- 11:55 – 12:10 Question the Panellists
- 12:10 – 13:25 Lunch

VI. Can self-regulation address the nature and balance of advertised food?

- Audiovisual without frontiers.
- How will self-regulation be monitored?

- 13:25 – 13:45 Presentation – The view of the regulators
Peter Bourton, *Senior Policy Executive, Ofcom*
- 13:45 – 14:05 Presentation – The view of industry
Sue Eustace, *Director of Public Affairs, Advertising Association*
- 14:05 – 14:25 Presentation – The view of the consumer
Sue Davies, *Chief Policy Advisor, Which*
- 14:25 – 15:05 Panel Discussion:
Panellists:
Sue Eustace, *Director of Public Affairs, Advertising Association*
Masterfoods Representative (tbc)
Peter Bourton, *Senior Policy Executive, Ofcom*
Sue Davies, *Chief Policy Advisor, Which*

- 15:05 – 15:20 Question the Panellists

- 15:20 – 15:35 Afternoon Break

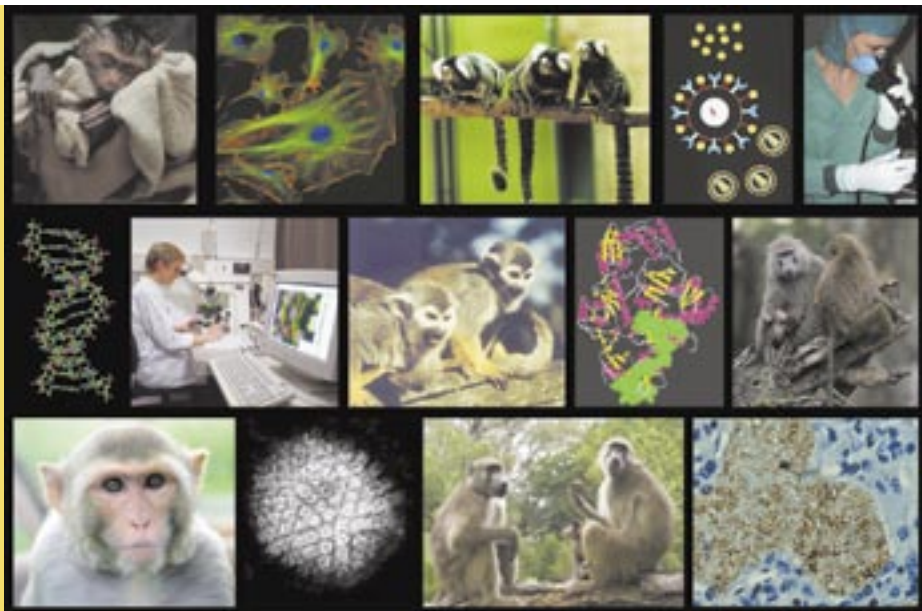
VII. Nutritional Labelling

- What needs are not being met by current labelling?
- A review of the Nutritional Labelling directive.
- What are the best formats to provide Nutritional information?

- 15:35 – 15:55 Presentation: Nutritional Labelling – the consumers’ response
Dr Laura Fernandez, *Scientific Affairs Manager, EUFIC*
- 15:55 – 16:35 Panel Discussion:
Panellists:
Representative from Tesco (Awaiting speakers name)
Representative from Industry (tbc)
Representative from ASAE(tbc)
Dr Laura Fernandez, *Scientific Affairs Manager, EUFIC*
- 16:35 – 16:45 Final Discussion and Summary from Conference Chair
- 16:45 **END OF CONFERENCE**

European Primate Network

EUPRIM-Net – A network coordinated by the German Primate Center focusing on specialized infrastructures and procedures for biological and biomedical research



How closely are primates and humans biologically related? The genetic similarity of non-human primates and humans is the cause of their resemblance in physiognomy and behaviour, in their organ system functions and their nervous systems. Understanding the biology of primates helps us to understand our own biology and has important implications for human medicine. Primate research provides insight into socio-biological evolution and behaviour and provides models for research in genomics and biotechnology for health.

The successful development of new strategies against infectious (e.g. HIV, hepatitis, and malaria), neurological (e.g. Alzheimer's or Parkinson Disease) and metabolic diseases (e.g. diabetes) in humans depends on the availability of living animals or biological material with primate origin. This also holds true for the development of new therapeutics (vaccines, gene therapy) and transplantation research. For that reason non-human primates play a currently irreplaceable role in biological and biomedical research.

Breeding of primates and primate research has to be done under high ethical standards and is therefore carried out in appropriately equipped facilities. Now, the EU funded



The German Primate Center, Göttingen: Coordinator of the EU funded project EUPRIM-Net

EUPRIM-Net links eight European primate centres in order to combine their wide range of biological and biomedical R&D activities, their extensive knowledge and infrastructure resources, as well as their solid experience in primate housing and breeding.

The first project period started in April this year and spans four years. It was initiated by the Director of the German Primate Center (DPZ), Prof. Stefan Treue, who now coordinates the project. Since the DPZ is unique in Germany and is the only European primate centre that combines service with a broad range of research, the centre is of very high international significance. Its profound experience in service as well as biological and biomedical research with primates is the basis for its central role in EUPRIM-Net.

EUPRIM-Net creates a virtual European Primate Centre for internationally competitive state-of-the-art research and offers European scientists easy access to excellent infrastructures and services. The network will improve basic and applied biological and biomedical research with primates effectively.

All of the network's activities contribute to the 3R-concept - Refinement, Reduction and Replacement:

- **Refinement** in animal welfare is achieved by improving and standardising methods and techniques used in primate research across Europe as well as by activities focusing on the viral and microbacterial state and the genetic profile of the primates.
- **Reduction** of the number of animals needed for a given scientific project can be met through an improved characterisation and selection of animals.
- A central database on the project website giving an overview of availability and providing access to material banks supports the **Replacement** of the use of additional primates.

Primarily scheduled for four years, it is intended to expand the network to include even more partners and to exhibit a sustained effect on its infrastructures.

See the project website for more information: www.euprim-net.eu

Contact information:

Stefan Treue (Project Coordinator)
Ines Lein (Project Management)
euprim@dpz.eu

EUPRIM-Net Management Office
German Primate Center
Research Coordination
Kellnerweg 4
D - 37077 Göttingen

The 3rd Annual Obesity Europe Conference

Incorporating the European Health & Wellness Expo

26th & 27th June 2007
(pre conference workshop 25th June)



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Early bird registration by the 15th May, payment must be received by 29th May.

*Reduced rate open to delegates attending from new EU member states, Central and Eastern Europe, and not-for-profit NGOs and associations. Further discounts are available to academics, political representatives, researchers and students. Please contact us for more details.

All prices exclude Belgian VAT @21%

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VENUE

Venue: Residence Palace

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All delegates will be sent detailed instructions of how to reach the venue prior to the event.

ACCOMMODATION

We have negotiated preferential rates with a number of local hotels, and will send you details of these on receipt of your completed registration form.

We will send you an e-mail to confirm your registration for this event and will invoice you appropriately.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A full refund will be given on cancellations up to 15th May subject to a €120 fee to cover administrative costs. After this date refunds are not possible, however substitutions can be made at any time. Payments for early bird registrations must be made by 29th May. If payment is not received by this date, the full price ticket will be invoiced. It may be necessary to alter the proceedings of the event. Epsilon Events Ltd. is not responsible for any fees or costs incurred by registrants in the case of such alterations. In the unlikely instance of the event being cancelled, Epsilon Events Ltd. reserve the right to transfer the booking to another conference to be held within the following 12 months, or alternatively issue a voucher for the same amount to a same sector event to be held within the following 12 months. Should a replacement event not be organised, a full refund will be given. The client hereby indemnifies and holds Epsilon Events Ltd. harmless from and against any and all costs, damages and expenses, including legal fees, which are incurred by the client. The validity and performance of this shall be governed by applicable laws in Wales and England. Personal data is collected in accordance with the data protection act 1998. If you do not wish your details to be passed on to carefully selected parties, please tick here ☐

If you are registering from outside the EU, payment is required when booking. Visa letters can only be issued upon receipt of payment for conference ticket.

GROUP DISCOUNTS

Register 3-5 delegates receive 10% discount
Register 6-8 delegates receive 20% discount
Register 9 + delegates receive 25% discount

For more information, please contact
Gideon Harries on:

E: gharries@epsilonevents.com

T: +44 (0) 2920 894 757



THE EUROPEAN HEALTH & WELLNESS EXPO 2007

Following the successful launch of the European Health & Wellness Mini-Expo alongside last year's Obesity Europe Conference, the event will be running again this year with additional space for exhibitors, and we invite organisations to submit their interest to exhibit at the event.



Annual events such as this are not simply stand alone, one-off marketing opportunities; they build momentum from year to year, with the best offering sponsors and exhibitors the opportunity to become involved on a regular basis in pivotal and talked about industry events.

This exhibition is a focussed and progressive format for organisations from across Europe and around the world to showcase their innovations, products and stakeholder positions. It provides the perfect opportunity to network with peers and those operating within a range of key sectors relating to health and wellness in Europe.

Exhibition space will be allocated strictly on a first come first served basis, so book early to avoid disappointment.

Exhibitors at last year's event included: - Unilever - Coca-Cola - World Cancer Research Fund - European Health and Fitness Association - CIAA - International Association for the Study of Obesity, and many more

To receive a copy of the Public Relations prospectus for this event and for further information on how you can become a sponsor for the main Obesity Europe Conference, please contact Gideon Harries E: gharries@epsilonevents.com or T: +44 (0) 2920 894 757

COMMENTS FROM PREVIOUS DELEGATES

We believe that our strategy of producing the Annual Obesity Europe Conferences in partnership with experienced industry leaders from the obesity debate coupled with our commitment to quality of content and the highest standards in delivery and event management, means that the event delivers an unrivalled level of value for delegates. Don't take our word for it though! Below are a series of quotes that we have received from delegates at the 2006 conference:

"Very well organised and excellent presentations"

"An excellent conference, lively and informative, I learnt a lot!"

"Great to see the involvement of the European Commission and Parliament, great value for money, I got a lot out of it"

KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS



www.mckennalong.com

McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP is an international law firm with offices in Brussels, Washington, DC, Atlanta, Denver, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Diego, and San Francisco. Our international reach is shared across the various practices in which we serve our clients, including regulatory and governmental law, corporate law, international dispute resolution, litigation, environmental law, intellectual property, and public procurement. The Brussels office, opened in 1990, features a diverse group of attorneys drawn from multiple countries speaking more than half a dozen languages. We counsel clients on a wide range of regulatory and business law matters related to commercial activities in the EU and its Member States. In particular, we are leaders in important legal practice areas such as environmental, health and safety laws (including the emerging REACH chemicals legislation), product defense, international arbitrations, and mergers and acquisitions. In the area of EU regulatory law, our practice includes the fields of food, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, pesticides, biocides, cosmetics, electronic products, textiles, industrial minerals, and medical devices, including related business and antitrust issues that arise when drafting and negotiating commercial agreements or setting up task forces. We represent European, American, and Asian clients and advise them on product regulation issues and product defense strategies. In addition to guiding clients through the maze of EU regulations, we often lobby EU and Member State institutions on our clients' behalf before legislation is adopted and, when necessary, represent their interests in related litigation before the European Court of Justice, the European Court of First Instance, and various Member State courts. We have solid food law expertise and we act as regular counsel to several food producing and processing companies. A list of recent projects includes review of existing national legislation on authorization and labeling of genetically modified food, including for restaurants, review of national regulation on irradiation of foodstuffs, assessment and lobbying on Danish legislation on trans fatty acids, advice on nominal content requirements, and nominal ranges of quantities allowed for vegetable juice, fruit juice, etc., advice on hormones in beef, filing novel food authorizations, notifications, and several legal opinions on scope of EU Novel Food Regulation, and setting up of voluntary nutritional labeling schemes.

Neville Craddock Associates

nevillecraddock@tunhouse28fsnet.co.uk

NCA Consultancy specialises in the practical application of EU and UK food legislation, encompassing product composition, processing, labelling and advertising, food safety and areas such as allergens, genetic modification and novel foods. NCA has undertaken projects in developing countries and with COLEACP; UNCTAD/CBI; and numerous international and national food businesses and associations through in-house training, workshops and presentations.

It's proprietor, Neville Craddock MA(Cantab.), CSci, FIFST has extensive industrial experience, including over 25 years' close involvement in all aspects of Food Law and related scientific, consumer and political issues. He has been a member of numerous UK and EU Advisory groups.



www.s-hec.eu

Skar - Health and Education Consulting is a newly founded consulting firm established by Mariann Skar in October 2006. Head office is in Brussels, Belgium with an antenna in Kristiansand, Norway. We offer a wide range of services within the fields of health and education. We conduct studies, research and evaluation within the fields of health, social and welfare policies, labour relations and particularly professional education, both national and international. We can also organise workshops and study trips. A large network has been developed through a number of years in Kristiansand and Tromsø, Norway; Thessaloniki, Greece; Luxembourg and Brussels, Belgium. Throughout these years and especially lately working in the European Commission, Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection a sound knowledge in public issues has been acquired, especially regarding lifestyle-related health determinants and its impact on health.

Science for healthier living

EU research projects are making life healthier and safer for European citizens, says the Joint Research Centre

Health and consumer protection are of primary concern to EU citizens and since 1998, the European commission has benefited from an in-house institute dedicated exclusively to providing policy-makers with the research in various fields they need. The institute for health and consumer protection (IHCP) located in Ispra, Italy, forms part of the joint research centre's network of seven institutes and 2750 scientific and support staff located in five member states – Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain.

With an annual budget of €30.2m and 300 staff, IHCP's role is to provide other commission departments with independent research and understanding of the potential risks to health from chemicals, biocides, and contaminants from materials in contact with food and other consumer products. Complementary to, and in close collaboration with, the JRC's institute for reference materials and measurements (IRMM) located in Geel, Belgium, the IHCP validates testing methods to promote regulatory compliance in the field of food products, with a strong focus on genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

One area in which the JRC is currently working is the health-related impact of nanotechnologies. Nanotechnology offers many novel applications and has many potential benefits, such as for medical applications and products used by consumers in their daily lives. The JRC is contributing to the understanding



of the beneficial versus potential harmful effects. In particular, a growing emphasis is put on understanding how nanoparticles (e.g. from cosmetic products) could interact with human cells.

This is important to assess whether nanomaterials pose particular sets of risks to consumers when using novel products. Radio-labelled nanotracers using the in-house cyclotron (a highly versatile accelerator with a rather large energy range) are developed to assess the degree of potential take up of nanoparticles in human cells. The cyclotron is also producing medical isotopes used for cancer detection in local hospitals. In addition, the JRC is developing sensors based on nanotechnology to



monitor exposure from, for example, cosmetics, food and environmental contaminants. The JRC currently looks also into the socio-economic impact of nanotechnology.

Another area of research is focused on alternatives to animal testing methods. The potential safety risks of chemicals must be identified by adequate testing before marketing is carried out, and the IHCP hosts the European centre for the validation of alternative measures (ECVAM) which does just that. The seventh amendment to the EU cosmetics directive and the new EU regulatory framework for chemicals (REACH) show the urgent need for new alternative methods to animal testing to ensure public safety.

ECVAM, with its own scientific advisory committee (ESAC), validates approaches that refine, reduce or replace animal test methods. ECVAM-validated tests using human blood cells to detect pyrogenic (fever inducing) agents in drugs are already in use in over 200 European laboratories. They are faster, more accurate and cheaper than animal tests and are being taken up rapidly by industry. Another group of ECVAM-validated tests for skin corrosion and phototoxicity has been endorsed by the OECD for international use.

Indoor pollution monitoring is yet another area of research. The JRC has shown that indoor environments can expose people up to twice the level of air pollution found outdoors. Europeans typically spend up to 90 per cent of their time indoors, where they can be exposed to a range of volatile organic compounds, some with toxic, mutagenic or carcinogenic effects. Through its research on indoor pollution, the JRC is contributing to a better understanding of the potential causes of asthma, allergies and headaches – symptoms suffered by 20 per cent of the EU population. Indoor pollutants can arise from building or furnishing materials, from equipment (e.g. photocopiers) or chemicals (e.g. paint, smoke, radon, asbestos and benzene).

The JRC's Indoortron facility is a unique walk-in controlled environment chamber with precision control of temperature, humidity, and air quality and exchange rate. It allows measurement of the emissions from equipment or materials, and models testing to predict emissions. For example, tests at the Indoortron confirm that changes in ventilation rates have no significant influence on the concentration of tobacco compo-



nents (burning products) during smoking. This research, for example, was taken up by the Irish government and contributed to the first smoking ban implemented in a member state.

Finally, safety and quality of the food and feed chain plays a key role in ensuring the health and safety of EU citizens. As mentioned above, this activity is mainly carried out in the two JRC institutes, IHCP and IRMM. Working with national control laboratories, the JRC in its role of community reference laboratory (CRL) in six areas (GMOs, feed additives, food contact materials, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, mycotoxins and heavy metals) develops, validates and harmonises analytical methods to support official food and feed control. In close collaboration with the European food safety authority (EFSA), two of the JRC CRLs authorise products for the European market (GMOs and feed additives).

The JRC has coordinated for a number of years the European network of GMO laboratories (ENGL), bringing together approximately 90 control laboratories from throughout the 25 member states and neighbouring countries. The network ensures strong and uniform application of the legislation and, by guaranteeing clear labelling, safeguards the right of consumers to choose whether or not to buy GM products.

The JRC's activities support the new member states to ensure compliance with EU labelling requirements. Other areas of research cover determination of acrylamide in food products, central nervous tissue (e.g. brain) in meat products, food allergens, dioxins and organic food. ★



WHAT IS ENSURING POSITIVE FUTURES?

Ensuring Positive Futures (EPF) is an award-winning employability programme for people living with HIV in the UK.

The EPF programme is run by a partnership of major HIV charities and brings together government bodies, businesses and trades unions to support people living with HIV in the workplace. We also work with policy-makers, parliamentarians and the media to raise awareness of HIV as an important employment issue and protect the rights of people with HIV.

WHY HIV?

HIV is a workplace issue that all employers should understand. Most people living with HIV are of working age, and advances in treatments mean that more people with HIV remain healthy and in work. Tackling HIV-related discrimination in the workplace isn't just a legal requirement in the UK, it makes good business sense.

FIND OUT MORE

EPF'S European partnership is the "Green Legged Chickens". GLC work to raise awareness of HIV as a workplace issue across Europe and we'll be at the Employment Week event in Brussels on 5th and 6th June. Come and visit us at stand 84 and find out more about our work and our current campaigns.

To find out more, visit www.e-pf.org.uk

Advanced MEMS for RF and Millimeter Wave Communications

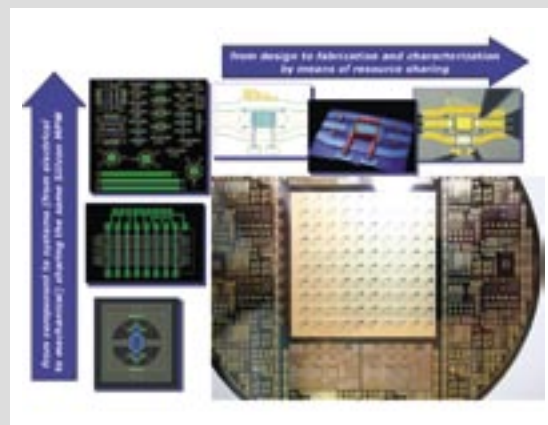


Figure 1: The Multi-Project Wafer (MPW) has been successfully implemented and made available at no charge also to organizations outside AMICOM. This initiative has greatly fostered the network research activities and enabled the efficient sharing of expensive research equipments.

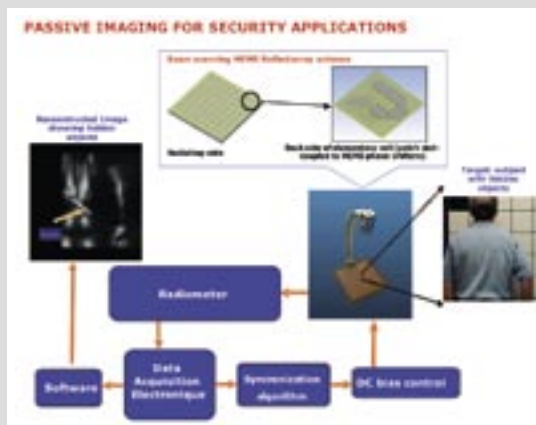


Figure 2: RARPA Project (one of the three collaborative projects established in AMICOM and called North Star Projects): Schematic of MEMS-based ReflectArray for Passive Imaging at mm-wave to THz frequencies for applications to outdoor security, indoor security, navigation systems, or medicine.

End), MMID (Millimeter-wave ID)) and promoting the participation to EU-funded initiatives (AMICOM partners participate in 10 FP6 projects). Guide European funding through research roadmapping (in close collaboration with the European specific support action ARRRO – www.amicom.info/arrro)

NETWORK PERSPECTIVE

RF-MST/MEMS technology is recognized as an enabling technology for smart integrated microsystems. This has also been acknowledged by the strategic research

AMICOM: “Advanced MEMS for RF and Millimeter Wave Communications” is the European Network of Excellence on RF-MEMS and RF-Microsystem Technology funded by the Sixth Framework Program (FP6 - Information Society Technologies). The network gathers 27 research teams from 12 European countries representing about the 90% of the EU research organizations in this area.

By introducing electromechanical functionalities, Microsystems Technology (MST) enables superior performance of electronic systems in terms of linearity, low power consumption, re-configurability, and sensing at micro and nanometer scale. Fabricated on a very large and cost effective scale by means of photo-lithographic C-MOS compatible batch processes, RF-MSTs are expected to constitute the core of all future RF systems.

AMICOM NoE aims at structuring and consolidating the EU research in the field, from fundamental science to application development, adopting a comprehensive multidisciplinary approach that covers design and modelling, testing and characterization, materials and fabrication technology. The ultimate objective is to enhance the EU competitiveness by supporting the industrial stakeholders in the general area of advanced integrated circuits and packaging technologies for microwave and millimeter-wave applications.

AMICOM IS STRUCTURED INTO FOUR MAIN INITIATIVES:

Virtual Laboratory:

a web-centric organization facilitating the use of shared resources for AMICOM durable integration and providing services such as fabrication technology, testing, packaging, etc.

Joint RF-MEMS research activities

optimised use of resources through co-ordinated efforts in research key areas such as reliability and multiphysic modelling and characterization.

Training and Dissemination

providing multi-disciplinary education at the post-graduated level by summer schools (next will be in Toulouse, 2-6 July 2007), an International Master Course in RF-MEMS and RF-MST (Fall 2007) and a number of *focused events* (e.g. the MEMSWAVE 2007 Symposium in Barcelona, 26-29 June 2007; the AMICOM Booth at the IEEE MTT-S Int. Microwave Symposium, Honolulu, 5-7 June 2007)

Exploiting RF MEMS

bringing the available know-how to industrial exploitation through internally developed projects (North Star Projects: RARPA (Reflectarrays and Reconfigurable Printed Antennas), ReRaFe (Reconfigurable Radio Front-

agenda (SRA) of the two major ETPs in the field of Micro and Nanosystems technology and smart system integration, such as ENIAC and EPoS, respectively.

AMICOM aims thus to become the EU think-tank in RF-MST and RF-MEMS technology by offering specialized support in tracking and providing know-how and resources in the field. This role is believed to be of key strategic importance in order to optimise the public and private funding available in this area. Europe's R&D is quickly emerging, but is still behind the USA where the research funding in RF-MEMS during the only year 2006 equalled the funding devoted to this technology during the entire FP6.

Contacts:

AMICOM Central Office
www.amicom.info
LAAS – CNRS
7 avenue du Colonel Roche
F-31077 Toulouse Cedex 4
France

Tel: +33 (0)5 61 33 79 00

Fax: +33 (0)5 61 33 69 69

E-mail: coccetti@laas.fr

SPECIAL REPORT: NANOTECHNOLOGY

- 49** Although not a cure for all the world's ills, nanotechnology has the potential to address some of the pressing issues of our time, reports Mark Morrison
- 55** International standards are vital if we are to fully explore the potential of nanotechnology, argues Dr Mihail Roco
- 59** New products based on nanotechnology are already making life easier and safer for thousands of people, claims Degussa's Markus Pridoehl

Nanoimprinting Technologies for Selective Recognition and Separation (NANOIMPRINT)

Composite filter for separation of biological molecules
(Fraunhofer Institute for Interfacial Engineering & Biotechnology)



Molecular imprinting of polymers is a technique often employed in the fabrication of biomimetic polymeric recognition matrices that is rapidly attracting increasing industrial interest. By this technology, recognition matrices, possessing high substrate site selectivity and specificity, can be prepared. The physical and chemical characteristics of molecularly imprinted materials are highly appealing. These materials exhibit high physical and chemical resistance against external degrading factors. Thus, molecularly imprinted polymers (MIPs) are remarkably stable against mechanical stresses, high temperatures and pressures, resistant against treatment with acid, base or metal ions, and stable in a wide range of solvents. The storage endurance of the polymers is also very high. Furthermore, the polymers can be used repeatedly without loss of their "memory effect".

It is widely accepted that MIPs will be one of the most important technological and scientific challenges in the fields of biotechnology, separation, purification, analytical science, catalysis, biomedical and environmental applications. Particular advantages to be realized by MIPs are the low preparation cost and the potential utility in situations where no recognizing biomolecule is available. Driven by the numerous potential applications, the NANOIMPRINT project aimed to bring MIPs one step closer to true antibody-mimics enabling the direct use of MIPs in aqueous systems and to shed light on the nature and function of the MIPs at a molecular level.

Scientific & Technical Results

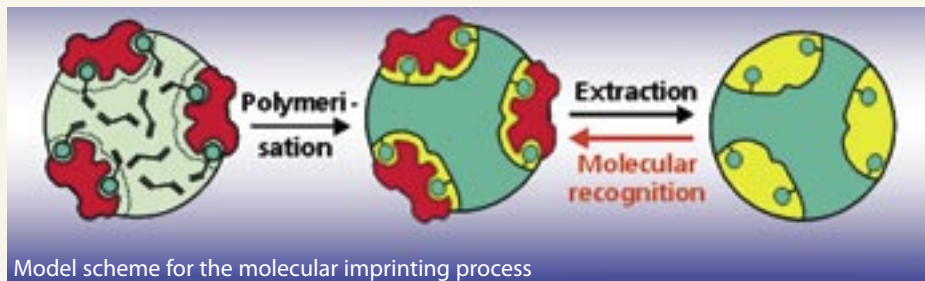
- Development of novel synthesis routes (e.g., suspension, inverse suspension, miniemulsion, inverse miniemulsion and precipitation polymerization) for

the economically feasible production of MIPs, in the form of nano-, micro-particles and membranes, taking into account limitations of the current synthetic approaches, and the rational design of improved imprinting materials.

- Development of MIPs towards hydrophobic or hydrophilic biomolecules, such as amino acid derivatives (e.g., *z*-His-*o*Me, *L*-Methionine), oligo-homo-peptides (e.g., *boc*-{Trp}₃, *z*-(His)₂-*o*Me, *Pal*-{His}₆), and oligo-hetero-peptides (e.g., *enkephalines*, *AI*SY, *CCK*-5) as well as towards mannan oligosaccharides.
- Encapsulation of MIPs in bead shaped support materials based on hydrogels (e.g., PVA) and inorganic oxides (e.g., Al₂O₃ and TiO₂).

Exploitation – Potential Market

- The new synthetic strategies developed in this project will allow large-scale production of MIPs in the form of beads and composite structures with well-controlled particle size distribution and morphology.
- Application of biomolecules-imprinted polymers as **artificial receptors with high substrate selectivity and specificity in analytical techniques** such as HPLC, capillary electrophoresis and solid phase extraction.
- Development of purification tools for native proteins (alternative to immunoaffinity chromatographic techniques) and recombinant tagged proteins.
- Application of carbohydrate-imprinted polymers in medical, bioanalytical and biotechnology fields.



Model scheme for the molecular imprinting process

Contact Information

Professor Costas Kiparissides
(Project Coordinator)
Director of Centre for Research
& Technology Hellas
P.O. Box 60361, 57001, Thessaloniki, Greece
Tel.: +30 2310 498211
fax : +30 2310 498110
e-mail: cypress@certh.gr
Website
<http://lpre.cperi.certh.gr/nanoimprint>

Nanotechnology for EU

Although not a cure all for the world's ills, nanotechnology has the potential to address some of the pressing issues of our time, reports **Mark Morrison**



"Nanotechnology is not really one technology, but a range of applications in different scientific and technical disciplines, underpinned by the novel properties of nanoscale materials"

Most people will have heard the word 'nano' or 'nanotechnology': many will know that it means something very small and will have heard it mentioned in the news, films, books, or games. Some see it as a magic wand to cure all modern ills, others the next big investment opportunity, and still others as an environmental disaster waiting to happen. The reality is not so dramatic, but the potential for nanotechnology enabled products to address some of the pressing issues of our time, is.

Nanotechnology exploits novel properties of materials when they are reduced to the size of a few hundred to thousand atoms. At this scale – anything from a few nanometres up to a hundred nanometres, a nanometre being one billionth of a metre – materials start to exhibit quite different properties than would normally be expected. For example, gold appears red (the Romans used such nanoparticles of gold to stain glass); while titanium dioxide and zinc oxide (both used in sun-blocks) become transparent (both are white in their bulk form). These are simple examples; however nanomaterials can have quite different physical properties – such as strength, flexibility, thermal – or, electronic, magnetic, and optical properties compared with bulk materials. Some nanomaterials such as carbon nanotubes possess several different properties including strength (50-100 times stronger than steel), electronic properties (for example in displays), and biomedical uses (as drug delivery systems).

A number of global problems such as major diseases, energy, clean drinking water, and environmental pollution could be addressed by nanotechnology. Cancer for example is being tackled both from the perspective of earlier detection through more sensitive and comprehensive screening of patient samples and through treatment using improved formulations of drugs, such as abraxane, that are more effective and have fewer side-effects; and through new types of treatment, such as magnetic nanoparticles that can be targeted to a tumour and are then heated using a magnetic field to destroy the tumour. Nanomaterials offer improved energy efficiency and harnessing, and cheaper materials to do so. Nanostructured





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"Nanotechnology exploits novel properties of materials when they are reduced to the size of a few hundred to thousand atoms. At this scale – anything from a few nanometres up to a hundred nanometres, a nanometre being one billionth of a metre – materials start to exhibit quite different properties than would normally be expected"

semiconductor materials absorb more energy from sunlight than existing solar cell technologies: the wavelength of light absorbed by semiconductor materials known as quantum dots can be altered by changing their physical size, and as such they have the potential to be more than twice as efficient as existing solar cell technologies.

Nanostructured alloys of bismuth and tellurium offer much more efficient means to scavenge waste heat – a process known as thermoelectricity. Nanostructured materials are the basis of new rechargeable battery technologies that offer enhanced power and energy capacities; nanomaterials will be essential for fuel cell technologies to make the necessary improvements to ensure market success. Pollution of water supplies is becoming a great concern with predictions that by 2025 each person on the planet will have access to 25 per cent of the clean drinking water available to someone living in 1960. In Mexico a pilot study is underway using magnetic iron oxide nanoparticles to remove arsenic from drinking water. The nanoparticles have been shown to irreversibly bind arsenic, removing over 99 per cent from the water, and can they in turn be removed from the water by applying a magnetic field. Environmental pollution and global warming are issues that are becoming increasingly important to communities and governments across the globe.

Detection of pollution is being improved through the use of more sensitive sensors, that can be distributed more widely and provide more detailed information on water and air pollution. From the point of remediation, titanium dioxide nanoparticles are already being used: these harness the sun's energy to break down pollutants into more benign products and have been incorporated into cement, paint and as coatings on glass for use in buildings. From the production point of view, the expectation is that nanotechnology



Mark Morrison is the Scientific Manager at the Institute of Nanotechnology (IoN). He trained as a molecular biologist, and joined the IoN in 2003, where his main role is coordinating the Institute's activities in EU projects, in particular leading the €2.7m Nanoforum project, which is funded by the EU under FP5 and provides a central point for public access to what is happening in nanosciences and nanotechnologies in Europe



enabled products and processes should use less material, less energy and have fewer waste issues.

The EU is already investing much in nanotechnology research and development. In FP6 there was a total budget of €1.3bn over five years, in FP7 this has increased to €3.5bn. At its heart, nanotechnology is about physics and chemistry. However by its nature it embraces many different scientific and engineering disciplines. Because of this, nanotechnology is not really one technology, but a range of applications in different scientific and technical disciplines, underpinned by the novel properties of nanoscale materials.

As a result, support for this trans and multi-disciplinary engagement must be fostered to ensure that sufficient trained personnel are available in the future and that there is the infrastructure to fully exploit their research expertise. The EU and national governments have recognised this need through support for capital projects, to create poles of excellence where academic research institutes and industry cooperate closely to develop and market research, and through the creation and support of training programmes to broaden the skill set of science and engineering graduates. ★

EuroNanoForum 2007

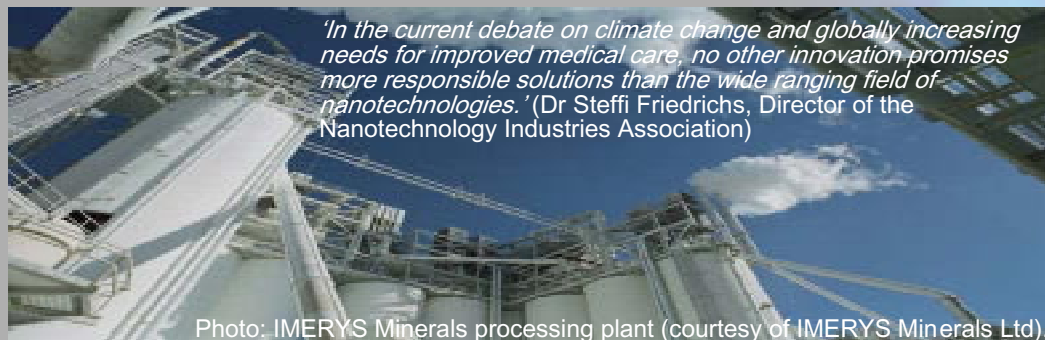
Nanotechnology in Industrial Applications
June 19-21, 2007, CCD Düsseldorf, Germany

Nanotechnology is leaving the laboratories and conquering new markets, according to the organisers of this week's EuroNanoForum 2007 conference in Düsseldorf. The new technology is already helping to improve products and production processes with better characteristics and new functionalities. In the coming years, products based on nanotechnology will say the organiser impact every industrial sector and enter consumer markets in large quantities.

EuroNanoForum 2007 will be the most important European event looking at the transfer of nanotechnology from research into industrial production processes, products and applications, and will bring together scientists and leading researchers with managers from industry.

The conference is being held at the Congress Centre Düsseldorf from June 19 to 21, 2007 and is organised on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and promoted by the European commission.

The conference will see international speakers present the state-of-the-art nanotechnology for industrial applications and open up new perspectives in Europe for the coming years. The conference will also be accompanied by a special industrial exhibition presenting European key players in nanotechnology.



'In the current debate on climate change and globally increasing needs for improved medical care, no other innovation promises more responsible solutions than the wide ranging field of nanotechnologies.' (Dr Steffi Friedrichs, Director of the Nanotechnology Industries Association)

Photo: IMERYS Minerals processing plant (courtesy of IMERYS Minerals Ltd).

The Voice of the Nanotechnology Industries

Formed in 2005, by a group of companies from a variety of industry sectors including healthcare, chemicals, automotive and consumer products, the Nanotechnology Industries Association (NIA) creates a clear single voice to represent the industries' views in the multi-stakeholder debate on nanotechnology.

Nanotechnologies meet the challenge

Frequently hailed as the next general-purpose technology (GPT) that will impact the entire global economy in a way similar to that of the steam engine and electricity, the nanotechnologies developed by public and private research laboratories around the world already provide solutions for some of mankind's biggest problems, from the supply of clean drinking water, to the sustainable use and generation of energy, to the improvement of medical care.

The commercialisation of nanotechnologies is anticipated to outnumber that of previous GPT innovations by several orders of magnitude.

Ensuring the advancement of nanotechnologies

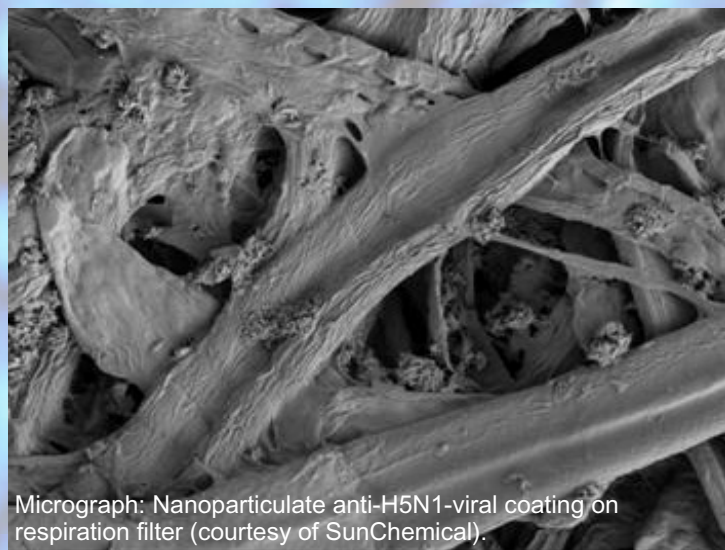
The NIA gives a single, unique voice to those who are involved in the development, production or exploitation of nanotechnologies, by providing an interface with government, acting as a source for consultation on regulation and standards, communicating the benefits of nanotechnologies, and interacting with the media to ensure an ongoing advancement and commercialisation of this exciting range of technologies.

A globally unique support for the nanotechnologies industries

Many representative organisations have been established around the world to support the research, invention, development, and exploitation of nanotechnologies, but few of these organisations are grounded in industry, or currently represent industrial views on practical applications for nanotechnologies. The unique feature of the NIA is that it provides a purely industry-led perspective derived from the views of the collective membership, which is made up of over 60 companies all at different stages of their life-cycle and with a variety of interests in the huge range of technologies that derive their benefit from the nanoscale. The breadth of this membership enables the NIA to put forward strong proposals to government and regulatory authorities, in order to promote an environment that supports the application and utilisation of nanotechnologies. The diverse range of nanotechnologies applications provides an ideal basis for the NIA to collaborate internationally with other trade associations, and to represent the nanotechnology industries through an increasing number of initiative. Current activities include NIA contribution to the nanotechnology initiatives of the following organisations: OECD, BIAC, UK Government (several initiatives), ISO/TC 229, BSI/NTI/1 (CEN/TC 352 pending); EC (several initiatives).

Current aims of the association are:

- Establishing a framework of shared principles for the safe, sustainable and socially supportive development and use of nanotechnologies,
- Working closely with regulators and policy makers to realise the full potential of nanotechnology and secure the full economic and societal benefits,
- Developing timely industry perspectives for government and assisting policy development of nanotechnologies,
- Clarifying and demystifying nanotechnologies and raising awareness of their applications in a balanced way amongst key audiences,
- Providing responses to consultation exercises and publishing position papers and statements, and
- Identifying and roadmapping unique areas of potential competitive advantage using nanotechnology.



Micrograph: Nanoparticulate anti-H5N1-viral coating on respiration filter (courtesy of SunChemical).

Dr Steffi Friedrichs
Director

Nanotechnology Industries Association

PO Box 581
Cambridge
CB1 0FF
United Kingdom

m: +44 (0)790 1637325
e: steffi.friedrichs@nanotechia.co.uk
w: www.nanotechia.co.uk

Background: BASF's innovative nanobinder: inorganic nanoparticles in organic polymer particles (courtesy of BASF).

INNOVATIAL – Truly innovative coatings for aerospace and automotive industry



Growing need for mobility increases airtraffic (source: DLR)

Reducing the weight of materials in rotating or oscillating parts of automotive and aerospace engines is an effective way to economize fuel consumption which contributes to a more efficient use of resources and less emission of greenhouse gases. That is why, in recent years, much attention has been paid to the development of lightweight materials to replace heavier state-of-the-art materials.



HIPIMS processing of coatings, courtesy Dr. Ehiastian, SHU

In Europe, the United States of America, Japan and more recently in China, a new class of break-through materials has been developed that offers excellent mechanical properties even at elevated temperatures at a low density. These so called titanium aluminides meet the requirements for automotive combustion engines (exhaust valves and turbocharger wheels) as well as for aero engines (compressor and turbine blades). However, despite significant R&D efforts on alloy and

component development, assessment and implementation, as well as attempts to establish a reliable production chain, as yet application of these materials is still rare but clearly on the horizon. Among others, the limited immunity against environmental impact by oxidation, erosion and wear makes the use of titanium aluminides challenging.

Being at mid-term, the INNOVATIAL project has developed different types of nanostructured hard and metallic coatings for a service temperature range between 450 and 1000°C. All the coatings have proven superior performance relative to any other attempt for protection of titanium aluminides so far. At the same time, a revolutionary novel coating deposition process called HIPIMS (high power impulse magnetron sputtering) is being further developed within the project enabling fabrication of unique coating architectures and properties. As can be concluded from the current results, the INNOVATIAL project will finally provide a substantial increase in lifetime and performance of protected components of this revolutionary class of materials and thus will further push its

introduction into service. The extraordinary results obtained by INNOVATIAL greatly contribute to the enhancement of Europe's leadership in the field of innovative light weight materials for a wide range of high tech applications.

Led by the German Aerospace Center (DLR), a consortium of 26 partners from 10 European countries is following an interdisciplinary approach combining important contributions from universities and research centers, SMEs and large OEMs; all of them are leaders in their technology and research areas. Innovations within the project are made in the field of new coatings, nanomaterials, processing technologies and and characterization techniques.

The INNOVATIAL integrated project is supported by the European Commission through the Sixth Framework Programme at a level of 8 589 k€ (out of a total budget of 12 323 k€). It addresses the area "Nanotechnologies and nano-sciences, knowledge-based multifunctional materials and new production processes and devices".



Contact:

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Christoph Leyens
(co-ordinator)
DLR - German Aerospace Center
Institute of Materials Research
51170 Cologne, Germany
Tel: +49 2203 601 3570
Email: Christoph.Leyens@DLR.de

Website: www.innovatial.com

Standard bearer

International standards are vital if we are to fully explore the potential of nanotechnology, argues **Dr Mihail Roco**



Nanotechnology, like biotechnology or information technology, describes a single essential technological capability with numerous applications in classical and emerging industries, medicine and the environment.

There is a need to have clear definitions and common approaches, as this is currently lacking and this is where standardisation can play a role. There is also a critical need for better tools and standards for measuring and restructuring matter with atomic precision. Measurement and controlled utilisation of quantum phenomena and self-assembling processes are special challenges, as is the characterization of nanoscale phenomena in biological systems at the sub-cellular level. A new area for standards is in nanoinformatics to help better communication, nanosystem design and interconnecting databases. Here there is a need for a multidisciplinary systemic approach to encompass multiple interactions of dynamic systems with many components.

Nanotechnology metrology standards and the development of standard materials are needed as a basis for effective manufacturing, trade and communication. Standards can apply to various nanotechnology applications because there are similar nanostructures and measuring needs. We should attempt to establish common standards for metrology for as many applications as possible, rather than developing specialized standards for each application. The best approach begins with clear and unifying terminology for the field before defining standards for measurement and characterization, processing and product design.

Currently most established measurements and standards are those related to point and time averages using surface probes and electronic beams. The main challenge is to reduce the averaging domains in measurements – that is, to increase the spatial and temporal resolutions. Another challenge is to extend the standards to simultaneously measure two or more parameters, such as chemical composition, mechanical properties, biological properties, magnetic behaviour and temperature.



Standards for soft nanostructures, such as biosystems, lag behind those for hard nanostructures, such as ceramics and nanoelectronics. Measurement of basic phenomena and processes such as quantum effects phenomena and self-assembly will become essential.

Standards for design, manufacturing and online process control are increasing in importance to ensure reliability which is important as nanoscale manufacturing is rapidly expanding, estimated at more than 25 per cent per year. More challenging are standards for future generation nanotechnology products and processes, such as for system architectures and the dynamic behaviour of nanostructures and nanosystems – areas where standards also may play a key role in the development of science.

Activities should be undertaken in different spheres and at different levels, with a strong emphasis on sharing outcomes and for adopting best practices. In order to establish international standards, ISO needs member organizations to make detailed proposals. In turn, the member bodies need the collaboration of industry and academia to provide data to develop standards and to listen carefully to the concerns of both public and civil society organizations.

The evaluation process should be transparent and allow many players from various countries to participate. That creates confidence in decisions and a viable international standards activity that can become a reference for government, industry, and the public and civil society actors.

Difficulties in measurements and on-line process control are more pronounced than in any other manufacturing field. Nanotechnology research and development has advanced faster than the capacity of regulators to assess the social and environmental impact. This has highlighted the need to develop common approaches and a common basis for communication. This is particularly true because it is difficult to visualize processes and develop intuitive concepts at the nanoscale. All developed countries and many developing countries now invest in nanotechnology (more than 60 countries since 2000).

Because of these factors, the role of common nomenclature (beginning with the term “nanotechnology” itself) and standards (common for as many domains of science and areas of relevance) is more essential than in other fields. Exchanges of correct and reliable information are important in the communication among various actors, in public perception and in the framing of new technology. Suitable nomenclature and

“Nanotechnology is still in an early phase of development, and preparation for the future should be an important component of activities on international standards. We need to cooperate to take full advantage of the new technology. For example, nanotechnology can play a key role in addressing major challenges common to humanity such as clean water and energy supply”

standards are necessary in order to allow global governance to be transformative, responsible, participatory and visionary.

Nanotechnology is still in an early phase of development, and preparation for the future should be an important component of activities on international standards. We need to cooperate to take full advantage of the new technology. For example, nanotechnology can play a key role in addressing major challenges common to humanity such as clean water and energy supply.

But conflicts over perceived risks of nanotechnology could undermine its ability to meet these challenges. While isolated measures may help, there needs to be a global framework for nanotechnology governance that allows stakeholders to play constructive and responsible roles. ★

This article is based on an interview published in the April 2007 issue of the magazine “International Standards Organization Focus”

Dr Mihail Roco is the senior advisor for nanotechnology at the US National Science Foundation and a key architect of the National Nanotechnology Initiative. He will be a speaker at the 2007 EuroNanoForum on 19-21 June in Düsseldorf

ESONN'

2008

european school
on nanosciences
& nanotechnologies



Working in a clean-room facility

Organized by:
Université Joseph Fourier (UJF)
Institut National Polytechnique de
Grenoble (INPG)

Co-organized by:
Centre National de la Recherche
Scientifique (CNRS)
Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique (CEA)

Directed by:
Hervé Courtois, UJF
Didier Delabouglise, INPG

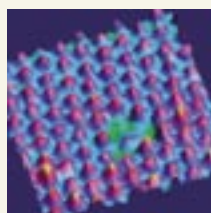
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The European School On Nanosciences and Nanotechnologies (ESONN) offers a 3 weeks intensive training in the field of Nanosciences and Nanotechnologies to European graduate students, post-doctoral and junior scientists. ESONN is organized every year **since 2004 in Grenoble, France**, by the local universities Université Joseph Fourier and Institut National Polytechnique de Grenoble with the strong support of the french national research organisations CNRS and CEA.

ESONN is funded by the **Marie Curie** program (SCF, 2005-2009) under FP6.



Participants of the session 2006



STM image of nickel atoms (crystal 111)

The program is made of two parallel sessions sharing common practicals and lectures (advanced microscopies, nanofabrication, nanomaterials), as interdisciplinarity is a clear objective.

Session A is dedicated to the most recent fundamental and technological advances in **Nano-electronics**, including quantum transport, spintronics, nano-scale mosfets, nano-photonics, molecular electronics. Session B addresses the **interface between Physics, Chemistry and Biology**, with topics including mechanics of biological molecules, optical and near-field techniques in biological studies and also microfluidics.

Half of the formation is devoted to practicals, which are held in clean room facilities and research laboratories of the internationally recognised research centers and universities of Grenoble. Practical in clean-rooms facilities are devoted to

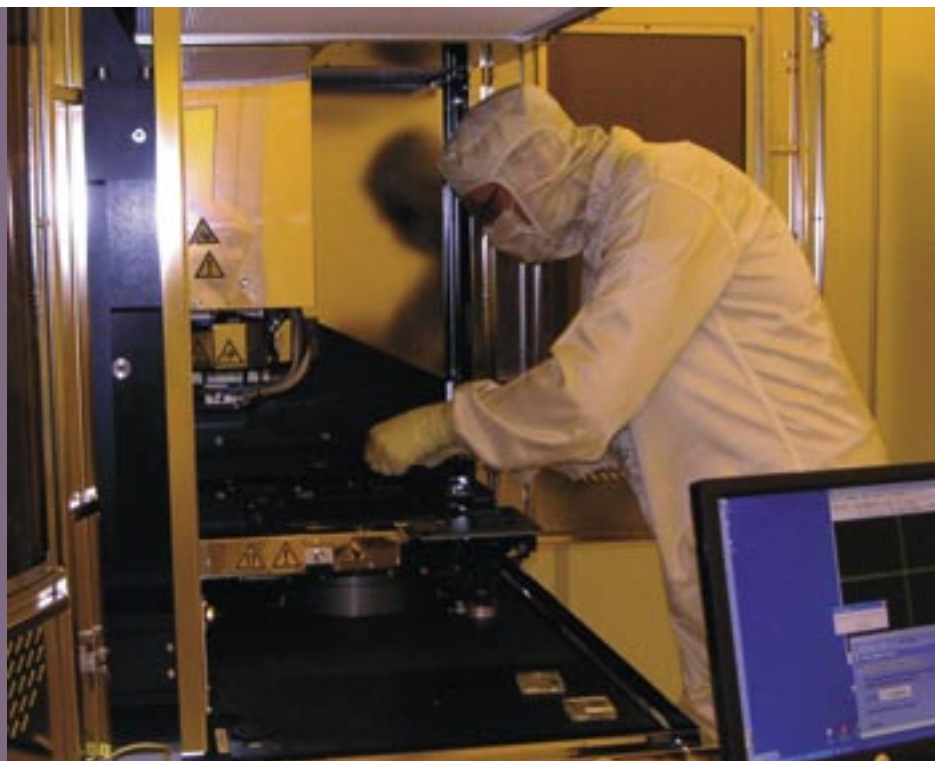
the use of the basic tools for fabrication and characterisation of micro-circuits and -systems. Practical in laboratories are proposed by researchers on their current works and are thus at the leading edge of the international research. They include some new approaches for nano-fabrication, surface investigation, physical studies of living cells,...

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Contact:

Clotilde EFFANTIN and Isabelle GAUVIN
ESONN Office, Maison des Magistères
CNRS - BP 166
38042 Grenoble cedex 9, France
Tel: +33 (0)4 56 38 71 50
Fax: +33 (0)4 76 88 79 81
e-mail: esonn@inpg.fr

Emerging Nanopatterning Methods – NaPa



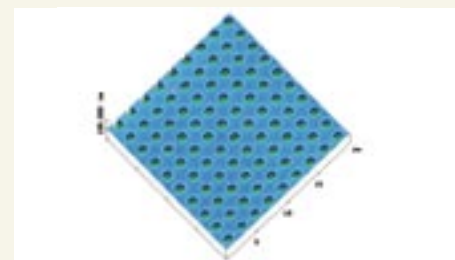
Since 2004 a large Integrated Project “Emerging Nanopatterning Methods”, NaPa (NMP4-CT-2003-500120) has gathered together well over 80% of the viable existing European experts in nanopatterning. With 35 partners from 14 European countries and a budget of EUR 31 million NaPa is one of the EU’s largest nanotechnology projects in the FP6.

Coordinated by the Technical Research Centre of Finland, VTT, the NaPa Consortium has the mission to develop a library of processes for nanopatterning based on novel methods like thermal and UV-nanoimprint lithography, soft lithography, self-assembly, stenciling and scanning probes. The goal is to provide low cost, industrially scalable alternatives for more expensive conventional techniques like deep UV technology and electron beam lithography. The approach of NaPa is to bring together the existing know-how to develop a complete process including materials, tools, theory and simulation,

deployed in the first instance on test devices, optimising both fabrication process and the device performance. The areas of applications cover mainly but not only photonics, optics and lab-on-a-chip systems.

The consortium integrates SMEs, corporate and national research labs, and university partners to ensure a strong presence and interaction of varied innovative enterprises to form a pipeline from strategic research to commercial exploitation. Simultaneously, the structure of the consortium allows for a continuum of academic education through to industrial training, thereby enabling nanosciences and new technologies and opening opportunities for industrial applications. One important part of the project is to disseminate not only the results of the project but also the nanofabrication itself for university students and even young children as a potential for future career and thereby guarantee the sustainable growth of the field.

The NaPa project addresses Community socio-economic objectives from many vantage points. In response to the need for the transformation of industry towards higher-added value activities, the consortium is actively steered at the management and R&D levels by the industrial participants to ensure that the research activities integrate design, materials and tool development into high-value production processes and products. The all-encompassing nature of nanopatterning insures that the technologies produced within NaPa will address the higher-value added industries of ICT, pharmaceuticals, biotechnologies, health and medicine. The expected lower costs will make these affordable by all citizens, thus addressing the social cohesion objective of An Information Society for All, and as well addresses the objectives of a Strategy for Sustainable Development, since the latter is enhanced by direct development of manufacturing processes for new product development from nanoscale lithography.

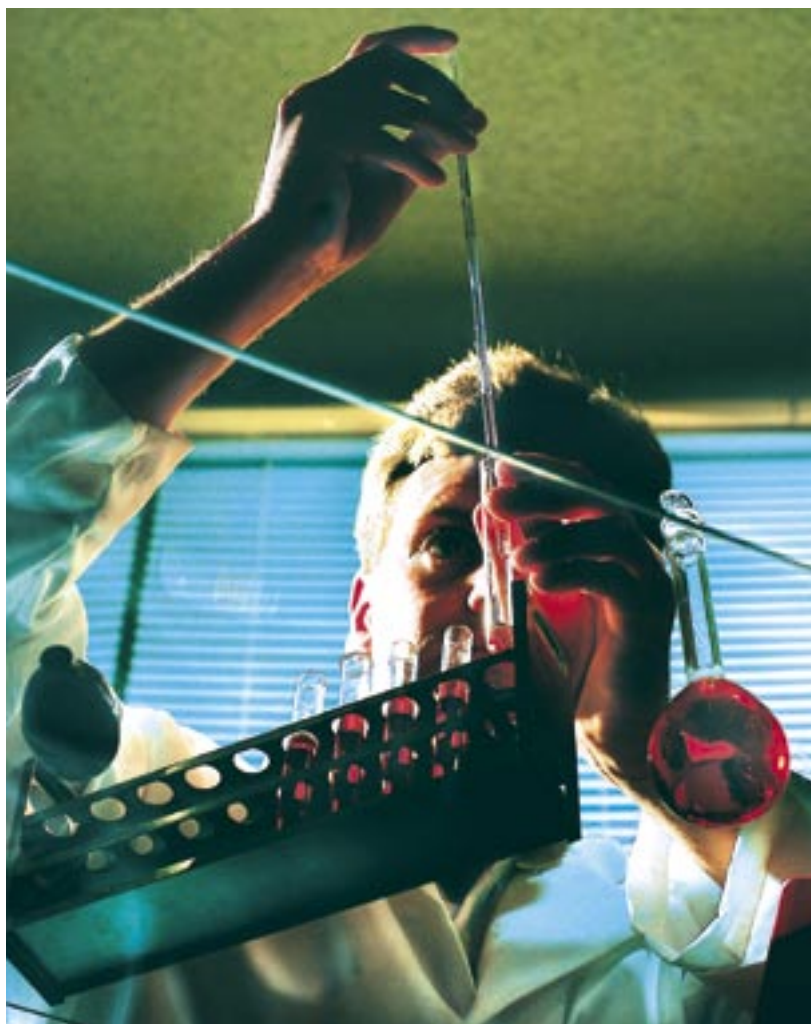


The formula of NaPa has proved to be successful. For the management team, coordinator and subproject leaders it has been rewarding to see how fast European level integration has taken place and establish and improve collaboration and partnership in a research field which has been earlier somewhat fragmented. Partners have also realised the added value arising from the integration and collaboration in NaPa and made the project successful with their commitment and strong effort on the project goals.

More information in www.napaip.org

From science to business

New products based on nanotechnology are already making life easier and safer for thousands of people, claims Degussa's **Markus Pridoehl**



Degussa, the leading speciality chemical company, regards nanotechnology as a key technology of considerable economic relevance. This view is based on the fact that it is a hugely important technology for a wide variety of production processes and products, and has a broad range of applications in chemistry. The market for systems solutions based on nanomaterials has been enjoying double-digit growth for years, with conservative estimates putting the volume at €220bn worldwide in 2010.

Degussa has a long track record in nanostructured materials that are tailored exactly to the needs of the market and consumers. As a result we make a significant contribution to environmental protection, health, comfort and mobility. Our business units carry out research into products and technologies that make paint more scratch-resistant and lithium-ion batteries safer. New business developments can help create added-value for customers by using tailor-made products such as zinc oxide, indium tin oxide and cerium oxide. These are used widely in the optics, electronics and coatings industries, all of them growth markets. →

Our nanotronics science-to-business centre is where we develop nanomaterials-based systems, particularly for the electronics industry. The centre combines all the resources along the entire value chain. Degussa experts, university researchers, suppliers and, for the first time, customers, work together under one roof, combining disciplines and industries. This cooperation enables scientific know-how to be swiftly turned into products and technologies that are ready for market. Over the past five years, Degussa has invested more than €100m in researching, developing and marketing new nanomaterials and systems based on them. Thus we expect to generate additional sales over the medium term in the three-digit million euro range. Around €50m is being invested in the nanotronics centre over a period of five years. The centre's projects also receive support from the German region of North Rhine-Westphalia and are co-financed by the EU.

There are several innovative nano products produced by Degussa. For example, the flexible ceramic membrane Separion improves the safety and performance of lithium-ion batteries for larger applications, which means they can also be used in hybrid vehicles that require up to 25 per cent less fuel. The ceramic wallcovering ccflex is a new kind of material that can compete with conventional wallpapers and wall tiles. Because it is ceramic based, ccflex is scratchproof and impact-resistant, resistant to chemicals and stable under ultraviolet irradiation. Degussa intends to sell more than one million square metres of this "marble sold by the roll" by the end of 2007. Fine-particle titanium dioxide enables transparent sun creams to be manufactured which have a particularly high sun protection factor, so they are effective in protecting sensitive skin against dangerous UV radiation. Papers treated with silicon dioxide and other special oxides allow inkjet printers to print digital images in photorealistic quality. They prevent the ink from running and sinking in, resulting in pin-sharp images and low ink consumption.

Protecting health and acting responsibly towards the environment are integral to the way Degussa

does business. This approach is an important foundation for our economic success. It is why we test the safety of our products with great care and in line with the latest scientific findings. Degussa encourages discussion on the opportunities and risks of nanotechnology. We invest every effort in making this technology transparent to society and highlighting its benefits. As nanotechnology develops, we engage in an ongoing dialogue with consumers, environmental associations and government bodies. We are involved in projects such as NanoCare, which examines the effects of industrially manufactured nanoparticles on health and which benefits from the financial support of the German federal ministry of education and research.

A study by the ministry shows that between 50,000 and 100,000 jobs in Germany already depend on nanotechnology, with this number set to grow. By 2015 it is likely that all branches of industry will be using nanotechnology-based components and processes. Nanotechnology is a genuine cross-sectional technology. It is used in diverse specialist areas such as electronics, pharmaceuticals, biology, physics and chemistry, as well as in medicine, where it is used for diagnosis and therapy purposes. In Degussa's view, nano researchers need to have outstanding expertise in one of the scientific domains, coupled with flexibility and the ability to work successfully in cross-disciplinary teams – in line with the successful approach that we have implemented at our science-to-business centre. ★



Markus Pridoehl is nanotechnology coordinator at Degussa



"As nanotechnology develops, we engage in an ongoing dialogue with consumers, environmental associations and government bodies"

New European movement for carers joins forces with the European Parliament.

ACE National
action for carers and employment
led by **CARERS UK**



Eurocarers - a new EU-wide platform for carers - was launched on Tuesday 12th June in the European Parliament in Brussels. A Special Interest Group on Carers made up of a political cross section of MEPs was also launched at the event.

There are an estimated 100 million carers living within the EU who provide unpaid care to a partner, relative or friend in need of help because they are ill, frail or disabled. Carers form the bedrock of our health and social care systems, yet as a consequence of caring, they experience ill health, poverty and discrimination.



Speaking at the event was Baroness Pitkeathley OBE, who sits in the House of Lords in the UK and who is the President of Eurocarers.

Baroness Pitkeathley OBE has spearheaded

the cause of carers in the UK, in Europe and across the world.

Baroness Pitkeathley, the President of Eurocarers, said:

"This presents both a wonderful opportunity and a new challenge to ensure that we learn from the experiences of each other and give carers a voice at the European level. It is vital, too, that in an enlarging Union we help carers in the new member states make their voice heard."

Carers from Ireland were also present at the launch, invited by Marian Harkin MEP. Marian Harkin, who is one of the co-chairs on the panel of the Special Interest Group on Carers in the European Parliament, said:

"I am delighted to be involved with the Interest Group in the European Parliament. The Interest Group will enable us to bring the issue of caring onto the European agenda and it is crucial in ensuring the recognition of, and reward for their work. They are the largest single workforce in Europe and they are the glue that holds society together."

The new Special Interest Group on Carers in the European Parliament will be led by a panel of co-chairs, including: Marian Harkin MEP Ireland, Magda Kosane Kovacs MEP Hungary, Kathy Sinnott MEP Ireland and Anna Zaborska MEP Slovakia.

The establishment of Eurocarers and the Interest Group in the European Parliament could not be more timely, with every one of the 27 European Union Member States facing at least a doubling of the population over the age of 80 in the coming decades meaning that all EU states will have a large and growing group of adults who will need to be cared for in older age.

Eurocarers will seek every opportunity to promote carers issues through a range of policy initiatives and actions - the Lisbon Agenda, the Open Method of Coordination, the PROGRESS programme, the Seventh Research Framework Programme and the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. Eurocarers is heartened by the strong support they have received so far from MEPs in the Parliament and will continue to promote carers issues - with a conference planned in Paris in June, and a 'blue skies' event, hosted by the Parliament Magazine, to take place following the MEP Awards in Brussels in October.



Equal

Eurocarers is supported by the European Social Fund's EQUAL Community Initiative Programme through the ACE National partnership, led by Carers UK.

For more information on *Eurocarers* and ACE National, contact:
Sally Bamford,
ACE National Policy Officer, Carers UK
Tel: 0207 566 7638
E-mail: sally.bamford@carersuk.org

Or go to:
www.carersuk.org
www.acecarers.org.uk
www.theparliament.com/EN/forums

Chewing the fat

Obesity is gaining ground in Europe, turning into a key political issue. Will the European commission's new proposals reverse the trend? Anne-France White reports

The European commission's latest move in the increasingly prominent fight against obesity is its white paper on nutrition, tabled on 30 May. The paper reiterated the commission's support for self-regulation in the field of obesity, earning the commission accolades from the food industry and rebukes from consumer organisations.

The white paper is sure to be a key topic of the third annual Obesity Europe Conference on 26 and 27 June in Brussels, which will bring together major speakers including Paola Testori Coggi, the deputy director general of DG Sanco, MEPs Jill Evans and Pilar Rodriguez, who is the head of dietetic products, nutrition and allergies at EFSA. Obesity is widely seen as one of the worst health issues of our day. According to EU figures, over 50 per cent of the adult population of most member states, and growing proportions of children across Europe, are overweight or obese. EU health commissioner Markos Kyprianou has vowed to take firm action, calling the rise of obesity "a top public health priority for the EU in the years ahead".

There is much less agreement, however, on how to tackle this issue – particularly on the question of whether lawmakers need to crack down in areas like advertising and food labelling. With the creation in 2005 of the "EU platform for action on diet, physical activity and health", the commission pronounced itself firmly on the side of self-regulation. The platform brings together the food industry and consumer groups in order to find ways to combat obesity – through actions such as voluntary labelling and the production of lower-fat products. But consumer organisations say this is not enough, and had hoped that the 30 May white paper would take a strong line on the need to shift to regulation.

Instead, the commission's new paper gives the industry another three years – until 2010 – to show that self-regulation works. It proposes a "revision of nutrition labelling" and more programmes to promote exercise and fruit and vegetables. It also calls upon the food industry to "develop



"The main criticism of the white paper is that it is seen to pass the buck to Kyprianou's successor, since the progress review is scheduled for 2010 and the current commission's mandate ends in 2009"



and half years” – after which member states could decide to legislate – represented a “great incentive for industry to co-operate on the obesity problem”.

The EU’s food and drink industry, which as a rule tends to be wary of any increase in regulation, applauded the proposals. EuroCommerce argued that “voluntary initiatives are recognised as important tools to promote healthy lifestyles”, and said it “welcomes the fact that the commission will give these time to produce results before proposing any new legislation”. Trade associations such as the CIAA also say they are committed to concrete action as part of the platform and are demonstrating that voluntary measures are enough to promote balanced diets and lifestyles.

Consumer groups beg to differ. Beuc, the main European consumer organisation, said the white paper “is like many slimming regimes – build on false hopes and unrealistic expectations”. The organisation describes the paper as a “disappointing, unambitious and minimalist response to the problems of obesity and diet related diseases”. Fellow organisation EuroCoop agrees, attacking the commission’s “disproportionate focus on self-regulation”.


Food labelling is one controversial area where the consumer organisations say the commission must step in with legislation. The paper says Brussels will “review” the issue, but Beuc insists that “consumers urgently need simple and understandable on-pack labelling if they are to make the most appropriate nutritional choices”.

Overall, the main criticism of the white paper is that it is seen to pass the buck to Kyprianou’s successor, since the progress review is scheduled for 2010 and the current commission’s mandate ends in 2009. “Reading the white paper it seems that Mr Kyprianou and the Barroso commission have

stronger advertising codes” and to “work on reformulating recipes, in particular to reduce levels of salt and fats”. Finally, the paper

suggests the creation of a new “high level group focused on nutrition, overweight and obesity related health issues” made up of a representative from every member state. The group is expected to be established in autumn 2007.

“Given the urgency of the matter, it is better to try with self-regulation at first and see, in 2010, if there’s a need for legislation,” Kyprianou said at the launch of the white paper. The commissioner argued that “offering industry these two



The obesity crisis

According to the World Health Organisation, the prevalence of obesity has more than trebled in many European countries since the 1980s. Child obesity is of particular concern: an estimated three million European schoolchildren are now obese, and some 85,000 more children become obese each year.

Obesity is a risk factor for many serious illnesses including heart disease, type-2 diabetes, hypertension, stroke, and certain types of cancer. As a result, obesity related illnesses are estimated to account for 7 per cent of total healthcare costs in the EU.

already decided to leave much of the work to their successors – who will no doubt themselves wish to ‘review the situation’ before deciding what to do,” said Beuc director Jim Murray.

It remains to be seen whether the food industry will convince its critics that it is capable of responsibly self-regulating and stemming the obesity crisis – or whether the commission, when it assesses results in 2010, will decide to go down the legislative road. ★

Fresh faces

Rumyana Vakarelska looks at the wave of Bulgarian MEPs who have just joined parliament

On 6 June, 18 Bulgarian MEPs joined the European parliament after the country's first European elections, bringing in a number of new faces and fresh spokespeople for its parties.

"Like the first European elections in Poland, the first European elections in Bulgaria have put forward people who have not necessarily been key political figures so far," said Toon Streppel, head of the European parliament representation in Bulgaria. "This choice has proven to be good for Poland and for parliament, as the MEPs have adapted quickly and have become fine EU politicians."

The biggest change in the Bulgarian MEP line-up is the arrival of five members to the EPP-EP party, bringing representatives from the growing movement of "Citizens for the European development of Bulgaria", which won 21.69 per cent of the vote. The party does not yet have a representation in the Bulgarian parliament. However, it is likely to become the new right-of-the centre force in the country after the local elections in October, and the arrival of its representatives in the biggest party of the European parliament can be only good news at home.

Rumiana Jeleva, a German-educated sociologist, will lead the Bulgarian delegation in the EPP-EP. The group's Bulgarian MEPs have a strong interest in regional development and agriculture, internal market and employment, justice and home affairs and industry and energy and will hope to get some of the relevant seats in the committees. "This week is very important for us as a Bulgarian delegation in the EPP-EP and as a cross-party Bulgarian delegation, as it gives us a chance to make Bulgaria better known in the EU," said Jeleva. The other new members of the EPP-EP party include Vladimir Uruchev, Nickolay Mladenov, Dushana Zdravkova and Petya Stavreva, all experts in their professional fields.

The PES group also got five Bulgarian MEPs (21.41 per cent of the vote) including the controversial candidate Evgeni Kirilov – a former MEP and MP who was revealed during the election campaign to have served in the Bulgarian secret services, but was still re-elected to the European parliament. US-educated Kristian Vigenin, who previously served in the

foreign affairs and South Asia committees, is the youngest Bulgarian addition to the PES group. The other three Bulgarian PES MEPs are Iliana Iotova, Atanas Paparizov and Marusia Lubcheva, who also might keep their existing roles in the committees.

However, the European elections in Bulgaria demonstrated that neither the BSP nor the old right-of-the centre parties such as UDF have recognised that the electorate needs if not new



ideas, then at least new faces. As a result, following the elections with a voter turnout of just 28.6 per cent, Bulgarian prime minister Sergei Stanishev reshuffled his cabinet and several right-wing party bosses resigned from their posts, including UDF leader and former Bulgarian president Peter Stoyanov.

ALDE also got five MEPs, including Feliz Husmenova, the vice chairwoman of the new committee for regional development, Mariela Baeva, Kazak Metin Hussein and Vladko Panaytov, who are all from the Movement of Rights and Freedoms (DPS). Iliana Raeva is the fifth ALDE addition from Movement Simeon II, which participated in the elections with a joint bulletin with DPS.

DPS – originally Bulgaria's Turkish ethnic party – brings an unprecedented national ethnic party presence in ALDE and the European parliament, having had a strong representation in the Bulgarian National Assembly and a number of coalition governments for over a decade. "Becoming an MEP will give me the opportunity to join ALDE and work with Bulgarian and international colleagues," said Kazak, who is a senior member of DPS. "Due to the nature of DPS and my work for

it, I would be glad to join the foreign policy and human right committees, both areas where ALDE has a strong representation." ALDE's principles in support of the rule of law and human rights are close to DPS' key objectives, Kazak said.

ALDE's Bulgarian delegation is about to launch a petition to the global media to attract further funding for the treatment of Aids-infected children in Lybia, and to lobby for the release of the Bulgarian medics in custody. They are also likely to provide valuable support in dealing with issues such as the impact of globalisation on Europe.

Finally the Bulgarian newcomers to ITS – the far-right group Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty – are the well-known Dimitar Stoyanov as well as Slavcho Binev and Dessislav Chukolov, as a result of the Attack party winning 14.22 per cent of the vote. The high rate of both the ethnic and nationalist votes in Bulgaria can only be explained by the demand for new political promises and actions in the country. The overall results of the European elections also demonstrate that the country could certainly benefit from the visible influence of the European political process. ★



"The European elections in Bulgaria demonstrated that neither the BSP nor the old right-of-centre parties such as UDF have recognised that the electorate needs if not new ideas, then at least new faces"



Romyana Vakarelska is an EU politics commentator with Team New Europe

The in crowd

Romania's failure to tackle corruption and reform its judicial systems may herald the end of guaranteed entry dates for EU hopefuls, writes Brian Johnson

Despite mounting criticism over the snail's pace of key reforms, commission president José Manuel Barroso last week defended the decision that allowed Romania and Bulgaria to join the EU in January. Replying to the suggestion that the two newest EU countries' continuing failure to implement judicial reforms and to crack down on corruption proved that they had not been fully ready for membership,

Barroso said the decision allowing entry had been the "right" one. "It was good and appropriate to have Romania and Bulgaria in on the date we proposed. The fact that we adopted mechanisms (a series of benchmarks for each country and the inclusion of sanctions in the form of safeguard clauses) gives the EU all necessary guarantees," said Barroso. "We can always improve...but we don't think we have anything to correct in the way we handled Bulgaria and Romania."



“Despite Barroso’s defence, there is widespread concern that the continuing political instability in Romania coupled with a growing antipathy across EU member states towards further enlargement, could affect future EU plans to bring in the rest of the Balkan states”

The Portuguese commission chief held talks last week with Romanian prime minister Calin Popescu Tariceanu, ahead of the publication of a key Brussels progress report on Bucharest due on 27 June. Despite Barroso’s defence, there is widespread concern that the continuing political instability in Romania – Tariceanu’s feud with the country’s president Traian Basescu has effectively halted the reform process – coupled with a growing antipathy across EU member states towards further enlargement, could affect future EU plans to bring in the rest of the Balkan states. Brussels is feeling the heat over Romania and Bulgaria. The commission has been accused by a number of member states of not taking its monitoring mechanism obligations seriously enough, while justice chief Franco Frattini was strongly criticised for being too close to ministers he was supposed to be watching over.

And the controversial inclusion of safeguard clauses, the key factor in allowing the two countries to join in January, looks more toothless with each passing day. FT Europe, in a damning analysis last week, hit the nail on the head. The paper argued that as soon as Romania and Bulgaria joined the EU, any incentive to reform was lost. “Now that both countries are in, Europe is discovering it has little more than empty threats to make new members clean up their act,” the paper said.

EU member states are unlikely to approve a “blank cheque” approach again and the new EU affect is likely to fuel European divisions on further Balkan enlargement.

The fear is that if high level corruption, gangsterism and political instability in Romania and Bulgaria cannot be effectively tackled within the EU fold then what chance of success will there be with more politically volatile states such as Serbia and Kosovo. Guaranteed EU entry dates – as both Bucharest and Sofia were given – are likely to disappear, to be replaced with target dates that would not carry any guarantees. Croatia, hoping to join the EU fold in 2010, and itself struggling to cope with corruption, could be the first victim of any change in approach by Brussels.

And Brussels insiders suggest that some member states could use this week’s summit

to press for new membership rules to be written into any agreement on a new EU treaty. Barroso said the upcoming reports on both Romania and Bulgaria would be “objective, fair and robust” but would not be drawn on saying whether any sanctions would be invoked. “I will not pre-empt the reports, but where we see progress we will say so and we will do the same on those areas where shortcomings still exist. There has been significant speculation on the possibility of safeguard clauses and I advise you to disregard this speculation as the conclusions have not yet been drafted.”

However, in a veiled warning to the feuding prime minister and president, Barroso said that the real issue for Romania was one of credibility. “In Romania there is a very lively democracy. Political conflict in a democracy is normal: the question is how to do it in a way that does not undermine the credibility of the country.” Tariceanu said that progress was being made, especially in the crucial areas of judicial reform and tackling corruption, and said he was “looking forward to the commission’s report”. ★

In the firing line

Romania’s political infighting has not helped the perception that graft is endemic in the country. Bucharest’s new justice minister Tudor Chiuariu found himself in the firing line recently when he attempted to sack a prosecutor in charge of a number of high-level corruption investigations. The move, coupled with the fact that Chiuariu replaced the highly respected anti-graft minister Monica Macovei has added to member states’ growing concerns over the way Brussels is managing EU enlargement.

However in an interview with the Parliament Magazine, Chiuariu vowed to press on with anti-corruption investigations and to continue the reform of the country’s judiciary. “I am determined to continue and to intensify these reforms,” he said, adding that he would pursue and improve on the agenda set by his predecessor. “I’ll try to improve things because many of [Macovei’s] projects have been blocked over the last six months by the parliament, and I will try to pursue this and achieve results that will finally adopt any laws that are necessary.”



Ukraine – the EU's buffer zone?



Adrian Severin reports back on parliament's recent delegation to Ukraine

On 26 April 2007, the European parliament's conference of presidents authorised the sending of a mission to Ukraine, to assess the situation in this country experiencing a profound political crisis. The crisis started when following the defection of a dozen opposition deputies to the ruling coalition and fearing that the coalition might eventually acquire the constitutional majority able to overrule presidential vetoes, on 2 April president Viktor Yushchenko issued a decree dissolving the Ukrainian parliament and ordering early parliamentary elections to be held on 27 May.

The parliament vowed to defy the president's order, and the government took steps to block election funding. Both asked the constitutional court to examine the president's ruling. That court was not able to rule since some of the judges suddenly and strangely fell sick, others resigned accusing political pressures and four were dismissed by the president and the parliament under the claim that they breached their oath.

The European parliament's mission was to identify the root causes of the crisis and the prospects for a solution consistent with EU values. On this basis one should determine the future policy of the EU towards Ukraine. All in all the Ukrainian social and political landscape looks complex. Most of the state institutions, each being an essential part of the democratic engine, do not function and/or have a dramatically damaged credibility. The only functional institutions are the government and the president which are in confrontation.

Most of the confrontational actions between the main public actors do not look primarily motivated by their ideological differences or by their divergences about the public political agenda but by their involvement in the fight for power sharing. The political spectrum in Ukraine cannot and should not be

described by the very simplistic division opposing an allegedly pro-Western president and an allegedly pro-Russian prime minister; nor should the political controversies be reduced to the fight between democracy (eventually of a European orientation) and oligarchy (eventually having its roots in Russia).

The hard core of the Ukrainian problem today is in the inter-institutional disequilibrium and the dispute about how the checks and balances system should be conceived and upheld. Therefore early elections might not be a sufficient solution and could create a continued series of political crises if the fundamental questions of the system of checks and balances, the separation of powers and the supremacy of the rule of law are not addressed appropriately.

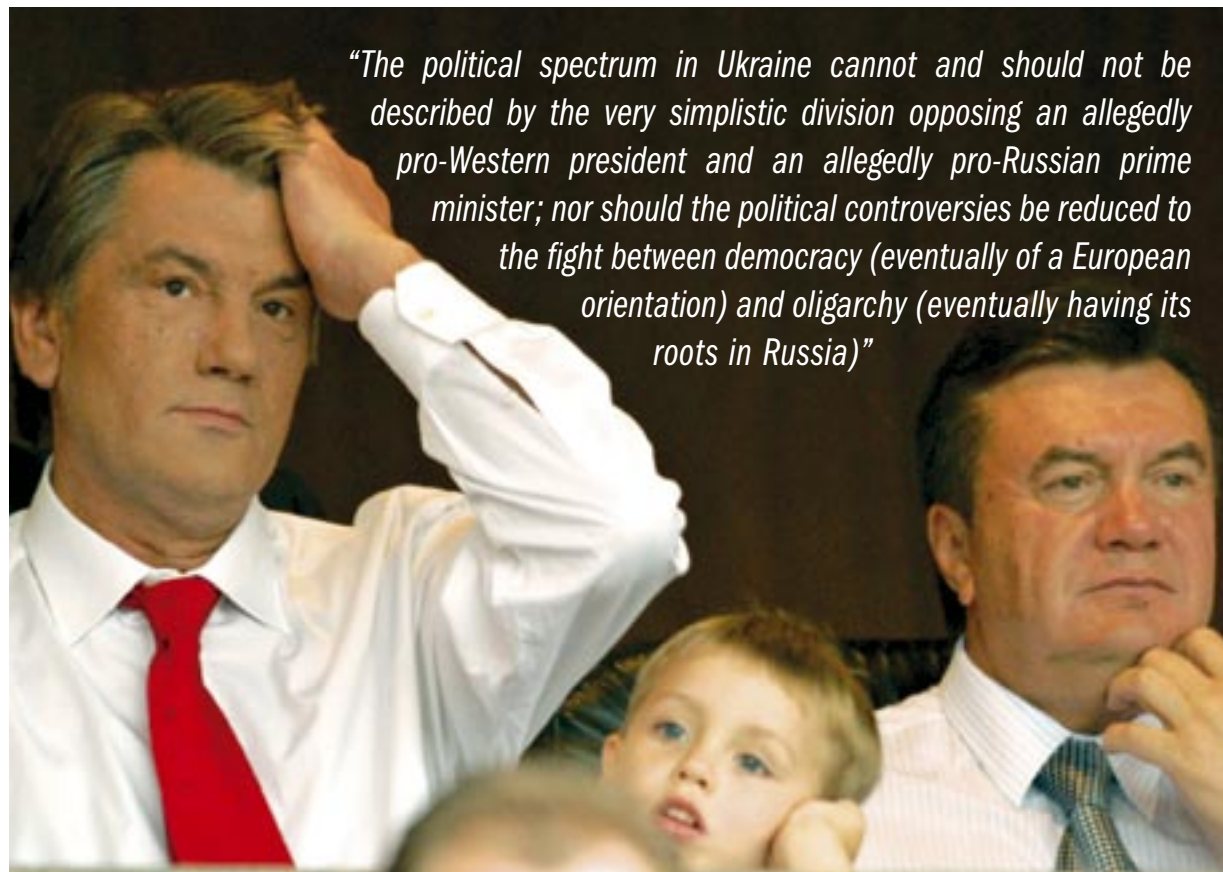
In this dispute some put the emphasis on the need to improve the democratic institutional equilibrium even if in a revolutionary way. Others think that the rule of law should have precedence and therefore the democratic reform should only be promoted through a legitimistic approach. The problem with oligarchic networks and corruption seems to be considerable and real.

Moreover, business and politics are strongly linked. The methods chosen for coping with those problems are also in dispute. Some are in favour of an effective action based on the

support coming from the internal security forces and on the limitation of the individual freedoms. Others want to promote a transparent and legal approach. This is very inefficient in a country where the judiciary is not completely functional. All these problems are particularly dramatic since Ukraine is culturally split into an Eastern (more rural and nationalistic) and a Western (more industrialized and cosmopolitan) part. Ukrainian society is tired of political fights and does not see their contribution in the improvement of the citizens' life, while the political elite lack the culture of dialogue, compromise and good faith in enhancing agreements.

In spite of this difficult background, all the interlocutors of the European parliament delegation reconfirmed the strong desire of the country to integrate in the EU and to eventually become EU member. The EU's response will depend on the Ukrainians' capacity to develop a true democracy while showing respect for the rule of law. Nevertheless it also depends on the EU's own ambitions. If the EU wants to play a role in the global world it should not hide behind a Ukrainian buffer zone but make Ukraine its Eurasian advanced post. ★

Will Ukrainian president Viktor Yushchenko (below left) and prime minister Viktor Yanukovich (below right) overcome their differences?



Adrian Severin is chair of parliament's delegation to the EU-Ukraine parliamentary cooperation committee

Trading places

A sightseeing trip in Alsace opened up a whole new career for German MEP **Helmuth Markov**. Martin Banks reports



Helmut Markov MEP

Born: 1952

Education: Kiev Polytechnic Institute, Ukraine

Career path: 1976-1990: Head of research and development division, Elektronenstahltechnik; 1990-2002: Managing Director, Eltesse GmbH; 1998-2004: Managing Director, LE-W GmbH; 1994-1996: PDS Regional Chairman, Brandenburg; 1990-1999: Member of Brandenburg Regional Assembly

In parliament: MEP since 1999; Chair of parliament's international trade committee since January 2007

Helmuth Markov still vividly recalls the day, back in 1998, when a coach tour of the French countryside took him to Strasbourg. He was travelling with his wife and three sons when, by chance, he passed parliament's then yet-to-be-opened building in the north east of the city. Though work was still to be completed, the gleaming, glass-fronted edifice had an immediate impact on the 55-year-old. "I decided there and then," he recalls, "that this was the place where I wanted to be."

The following year, Markov's dream was realised when he was elected as an MEP. It may not be entirely surprising, therefore, that he rubbishes the campaign to axe Strasbourg as one of parliament's official seats. "It is a pointless campaign," he says. "It is written into the treaty and there is nothing that MEPs can do about it."

Markov was born in 1952 in the east German city of Leipzig. His late father was a professor of history at Leipzig University while his mother was a librarian. At the age of 24, he left to study electrical engineering in the Ukrainian capital, Kiev, an experience he describes as particularly memorable. "It was an exciting time. The country was still part of the Soviet Union and it was good to sample a totally different culture." After taking his doctorate in Kiev, he returned to Germany to work as an electrical engineer in a town near Berlin. He founded his own company which he ran until selling it two years ago.

The fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 was the single event which awakened an interest in politics and Markov went on to spend nine years as a deputy in regional government in the state of Brandenburg. His trip to Strasbourg in the late 1990s planted the seeds of what was to become a new career on the European political stage. Although he was sixth, and last, on the party list, he was elected in the 1999 European elections and now represents the Confederal group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left.

He particularly enjoys his current job because it enables him to forge alliances with people from a range of political persuasion. "This parliament is totally different from national parliaments where, usually, there is a strict sense of discipline within political groups. In this place people like me have a lot more freedom to do and say as we wish. The European parlia-

"Although we are different politically, I have a good working relationship with Peter Mandelson. However, I just do not think the approach he has adopted in the current trade talks will get anywhere"

ment also gives you the chance to find political solutions to issues with all manner of people. I think this is good for policy making," he says.

Thus far, he considers his main achievements as an MEP to be the numerous parliamentary reports he has produced. These include reports on driving hours for professional drivers, digital tachographs, and the influence of globalisation on poor countries.

However, since his election earlier this year as chair of parliament's international trade committee, his profile – and workload – has increased substantially. When it comes to trade deals, Markov much prefers multilateral, rather bilateral, agreements. "Free trade without some limitations or regulation is, in the main, not fair," he says. "Economically powerful nations must be prepared to open their trade borders to poor developing countries." While he respects Peter Mandelson's determination to fulfil his mandate, Markov says the EU trade commissioner's approach to the current trade negotiations are destined

to end in failure. "Although we are different politically, I have a good working relationship with Mandelson. However, I just do not think the approach he has adopted in the current trade talks will get anywhere," he says.

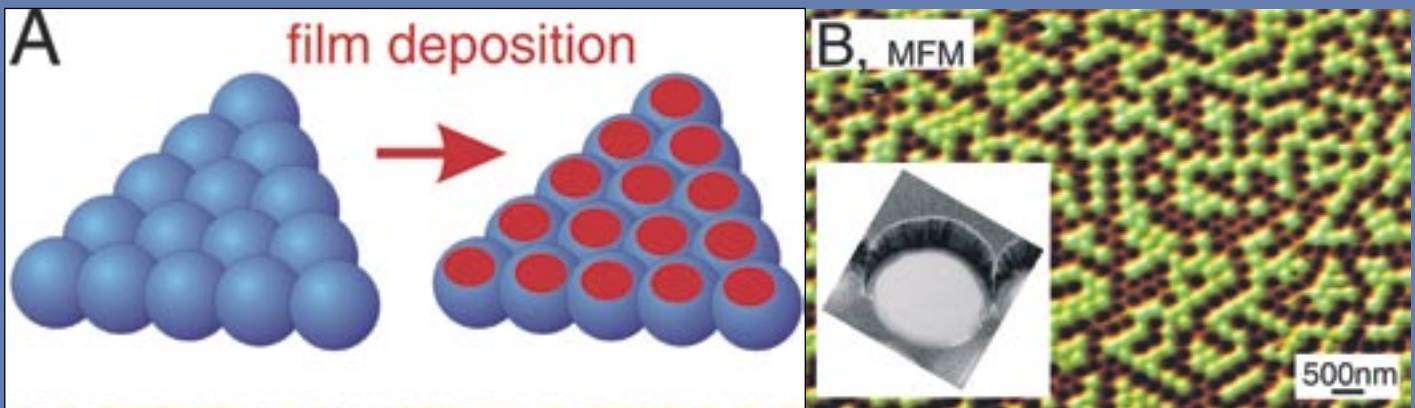
Away from work, Markov enjoys a range of activity sports, including judo (he is a black belt), parachuting and, despite numerous injuries over the years, downhill skiing. He is also a keen motorcyclist and takes part in parliament's annual Brussels-Strasbourg bike ride. In his quieter moments, he also enjoys classical music. He says his "action man" interests are not shared by his sons, aged 21-25, both of whom are students in Germany.

Markov was re-elected in 2004 but says he is unlikely to stand again in the 2009 European elections because he thinks "ten years in the same job is quite enough". He will probably return to his former engineering job but, before his mandate draws to a close, he still has a "wish list" of things he wants to do.

"I want to play my part in finalising the Doha trade talks, reducing poverty through fair trade and doing something for less developed countries," he says. On his monthly trips to Strasbourg, Markov finds himself occasionally thinking back to that day when he first clapped eyes on the parliament building. When asked what crosses his mind, he pauses for a moment and says, "I have had a really interesting life as an MEP. I am a happy man." ★

The 'MAFIN' data storage project

Mass data storage on magnetic hard drives in portable products is a new and fast growing market with an estimated turnover of several billion EUR per year. However, continued growth of storage density is limited as a result of the thermal instability of recorded data. To overcome this so called 'superparamagnetic effect', the use of discrete media, in which information is stored in single nanostructures, will become mandatory. However, the relevant roadmaps indicate that the required lithography tools will not be able to provide the needed feature size, performance and cost efficiency in time. Therefore, it is likely that magnetic recording media will be the first technology which requires the introduction of nanostructuring by self-assembly processes.



In 2006 a new EU project called MAFIN (Magnetic Films on Nanospheres) has been established and funded by the Sixth Framework Program of the EU, involving partners from universities (Sheffield (UK), Konstanz (D)), research institutes (EMPA, PSI (CH)), and one industrial partner (OC Oerlikon-Balzers (FL)). It is expected that self-assembly of nanoparticles can be governed and expanded to wafer size scale by pre-patterning the substrate with optical or x-ray lithography. New material functionality is introduced by magnetic material deposition onto the particle array, as illustrated in Fig. A. The magnetic nanostructures formed on top of the particles are in a magnetic single-domain state, as indicated by the dark and bright contrast in magnetic force microscope (MFM) imaging of the particle caps (see Fig. B). This nanoscale system is quite distinct from the classical geometries: The film is extended over a wide region of the sphere and thus shows substantial curvature (see cross section in insert of Fig. B).

The present concept leads to a realization of nanostructure media, which offer new advances in achieving higher densities, following 'Moore's Law' in future storage devices, and secure appropriate IP to the European Community.

For further information please visit:
<http://idefix.physik.uni-konstanz.de/~ulbrich/index.html>

Drink, drugs and the European parliament

It's been a booze-tastic and substance-fuelled few weeks for members of the European parliament. According to a recent survey, one third of Britain's MEPs support the decriminalisation of cannabis. Research by the University of Manchester, England, has shown a large proportion of British MEPs who answered a survey believe the drug should be made legal despite growing health fears over its use. Studies have suggested the drug is linked to severe mental illness such as schizophrenia. Recent figures from Britain's National Health Service have revealed an 85 per cent rise in the number of cannabis-related hospital admissions in England.

The results were part of a questionnaire directed at 732 MEPs, of which one-fifth said they supported a change in the law.

British support for the legalisation of the soft drug was higher than average, although a soaring 83 per cent of Dutch MEPs who responded said they favoured wider decriminalisation. The survey was part of a wider study of MEP views carried out in 2006 by Professors David Farrell from the University of Manchester, Simon Hix from the London School of Economics and Roger Scully from the University of Aberystwyth.

Out of 732 MEPs contacted, 272 responded. Other revelations included 51 per cent of MEPs believing there should be more harmonisation of national immigration policies, while just short of three-quarters of MEPs think women should be free to decide on abortion, although only 20 per cent of Irish MEPs agree.

Three quarters of MEPs think there should be EU-wide arrest warrants for serious crimes, while 40 per cent of MEPs think the EU rather than Nato should be responsible for European defence, though only 29 per cent of the Brits agree. A similar 40 per cent think that EU foreign policy should be a counterweight to the US. In the case of the French – quelle surprise – this rises to 64 per cent. And finally 68 per cent of MEPs think the EU should no longer meet in Strasbourg, though only seven percent of the French believe this.

Professor Farrell said the growing influence of MEPs meant their views had to be taken more seriously. Ahem. "The views of MEPs as shown in this survey may very well have a direct impact on policy and therefore on all citizens in



MEPs want to change the rules on this...

the EU. So the public should sit up and take notice of what their representatives are saying," he said.

We do love a bit of reckless optimism. Meanwhile, back in the land of substances, Bulgaria is pinning its hopes on the European parliament to remove excise tax on homemade rakiya for personal use. The introduction of excise tax was an unexpected and unwelcome consequence of Bulgaria's entry to the EU and prompted protests in the country earlier this year. The issue is a highly sensitive one for Bulgaria, where the distillation of homemade rakiya is an annual harvest ritual.

The proposal to lift the tax has been put forward by Bulgarian Socialist Kristiyan Vigenin. He remains optimistic the economic and monetary affairs committee will back his plan, despite the proposal already being rejected once. Homemade rakiya is a deeply-rooted Bulgarian tradition and the zero

excise duty will not have any significant effect on sales of alcoholic beverages in the country, he said. Vigenin also pointed out that similar amendments had been passed successfully by Greece, Italy and Portugal.

On a separate, but related, issue the Poles are fuming after a perceived snub in the great vodka debate, ignoring the age-old wisdom that life is just way too short. An argument over the definition of real vodka has been raging for the past year and a half, pitting Eastern Europe – where vodka is made from grain and potatoes – against other countries like the UK, where it can be made from molasses and still called vodka.

The quest for a definition of the spirit, naturally an issue of great national pride, raised the hackles of the Poles once again after a representative of the German government sent a letter to 24 countries asking for their support to redefine vodka beyond the ingredients of

grains and potatoes. The letter did not find its way to the mailboxes of the Polish or Lithuanian delegations.

Outrage! said Polish MEP Boguslaw Sonik in a cutting statement denouncing the Germans for going behind the backs of some EU countries. To exclude Poland and Lithuania even in a single matter is a sign of discrimination, he raged. The feisty Polish MEP has demanded an immediate reaction from German chancellor Angela Merkel and an investigation into the apparent connections between German officials who issued the letter and groups lobbying for a wider definition of vodka.

Chancellor Merkel is, of course, reported to have stopped all of her preparations for this week's EU constitution negotiations at the Brussels summit, and rushed to placate the Poles. Meanwhile, MEPs themselves have a lot to say about the future European constitution. But tragically I've run out of space...

...and this



Heard any
whispers?



CONTACT:
Psst!@theparliament.com

NANDOS

STREP-project in FP6 frame fund by EU commission since 1th August 2005,
Coordinated by Prof. Magnus Willander in Göteborg University, Sweden.

Tel: +46 31-7722093, Fax: +46 31-7722092,

E-mail: mwi@fy.chalmers.se, mwi@physics.gu.se

Project webpage: <http://www.nandos.tu-bs.de>



Figure 1: Sketch of ZnO/ZnMgO quantum well structures realised on ZnO nanorods (SEM image of nanorods on the right)



Figure 2: Digital photograph showing white light emission from ZnO nanorods grown on SiC substrate.

Developing nanotechnologies has become an objective of utmost strategic importance for reinforcing the competitiveness of European industry. Whereas the top-down approach for the fabrication of nanostructures becomes exponentially more expensive, the bottom-up approach utilising self-organisation of nanostructures is a simple and productive way to achieve devices with very small lateral dimensions in an extremely parallel process. For application of self-organisation on an industrial scale, however, the "automatic" self-organised formation of nanostructures has to be controllable precisely. Among

the many materials exhibiting self-organisation, oxide semiconductors, e.g. Zinc Oxide (ZnO) and related compounds, are a very interesting material family.

Zinc oxide is a direct bandgap wurtzite type semiconductor with a bandgap energy of 3.37 eV at room temperature. Due to its large bandgap energy, ZnO is a serious contender for applications considered for other wide bandgap materials like GaN and SiC. In addition to this, due to the very large exciton binding energy (about 60 meV), excitons in ZnO are thermally stable at room temperature, and thus ZnO has significant advantages in optoelectronic applications such as in ultraviolet (UV) lasing media. Furthermore, a wide variety of self organised ZnO nanostructures have been realised recently (nanopillars, nanowires, nanobelts,...) that could have novel applications in optoelectronics, sensors, transducers. In addition to its optical properties, ZnO can also be used for chemical and gas sensing applications and the large surface area of nanostructures is one of their attractive aspects in this regard. ZnO based devices will find their application in areas such as communication, security environment or biomedical sciences.

One particularly attractive aspect of our project is that, unlike some other competing materials, ZnO

based nanodevices can be fabricated on a variety of different substrates, including silicon or flexible polymer substrates, which makes them compatible with existing silicon technology and organic electronics and optoelectronics, an emerging field in rapid expansion. The use of flexible substrates with inorganic semiconductors is a particular and new aspect of the nanophotonic devices proposed. The figures 1 and 2 show an example in recent progresses of the project on ZnO based quantum well nanorods and white light emitting diode based on ZnO nanorods.

Project objectives:

Development of ZnO nanostructures for applications in optoelectronics with a particular emphasis on lighting technology

Specific challenges:

- Growing self-organised ZnO based nanostructures
- Optimising the control of self-organisation
- Achieve p-type doping ZnO layer
- Demonstration of working applications with ZnO nanodevices

Expected impact:

Use of self-organized ZnO nanostructures will have a very big impact on lighting (in general) as well as for biotechnology, for example, white light emitting diodes, bio-sensors, and cancer therapy.



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