

NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION

On 9 February 2010 the European Parliament voted in, with 70 per cent in favour, the new European Commission giving it support to carry out its work until 31 October 2014. The Barroso II Commission won approval in a vote of 488 to 137, with 72 abstentions. The three large political groups voted massively in favour of the Commission. The EPP Conservatives (265 seats) unanimously supported the new Commission. Among Social Democrats of the S&D (184) more than 90 per cent of its members voted in favour. There was also support from the Liberals (84) apart from certain exceptions such as six French members. The Greens-EFA (55), the European United Left-Nordic Green Left (35), the far-right Europe of Freedom and Democracy group (31) and the non-attached (28) voted against the Commission, while the Eurosceptic European Conservatives and Reformists (54) abstained. This first approval of the Commission under the Lisbon Treaty marks the end of a process launched in June 2009 with the European elections, followed by the appointment of the Commission president in September 2009 and the hearings of the commissioners- designate in January and February 2010. The new Commission will officially take up its duties on 10 February 2010, after being sworn in before the Court of Justice in Luxembourg and after its appointment by the EU Council of Ministers acting by qualified majority. On 11 February, President Barroso will attend the informal European Council focused on the EU2020 economic strategy, among other issues. The economic and social crisis will certainly be the key issue of the coming year to be tackled by the Commission. The new executive will be going to Madrid in the next few days to meet the ministers of the Spanish EU Council Presidency.



INTELLIGENT ENERGY EUROPE INFO DAY-OUTCOME



The Brussels office recently attended the Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) Info Day (Brussels, 3 February 2010) and has prepared a note. The IEE is a part of the EU's Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and is managed by the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI) on behalf of the European Commission. The event provided a number of debates on specific priorities and requirements regarding future funding opportunities under the IEE programme, a survey of ongoing projects and opportunities to find partners for future projects. The IEE programme provides financial support to local, regional and national initiatives in the fields of renewable energy, energy efficiency and transport. The total budget for 2007-2013 is €730m. The programme is structured around three strands: **SAVE** – to promote energy efficiency and the rational use of energy resources, particularly in the building and industry sectors; **ALTENER** – for renewable heating and cooling, domestic and small-scale power generation and integrating new and renewable energy sources into local energy systems; **STEER** – for the diversification of fuels, promoting renewable fuels and energy efficiency in transport.

EU SUSTAINABLE ENERGY WEEK

On 22-26 March 2010 the EU Sustainable Energy Week will take place in Brussels. The event is organised by the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI) on behalf of the European Commission Directorate-General for Energy and Transport. Sustainable Energy Week is the reference event for sustainable issues in Europe. It forms part of the Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign which is an initiative of the European Commission launched in 2005. The Campaign contributes to achieving the European Union's energy policy targets within the fields of renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, clean transport and alternative fuels.



EUROPEAN LOCAL ENERGY ASSISTANCE (ELENA)

ELENA (European Local ENergy Assistance) is a new EU financial facility which will support local and regional authorities in making the investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy that are required to meet the EU's sustainable energy targets. The fund addresses a problem that many regional and local authorities, particularly medium to small ones, have i.e. they lack the technical capacity to develop large investment programmes in this area. This is particularly the case when such investments require private sector involvement, implying complex tendering processes which may exceed the capacity of local public bodies. ELENA supports technical assistance to help local and regional authorities develop energy related investment programmes that may otherwise fall through. ELENA can provide up to 90 per cent of the technical support costs necessary to prepare, implement and finance large sustainable energy investment programmes. Technical support covers a variety of different measures including the creation of project implementation units, production of feasibility studies, energy audits, and the preparation of tendering procedures and contractual arrangements. It does not cover the actual hardware costs, but, in providing technical assistance, aims to help local authorities to obtain large scale loans from development banks such as the European Investment Bank (EIB). ELENA is financed through the Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) programme, with an initial budget of €15m. It is managed jointly by the EIB and the European Commission. The funding is open to local or regional authorities particularly, but not exclusively, those participating in the Covenant of Mayors Initiative, as well as groupings of such authorities. There will be no calls for proposals. Instead, public bodies preparing an investment programme should apply for assistance directly to the EIB. Funds will be granted on a first-come first-served basis within the limits of the budget. To make an application, authorities should email the EIB with details of the planned investment programme, including the type of investment, cost and schedule, and the planned type and cost of technical support required. For more information, see the ELENA page on the EIB website.

OTHER OPEN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

CALL FOR PROPOSALS – MEDIA 2007 – TRAINING

On 5 February 2010 the Official Journal of the European Union published a call for proposals in the field of 'Training' under the European Commission Media Programme. The call has a budget of €2.5m and the deadline for sending applications is 9 July 2010. The projects shall last for a maximum period of 12 months, with a financial support from the European Commission that cannot exceed 50-60 per cent of the total eligible costs. The eligible actions should aim at developing the capacity of audiovisual professionals to understand and integrate European dimension to their work by improving expertise in the fields of economic, financial and commercial management, new audiovisual technologies or script project development.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS – MEDIA 2007 – NETWORKING AND MOBILITY OF STUDENTS AND TRAINERS

On 6 February 2010 the Official Journal of the European Union published a call for proposals, in the field of 'Support for the networking and mobility of students and trainers in Europe' under the European Commission Media Programme. The call has a budget of €2m and the deadline for sending applications is 30 April 2010. The supported actions should aim to develop the capacity of future audiovisual professionals to understand and integrate a European dimension to their work by improving training expertise in the field of economic and commercial management, new audiovisual technologies or script project development.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS – INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

The Official Journal of the EU published a new call for proposals under the 2010 Work Program for the Information and Communication Technologies Policy Support (ICT PSP). The current call for proposals is the fourth call: CIP-ICT PSP-2010-4 and includes the following: Theme 1: ICT for low carbon economy and smart mobility (energy and water efficiency in social housing, energy efficiency in cooperative transport management systems, water efficiency); Theme 2: Digital Libraries; Theme 3: ICT for health and inclusion (eHealth and ePrescription, eAccessibility of public digital terminals); Theme 4: Open innovation for future internet-enabled services in 'smart' cities; Theme 5: ICT for improved public services for citizens and businesses (eJustice services, implementation of the Services Directive, universal ID); Theme 6: Multilingual Web (open linguistic infrastructure, multilingual online services). The call deadline is 1 June 2010.

Greater Manchester Brussels Office
North West House
21 Rue du Marteau
B-1000 Belgium
Phone: 0161 408 7147
Phone: 0032 2 2295 375
E-mail: info@greater-manchester.eu,
Web : <http://www.greater-manchester.eu>