

## NEW EU COUNCIL CONFIGURATIONS



Recently, the European Council of Ministers decided to modify the list of Council configurations to reflect the changes made by the Lisbon Treaty to the previous treaties, with a view to incorporating space policy in the 'competitiveness (internal market, industry and research)' configuration and policy on sport in the 'education, youth and culture' configuration. Consequently, the names of the Council configurations will be as follows: General Affairs; Foreign Affairs; Economic and Financial Affairs; Justice and Home Affairs; Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs; Competitiveness (internal market, industry, research and space); Transport, Telecommunications and Energy; Agriculture and Fisheries; Environment; and Education, Youth, Culture and Sport.

## 2012 EUROPEAN YEAR FOR ACTIVE AGEING

The European Commission has proposed that 2012 be designated as the 'European Year for Active Ageing'. The main goal is to create better job opportunities and working conditions for the growing numbers of older people in Europe helping them to participate in society and encourage healthy ageing. According to the European Commission, from 2012 the European working-age population will start to shrink while over-60 population will continue to increase by about two million people annually, with the strongest pressure during the period 2015-35 when the so-called baby-boom generation will enter retirement. The proposed initiative is designed to serve as a framework for raising awareness, for identifying and disseminating good practice and for encouraging policymakers and interested bodies at all levels to promote active ageing and to commit to specific action and goals in 2011 to present future achievements during the European Year for Active Ageing in 2012.



## CAP REFORM COMMUNICATION



On 17 November 2010 the European Commission is planning to adopt its communication on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in 2020. The upcoming communication has three key objectives. First, the EU's agricultural potential must be safeguarded throughout European territory so as to guarantee Europeans' food security and meet growing global demand. Second, natural resources must be managed on a sustainable basis (water, soil, biodiversity, combating climate change). Third, agriculture must ensure fair territorial development. To meet these aims, the European Commission notes that the CAP's first pillar (market support) will have to become 'greener' and be distributed more fairly and that the second pillar (rural development) must be based

to a greater extent on competitiveness, innovation, combating climate change and protecting the environment. In order to improve distribution of direct support, the European Commission proposes a several principles based on a general system that limits Member States' gains and losses by guaranteeing that farmers in every country receive a minimum share of average EU support. Regarding rural development, the paper states that a wide range of instruments could still be useful for financing investments and infrastructures or public goods. A risk management toolbox should also be developed to deal with income risks and market volatility, which limit the agriculture sector's capacity to invest and remain competitive.

## OPEN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### CALL FOR PROPOSALS – EUROPEAN REFUGEE FUND

The European Commission has published the 2010 call for proposals under the European Refugee Fund (ERF) for Community Actions. The ERF aims to support and improve the efforts of EU Member States to grant reception conditions of refugees, displaced persons and beneficiaries of subsidiarity protection to apply fair and effective asylum procedures and to promote good practice in the field. The main priority for the 2010 call are: improving the quality of asylum decision-making and the development of the capacity stakeholder; improving efficiency of the Dublin system (development of best practices on the implementation of the family unity criteria and on improvement of transfer procedures); enhancing solidarity mechanisms between Member States, particularly those who face pressures on their national asylum systems; promoting good practices in the field of resettlement in Member States; promoting measures to address specific needs of vulnerable groups among asylum seekers and people benefiting from international protection. The call has a budget of €3.6m (maximum €1m per project if the applicant is a national authority, €500 000 for other applicants and the minimum amount is €200 000 for all applicants). Deadline: 14 December 2010.

### CALLS FOR PROPOSALS – MEDIA 2007

On 12 October 2010 the Official Journal of the EU published a new call for proposals under the MEDIA 2007 programme providing support for Promotion/Access to Markets in and outside the member countries of the MEDIA programme. The call aims at facilitating and encouraging the promotion and movement of European audiovisual and cinema works at trade shows, fairs and audiovisual festivals in Europe and around the globe and also to encourage the networking of European operators, by supporting joint activities on the European and international markets by national public or private promotion bodies. Projects shall last for a maximum period of 12 months and activities must begin at the earliest on 1 June 2011 and must end at the latest by 31 December 2012. The call has a budget of €2 500 000 and financial contribution from the European Commission cannot exceed 50 per cent of the total costs of the action. Deadlines: 8 December 2010 for activities between 1 June 2011 and 31 December 2011 and 1 June 2011 for annual activities taking place in 2012 and activities starting between 1 January 2012 and 31 May 2012.

### CALLS FOR PROPOSALS – TEMPUS IV

The European Commission has published the Tempus IV call for proposals. Tempus IV is the 'Trans-European mobility scheme for university studies' is the EU programme that supports the modernisation of higher education in the partner countries of the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, North Africa and the Middle East. The call supports two types of actions: **Joint Projects** - based on multilateral partnerships between higher education institutions in the EU and partner countries. They can develop, modernise and disseminate new curricula, teaching methods or materials, boost a quality assurance culture, and modernise the management and governance of higher education institutions and **Structural Measures** contribute to the development and reform of higher education institutions and systems in partner countries, to enhance their quality and relevance, and increase their convergence with EU developments. The maximum duration of projects is 24 months or 36 months. The period of eligibility of costs is expected to start on 15 October 2011. The call has a budget of €48.7m and the EU contribution cannot exceed 90 per cent of the total eligible and the minimum contribution is set at 10 per cent of the total eligible cost. The minimum grant for both Joint Projects and Structural Measures will be €500 000. The maximum grant will amount to €1 500 000. For national projects in Kosovo and Montenegro the minimum grant for both project types is set at €300 000. Deadline: 15 February 2011.

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