

EU BUDGET REFORM



On 29 September 2010 the European Commission is expected to publish its review of the EU budget which will unveil the future 2014-2020 financial framework. The report intends to propose an evaluation of policies with a special focus on agriculture and cohesion. It should also set several (six or seven) options for new own resources. The text will be neither a communication nor legislative proposal but rather a report in response to the mandate given by Member States five years ago. Together with the publication, a public debate will be launched on budget reform. It is expected that EU resources for farmers and for the poorest regions will not be totally abolished but the allocation of funds will be reviewed and corrected. On the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), EU Budget Commissioner, Janusz Lewandowski is opting for rural development rather than direct payments. The European Commission is expected to propose to abolish the British rebate and all other types of exceptions granted to certain states in order to simplify the present system, based essentially on national contributions. The future options for new own resources will be presented, with each one's advantages and disadvantages detailed. Among the likely options are the creation of a carbon tax, a tax on financial transactions and air transport tax. Lewandowski is opposed to a European income tax that would fall on states and EU citizens. He also seems to be prepared to defend the idea that a substantial part of the income generated by taxes levied nationally and decided at European level should be paid back into the EU budget. In response to that, the European Commission's text is expected to highlight that such taxes are fiscally neutral, politically acceptable and logistically feasible – the cost of levying them does not exceed the revenues raised. The Belgian Presidency is expected to react to the future text this autumn and the European Parliament will be working on that issue through its special committee on preparation of the next financial framework which was set up in July 2010. The major debate on the financial framework for 2014-2020 is scheduled for spring 2011.

2011 EU BUDGET

The Member States took the axe to the figures proposed by the European Commission in its draft 2011 EU budget. The match with the European Parliament is scheduled for October 2010 against the backdrop of the future debate on the general overhaul of the EU Budget. On 12 August 2010, the EU Council of Ministers adopted its position on the draft 2011 EU budget which under the Lisbon Treaty now constitutes its sole reading. The states made a total cut of €3.6bn (-2.8 per cent) in the payment appropriations tabled by the European Commission, which means that in times of economic crisis and national budget restrictions, there is no question of paying more into the EU pots. Seven Member States, including the UK, argue for a fair return on funds invested in the EU and they voted against the proposal on the grounds that the cuts are not deep enough. The European Commission aims to increase expenditure in 2011 by 5.9 per cent over 2010. The states intend to restrict the expenditure increase to 2.9 per cent proposing a draft budget of €126.6bn in payment appropriations - 1.02 per cent of the Union's gross national income - €141.7bn in commitment appropriations. The sector most concerned by the cuts is cohesion policy, which is slashed by more than €1bn. Measures to stimulate growth and employment also lose €841m although leaders have been stressing the need to guarantee the success of the Europe 2020 economic strategy that will replace the failed Lisbon Strategy. The European farming sector also drops by €820m. In October, the European Parliament is expected to vote for reinstate appropriations for next year going even higher than the European Commission's figures. The 2011 budget will be the first to be adopted under the Lisbon provisions which give the European Parliament the final say.



OPEN DAYS 2010



More than 6,000 participants will be attending the Open Days 2010 in Brussels on 4-7 October 2010. Open Days is the biggest annual event on the EU regional policy calendar and is jointly organised by the Committee of the Regions and the EC's Regional Policy Directorate-General. On 16 August the European Commission published the final Open Days programme, which will involve 130 varied workshops and about 244 regions representing a large number of regional, national, European and international institutions and public and private entities involved in regional

policy and urban development. The overarching banner for this year is 'Europe 2020: Competitiveness, Cooperation and Cohesion for all Regions'. The Greater Manchester contribution to the Open Days in Brussels will focus on the delivering inclusion through the Greater Manchester Strategy. Baron Frankal, Director of Economic Strategy from the Commission for the New Economy, will speak during the workshop. Baron will be also a moderator of the 'Inclusive Territories: Enhanced Competitiveness?' workshop which will take place on 5 October 2010.

OPEN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

CALL FOR PROPOSALS – PREVENTION OF AND FIGHT AGAINST CRIME

On 2 August 2010 the European Commission published its latest annual "Action Grants" call for proposals under the Prevention of and Fight against Crime 2007-2013 Programme. The programme provides financial support to activities aimed at combating all types of crime, in particular people trafficking and offences against children, illicit drugs and arms trafficking, corruption and fraud. It covers the themes of: crime prevention and criminology, law enforcement, protection and support to witnesses, and protection of victims. More specifically, the 2010 priorities include: financial and economic crime; illegal internet use; prevention of crime including urban, juvenile, environmental, firearms and drug related crimes; police and customs operation and cooperation. The call has a budget of €5 925 000, to which may be added further sums unspent under calls released earlier this year, and the deadline for expressions of interests is 15 October 2010.

CALLS FOR PROPOSALS – SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

On 20 July 2010 the Official Journal of the EU published several calls for proposals under the 2010 and 2011 work programmes of the Seventh Framework Programme: Cooperation (health; food, agriculture and fisheries, and biotechnology; information and communication technologies; nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials and new production technologies; energy; environment including climate change; transport including aeronautics; socio-economic sciences and humanities; space; security; general activities, joint technology initiatives), Ideas (ERC starting independent researcher grants), People (Marie-Curie actions) and Capacities (research infrastructures; research for the benefit of SMEs; regions knowledge; activities of international cooperation). The European Commission has made available €6,4bn to invest in research and innovation. The calls cover a vast range of scientific disciplines, public policy areas and commercial sectors. The goal is to increase European competitiveness and support some societal challenges such as climate change, energy and food security, health and an ageing population. According to the European Commission around 16 000 participants from research organisations, universities and industry, including €800m for around 3 000 SMEs, are expected to receive funding. Grants will be awarded through calls for proposals and evaluations over the next 14 months. The deadlines vary.

CALLS FOR PROPOSALS – ESPON 2013 PROGRAMME

Two new calls for proposals have been launched under the ESPON programme: 1) Targeted Analyses (priority 2 of the ESPON Programme, budget: €650 000), 2) ESPON Database Project Phase II (priority 3 of the ESPON Programme, budget: €1.3m). The first call for proposals is targeting a new type of project supporting the use of existing ESPON results in partnership with different groups of stakeholders, who will participate actively in project implementation. The projects should address the following targeted themes: Airports and Drivers of Economic Success in Peripheral Regions (ADES) and Advanced Monitoring and Coordination of EU R&D Policies at Regional Level (AMCER). The second call represents a core element in the knowledge base being created by ESPON. Projects carried through should contribute with solid facts and methodologies in support of quality evidence for the policy development processes. In addition, they should contribute to the building of European datasets, indicators and tools that constitute a foundation for a scientific community in the field of European territorial science. The deadline for sending application is 19 October 2010 and potential beneficiaries of this call are public and private bodies.

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>