



Business Support on Your Doorstep

EU Alert

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Rural Development Funding

The Rural Development Committee has voted on the last proposals from Member States/regions for using EU Recovery Plan and CAP Health Check funding and other transfers within the CAP to address issues including the economic and dairy crisis, and climate change. In the period October 2009 – January 2010, all rural development programmes were modified and the additional funding of about €5 billion is now ready to be invested in agriculture, the environment and broadband in rural areas. The January 2010 RDC voted on the last 7 of these modifications. The majority of the funds will be concentrated in the areas of bio-diversity (31.2% of all funds, or €1.5 billion) and water management (26.9% or €1.3 billion). The development of broadband infrastructure remains an important policy issue for rural areas. Member States have thus decided to invest 35% of the EU Recovery funds for broadband, which equals €360.4 million out of the available €1 billion.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/102>

Data Protection Day - Challenges to Privacy

Our privacy faces new challenges: behavioural advertising can use your internet history to better market products; social networking sites used by 41.7 million Europeans allow personal information like photos to be seen by others; and the 6 billion smart chips used today can trace your movements. The European Commission today – Data Protection Day – warned that data protection rules must be updated to keep abreast of technological change to ensure the right to privacy, legal certainty for industry, and the take-up of new technologies. EU rules say that a person's information can only be used on legitimate grounds, with their prior consent.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/63>

New Telecoms Regulator Gets to Work

Today marks the start of a new era for telecoms in the EU. The telecoms regulators of the 27 EU countries will meet for the first time in Brussels as members of the new Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC). The new European telecoms regulator BEREC has been established following the adoption by the Council and Parliament of the new EU Telecoms rules in December 2009. With 12 fixed and 10 mobile telecoms companies offering services in many other EU Member States and hundreds of service providers operating across borders, BEREC will play a crucial role in strengthening the single telecoms market and consistent regulation across Europe.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/62>

EU Support for Copenhagen Climate Change Accord

The European Union has formalised its support for the Copenhagen Accord on climate change and presented its commitments for emission reduction targets. In a joint letter with the Spanish Presidency of the Council, the European Commission has formally notified the EU's willingness to be associated with the Accord and submitted for information the EU's established greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for 2020. These consist of a unilateral commitment to reduce the EU's overall emissions by 20% of 1990 levels and a conditional offer to increase this cut to 30% provided that other major emitters agree to take on their fair share of a global reduction effort. Under the Accord, notifications are to be submitted by 31 January 2010.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/97>

Brussels Hosts a Conference on 'New Skills for New Jobs'

The European Commission is organising a major conference in Brussels to present the key findings of the 'New Skills for New Jobs' high-level expert group, providing recommendations on how to take forward the EU skills and jobs agenda. In addition, new figures on the supply and demand for skills in Europe up to 2020 will be presented. The conference "New skills for new jobs" comes at a time when the Barroso II Commission will be starting to shape the EU 2020 Strategy, the follow-up to the Lisbon Strategy. According to the experts, much stronger bridges have to be built between the worlds of work and education and training. This is all the more urgent as today, despite the crisis, several millions of jobs are waiting to be filled by the right candidates. Labour markets in the EU are changing fast: within the next decade, around 80 million vacancies will need to be filled due to retirement and 20 million new jobs can be expected to be created, often requiring more and better suited skills than ever before.

<http://euroalert.net/en/news.aspx?idn=9535>

Skills and Jobs Experts Call for Action Now

Immediate action is required to solve Europe's skills deficiencies and give Europeans a better chance of labour market success in the future, says an independent expert report published by the European Commission today. The report - 'New Skills for New Jobs: Action Now' - stresses the need to provide the right incentives for people to upgrade their skills, to better link education, training and work, to develop the right mix of skills, and to better anticipate those skills needed in the future. The report is one of the major outputs of the European Commission's 'New Skills for New Jobs' agenda and will be presented at a high level conference in Brussels.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/123>

Safer Standards for European Citizen's Data Transfers to Processors in Third Countries

The European Commission has adopted a Decision updating the standard contractual clauses for the transfer of personal data to processors established in non-EU countries. The Decision modifies current standard contractual clauses to take account of the expansion of processing activities and new business models for international processing of personal data. It contains specific provision to allow, under certain conditions, the outsourcing of processing activities to sub-processors, while ensuring a constant protection of personal data.

Vice-President Jacques Barrot said "This updated version of the standard contractual clauses takes account of new business models and the growing trends to global processing and outsourcing. The updated standard contractual clauses ensure a balance between global business needs and protection of EU citizens' personal data".

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/130>

Social Situation Report

Europeans are on average broadly satisfied with their personal situation, but less satisfied when it comes to the economy, public services and social policies in their country, according to an opinion survey released. The Eurobarometer on the social climate in the EU also found large differences between countries, with people in the Nordic countries and the Netherlands generally most satisfied with their personal situation. The survey forms part of the European Commission's Social Situation Report, also released today, which examines social trends in Europe, this year focusing on housing.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/114>

Waste Implementation Agency

A European Commission study recommends setting up a dedicated European body to oversee the implementation and enforcement of EU waste law. The study is part of a series of steps being taken by the Commission to improve waste management and ensure it meets the standards set by EU legislation to protect citizens and the environment. Illegal dumping of waste continues on a significant scale, many landfill sites are sub standard and in some Member States basic waste infrastructure is still missing. Illegal waste shipments are also a concern. A second report published today reveals that almost one fifth of waste shipments inspected as part of recent enforcement actions in Member States were illegal.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/113>

Consultation: USA International Agreement on Personal Data Protection

The aim of the consultation is to collect opinions with a view to the future EU-US international agreement on personal data protection and information sharing for law enforcement purposes.

http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/news/consulting_public/news_consulting_0005_en.htm

Consultation: Update of European Commission Publication on Radiation Protection

Council Directive 97/43/EURATOM on health protection of individuals against the dangers from ionizing radiation in relation to medical exposure stipulates that the EU Member States' competent authorities shall adopt specific criteria of acceptability for equipment in order to indicate when appropriate remedial action is necessary, including, if appropriate, taking the equipment out of service. In order to facilitate the implementation of this requirement in the EU Member States, in 1997 the Commission published Radiation Protection 91: Criteria for acceptability of radiological (including radiotherapy) and nuclear medicine installations (RP 91). This publication specified minimum criteria for acceptability and has been used to this effect in legislation, codes of practice and by individual professionals throughout the member states and elsewhere in the world.

However, development of new radiological systems and technologies, improvements in traditional technologies and changing clinical/social needs have created circumstances where the criteria of acceptability need to be reviewed to ensure the principles of justification and optimization are upheld. To give effect to this, in 2007 the Commission initiated a study* aimed at reviewing and updating RP 91, which in due course has led to the development of the present publication.

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/radiation_protection/consultations/2010_radiation_criteria_en.htm

If you have any queries about the EU Alert bulletin, or would like some more information about any of the topics in this edition, please contact Enterprise Europe West Midlands on 0121 455 0268

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