



Business Support on Your Doorstep

EU Alert

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23rd October 2009

European IT Companies to Recruit More Women

On 8th October the European Commission welcomed the growing commitment by Europe's tech companies to attract more women to the information and communication technologies (ICT) industry. Only six months after the European Commission launched a code of best practices for women in the ICT sector, the number of signatories committed to encourage young women to study and follow careers in the telecoms, technology and internet industries has grown from initially five to now 28 – a more than five fold increase. The Commission also launched the European Directory for Women in ICT – a new online tool that will bring together all information on activities and jobs in the EU related to women and ICT.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1489>

www.ictwomendirectory.eu

Investing in Low Carbon Technologies

European Commission called public authorities, business, and researchers to join efforts in order to develop by 2020 the necessary technologies to address climate change, secure EU energy supply and ensure the competitiveness of our economies. In a proposal on "Investing in the development of low-carbon energy technologies", the Commission estimates that an additional investment of €50 billion in energy technology research will be needed over the next 10 years. This means almost tripling the annual investment in the European Union, from €3 to €8 billion. This represents a step forward in the implementation of the European Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan), the technology pillar of the EU's energy and climate policy. Different sources of funding are considered, from public and private sectors at national and EU level, to be used in a coordinated way will also help to push forward a fast growing industrial sector and to create jobs.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1431>

Study on Threats to Information Services

The European Commission has repeated its call for EU countries to do more to tackle online privacy threats to the public. A Commission-funded study found that although in recent years several EU countries have taken some measures to enforce Europe's ban on spam, including fines for spammers, the number of prosecuted cases and sanctions imposed on lawbreakers vary considerably. The study confirms the need for the legislative improvements proposed under the reform of the EU's Telecoms rules: clearer and more consistent enforcement rules and dissuasive sanctions, better cross-border cooperation, and adequate resources for national authorities in charge of protecting citizens' online privacy.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1487>

EU Bookshop Digital Library Goes Live

12 million scanned pages in more than 110 000 EU publications are available free of charge for download in the EU Bookshop Digital Library. Launched at the Frankfurt Book Fair on the 16 October, it offers all publications edited by the Publications Office on behalf of the EU institutions, agencies and other bodies since 1952.

The Publications Office's archives have long represented a veritable treasure trove of European history. Publications such as the address delivered by Mr Jean Monnet, President of the High Authority before the Common Assembly at the first session of September 1952 or the General Report on the activities of the Community in French from 1953 can once again see the virtual light of day through the Publications Office Digital Library.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1529>

Gender Equality to Boost Economic Growth by 15%-45% of GDP

A meeting of ministers responsible for gender equality and for finance and economics will take place on 16 October in Stockholm in the margins of the EU Presidency conference 'Does gender equality boost economic growth?'. The conference will discuss how and why gender equality is important in achieving long-term, sustainable economic growth in the EU also with a view to the future shape of the EU's strategy for growth and jobs after 2010. Vladimír Špidla, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities will represent the Commission. Over the last decade, much progress has been made in female participation in the labour market, with the employment rate for women having increased from 52% in 1998 to 59.1% in 2008, close to the Lisbon target set for 2010. However, compared to the rate for men, large gaps remain in quantitative (13.7 percentage points) as well as qualitative terms (gender pay gap, involuntary part-time, gender segregation of the labour market).

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1527>

New Website to Help Improve Development Co-Operation

The European Commission is launching Capacity4dev.eu, an interactive website aimed at improving Europe's development co-operation. It will allow the development community at large to meet and exchange best practices on the European Commission's reform of how it provides know-how through training, research, consultancy or technical support. The goal of the reform is to ensure our aid for developing countries happens faster and better. The launch coincides with the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on Saturday 17th October.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1531>

EU and South Korea Initial Free Trade Deal

EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton and Korean Trade Minister Kim Jong-hoon have initialled a free trade agreement (FTA) that is the most important ever negotiated between the European Union and a third country. The deal, estimated to be worth up to EUR 19 billion in new trade for EU exporters, will remove virtually all tariffs between the two economies, as well as many non-tariff barriers. The agreement will create new market access in services and investment. The deal also makes major advances in areas such as intellectual property, procurement, competition policy and trade and sustainable development. The FTA signals an important upgrade of the EU-South Korea relationship, together with a new Framework Agreement. Speaking following the initialling in Brussels, Commissioner Ashton said: "This is the first 21st Century free trade agreement for the EU, creating deep economic ties with another developed economy. It will create new market opportunities for European companies in services, manufacturing and agriculture. This agreement is particularly important in the current economic climate, helping to fight the economic downturn and create new jobs."

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1523>

Have Your Say on EU Financial Rules

As part of its second revision of the financial rules for EU-funded programmes, the European Commission launched a public consultation inviting beneficiaries and managers of public funds to send in their views on how to make the rules for grants and contracts more effective for everyone. The open consultation is an opportunity for all interested parties to share their practical experience so the Commission can, among other things, improve access to grants and simplify its own handling of financial files. This is especially important as the EU begins to prepare the ground for a new generation of programmes in 2014.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1542>

European Union Ready for Wireless Broadband on GSM Frequencies

The path has been cleared for a new generation of mobile services in Europe with the publication in the EU's Official Journal of new measures that allow 3G phones to use GSM frequencies. This follows the European Parliament and Council of Ministers' agreement, in July to modernise European legislation – the GSM Directive – on the use of the radio spectrum needed for mobile services. The new EU measures will foster stronger competition on Europe's telecoms market and make it easier for operators to provide faster, pan-European services such as mobile internet alongside today's GSM services. They will also boost the roll-out of wireless broadband services, one of the drivers of the EU's economic recovery.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1545>

Nine out of Ten Europeans Still Strongly Support Development Aid Despite the Downturn

Around 90% of Europeans still believe development is important and 72% of Europeans are in favour of honouring or going beyond existing aid commitments to the developing world. "This poll clearly shows that citizens expect their governments and the EU Commission to dig deep for development financing", says EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Karel De Gucht. "Even in the context of the economic crisis, I appeal again to the EU Member States to stick to their commitments to increase development aid up to € 69 billion by 2010 to meet the mid term target of the Millennium Development Goals".

A large majority of European citizens (61%) feel that Europe can positively contribute to the debate on global development. "Europeans understand better and better why development is important. They ask for more coverage on development issues by national media", says EC Vice-President and Commissioner for Communication Strategy, Margot Wallström.

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1540>

Consultation: Commission Launches Survey on EGNOS (Satellite Navigation)

This consultation aims at collecting feedback from the general public about an advertisement for EGNOS. The key objective is to check if what is understood by the viewers is in line with the Commission's communication objectives. If that is not the case, corrections will be made for the final version of the advertisement.

EGNOS (European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service) is the new European satellite navigation system that corrects GPS errors, making the GPS signals much more accurate. The EGNOS system, composed of a network of ground stations and transponders aboard three satellites, is the first infrastructure owned by the European Union. The EGNOS signal is also the first real European public service. It is therefore key that the Commission communicates widely about this new system and service and does it in an effective way.

<http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=Advertisingsurvey>

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

www.een-midlands.org.uk

