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Strong EFCA and ACE (architects) voice heard on European issues of H&S

EFCA and ACE (Architects Council of Europe), jointly representing the designers' community, have effectively offered direction on the European Commission's non-binding guidance for the member states on the implementation of the Temporary and Mobile Sites Directive (92/57/EEC).

EFCA and ACE jointly submitted comprehensive and detailed comments on the successive drafts of the EC guidance as member of Advisory Committee overseeing the work of the external consultant. The final draft was discussed at the 24 September 2009 meeting of the Advisory Committee.

Whilst being in the minority in the Advisory Committee, J.-Martin Hohberg, EFCA representative, reported successes in respect of several issues, namely:

- the deletion of misleading allegations that numerous accidents on construction sites are caused by unsatisfactory design;
- the replacement of the term 'compliant design' by 'design respecting the principles of prevention';
- the clarification of the terms 'preparation phase' and 'design' to address also the cooperation between various construction actors (including H&S duties of contractors);
- under the term 'preliminary H&S plan' it is made clear that it is a dynamic document, which requires regular updating during all construction project phases and of which the level of detail depends on the project's advancement;
- the guide will carry the EC communication on the practical implementation of Health and Safety at Work Directives in annex.

However, this EC guidance does not include an overview of the diverging interpretations of the Directive in the member states.

Such information on H&S responsibilities of designers is of particular importance for the firms that work on cross-border projects and in trans-national partnerships. The EFCA and ACE task forces will cover this matter under their forthcoming working plans.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0698:FIN:EN:PDF>

European liability and insurance landscape unveiled

The Board of Directors approved the preparation of two fact-finding studies on national liability rules and insurance requirements and practices.

The members of the European Liability & Insurance Committee assembled data on the eight countries participating in the committee: Denmark, France, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, U.K.

This information, including information from two more countries, is now being elaborated into a useful and readable digest for both the member associations and the firms.

The final document will serve as a quick reference for firms with ambitions to extend their activities across national borders.

A more comprehensive and scientific study is being prepared under the guidance of Professor Daniele U. Santosuosso of the University of Sapienza with funding kindly arranged by OICE; this will complement the first report.

Moreover, EFCA is finalising its policy paper on the need to limit the liability of engineering consultants and allocate liability to the appropriate party in cases of joint ventures. The paper will support EFCA's and national associations' efforts to promote liability reforms.

Understanding buy smart, buy green

EC official Alenka Burja (DG Environment) briefed the European Public Market Committee on the European Green Public Procurement (GPP) policy and discussed how the industry could contribute in achieving its application.

Alenka Burja explained the ambitions of the European Commission: to move towards the reduction of environmental impacts caused by public sector consumption and to use GPP to stimulate innovation in environmental technologies, products and services; the European goal is for GPP to reach 50% of public procurement by 2010.

She outlined current obstacles to the use of GPP and the results of a study on the level of GPP in 7 Member States in the years 2006 and 2007.

The discussion touched on various issues, including:

- the role of our industry to raise awareness of clients in order to stimulate their demand for environmentally friendly services and eco-efficient technologies;
- the importance of training and education of public clients on the introduction of environmental factors in the procurement process;
- the benefits of project planning on the basis of life cycle costs, including appropriate valuation of environmental impacts to the extent possible (an evolving issue).



She presented a series of European initiatives such as:

- the EU Ecolabel
- the revised Ecodesign criteria
- the proposed methodology for internalising external costs for the promotion of clean and energy efficient vehicles, and
- the promotion campaign for Life Cycle Costing in construction.

The EFCA Committee is determined to further examine life cycle costing and the ongoing work on the defining criteria for 'green' services.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/construction/compet/life_cycle_costing/index_life_cycle_en.htm

European External Aid Committee assesses progress and priorities

The Committee's contributions to the successive reviews of the PRAG (Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions) have proved positive. However, together with the Permanent Representations EFCA will pro-actively address continued procedural and operational problems.

At its October 2009 meeting, the Committee made a systematic review of its current policies.

As some emerging key issues, issuing from major reforms to EC development policy were inadequately covered, the committee decided to re-position its debate on the following general themes:

- procurement procedures and application of procurement rules
- development instruments and modalities (e.g. budget support, delegated cooperation);
- appeal and redress systems;
- aid effectiveness and aid quality (referred to as the Accra Agenda for Action).



The latter theme would touch on global principles such as country ownership and managing for results and the broader aid architecture, but at the same time focus on the resulting challenges for our industry and the impact on the firms' business environment.

The industry's views will contribute to the discussion on how the EU should evolve as a donor and the added value and impact of EC development cooperation.

Policy papers on concrete sub-items will be elaborated to serve as a basis for further EFCA efforts for the improvement of business conditions.

Blueprint of strategic ideas for future industry leaders

The recently established Committee on the European Consulting Future will set trigger points for reflection and action for both the national associations and their firms.



At its September 2009 meeting in Stockholm, the European Consulting Future Committee adopted its Terms of Reference and work plan.

These proposals, approved by the EFCA Board of Directors, set the lines of the work to be completed for May 2010.

The envisaged outputs that will contribute to a better control of the industry's destiny include:

- a presentation for the member associations to increase awareness and interest in questions and ideas for future

strategies at national seminars and in discussions;

- a report on the perceived evolution of the consulting industry in the future, to serve as a professional input for the firms' business strategies.

EFCA joins European Construction Technology Platform

The European Construction Technology Platform (ECTP) is a 'partnership' of major stakeholders from the construction industry and the construction research world.

The platform identifies research orientations in the construction sector, before developing and implementing a strategic agenda.



The pivotal role played by the construction sector in sustainable development and economic recovery is widely recognised.

However, the resources invested in research, development and innovation for the generation of growth and employment and making the European economy a 'knowledge-based economy' remains insufficient.

ECTP aims at coordinating the efforts of industry, universities and research institutes to develop new technologies. It is actively involved in the orientation of research (through a 'bottom-up' process). ECTP also supports the creation of a Joint Technology Initiative on Energy Efficient Buildings.

EFCA is in contact with Terry Hill (ARUP) and Michel Ray (EGIS), who have a seat in the management Board of ECTP.

Through this engagement in the European research and technological development policy-making process, EFCA aims to provide input into the direction of research & development funding of the European Commission; to this end member associations are encouraged to provide feedback to the Secretariat on appropriate funding directions, in consultation with their member firms.

<http://www.ectp.org>

The next ECTP Conference 'Innovation in construction: taking the lead in greening the future' will be held in Brussels on 24-25 November 2009.

Experts will highlight the research and innovation priorities which have been set to meet the challenges we are facing. Results from ongoing research projects will be showcased as well as innovative new products entering the market. Ample opportunities will be available for technology transfer from and to SMEs and major construction players.

www.ectp.org/conference2009.asp

Promoting energy efficiency through complementary building-performance assessment schemes

EFCA joined the Sustainable Building Alliance (SBA), which aims at establishing 'a core set of common metrics for sustainable building construction while preserving their existing systems. The core metrics will be built so as to provide transparency between rating systems while recognizing regional / national differences.

The SB Alliance

A research based assessment oriented organization

SB Alliance was created on the initiative of several organisations, among which:

- the Building Scientific and Technical Centre (CSTB), France, a subsidiary of which runs and delivers the HQE certification
- the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Ltd, Britain, which delivers the BREEAM certificate through its subsidiary BRE-Global, and
- the German Sustainable Building Council (DGNB), which runs and delivers the German certificate
- the Finnish VTT, the Italian ITCCNR, the Brazilian FCAV and the American National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST).

Other certification and standardisation organisations, companies and associations have joined in since then, including FIDIC and the United States Green Building Council, which issues the LEED certification.

SB Alliance is not a certification body, and it does not deliver a new label or certification.

The operational objectives are the coordination and sharing of R&D efforts, the establishment of a common core for promoting shared use of building assessment tools and worldwide promotion of building assessment systems.

EFCA's SBA membership will give both the federation and the national associations further opportunities to promote together a systemic approach to building sustainability and facilitating the sharing of best practices in the design of the built environment.

<http://www.sballiance.org/>

Swedish delegation visits Brussels

On 13 October the STD Secretariat, our Swedish member, paid a visit to the EFCA secretariat during their study trip to Brussels.

The STD secretariat was acquainted with issues currently under debate in the committees and working groups and the ins and outs of the EFCA lobby.

This interaction was highly appreciated by the STD staff who considered having gained a far better understanding of what EFCA does for the engineering consultancy sector.

It should be noted that over past years other associations took similar initiatives.

Other member associations are most welcome to visit the EFCA office with their secretariat staff and discuss issues of common interest with the EFCA Secretariat.

E F C A A G E N D A

D&S meeting	Seville	06.11.2009
European Consulting Future Committee	Brussels	18.11.2009
Board of Directors meeting	Copenhagen	26-27.11.2009
Liability and Insurance Committee	Brussels	10.12.2009
European External Aid Committee	Brussels	14.01.2010
European Public Market Committee	Brussels	28.01.2010
Board of Directors meeting	Brussels	29.01.2010
EFCA GAM & Conference	Rome	27-29.05.2010



EUROPEAN BRIEFING

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Call for additional 50 billion euro investment in energy technology research

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Europe stresses importance of helping developing countries financially in their work to reduce emissions

The European Commission estimates that it will cost developing countries around 100 billion euro by 2020 to stem the effects of global warming in their countries.

The Commission presented a blueprint for scaling up international finance to help developing countries combat climate change. It recognises that the financing issue is central to prospects for reaching an ambitious agreement in Copenhagen.

However, no firm commitment on the EU's contribution to help developing countries financing mitigation and adaptation

strategies is yet reached in advance of the Copenhagen meeting.

Tensions exist between the richer and the newer member states whilst some of the first group refuse to commit as long as the other industrialised countries do not do the same.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/future_action.htm

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/envir/110634.pdf

ENERGY

Call for additional 50 billion euro investment in energy technology research

The Commission presented a strategic plan to accelerate the development and deployment of cost-effective low carbon technologies.

The Commission is calling on 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 its proposal on 'Investing in the development of low-carbon energy technologies', the Commission estimates that an additional investment of 50 billion euro in energy technology research will be needed over the next 10 years.

The Commission, together with industry and the research community, has drawn up technology 'roadmaps' which identify key low carbon technologies with strong potential at EU level in six areas: wind, solar, electricity grids, bio-energy, carbon capture and storage (CCS) and sustainable nuclear fission.

The additional costs would cover basic and applied research, demonstration and early market take up, excluding deployment activities. A new initiative on energy efficiency for up to 30 cities ('Smart Cities Initiative') has been proposed as first enabler for the mass market take-up of energy efficiency, renewables and energy network technologies.

The investment needs to develop clean and renewable energies can only be met through a wide range of financial instruments. The Commission and the EIB have already significantly increased funding for this purpose.

But more public and private sector funds need to be mobilised to support low carbon technologies and implement the overall EU guiding strategy.

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/technology/set_plan/set_plan_en.htm

ICT sector to lead the way on climate and energy targets

In a recommendation, the Commission calls on Europe's information and communication technologies (ICT) industry to outline by 2011 the practical steps it will take to become 20% more energy efficient by 2015.

ICT equipment and services alone account for about 8% of electrical power used in the EU and about 2% of carbon emissions. Using ICT in a smart way could help to reduce energy consumption in energy-hungry sectors such as buildings, transport and logistics, and save 15% in total carbon emissions by 2020.

The Commission recommends that the ICT sector adopt bold energy efficiency targets by 2011.

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sustainable_growth/energy_efficiency/index_en.htm

TRANSPORT

Commission facilitates access to the Marco Polo programme

A reduction in the period running from the day of application to the signature of the grant agreement, a general reduction of minimum thresholds for eligible projects and more flexible deadlines for completion of project objectives are some of the changes that are expected to enter into force with the next call for tenders at the start of next year.



The Marco Polo budget has seen its budget increased fourfold for the 2007-2013 period to 450 million euro.

The programme gives financial support to the transport industry in order to reduce road freight on our congested roads or to shift it to other more sustainable transport modes, like shipping, rail or inland waterways.

Modal shift will also be extended to empty containers and transport vehicles if they are effectively taken off the roads.

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/marcopolo/home/home_en.htm

EU invests first part of 500 million euro TEN-T funding in infrastructure works

The Commission announced the first group of projects that will benefit from a total of 500 million euro in EU funding investment under the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T).

This package was brought forward in response to the economic and financial crisis.

The projects selected for funding are as follows (EU contribution in parentheses):

- Austria: works at the Melk railway station (€3,400,000)
- Belgium: reconstruction of Noorderlaan bridge (€1,342,000)
- France: new high-speed rail line LGV Est-Baudrecourt-Vendenheim section (€75,996,000)
- Germany: renovation of the Main bridge at Randersacker (€2,395,000) and enlargement of trans-shipment capacity at the port of Cologne (€3,330,000)
- Hungary: works at Budapest airport (€7,560,000)
- Italy: Rome ring road motorway (€2,981,000), accessibility of port of Venise-Marghera (€3,912,000), rail hub in Torino (€52,740,000), air traffic: integration of communication and surveillance (€4,048,000)
- Netherlands: urban motorway tunnel in Maastricht (€15,000)
- Portugal: Faro airport development plan (€6,016,000)
- Spain: construction of express route around Seville (€23,969,000)
- Sweden: infrastructures in port of Malmö (€5,922,000), Partihall road connection (€16,296,000)
- United Kingdom: dredging and reclamation works in Thames estuary (€14,174,000), traffic management system (€11,670,000), Felixstowe-Nuneaton route work (€9,234,000).

A second group of projects benefitting from TEN-T funding will be announced later this year.

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/events/2009_10_21_naples_en.htm

Initiatives to help local, regional and national authorities in addressing urban mobility challenges

Although cities and regions must come to their own decisions with regard to urban mobility measures, the Commission presents a comprehensive support package.

According to the Commission, the wasted time and environmental damage caused by traffic jams cost the European economy nearly 100 billion euro, or 1% of the Union's GDP. Urban traffic is also responsible for 40% of CO₂ emissions and 70% of emissions of other pollutants from road transport.

The Commission will play a role in promoting the exchange of best practice – particularly through the creation of data bases – to improve the availability of information on urban transport. It plans to encourage the introduction of mobility plans in cities, but without going as far as creating legislative obligations.



The Commission will continue to support the organisation of awareness campaigns, such as European Mobility Week. It will also publish a guide to available financing under the Cohesion Policy.

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/european_coordinators/2009_en.htm

EU FUNDS & PROGRAMMES

Public-private partnership on the Future Internet

The Commission will launch a partnership between public authorities and major ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) players with a budget for 2011-2013 of 300 million euro available for projects to be selected in the near future, to complement the 200 million euro yearly ICT support to ongoing research for underlying internet technology.



The Commission unveiled a strategy to put Europe at the forefront when it comes to the development of smart internet-powered infrastructures. It aims to make Europe a leader in the research and roll out of future internet technologies needed to 'smarten up' infrastructures in areas affecting daily life like healthcare, transport, and energy.

The Commission urges governments and industry to work together so that European research focuses further on key internet technologies and their fast application to daily life. The Commission will kick-start this public-private partnership with a call for proposals in 2010.

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/foi/library/fi-communication_en.pdf

Agreement on Western Balkans Investment Framework

The European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Council of Europe Development Bank, with the endorsement of EU Member States, have agreed on the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF), providing a joint grant facility and a joint lending facility to finance priority projects in the Western Balkans.

The objective is to pool and coordinate different sources of finance and leverage loans with grants for projects representing a priority for the Western Balkan beneficiaries. The initial focus on infrastructure sectors, including social infrastructure will be expanded to include support to SMEs, energy efficiency and other investment sectors.

The WBIF creates a single entry point for project submission by beneficiary countries and screening by contributors and financiers. The project selection will ensure consistency with the countries' needs and will support EU accession priorities.

<http://www.eib.org/projects/regions/enlargement/the-western-balkans/index.htm>



EU LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products

On 24 September 2009, the Council adopted a revised eco-design Directive, thus extending the scope of the existing legislation in the sector. The revised directive is expected to ameliorate the energy and resource efficiency of a large range of products, while equally contributing to the achievement of greenhouse gas emission targets in the EU. The new rules oblige manufacturers of such products to consider at the design stage the environmental impact throughout the product's life cycle. Around ten technical annexes provide details on the parameters of requirements, methods for setting specific ecodesign requirements, the product-conformity management and evaluation system, control and product marking.

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/ecodesign/eco_design_en.htm

Commission Decision of 6 October 2009 on the definition of the European Electronic Toll Service and its technical elements

The decision sets out the essential technical specifications and requirements needed to launch a European Electronic Toll Service (EETS) which will enable road users to easily pay tolls throughout the whole European Union (EU) thanks to one subscription contract with one service provider and one single on-board unit. EETS will be available on all infrastructures in the entire Community such as motorways, tunnels and bridges where toll can be paid using on-board equipment.

EETS will eventually limit cash transactions at toll stations, thereby improving traffic flow and reducing congestion.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:268:0011:0029:EN:PDF>

Reviewing Community innovation policy in a changing world

Almost all Member States have improved their innovation performance. However, the innovation gap between the EU and its key competitors, the US and Japan, has narrowed.

The Communication lists a series of European challenges and coordinated initiatives to improve framework conditions for innovation.

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/future-policy/index_en.htm

GDP and beyond - Measuring progress in a changing world

GDP data are limited by the fact that they do not measure social or environmental progress.

The Commission wishes to make five main changes to how wealth is calculated in the EU:

- environmental and social data to complement GDP;
- GMES (Global Monitoring for Environment and Security) and the new Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) to upload, compile and disseminate data more quickly;
- economic data must take into account disparities within countries, such as a widening gap between rich and poor;
- a test Sustainable Development Scoreboard will be released at the end of 2009;
- a trial version of an environmental index will follow in 2010.

<http://www.beyond-gdp.eu/>

Aid Effectiveness Agenda: Benefits of a European Approach

The study reveals that European donors could bring at least 3 to 6 billion euro a year in gains on a yearly basis. It identifies a number of areas where increased aid effectiveness could lead to significant efficiency gains. The major obstacles to cost-effectiveness of aid are to be found in the volatility of aid flows, the proliferation of donors and implementing organisations and the ensuing fragmentation of aid programmes into tens of thousands of projects.

http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/AE_Full_Final_Report_20091023.pdf

Policy Coherence for Development - Establishing the policy framework for a whole-of-the-Union approach

Policy Coherence for Development is aimed at strengthening synergies between the EU non-aid policies and its development objectives. The idea is that carefully designed and implemented EU policies would generally lead to increased effectiveness of development aid and non-aid policies and to efficient use of resources.

http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/COM_2009_458_part1_en.pdf

http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/SEC_PDF_2009_1137_F_ACTE_PCD_EN.pdf

EU-Latin America: Global players in partnership

Main announcement: the Commission plans to create an investment facility in Latin America, a 100 million euro financial instrument (from existing funds) that will help mobilise resources from financial institutions (e.g. the Inter-American Development Bank) for investment projects in infrastructure, energy efficiency, renewable energy, transport and the environment.

The EU development aid budget for Latin America totals around 500 million euro a year.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0495:FIN:EN:PDF>

Towards an Integrated Maritime Policy for better governance in the Mediterranean

Commission proposed strategy, aimed at countering the various maritime challenges in the Mediterranean Sea basin. While the European integrated maritime policy concerns first and foremost the seven EU Mediterranean rim countries (Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta), it will also involve closely all non-EU rim countries.

The tools that would be mobilised are:

- maritime spatial planning (MSP), for the better use of marine space. The Commission is launching a study to assess the possibility of applying MSP in the Mediterranean;
- integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) of coastal areas and islands and a more coherent approach across the land-sea boundary;
- integrated research efforts. The Commission will develop a major cross-thematic research opportunity tailor-made for the Mediterranean under the 7th Framework Programme;
- integrated maritime surveillance to make the Mediterranean Sea safer.

http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/mediterranean_en.html

REPORTS

International cooperation on green building standards

Based on literature review, interviews and contacts with key players, the study analyses the scope for international co-operation on green building standards and thereby focuses on voluntary third-party assessment tools, certification and rating systems (AT-CRS).

http://grips.proinno-europe.eu/knowledge_base/view/858/international-cooperation-on-green-building-standards/

Green New Deal for Europe - Towards green modernization in the face of crisis

The study, commissioned by the European Parliament Greens to the Wuppertal Institute, focuses on climate, environment and energy aspects of the Green New Deal.

The study reveals that in terms of recovery packages, the EU is lagging behind the US and Asia. It presents evidence of the economic and employment potential of a Green New Deal and focuses on how to 'green' recovery activities in specific economic areas and support framework conditions to shift towards structural changes.

http://www.greens-efa.org/cms/default/dokbin/302/302250.a_green_new_deal_for_europe_towards_gree@en.pdf

The role of fiscal instruments in environmental policy

The paper takes a policy-making perspective and provides an overview of key issues on the role of fiscal instruments in energy and environmental policies. It describes fiscal instruments as cost-effective means to promote environmental goals and highlights in which cases taxes and other types of fiscal instruments can usefully complement each other.

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_papers/taxation_paper_19.pdf

Science, Technology and Innovation in Europe – 2009

The report covers a wide range of indicators, including R&D expenditure and personnel, patents, innovation and other indicators related to high-tech and knowledge-intensive sectors of the economy.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-EM-09-001

Annual Report on research and technological development activities of the European Union in 2008

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0558:FIN:EN:PDF>

2009 EU Report on Policy Coherence for Development

The report shows that development concerns have been integrated in the 12 policy areas coherence which impact on development, namely trade, environment, climate change, security, agriculture, fisheries, social dimension of globalisation, employment and decent work, migration, research and innovation, information society, transport and energy. It builds on evidence that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) depends not only on development aid, but also on the policies defined and implemented by the EU and other international actors in areas such as trade, environment, security or migration.

Building on the results achieved, the Commission proposes to focus future policy coherence development on five priority areas for achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals: climate change, global food security, migration, intellectual property rights and security.

http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/SEC_PDF_2009_1137_F_ACTE_PCD_EN.pdf

Action Programme for Reducing Administrative Burdens in the EU - Sectoral Reduction Plans and 2009 Actions

Based on a Commission proposal from 2007 the European Union set itself an ambitious target of cutting administrative costs imposed by EU legislation by 25% by 2012.

The Commission published an overview of progress to date. Reduction measures put in place or proposed by the Commission and already adopted could bring a reduction of 7.6 billion euro. Preparatory work on further reduction could lead to the presentation of additional measures bringing further reduction of at least 2.1 billion euro.

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/better-regulation/administrative-burdens/index_en.htm

EU budget 2008 - Financial Report

The 2008 financial report shows how a record 40% of the 2008 budget's 116.5 billion euro was invested in measures linked directly to jobs, growth and competitiveness like the 6 billion euro committed for new research projects (500 million euro more than in 2007).

Over 90% of the EU budget's funds or 105 billion euro was spent directly on the ground in the EU's 27 Member States.

2008 also saw more than half of Member States fail to exploit the full potential of the EU's structural and cohesion funds from the previous programming period (2000-2006). Committed money that is not claimed as a payment within two years is lost (the n+2 rule). The amount member states lost out on increased slightly from 227 million euro in 2007 to 267 million euro for 2008.

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/documents/2008_en.htm?go=t3_2#table-3_2

Annual report on the instrument for Structural Policy for Pre-Accession 2008

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0590:FIN:EN:PDF>

Transport infrastructure - European Coordinators annual reports

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/european_coordinators/2009_en.htm

CONSULTATIONS

Public consultation on the review of the Financial Regulation

The European Commission invites 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.

Deadline: 18 December 2009

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/consultations/FRconsult2009_en.htm

European Road Safety Action Programme 2011-2020

This consultation aims at engaging the European citizens and stakeholders in governments at national, regional and local levels, as well as the business and professional sectors, in identifying the key road safety problems to be addressed by the European Road Safety Action Programme for the period 2011 – 2020 and the priority actions which could be taken to address the unacceptable and costly levels of road death and serious injury across the EU.

Deadline: 20 November 2009

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/consultations/2009_11_20_ersap_2011_2020_en.htm

MISCELLANEOUS

Doing business with the European Commission - Tips for potential contractors

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/publications/public_contracts/doing_business_EN.pdf

Commission releases 2008 data on recipients of EU funds

http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/beneficiaries_en.htm

Doing Business 2010

World Bank and the International Finance Corporation report on business regulation reforms, aimed at improving the ease of doing business.

<http://www.doingbusiness.org/features/Highlights2010.aspx>

European Business: Fact and figures - 2009

This publication gives a comprehensive picture of the structure, development and characteristics of European business and its different activities: from energy and the extractive industries to communications, information services and media. It presents the latest available statistics from a wide selection of statistical sources describing for each activity: production and employment; country specialisation and regional distribution; productivity and profitability; the importance of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs); work-force characteristics; external trade etc.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-BW-09-001

Europe in figures

The 2009 yearbook contains 16 chapters covering different statistical areas. The first highlights creativity and innovation, the theme of the European year 2009. The following chapters focus on all major statistical domains: economy, population, education, health, living conditions and welfare, labour market, industry and services, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, external trade, transport, environment, energy, science and technology, Europe's regions and a chapter on the links between statistics and European policies.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/publications/eurostat_yearbook

Economic survey of the European Union 2009

The OECD's (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) assessment and recommendations on the main economic challenges faced by the European Union: strengthening innovation, deepening the single market and the transition to a low carbon economy are some of the areas in which reforms must be accelerated, in order to reinforce long-term growth in the European Union following the worst recession for 50 years.

http://www.oecd.org/document/11/0,3343,en_2649_34111_43709451_1_1_1_37443,00.html

Building a successful future for Europe

BusinessEurope, the confederation of European business, underlines that EU innovation policy must be based upon five top priorities: increase public and private investments in R&D and innovation; enhance the efficiency of public support policies; adapt education and training systems to new competence requirements; stimulate demand and markets for innovation; and integrate better the EU policies influencing innovation.

<http://212.3.246.117/docs/1/KEHJLNADFOFFIHGHKIJINPPNPDBG9DPYCD9LTE4Q/UNICE/docs/DLS/2009-02180-E.pdf>

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