



EUROPEAN  
OFFICE OF  
CYPRUS



INFO DAYS

“2018-1 CEF Telecom call  
Virtual Info Day”  
8 March 2018,  
Online  
<https://tinyurl.com/y9m7qbgq>

“Horizon 2020 Secure  
societies European Info Day  
and Brokerage Event”  
12-13 March 2018,  
Brussels, Belgium  
<https://tinyurl.com/y85anxbu>

“Bio-Based Industries JU  
Info Day 2018”  
17 April 2018,  
Brussels, Belgium  
<https://tinyurl.com/yccddor5p>

“LIFE Info Day 2018”  
4 May 2018,  
Brussels, Belgium  
<https://tinyurl.com/y7t9f2tc>

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# EUROPEAN NEWS

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## Cypriot Universities Position Paper towards the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

*The current Framework Programme for Research and Innovation “Horizon 2020” runs until the end of 2020. A new Framework Programme (working title “FP9”) is due to start on 1 January 2021. The preparatory work for the design of FP9 has already started, both on the European Commission and stakeholders’ side. In an effort to contribute to the shaping of the next Framework Programme, the Cypriot Universities have published a position paper towards FP9 that was submitted to the European Commission earlier this week. This joint initiative of all eight (8) Cypriot Universities, coordinated by the European Office of Cyprus, aims to provide input, and solutions on the challenges faced by the European Commission in the design of FP9.*

In Horizon 2020 the overall Cyprus’ success rate is 11,8 %. The major research activity is performed by the Universities. Cypriot Universities major participation is in Excellence and Societal Challenges (most popular societal challenges: Energy, Inclusive Societies, Health, Security, Environment). Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions (MSCA) and ICT are the most attractive programmes among Cypriot researchers. European Research Council (ERC) applications however, have not been as successful in Horizon 2020 (low success rate 6%) as in FP7.

The paper reflects the perspective of research organisations from a small EU Member State, calling for more bottom-up initiatives and small scale projects, enhanced integration of Social

Cyprus’ Universities position paper on the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

19 January 2018

Introduction

This paper reflects the opinions of all eight (8) Cypriot Universities in view of the discussion of the next EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (working title “FP9”).

- University of Cyprus
- Open University of Cyprus
- Cyprus University of Technology
- European University Cyprus
- Frederick University
- Neapolis University Pafos
- University of Nicosia
- University of Central Lancashire - Cyprus

In order to better understand the position of Cypriot Universities towards FP9, it is important to have an overview of the key figures regarding R&I in Cyprus.

It is critical to retain that the total Gross Expenditure on Research and Development (GERD) in Cyprus accounted to 0,50% of GDP (or EUR 91 million) in 2014. Cyprus, as well as other countries with less developed research ecosystems, are in need of incentives in order to develop. Lack of funding and low success rates in EU funding processes can forestall excellent research (and/or research potential).

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Sciences and Humanities (SSH) across programmes, as well as extended integration of the knowledge triangle in FP9, with transfer of knowledge to students as a prerequisite in research projects.

More specifically, the Cypriot Universities call for:

- **An increased overall budget of EUR 120 billion**, with more budget share going to bottom-up programmes (ERC, MSCA, SME instrument) as well as WIDESPREAD programmes.

- Continuity from Horizon 2020 to FP9 regarding the **three pillar architecture**, allowing however space for small collaborative projects (EUR 1-4 million) that are more accessible to Cypriot Universities.

- **Enhanced integration of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH)** across programmes and creation of thematic calls in these research areas with the provision of either mono-beneficiary or small scale projects.

- **Creation of ERC grants for the less advanced R&I countries**, which will be collapsed in five levels including a Proof of Concept and Synergy type of grant.

- **Extended integration of the knowledge triangle in FP9**, with transfer of knowledge to students as a prerequisite in projects, and with linkages among the mobility and teaching activities, and curriculum development of the Erasmus+ projects with research projects.

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- Research-based and non-research-based innovation, **welcoming the integration of the European Innovation Council (EIC) into FP9**, under the Industrial Leadership pillar, with a full autonomy equivalent to that of the European Research Council (ERC).
- **A limited number of missions (no more than 5)** selected with caution, to avoid losing focus from other pressing challenges and priorities.
- **A clear framework for international cooperation, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030, and enhancement of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation** in addressing common societal challenges (migration, security, pollution, migration of marine species, and energy), with joint calls in which common evaluation processes are applied .
- **A reinforced Spreading of Excellence and Widening Participation programme** with an increased budget and more supported activities in FP9 .
- **Rationalisation of the rules of participation and funding from all EU as well as transnational and national funding programmes.** The sheer administrative burden required to master and provide support for the participation in the different programmes, makes participation prohibitive for smaller organisations.
- **Further administrative and financial simplification.** The “reduced scope of calls” is definitely not to the advantage of Universities from Cyprus, as narrower scopes, mean less budgets and fewer projects per call and more defined subjects set by stronger already well networked players which later become the main contenders for these calls.

More information: <http://www.eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=598>

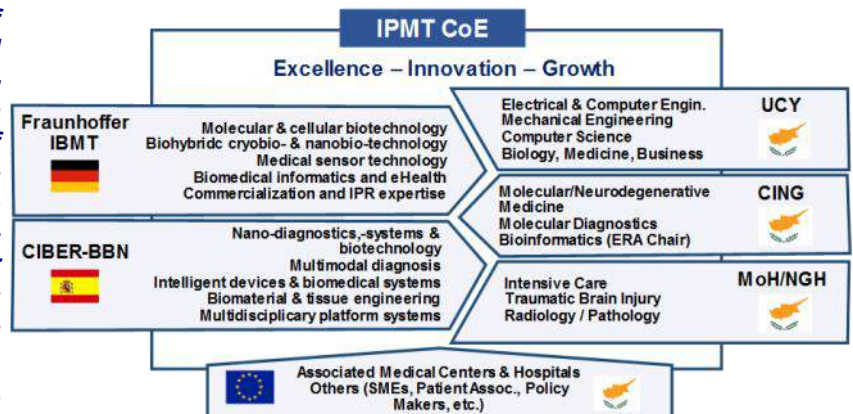
## IPMT: Proposal for the Creation of an Integrated Precision Medicine Technology Research Centre of Excellence

*Through a highly competitive process of the European Commission, the proposal with the acronym "IPMT" - Integrated Precision Medicine Technology Research Centre of Excellence, of the Faculty of Engineering, the Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences and the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Cyprus, was selected as part of the Competitive Call for Proposals of the Horizon 2020 Strategic Program "Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation - TEAMING".*

*The main goal of the proposed TEAMING project is to establish an inspiring multi-disciplinary research and innovation centre, which will become a world leader in the development of new technologies (hardware and algorithms) to further enable and accelerate the development, translation, and application of precision medicine.*



The proposal is a collaborative effort between local and renowned European institutions. **The host of the proposal, the University of Cyprus, is the country's leading academic institution, ranked 55th in the world among young universities (under 50 years) by the Times Higher Education.** The local partners also include major medical centres (such as the Nicosia General Hospital via the Ministry of Health, and Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics) as well as support from SMEs and other private medical and industrial organizations. The advanced partners are leaders in the areas of biomedical engineering and medical



technologies in **Germany (Fraunhofer Institute for Biomedical Technology - IBMT) and Spain (Centro de Investigación Biomédica en Red - Bioengineering, Biomaterials and Nanomedicine - CIBER-BBN).**

The strong background and individual experience of the partners in this area, combined with the synergy created by the TEAMING proposal provides a great opportunity for establishing a sustainable Centre of Excellence, which will address vital research and innovation problems in the field of Precision Medicine. **In addition, the Centre will contribute to the education and training of a new breed of clinicians and researchers who will be at the forefront of precision medicine translation.**

More information: <http://ipmt.ucy.ac.cy/>

## ALLIANCE: Enhancing excellence and innovation capacity in sustainable transport interchanges



*ALLIANCE project, funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, aims at developing advanced research and higher education institution in the field of transport in Latvia by linking Transport and Telecommunication Institute with two internationally recognized research entities – University of Thessaly and Fraunhofer Institute for Factory Operation and Automation.*

In order to support sustainability of the educational/training activities, ALLIANCE organizes “Train-the-Trainers” and “Young Researchers” Seminars and Summer Schools. The 1st Summer School entitled: “Sustainable Transport Interchanges Program (STIP) – Part I: Freight Transportation” was successfully realized in Riga, Latvia, from the 16th to the 22nd of July 2017. In total 25 young researchers from Latvia, Lithuania, Greece and Germany attended the School.

**This year's Summer School focuses on “Public Transport Systems: from research to decision making” and will be held on 1-7 July 2018 in Riga, Latvia.** The offered courses are:

- *The European policy on intermodal transportation*
- *Building business models for intermodal transport interchanges*
- *Sustainable development and transportation planning for passengers*
- *Operation and management of intermodal transport systems: passenger interchanges*
- *Optimization of intermodal transport systems*
- *Intelligent services for passenger transportation*
- *Design of passenger transport interchanges*
- *Decision making methodologies*
- *Data collection methods: Travel surveys*
- *Data collection methods: Historical and observed data: passenger transport*
- *Research methodology and teamwork setup*

**The School is addressed to young researchers, preferably master and PhD students, master degree holders and post-doc researchers, practitioners, from public and private sector, who are involved in the domain of sustainable transportation.**

More information: <http://alliance-project.eu/>

## INTELEd: Embodied Learning and multi-sensory techniques for inclusive education



*The kick-off meeting of the ERASMUS+ project INTELEd [INnovative Training via Embodied Learning and multi-sensory techniques for inclusive education] took place with great success on November 20th-21st, at the Cyprus University of Technology. The INTELEd project, which is funded by the European Commission, is composed by four partners (Cyprus University of Technology, CESIE, University of Piraeus, University of Valladolid) in four countries (Cyprus, Italy, Greece, Spain). Cyprus is represented by the Cyprus University of Technology through the Cyprus Interaction Lab (<http://www.cyprusinteractionlab.com/>), which has the responsibility for coordinating the project, with Dr. Andri Ioannou (Assistant Professor at the Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts), as the Scientific Coordinator of the Project.*

The main aim of the INTELEd project is to support Special Education (SEN) teachers in acquiring knowledge and skills about the use of embodied and interactive multi-sensory techniques for learning and assessment, for addressing the needs of SEN children.

During the meeting a sequence of different presentations took place in relation to the philosophy and the goals of the project. In addition, the partners had the opportunity to define the framework as well as the timelines of the project, while they also exchanged their views, focusing on the best accomplishment of the INTELEd project's goals. The kickoff meeting concluded with the partners' visit at the Cyprus Interaction Lab.

More information:

<https://inteled.cyprusinteractionlab.com/> and <https://www.facebook.com/INTELEdCIL/>



## ENGINITE: Innovative vocational training programme for engineers

**The kick-off meeting of the ERASMUS+ project entitled: ENGINITE: “ENGINEERING AND INDUSTRY INNOVATIVE TRAINING FOR ENGINEERS” took place at the Cyprus University of Technology in December 7th-8th 2017. The project’s consortium is comprised of 7 partners from 4 different European countries: Cyprus University of Technology (Cyprus), Aalborg Universitet (Denmark), CUBEIE L.L.C (Cyprus), London South Bank University (UK), Technical University of Crete (Greece), GrantXpert Consulting (Cyprus), and Useful Simple Projects Limited (UK). The project coordinator of ENGINITE is the Cyprus University of Technology led by Dr Andri Ioannou, Assistant Professor in the Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts and Director of the Cyprus Interaction Lab (<https://www.cyprusinteractionlab.com/>).**



ENGINITE focuses on the development of a new industrial-oriented postgraduate vocational training programme, which will use synchronous methods to set a higher standard level for engineering training. In particular, ENGINITE aims to bridge the gap between academia and industry using the problem-based learning approach for the training of young engineers.

During the kick-off meeting, a sequence of presentations took place, aiming at the introduction of the

participating partners and the communication of the project goals. In addition, all partners were provided with the opportunity to specify the responsibilities of each organisation and define the timeframe of their work in order to successfully meet the project’s objectives.



More information: <https://www.enginite.eu/> and <https://www.facebook.com/>

## QUALIFY: specialised training for guidance practitioners

**The new Erasmus+ project, QUALIFY, aims to revolutionise professional guidance and explore coaching as a tool to support low-skilled unemployed people to reflect on blocks and obstacles to their decision making, identify patterns of behavior from the past that may impact future choice and work as catalyst in helping them define their own way forward. The project will implement a specialised training for guidance practitioners (private/public) to become Career Coaches as well as provide them with useful complementary ICT tools to support their daily practice, empower and up-skill low-skilled unemployed adults.**



Specifically, the objectives of the project ‘QUALIFY’ are:

- To provide career advisors in each participating country with the latest, more effective and individualized methods and tools to support low-skilled unemployed adults such as strengths based coaching techniques amongst others.
- To support and empower low-skilled unemployed helping to change their mind-set by discovering their strengths, skills and interests through the most appropriate training and by helping them develop a set of skills to unlock their career potential .
- To promote European networking between private and public entities dealing with unemployed adults with holistic collaborative approaches to support and guidance as well as to develop methods and create conditions for tailored and personalized trainings, thus increasing adults individual opportunities for the future.

The project will directly benefit the guidance practitioners that will have the opportunity to upgrade their skills and competences, explore new networks with other European career advisors and experiment with new approaches to work.

Ultimately, low qualified adults will be involved in the project as well through the training workshops with the aim to test skills and competences acquired by “Career Coaches” through the coaching programme and the innovative ICT tools.

More information: Mr. Sotiris Themistokleous, CARDET, [sotiris.t@cardet.org](mailto:sotiris.t@cardet.org)



## SMART: Volunteering for Female Migrants

*The ‘SMART Volunteering for Female Migrants’ is a multi-agency cooperation project, between civil society, business community and migrant women in five European states, designed to promote better integration and active participation of Third Country National (TCN) females in socio-economic life of European societies. Based on the empirical evidence of the barriers to integration faced by migrant women, the project builds on the innovative practices and tools developed in the business, promotion and civil advocacy sectors adjusting them to the grass root needs of TCN females, with an aim to create a structured corridor for up-scaling and transfer of migrant women’s skills between the two sectors.*



SMART project is an inclusive inter-sectoral model that takes into account the existing gap between labour and social integration, offering a fresh method of increasing socio-economic participation found in one of the fastest growing sectors of EU – social economy – where business and civil society meet.

By bridging the two integration areas it aims to address the problem of TCN females under-employment, taking into account the empirical evidence of their high rates of over-qualifications in Europe. It does so through a thorough assessment of needs, creating a multi-agency knowledge framework, fostering structured dialogue between the target groups and delivering a comprehensive set of practical, goal-oriented exercises in group, one-to-one and digital form. It includes the training of trainers among NGOs and businesses, the capacity-building techniques for migrant women, a civic visibility manual, which results will be documented, sustained and promoted through multi-languages materials and a digital platform for further utilisation by civil, business and migrant groups in the EU states and at EU and international level.

For the successful implementation of the SMART project the following partners will work together: Camara Oficial de Comercio Industria Y Navegacion De Sevilla (Spain), International Consulting and Mobility Agency Sociedad De Responsabilidad Limitada (Spain), Inova Consultancy Ltd (UK), Programma integra scs (Italy), Consorzio Materahub Industrie Culturali E Creative (Italy), Elan Interculturel (France), Centre For Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology Ltd (Cyprus) and European Network of Migrant Women (Belgium).

More information: Mr. Sotiris Themistokleous, CARDET, [sotiris.t@cardet.org](mailto:sotiris.t@cardet.org)

## Drop-IN: New opportunities for early school leavers

*The “DROP-In – Early School Leavers” new EU project seeks to establish alternative pathways for youth ESLs and drop outs, towards social inclusion and ultimately, the labour market. A modern, integrated and holistic e-learning and networking platform will be available for young drop-outs and ESLs across Europe while, on the same time, new and innovative methodologies will be introduced in order to enhance the basic and transversal skills of the specific group.*

The involvement of the wider educational community, especially when it comes to non – formal training, will be essential as one of the project’s main goals is to enhance the quality and relevance of the learning offered. The project team of experts will work on bridging the gap between labour market and disadvantaged youth, by directly linking market demands to the needs and wishes of the target groups.

The DROP-In project is funded by Erasmus+ programme of the European Commission and will run for 24 months (September 2017 – August 2019). It is implemented by a scheme of 5 highly experienced partner organisations in 5 countries (UK, Romania, Greece, Cyprus, Italy), led by the IARS International



Institute. In Cyprus, the project is implemented by the Center for the Advancement of Research & Development in Educational Technology (CARDET).

More information: <https://dropinproject.eu/>

## Maximising the impact of EU research and innovation

**Europe must step up investment in research and innovation in order to maximise impact, while also further refining the success story that is Horizon 2020, the EU research and innovation programme. This is one of the key messages from the Communication on the Horizon 2020 interim evaluation that the European Commission presented on the 11th January 2018. It also calls for a mission-oriented approach, focusing on cracking specific challenges, as a way of boosting the impact of the programme. Other key messages include the need for an increase in effective engagement of citizens and support for breakthrough innovation. Concrete links with other EU**



**funding programmes should be deepened and open science strengthened.**

The Communication develops lessons learned from the interim evaluation of Horizon 2020 in areas such as international cooperation, synergies with other EU programmes and policies as well as continued efforts to simplify the EU research and innovation support landscape. The possible improvements and orientations for the future reflect the recommendations of the report by the independent High Level Group on maximising the impact of EU Research & Innovation programmes chaired by Pascal Lamy.

More information: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/maximising-impact-eu-research-and-innovation-2018-jan-11\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/maximising-impact-eu-research-and-innovation-2018-jan-11_en)

## 1 billion EUR investment in world-class European supercomputers

**On the 11th January 2018, the European Commission unveiled its plans to invest jointly with the Member States in building a world-class European supercomputers infrastructure. Supercomputers are needed to process ever larger amounts of data and bring benefits to the society in many areas from health care and renewable energy to car safety and cybersecurity.**



This step is crucial for the EU's competitiveness and independence in the data economy. Today, European scientists and industry increasingly process their data outside the EU because their needs are not matched by the computation time or computer performance available in the EU. A new legal and funding structure – the EuroHPC Joint Undertaking – shall acquire, build and deploy

across Europe a world-class High-Performance Computing (HPC) infrastructure. It will also support a research and innovation programme to develop the technologies and machines (hardware) as well as the applications (software) that would run on these supercomputers.

The EU's contribution in EuroHPC will be around EUR 486 million under the current Multiannual Financial Framework, matched by a similar amount from Member States and associated countries. Overall, around EUR 1 billion of public funding would be invested by 2020, and private members of the initiative would also add in kind contributions.

More information: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-18-3\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-18-3_en.htm)

## EIT creates two new Knowledge and Innovation Communities: Open Call for Proposals

**The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is launching a Call for the creation of two new Knowledge and Innovation Communities: EIT Manufacturing and EIT Urban Mobility. The former will contribute to the development of a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly manufacturing process in the industrial sector. The latter will focus on smart, green and integrated transport.**



The two new pan-European partnerships of universities,

research organisations and businesses will join the six existing Knowledge and Innovation Communities on climate (EIT Climate-KIC), digitisation (EIT Digital), food (EIT Food), health (EIT Health), renewable energy (EIT InnoEnergy), and raw materials (EIT Raw Materials).

They will help to boost innovation in strategic sectors where Europe needs to build and maintain a competitive advantage.

More information: <https://eit.europa.eu/collaborate/2018-call-for-proposals>

## ALL programme: Call for “Smart Solutions for Ageing well”

*The Active and Assisted Living Programme (AAL Programme) aims to create better conditions of life for the older adults and to strengthen the international industrial opportunities in the area of information and communication technology (ICT). The topic of the 2018 call is “Smart Solutions for Ageing well”.*



The aim of this international call for proposals is to support innovative, transnational and multi-disciplinary collaborative projects developing ICT-based solutions by targeting any application area(s) within the AAL domain. For the first time, the call allows for more flexibility regarding the scope, size and duration of the submitted projects by including a new type of instrument, namely the “small collaborative project”. The deadline for submission of proposals is **28 May 2018**.

More Information: <http://www.aal-europe.eu/call-challenge-2018/>

## Reinforcing Cooperation in assessing health technology in the EU



*On 31 January 2018, the Commission put forward a proposal to boost cooperation amongst EU Member States for assessing health technology. Greater transparency will empower patients, by ensuring their access to information on the added clinical value of new technology that could potentially benefit them. More assessments could lead to effective, innovative health tools reaching patients faster. For national authorities it means being able to formulate policies for their health systems based on more robust evidence.*

**Furthermore, manufacturers will no longer have to adapt to different national procedures.**

The proposed Regulation on Health Technology Assessment (HTA) covers new medicines and certain new medical devices, providing the basis for permanent and sustainable cooperation at the EU level for joint clinical assessments in these areas. Member States will be able to use common HTA tools, methodologies and procedures across the EU, working together in four main areas: 1) on joint clinical assessments focusing on the most innovative health technologies with the most potential impact for patients; 2) on joint scientific consultations whereby developers can seek advice from HTA authorities; 3) on identification of emerging health technologies to identify promising technologies early; and 4) on continuing voluntary cooperation in other areas. Individual EU countries will continue to be responsible for assessing non-clinical (e.g. economic, social, ethical) aspects of health technology, and making decisions on pricing and reimbursement.

More information: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-18-487\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-18-487_en.htm)

## Safer drinking water for all Europeans

*Revised European legislation proposed by the European Commission will improve the quality of drinking water and access to it as well as provide better information to citizens.*



The right to access essential services of good quality, including water, is one of the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights unanimously endorsed by Heads of State or Government at the Gothenburg Summit.

**This legislative proposal aims to guarantee this right and thereby responds to the first-ever successful European Citizens' Initiative, "Right2Water", that gathered 1.6 million signatures in support of improving access to safe drinking water for all Europeans.**

In addition this proposal seeks to empower consumers ensuring that water suppliers provide consumers with clearer information on water consumption, on the cost

structure as well as on the price per litre allowing a comparison with the price of bottled water. This will be contributing to the environmental goals of reducing unnecessary plastic use and limiting the EU's carbon footprint, as well as to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The rules which the Commission proposes to update will improve water quality and safety by adding new and emerging substances to the list of criteria for determining water safety (such as legionella and chlorate).

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-drink/pdf/revised\\_drinking\\_water\\_directive.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-drink/pdf/revised_drinking_water_directive.pdf)

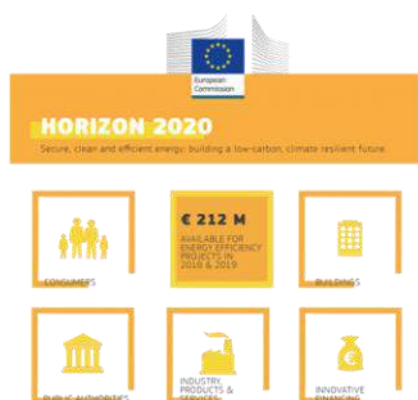
## Welcoming new project proposals on energy efficiency

**Are you interested in submitting a project proposal to receive EU funding? The new call for Horizon 2020 Energy Efficiency project proposals has opened on the 25th of January 2018. With a budget of over €212M for 2018 and 2019, the Secure, Clean and Efficient Energy topics offer plenty of opportunities for innovative project proposals to receive funding.**

### 2018 Funding areas

The areas we aim at tackling will fund projects on: buildings renovation; integrated home renovation services; next-generation of energy perfor-

More information: <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/news/welcoming-new-project-proposals-energy-efficiency>



mance assessment & certification; heat/cold recovery of industrial waste; capacity building for energy audits; mainstreaming of energy efficiency financing and its further innovation; project development assistance; new energy labelling, modelling energy efficiency & energy demand; supporting public authorities to implement the Energy Union; mitigating household energy poverty; role of consumers in changing the market; and enabling the next-generation of smart services integrating energy efficiency.

## Sustainable Finance: Roadmap for greener and cleaner economy



**On the 31st of January 2018, the European Commission welcomed the final report by its High-Level Expert Group on Sustainable Finance (HLEG), which sets out strategic recommendations for a financial system that supports sustainable investments.**

This final report by the High-Level Expert Group maps out the challenges and opportunities that the EU faces in developing a sustainable finance policy. It identifies ways in which the financial sector can re-connect with the real economy to support the transition to a more resource-efficient and more circular economy. The group argues that reorienting investment flows into long-term, sustainable projects will also improve the stability of the financial system.

The Commission will move to finalise its strategy on sustainable finance on the basis of these recommendations. Delivering an EU strategy on sustainable finance is a priority action of the Commission's Capital Markets Union (CMU) Action Plan, as well as one of the key steps towards implementing the historic Paris Agreement and the EU's Agenda for sustainable development. To achieve the EU's 2030 targets agreed in Paris, including a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions, we need around €180 billion of additional investments a year. The financial sector has a key role to play in reaching those goals, as large amounts of private capital could be mobilised towards such sustainable investments.

More information: <https://tinyurl.com/ybjsahfj>

## New EU Energy Poverty Observatory



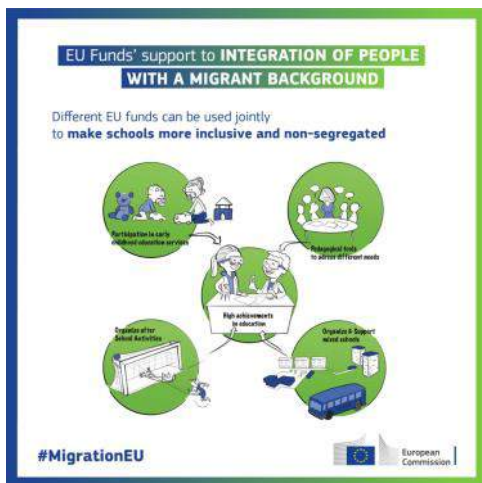
**The new EU Energy Poverty Observatory was launched on 29 January 2018. . The Observatory aims to support informed decision making at local, regional and national level by providing a user-friendly and open-access resource that will promote public engagement on the issue of energy poverty as well as serve to disseminate information and good practice among public and private stakeholders.**

Roughly 9% of the EU population struggle to attain adequate warmth. Awareness of energy poverty is rising in Europe and has been identified as a policy priority by European Commission's in its 'Clean Energy for All Europeans' package of initiatives. There the Commission proposed to establish a common definition and required Member States to monitor figures and report back to the Commission. This is part and parcel of the implementation of Principle 20 of the European Pillar of Social Rights and one of the enabling actions are being put in place to support a just and socially fair clean energy transition. A new website is dedicated for the Observatory.

More information: <https://tinyurl.com/y7d5m7gh>



## Integration of migrants: Commission presents toolkit to help Member States make the best use of EU funds



On 24 January 2018, the Commission published a toolkit to help national and regional authorities design strategies and projects to integrate migrants and identify available EU resources. It will help set up local integration strategies supported by EU resources used in synergy, still in the current 2014-2020 budget period.

The toolkit identifies five priorities for holistic and efficient long-term integration strategies: reception; education; employment; housing; and access to public services. It lists the most pressing challenges under these five priorities and suggests adequate support measures, each one of them matched with the right EU fund. Member States and regions have a wide range of EU funding instruments at their disposal that can support different types of projects in the field of integration – from providing language classes and healthcare upon arrival to helping migrants find a job, a home to live in and a place in society.

More information: <https://tinyurl.com/y7xqclyk>

## Conference on Good Governance and EU Cohesion Policy

Cohesion policy is EU's main investment policy. In the period 2014-2020, EUR 350 billion will be invested in the EU Member States and regions. As underlined by the 7th Cohesion Report, the success of those investments depends to a large degree on the capacity of public administrations to invest and manage EU funds. Against this background, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) is organising a conference on "Good Governance and the EU Cohesion Policy". The conference will take place on 24 May 2018 in Brussels.



ance in the management of European Structural and Investment Funds. The event will provide an opportunity to showcase the results of the capacity building initiatives undertaken by Member States, DG REGIO and other international organisations. We will also discuss how to promote good governance and better quality

investments in the new cycle of cohesion policy post-2020.

The event will be open to participants from central and regional administrations of the EU Member States, representatives of EU institutions, other international organisations and academia.

More information: <https://tinyurl.com/y9gjvzrz>

The aim of this event is to bring together decision makers and experts to discuss achievements and challenges in terms of administrative capacity and good govern-

## Partner up for the EURegionsWeek 2018



Preparations of the 16th European Week of Regions and Cities are launched. Under the main headline of 'For a strong EU Cohesion Policy beyond 2020', the organisers – the European Commission Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy and the European Committee of the Regions – are now looking for event partners.

The later will contribute to the official programme, with a focus on: territorial development (regional, urban, rural); the future of cohesion policy, EU budget, and; education, culture and youth.

Many novelties are planned in 2018, in particular new innovative formats and a main central venue in the Brussels' Square Conference Centre. Interested to become a partner? Visit the 'Become a partner' section of the 2018

website, read through the guide for event partners and apply no later than **30 March 2018**.

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/regions-and-cities/#/!partners/become](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/regions-and-cities/#/!partners/become)

## New measures to boost key competences and digital skills, as well as the European dimension of education

*The European Commission adopted on the 17th of January 2017 new initiatives to improve key competences and digital skills of European citizens, to promote common values and pupils' awareness of the functioning of the European Union.*



The three initiatives proposed by the Commission are:

1. **A Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning:** Building on the Recommendation on Key Competences adopted in 2006, this proposal brings forward important updates reflecting the rapid evolution of teaching and learning since then. More generally, the measures will support Member States in better preparing learners for changing labour markets and for active citizenship in more diverse, mobile, digital and global societies.

2. **A Digital Education Action Plan** that outlines how the EU can help people, educational institutions and educa-

tion systems better adapt to life and work in an age of rapid digital change by:

- making better use of digital technology for teaching and learning;
- developing the digital competences and skills needed for living and working in an age of digital transformation; and

- improving education through better data analysis and foresight.

3. **A Council Recommendation on common values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching:** This initiative proposes ways in which education can help young people understand the importance of and adhere to common values set out in Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union. It aims at strengthening social cohesion and contributing to fight the rise of populism, xenophobia, divisive nationalism and the spreading of fake news.

More information: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-18-103\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-18-103_en.htm)

## First Education Summit: laying the foundations for the European Education Area



*The first European Education Summit took place on the 24th of January 2018 in Brussels. It was an important opportunity for 18 EU Education Ministers, education professionals and representatives from all over Europe to come together and discuss the future of education in Europe. This European Education Summit was the start of a series, with the second one to follow in autumn 2019.*

Under the broad theme '**Laying the foundations of a European Education Area: for an innovative, inclusive and values-based education**', the Summit focused on answering questions such as how quality, inclusive and values-based education can contribute to a successful Europe; what competences are needed for the decades to come; and how we can boost basic, digital and entrepreneurial skills. The programme covered a vast range of issues, including how to engage disadvantaged pupils to ensure no one is left behind, how to best equip teachers, how to boost learning through sport, as well as the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) in education and the role children play in helping to transform societies.

More information: <https://tinyurl.com/y9zxvdjt>

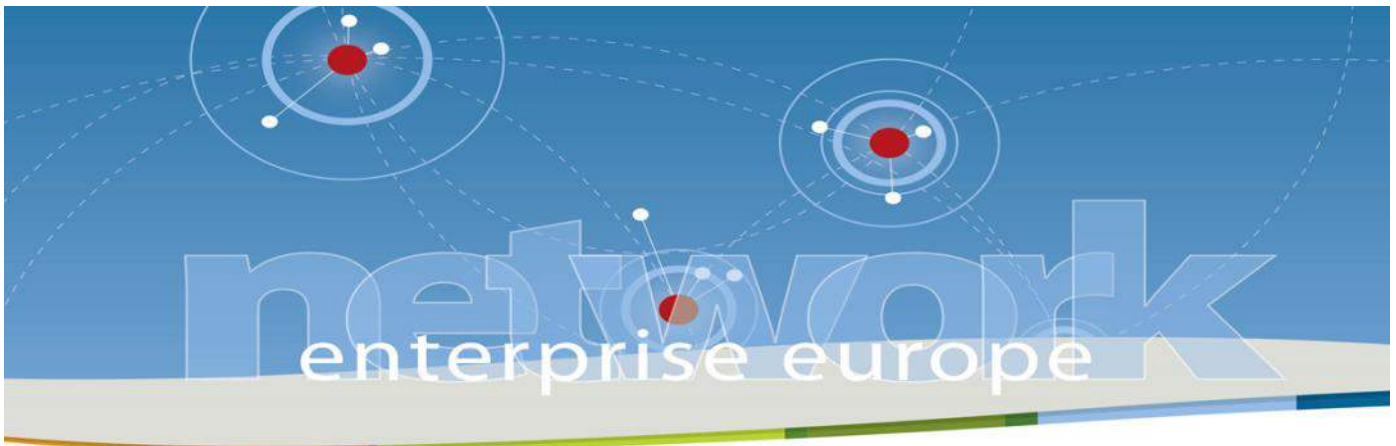
## Europeana #edTech Challenge



*On the 12th of January 2018, the Europeana #edTech Challenge was launched: a funding opportunity for entrepreneurs, developers, designers and educators who explore digital opportunities for education and training. Do you have an exciting project in the intersection of culture, education and technology? They are offering €30,000 for the best products, services or businesses that bring together cultural heritage and educational technology. Apply for this challenge before **28 February 2018** and show them how to use cultural content to inspire learners of all ages.*

They invite applications from individuals or teams of creatives interested in designing fantastic edTech projects using Europeana's openly licensed content. Eligible proposals include but are not limited to digital applications, games, web services, learning software and digital learning materials (for instance, MOOCs). They accept proposals at various stages of maturity, including existing applications and educational platforms that would like to further develop their business potential.

More information: <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/europeana-edtech-challenge>



## News for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

### VAT: More flexibility on VAT rates, less red tape for small businesses



*On the 18th of January 2018, the European Commission proposed new rules to give Member States more flexibility to set Value Added Tax (VAT) rates and to create a better tax environment to help SMEs flourish. These proposals are the final steps of the Commission's overhaul of VAT rules, with the creation of a single EU VAT area to dramatically reduce the €50 billion lost to VAT fraud each year in the EU, while supporting business and securing government revenues .*

The EU's common VAT rules, agreed by all Member States in 1992, are out of date and too restrictive. They allow Member States to apply reduced VAT rates to only a handful of sectors and products.

The Commission is also addressing the problem of smaller companies suffering from disproportionate VAT compliance costs. Businesses trading cross-border face 11% higher compliance costs compared to those trading only domestically, with smaller players hit hardest. This is proving to be a real obstacle to growth, as small businesses make up 98% of companies in the EU. We are therefore proposing to allow more companies to enjoy the benefits of simpler VAT rules which are at the moment available to only the smallest firms. Overall VAT-related compliance costs will be cut by as much as 18% per year.

More information: <https://tinyurl.com/y76amlpc>

### Guidance on upcoming new data protection rules



*On 24 January 2018, the Commission published guidance to facilitate a direct and smooth application of the new data protection rules across the EU as of 25 May. The Commission also launched a new online tool dedicated to SMEs. The General Data Protection Regulation enables the free flow of data across the Digital Single Market. It will better protect the privacy of Europeans and reinforce trust and security for consumers, while at the same time opening up new opportunities for businesses, especially smaller ones.*

With just over 100 days left before the application of the new law, The guidance recalls the main innovations, opportunities opened up by the new rules, takes stock of the preparatory work already undertaken and outlines the work still ahead of the European Commission, national data protection authorities and national administrations. The Commission launched a new practical online tool to help citizens, businesses, in particular SMEs, and other organisations to comply and benefit from the new data protection rules.

More information: <https://tinyurl.com/yc2ztgll>



## CALENDAR MARCH 2018

<b>Annual Conference on EU Law in the Pharmaceutical Sector 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y9mux3bs">https://tinyurl.com/y9mux3bs</a>	1-2 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>Global Congress on Biotechnology</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y98kxe4g">https://tinyurl.com/y98kxe4g</a>	5-7 March London, United Kingdom
<b>12th annual International Technology, Education and Development Conference</b> More information: <a href="https://iated.org/inted/">https://iated.org/inted/</a>	5-7 March Valencia, Spain
<b>Enhancing Consumer Protection in the EU</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/ybb55spz">https://tinyurl.com/ybb55spz</a>	6 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>Closing Loops – Recipe for a truly circular economy</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y94bkxrw">https://tinyurl.com/y94bkxrw</a>	6 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>EU Funding for Defence and Security</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/yhx4zwk">https://tinyurl.com/yhx4zwk</a>	8 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>2018-1 CEF Telecom call Virtual Info Day</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y9m7gbqs">https://tinyurl.com/y9m7gbqs</a>	8 March online
<b>European Quality of Life Survey 2016 - Thematic event</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/yhx4zwk">https://tinyurl.com/yhx4zwk</a>	8 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>European Association Summit 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y7gcm8hl">https://tinyurl.com/y7gcm8hl</a>	8-9 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>Horizon 2020 Secure Societies European Info Day and Brokerage Event</b> More information: <a href="https://seren3brussels2018.b2match.io/">https://seren3brussels2018.b2match.io/</a>	12-13 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>European Robotics Forum 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://www.eu-robotics.net/robotics_forum/index.html">https://www.eu-robotics.net/robotics_forum/index.html</a>	13-15 March Tampere, Finland
<b>Achieving a Business-friendly Environment in the EU</b> More information: <a href="http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/IC14-PPE2">http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/IC14-PPE2</a>	14 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>'Your Europe, Your Say!' 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/ycw4xtqw">https://tinyurl.com/ycw4xtqw</a>	15-16 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>International Med-Tech Summit</b> More information: <a href="http://medxperience.org/">http://medxperience.org/</a>	15-16 March Paris, France
<b>Successful R&amp;I in Europe 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/ybfjrbd7">https://tinyurl.com/ybfjrbd7</a>	15-16 March Dusseldorf, Germany
<b>4th European Federation of Internal Medicine (EFIM) Day</b> More information: <a href="http://www.efim.org/4th-efim-day-16-march-2018-brussels">http://www.efim.org/4th-efim-day-16-march-2018-brussels</a>	16 March, Brussels, Belgium
<b>High-level Horizon 2020 Conference on Innovation and Cultural Heritage</b> More information: <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/info/events/innovation-and-cultural-heritage-2018-mar-20_en">https://ec.europa.eu/info/events/innovation-and-cultural-heritage-2018-mar-20_en</a>	20 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>European Consumer Day 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y7th74hm">https://tinyurl.com/y7th74hm</a>	20 March Sofia, Bulgaria
<b>EU Association of Research and Technology Organisations Annual Conference</b> More information: <a href="http://www.earto-ac2018-oslo.eu/">http://www.earto-ac2018-oslo.eu/</a>	21-22 March Oslo, Norway
<b>H2020 financial management and administration</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y8b8mju5">https://tinyurl.com/y8b8mju5</a>	21-23 March Madrid, Spain
<b>Mobile Learning Week 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://en.unesco.org/mlw/2018">https://en.unesco.org/mlw/2018</a>	25-30 March Paris, France
<b>Digitizing European Industry Stakeholder Forum 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y9o5vnxv">https://tinyurl.com/y9o5vnxv</a>	27-28 March Villepinte, France
<b>Forum for the Future of Agriculture</b> More information: <a href="http://www.forumforagriculture.com/">http://www.forumforagriculture.com/</a>	27 March Brussels, Belgium
<b>Promoting Cultural and Creative Industries</b> More information: <a href="https://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/IC27-PPE2">https://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/IC27-PPE2</a>	27 March Brussels, Belgium














## CALENDAR APRIL 2018

<b>Digital Skills for Everyone</b> More information: <a href="https://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID05-PPE2">https://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID05-PPE2</a>	5 April Brussels, Belgium
<b>EUA Annual Conference 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y9wf4xl6">https://tinyurl.com/y9wf4xl6</a>	5-6 April Zurich, Switzerland
<b>Fostering Gender Equality in the Workplace</b> More information: <a href="https://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID10-PPE2">https://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID10-PPE2</a>	10 April Brussels, Belgium
<b>Transforming Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services</b> More information: <a href="http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID10-PPE">http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID10-PPE</a>	10 April London, United Kingdom
<b>IntelliSub Europe 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://euagenda.eu/events/2018/04/10/intellisub-europe-2018">https://euagenda.eu/events/2018/04/10/intellisub-europe-2018</a>	10-12 April Düsseldorf, Germany
<b>5th International Solar District Heating Conference</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y8heml9s">https://tinyurl.com/y8heml9s</a>	11-12 April Graz, Austria
<b>Building an Innovative, Customer-Focused Public Transport Network</b> More information: <a href="http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID11-PPE">http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID11-PPE</a>	11 April London, United Kingdom
<b>One Of Europe's Most Exclusive Infosec Events</b> More information: <a href="http://cybercentral.eu/">http://cybercentral.eu/</a>	11-13 April Prague, Czech Republic
<b>The Future of Tourism in the EU</b> More information: <a href="https://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID12-PPE2">https://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID12-PPE2</a>	12 April Brussels, Belgium
<b>Lisbon Tech Job Fair 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/ybsukrpa">https://tinyurl.com/ybsukrpa</a>	12 April Lisbon, Portugal
<b>6th International Fresenius Conference: Environmental Risk Assessment of Biocides</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/yc7zn3l3">https://tinyurl.com/yc7zn3l3</a>	12-13 April Düsseldorf, Germany
<b>European Congress on Obesity and Eating Disorder</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y9j6c2u9">https://tinyurl.com/y9j6c2u9</a>	12-13 April Amsterdam, Netherlands
<b>Bio-Based Industries JU Info Day 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://bbi-europe.eu/events/bbi-ju-info-day-2018">https://bbi-europe.eu/events/bbi-ju-info-day-2018</a>	17 April Brussels, Belgium
<b>8th Annual International Symposium on Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling</b> More information: <a href="http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID17-PPE2">http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID17-PPE2</a>	17 April Brussels, Belgium
<b>Ensuring Young Careers are Safe, Healthy, Aspiring and Achieving</b> More information: <a href="http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID17-PPE">http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID17-PPE</a>	17 April London, United Kingdom
<b>Workplace Innovation: The Essential Fifth Element Diagnostic and Beyond</b> More information: <a href="https://www.eipa.eu/product/workplace-innovation/">https://www.eipa.eu/product/workplace-innovation/</a>	23-25 April Maastricht, Netherlands
<b>European Public Procurement, PPP/Private Finance and Concessions</b> More information: <a href="https://www.eipa.eu/product/european-public-procurement-ppp/">https://www.eipa.eu/product/european-public-procurement-ppp/</a>	24-25 April Dubrovnik, Croatia
<b>Computer Science On-line Conference 2018</b> More information: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/ybvkjtho">https://tinyurl.com/ybvkjtho</a>	25-28 April Online Webinar
<b>Building a Zero Tolerance Approach to Acid and Corrosive Substance Attacks</b> More information: <a href="http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID26-PPE3">http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID26-PPE3</a>	26 April London, United Kingdom
<b>Updating the European Strategy on High Performance Computing</b> More information: <a href="http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID26-PPE2">http://www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events/ID26-PPE2</a>	26 April Brussels, Belgium

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