Cyprus International “Education and Career” Exhibition 2019

The Cyprus International Education and Career Exhibition 2019 was held at kiosk 6 of the National Cyprus Expo between the 15th and 17th of February 2019.

The exhibition was co-organised by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Cypriot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation (ΟΕΒ) and the European Office of Cyprus (EOC), in cooperation with the British Council Cyprus.

Students, parents, and other interested parties had the chance to discuss personally with the agents and representatives of the Universities and be informed about study programmes of their field of interest. More than 150 Universities and Education Institutes from Cyprus, Greece, United Kingdom, United States, Sweden, Germany, Italy, France, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Czech Republic, The Netherlands, Slovakia, Hungary and Ireland, participated in the fair providing information on their study programmes, offers, and job and funding prospects.

The growing internationalization of Higher Education is widely considered to constitute an important positive factor in the enhancement of its quality and relevance. Data show that mobility is a factor forecasting better job opportunities and career development.


EOC MEMBERS AND COLLABORATORS NEWS

Inaugural meeting of the European Project Neo-Prism-C MSCA INT

This exciting event marked the commencement of the Neo-PRISM-C MSCA ITN project aiming at studying the relationship between brain and behavior for the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of neurodevelopmental disorders (NDD) that compromise the quality of life of millions of young Europeans.

The inaugural meeting of the Neo-PRISM-C project, hosted by the Center for Applied Neuroscience (CAN) and the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Education, took place at the Learning Resource Centre UCY Library ‘Stelios Ioannou’, on February 15-16, 2019.

EOC MEMBERS AND COLLABORATORS NEWS

European Consumer Centre ECC Cyprus

ECC Cyprus provides information and advice to consumers when conducting cross border transactions and supports them in seeking redress through alternative means of dispute resolution.

The European Union (EU), in an effort to further protect consumers’ rights, has created the European Consumer Centres Network consisting of all the Member States of the EU, as well as Iceland and Norway. The Network provides information and advice to European consumers on matters relating to the protection of their economic interests.

The European Consumer Centre of Cyprus (ECC Cyprus) has been a member of the European Consumers Centres Network since April 2005 and is co-funded by the European Commission through the Directorate General for Justice and Consumer (DG-Justice) and the Republic of Cyprus.


RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

No-Deal would cut UK’s Horizon 2020 funding by almost half, report finds.

Replacing top EU research schemes in the UK post-Brexit is “a formidable challenge”, says House of Lords. International scientific collaborations could not be replicated at the national level.

It would “take many years for any UK alternative to emulate the strength and productivity of the research collaborations built through the EU’s research programmes, and the prestigious reputation of funding instruments” like the European Research Council (ERC). The report looks at the short and longer-term implications of Brexit for UK participation in the EU Horizon 2020 research and Erasmus+ student exchange programmes.

In preparation for no-deal, the UK government has committed to underwrite funding from the EU Horizon programme until the end of 2020. However, no-deal would see the loss of access to the ERC and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, which are not open to third country participation and not covered by the guarantee. The government has said it would consider replacing the ERC and Erasmus+ if the country had restricted access after Brexit.

Grants from these programmes account for about 44 per cent of total UK receipts from Horizon 2020, the report says. The UK is the second largest recipient of Horizon 2020 funding overall, receiving some 15 per cent of grants distributed through the programme since 2014, totaling €5.7 billion.


Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Telecom: Further €19.2 million to support cross-borderer services for citizens, businesses and public administration.

The European Commission launched the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Telecom 2019–1 call, making €19.2 million available to stimulate and sustain the deployment of European Digital Service Infrastructures (DSIs) in the areas of Automated Translation, eIdentification and eSignature, eDelivery, eInvoicing, Europeana and the EU Student eCard.

This call is the first under the current CEF Telecom Work Programme. In 2019, CEF Telecom aims to provide up to €88 million in total funding for 18 DSIs.

- accessibility of the European digital services across the language barriers, via Automated Translation – available funding: €4 million;
- easy cross-border authentication of eIDs and the uptake and use of electronic signatures through eldentityfication & eSignature - available funding: €5 million;
- secure, reliable and trusted exchange of electronic data and documents between public administrations, business and citizens through eDelivery – available funding: €1 million;
- seamless flow of electronic invoices across the EU, through the implementation of the European Standard on eInvoicing (EN) with elnvoicing - available funding: €6.2 million;
- increased accessibility of the European cultural heritage, through awareness raising and usage of the Europeana portal – available funding €2 million;
- smooth cross-border student mobility through solutions based on the reuse of the eIDAS eID - EU Student eCard - €1 million

Interested applicants from all EU Member States plus Iceland and Norway may submit their proposals by 14 May 2019 17:00h Brussels time through a dedicated proposal submission system, accessible from the individual call webpages on the 2019 CEF Telecom Calls web page. A Virtual Info Day guiding potential applicants through the call and through the application process took place on 7 March 2019.

Defence: European Commission paves the way for first joint industrial projects under EU Budget.

On 12 February 2019, the European Commission formally initiated work with Member States to finance joint industrial projects in the field of defence. Once the Commission adopts the work programme for the European Defence Industrial Development Programme, it will launch calls for proposals under the EU budget for 2019-2020. This will help pave the way for the future European Defence Fund for the period 2021-2027.

In a world of increasing instability and cross-border threats to our security, no country can succeed alone. That is why the Juncker Commission is making an unprecedented effort to protect and defend Europeans. It has already taken first steps to boost cooperation between Member States in the field of defence research and defence industry development, with more to follow in 2019-2020. In June 2018, the Commission also proposed a fully-fledged €13 billion European Defence Fund for 2021-2027, which is now under discussion by the European Parliament and Council.


Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions programme: over €353 million to support more than 2350 scientists.

The Commission will award grants worth a total of €273 million to 1,351 researchers across the European Research Area. Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships will help excellent scientists find a cure for paediatric cancer, make agricultural systems more resilient to climate change, and fight plastic waste pollution. Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor Navracsics, said: “I congratulate the 1,351 outstanding researchers who faced intense competition to be awarded a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship. They will tackle some of the key challenges facing our societies, helping to build a resilient, fair, and competitive Europe. I am also delighted that through our new Widening Fellowships pilot scheme, we will grant 33 additional Fellowships to excellent researchers in European countries currently less represented in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions.”

The funding, which is part of the EU’s Horizon 2020 programme for research and innovation, represents an increase of €24.3 million compared to the previous call in 2017. As part of another strand which provides co-funding for regional, national and international programmes, the Commission also announced on 14 February 2019 that the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions will support 14 doctoral and 14 post-doctoral research training programmes from nine EU Member States and one associated country with up to €80 million over five years supporting around 1,000 additional scientists.


It’s time for Europe to take a broader view of mobility.

Talent mobility – helping researchers, students and skilled workers move – is normally thought of in just one dimension: geographically, across borders. But there are a number of other dimensions, such as moving between academia and industry, working remotely with researchers in other countries and crossing between disciplines.

“The EU should take on mobility much more centrally,” said Jan Palmowski, secretary general of the Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities. For example, EU-Africa programmes should aim to strengthen the capacity of Africa and increase the capabilities of its universities. Similarly, the EU’s interactions with southeast Asia should actively promote talent development. “It’s not enough to say ‘open up Horizon Europe’; you’ve got to think of bespoke ways of interacting,” Palmowski said.

Take the case of Luxembourg. It is hard to believe that with a population of half a million, the country did not have its own university until 15 years ago. Coming so late to the party, and with no higher education base on which to build, forced the university to look outwards from day one. By necessity, 80 per cent of staff are from a foreign country, said Jens Kreisel, vice rector of research at the University of Luxembourg. “Talent mobility is part of our DNA,” he said. The resulting cultural diversity promotes excellence. “The intelligence of a group scales with diversity,” Kreisel said.


Summary of stakeholder meeting on Horizon Europe Simplification.

The Commission is preparing for the implementation of Horizon Europe in parallel to the legislative process that will help to establish the new programme. The overall aim is to provide continuity when it comes to rules, tools and procedures but a number of novelities, namely the European Innovation Council (EIC), and mission-oriented funding require new approaches.

The Commission is guided in this work by five key principles, innovative approaches, simplification/harmonisation, ensuring synergies with other programmes, more efficient governance and efficient reporting and demonstrating impact.

With preparations under way, the Commission is aiming to have a first draft ready for consultation with EU Member States as early as March 2019, with the goal of agreeing a basic version in June 2019. A period of consultation is foreseen over the summer/early autumn with fine tuning and deployment in late 2019 and 2020.

MSCA COFUND 2018 thresholds and success rates.

The European Commission has released the results of the 2018 Marie Skłodowska Curie (MSCA) Co-funding of Regional, National and International Programmes (COFUND) call. A total of 129 proposals were submitted to the 2018 COFUND call, of which 14 were ineligible. Out of 114 evaluated proposals (43 Doctoral Programmes, and 71 Fellowship Programmes), 14 are on the main list in each instance. The average success rate is 24.6% for the 14 Doctoral and 14 Fellowship Programmes funded. The main list threshold for the Doctoral Programme is 88.6 and 88.4 for the Fellowship Programme.


EU promises “flexible” deal for foreign research partners in Horizon Europe. But beware the fine print.

The EU’s biggest ever R&D programme, which will run for seven years from 2021, will offer “more flexible” entry terms for foreign countries, the European Commission’s director-general for research and innovation said Tuesday.

Successive EU R&D programmes have welcomed outside participation, but the offer of association membership to Horizon Europe, a status that allows countries to participate in EU research under the same conditions as member states, will be much wider than in the past, said Jean-Eric Paquet.

Negotiations to associate with Horizon Europe, which will be one of the largest funding initiatives in the world for scientific research with a proposed budget of €94.1 billion, haven’t yet begun, though there have been some preliminary discussions.

The Commission is creating a new position in its research directorate, to be called chief negotiator for Horizon Europe association. This diplomat post, with the management rank of a director, would be dealing with all possible collaborations, with terms varying case-by-case. Paquet said he has not yet selected the person to hold the position.


How are MSCA Individual Fellowships and Innovative Training Networks Evaluated?

In general, the evaluation procedures for the MSCA Individual Fellowships and the MSCA Innovative Training Networks are very similar to each other and follow the same rules as the rest of evaluations conducted under the MSCA part of Horizon 2020, as described in the 2018-2020 MSCA Work Programme.

The key difference is that for ITNs the rapporteur is also a vice-chair, whereas for IFs the rapporteur is also one of the expert evaluators. The reason for the difference is due to the sheer volume of applications and the number of expert evaluators required for each scheme. For the 2018 ITN call, there were approximately 900 evaluators as well as almost 200 chairs and vice-chairs. For the 2018 IF call, there were approximately 3400 evaluators in addition to roughly 420 chairs and vice-chairs.

Detailed information about the procedures is included in the MSCA ITN and MSCA IF evaluators’ manual.


ERC signs second implementing arrangement with Australia.

The European Research Council (ERC) has signed a new agreement with the Australian Research Council (ARC) to allow Australian researchers to temporarily join ERC-funded teams in Europe.

The joint initiative is the second of its kind for the ERC with an Australian funding body, after a similar agreement was signed with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) in October last year. It will target Australian early-career researchers benefitting from the Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) scheme, administered by the ARC and allow them to make a single long-term, or multiple short-term visits to Europe. The pairing of researchers and the ERC teams in Europe will be facilitated jointly by the ERC and the ARC, following an expression of interest sent to current ERC grant holders.

This is the thirteenth agreement of this kind designed to help attract top researchers to Europe and to stimulate cooperation and scientific exchange across the world, in line with the ERC’s global outlook.

The big challenge: defining scientific excellence.

In just ten years, the European Research Council (ERC) has become a reference point for scientific quality, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the leading national agencies from the US, Japan, Germany and the UK.

However, its money is not evenly distributed and that has become a political issue, with some member states arguing its excellence criterion is widening the gap between countries that are already well endowed and those trying to build their science up from a low base. In the ongoing political negotiations over the next EU budget, some politicians have been calling for a more even geographical distribution of funds.

New “seal of excellence” section on the Horizon 2020 dashboard.
The European Commission has made available a new section on the Horizon 2020 Dashboard with information about the Seal of Excellence awarded under the SME Instrument calls. Seal of Excellence (SoE) is a quality label awarded to project proposals, which were evaluated to deserve funding, but did not receive it due to the budgetary constraints. It recognises the value of proposals and helps them find alternative funding at regional or national level. The new section allows users to view the SME Instrument proposals, which were awarded the Seal of Excellence by region/country, thematic area, etc. – It makes it easier for anyone interested in excellent projects that could not receive EU funding due to insufficient budgets to find the relevant information.

Provisional agreement reached on Digital Europe Programme for 2021-2027.
On 14 February 2019, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union reached a provisional political agreement on the Digital Europe programme, part of the European Union's long-term budget for 2021-2027. A €9.2 billion investment in the Digital Europe programme was proposed in June 2018 by the European Commission in order to ensure that the long-term EU budget for 2021-2027 aligns well with increasing digital challenges. The programme focuses investment in five key digital sectors, high performance computing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and trust, advanced digital skills.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Europe leads the global clean energy transition: latest Eurostat data confirm that the EU is on track to meet its 2020 renewable energy target.
When Jean-Claude Juncker became President of the European Commission he vowed to make the bloc a global leader in renewable energy. Achieving 20% of energy from renewable sources in 2020 is one of the headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy. An increasing share of renewable energy is not only necessary to decarbonise our economy and to improve our energy security, it is also ensuring the EU's position at the forefront of the development of technologies of the future and creating growth and jobs. The EU has been a leading voice in international climate negotiations for years and was once again instrumental in reaching an agreement on the “Paris Rulebook” at the COP24 in Katowice. But fighting climate change is not only about brokering international deals, it is also about delivering at home. The Juncker Commission recently finalised negotiations of the Clean Energy for All European package, setting ambitious targets for 2030. However, setting new targets is only credible if we deliver on our current objectives. Today's Eurostat report shows that the EU is on track for reaching its renewable energy target for 2020. In 2017, the share of energy from renewable sources in gross final consumption of energy in the EU, reached 17.5%, up from 17.0% in 2016 and more than double the share as in 2004 (8.5), the first year for which the data are available. The Commission is delivering on its priority to put in place a fully integrated Energy Union with a forward-looking climate policy by leading abroad and fulfilling its commitments at home.

EU Invests €116.1 million to improve the quality of life of Europeans.
New LIFE programme funding will unlock more than € 3.2 billion of additional support to 12 large-scale environmental and climate projects in ten Member States to support Europe's transition to a low-carbon, circular economy. The European Commission today announced an investment of € 116.1 million for the latest integrated projects to be funded under the LIFE programme for the Environment and Climate Action. The funding will support projects in Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal and Slovenia.
Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Karmenu Vella said: "LIFE Integrated Projects are a perfect example of EU funds making a real difference on the ground, improving the quality of life of millions of European citizens. The new investment will help Member States to tap into resources to respond to citizens' concerns on air and water quality and halt the loss of biodiversity."
Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) urban Europe – updated strategic Research and Innovation.

The Joint Programming Urban Europe has updated their Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA 2.0). The launching event took place during the policy conference "Urban Transitioning – A Joint Adventure" at the Committee of the Regions in Brussels, on 12 February 2019.

The updated agenda will guide the activities and research priorities in the programme until 2026. The JPI Urban Europe has taken a challenge-driven approach and structured the SRIA 2.0 around four areas, digital Transitions in Urban Governance, from Resilience to Urban Robustness, sustainable Land-Use and Urban Infrastructure, inclusive Public Spaces for Urban Liveability.


INSTITUTIONAL

Over 500 comments received on the draft ethical guidelines for trustworthy artificial intelligence.

The consultation on the draft Ethics Guidelines on Artificial Intelligence (AI) concluded on 1 February 2019 with over 500 comments received from a wide array of European and international stakeholders.

The process had been launched with the presentation of the document by the High-Level Expert Group on Artificial intelligence (AI HLEG) on 18 December 2018. During the consultation, organisations (including companies, civil society, trade associations and others), members of the academic and research community and individual European citizens had the possibility to submit extended comments on the distinct chapters as well as the document as a whole.


Factsheet on copyright.

This factsheet explains why a reform of EU copyright legislation is needed.

The European Union wants to protect authors and performers who are at the heart of content creation, strengthen the position of rightholders in their negotiations with online platforms, and ultimately make more legal content available to citizens in Europe. This factsheet explains why a reform of EU copyright legislation is needed, what are the objectives of the reform, what the EU has done to modernise copyright and what has been achieved.


European Commission adopts 2018 general report on the activities of the European Union.


The report shows how the EU is delivering on its commitments to Europeans. In 2018, after nearly 6 years of continuous growth, 239 million Europeans were at work – more than ever before. 12.4 million jobs have now been created since 2014, with unemployment dropping to 6.8% and youth unemployment back to 2008 levels. The Juncker Investment Plan for Europe has mobilised over €370 billion in investment across Europe.


EDUCATION AND CULTURE

€251 million more for Erasmus+ in 2019

On 15 February 2019, the European Commission adopted the revised Erasmus+ Annual Work Programme for 2019, allocating an additional €251 million to the already planned €3 billion budget for the year, which will be invested in learning mobility and a number of priority projects.

Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor Navracsics, said: “I am very pleased that the Erasmus+ programme 2019 will be able to offer more people a learning experience abroad and in particular double the funds for European Universities. We will also increase funding for the new Centres of Vocational Excellence and be able to reinforce our focus on social inclusion projects.” The revised work programme 2019 will also benefit innovative and cross-disciplinary projects such as digital learning and the teaching of science, technology, engineering, arts and maths (STEAM) as well as international activities in the field of higher education. Recognising the importance of investing in young people, the additional funding was agreed between the Council of the EU and the European Parliament in the context of their decision on the overall 2019 EU budget.

**EEN NEWS**

**Digital Single Market: Commission welcomes agreement on Digital Europe Programme for 2021-2027.**

On 14 February 2019, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union reached a provisional political agreement on the first-ever Digital Europe programme, part of the EU’s long-term budget presented by the Commission.

The programme, proposed in June 2018, will invest in five key digital sectors: high performance computing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and trust, advanced digital skills, and ensuring the wide use and deployment of digital technologies across the economy and society, in order to strengthen European industrial technological leadership.


**Digital Single Market: EU Negotiators reach a breakthrough to modernize copyright rules.**

On the 13th of February, the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the Commission found a political agreement to make the copyright rules fit for digital era in Europe and bring tangible benefits to all creative sectors, the press, researchers, educators, cultural heritage institutions, and citizens.

The political agreement reached today will adapt copyright rules to today’s world, where music streaming services, video-on-demand platforms, news aggregators and user-uploaded-content platforms have become the main gateways to access creative works and press articles. The agreement needs now to be confirmed by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU in the coming weeks.


**INTERNATIONAL BROKERAGE EVENTS**

The “Participation in International Brokerage Events” Programme aims to the international networking of Cypriot organisations. Through implementation of the Programme it is anticipated to support the extroversion of Cypriot organisations and to eliminate the weaknesses attributed to the small size of the Cypriot market and lack of critical mass of resources and infrastructures.

Furthermore, Cypriot entities will be supported in exploiting research results of Cypriot origin that cannot be utilised in the local market, as well as identifying technologies and technical know-how which are not available in Cyprus.

**DESCRIPTION**

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<td>More information: <a href="https://500podjetcni.si/en/500-business-women/">https://500podjetcni.si/en/500-business-women/</a></td>
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<td><strong>Floating Offshore Wind Turbines, FOWT 2019</strong></td>
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<td>More information: <a href="https://fowt2019.b2match.io/">https://fowt2019.b2match.io/</a></td>
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<td><strong>European Maritime Day 2019</strong></td>
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<td>**Digital Health Connect 2019</td>
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<td>DESCRIPTION</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UAS4EUROPE Conference 2019</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The European Innovation Council Pathfinder and the Future and Emerging Technologies Info Day</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Destination: SMEs and the Multiannual Financial Framework - Which route for access to credit and provision of funding for SMEs?</strong></td>
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<td>More information: <a href="https://bit.ly/2O1w3hH">https://bit.ly/2O1w3hH</a></td>
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<td><strong>Regions and Cities Making the SDGs Happen</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Conference: Our Forests, Our Future</strong></td>
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Should you wish us to attend to the aforementioned events please inform us by email. Requests should be sent to eoc.brussels@ucy.ac.cy as soon as possible or as long as event registrations remain open.

Should you have a different event in mind that is not included in the calendar, please let us know.
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