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## Towards the establishment of a Research and Innovation Center of Excellence for Biobanking and Biomedical Research at the University of Cyprus



*The archiving of biological material for studying the human genome (DNA) of Cypriot volunteers (healthy and patients' cohorts), is under way, with the aim of diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of diseases as well as further development of innovative research.*

The two-day Kick-off event of the Project "Development of a Modern Biobank and the Cyprus Human Genome Project" (CY-Biobank) for the creation of a Center of Excellence at the University of Cyprus, with the aim to enhance the Next Generation Biomedical Research and Detailed Study of the Human Genome – (DNA of Cypriots) took place on the 26 and 27th of November 2019 at the "Nikos K. Shakolas" Amphitheater of the University of Cyprus Clinical Educational Center, in the presence of civil servants, European Commissioner, European Commission Research Executive Agency (REA), doctors, experts, patients, and the public. The project is co-financed with 15 million euros from the European Commission, 15 million euros from the Republic of Cyprus and 8 million euros from the University of Cyprus over a 15-year period.

Project Coordinator of the CY-Biobank project, Professor of Genetics Constantinos Deltas, Director of the Molecular Medicine Research Center (MMRC), took the floor presenting the project in detail. Professor Deltas referred to the MITOS program, which has already begun enrolling volunteers at the Biobank. More than 1,000 volunteers are being sought to provide biological material that will allow researchers to study unique characteristics of the Cypriot DNA. This program invites people over the age of 18 to participate, giving biological material in complete confidentiality. The program will provide a detailed study of the DNA of Cypriots in order to identify unique characteristics and mutations in Cypriot DNA that are responsible for genetic diseases, rare or frequent, and to facilitate further diagnosis and tailored patient treatments.

On behalf of the European Commission's Research Executive Agency (REA), Mr Ales Fiala, Head of Unit at the REA, attended and spoke at the kick-off event, while specialized presentations and discussions led by academics and researchers presenting the project's Work packages were given during the two-day workshop.

Important conclusions include specific measures to be taken to address problems related to the new project's housing and implementation of the electronic health record, a project to be implemented by Professor Christos Schiza's e-Health team at the Department of Computer Science, University of Cyprus.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1332>

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## EU NEWS AND EU POLICY

### EU and Africa establish Pan-African Network for Economic Analysis of Policies in the Agri-food sector

The first week of November, the European and African Union Commissions launched the Pan-African Network for economic Analysis of Policies (PANAP) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to bring together researchers and policymakers from the agri-food sector. The network aims to discuss ways to support agriculture and food policies in Africa through scientific research and cooperation. The overall goal is to strengthen cooperation between researchers and policymakers in the agri-food sector in Africa and to develop research on agricultural economics and policy issues to enhance food and nutrition security. The Network will work closely with key stakeholders, researchers, data analysts and policymakers. Scientific cooperation between the EU and Africa in the agri-food sector is supported by Societal Challenge 2 of Horizon 2020.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1318>



### Commission and OECD present recommendations to help EU Countries and Regions achieve industrial Transition

On the 14th of November the Commission and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) presented a report on an initiative launched in 2017 to help 12 EU regions and Member States achieve industrial transition and hold their own in a globalised economy.

Teams of OECD and Commission experts worked with the regions and the two Member States to identify what was holding back job creation and growth in these areas. The goal was to reinforce their long-term development strategies based on areas of competitive strength – their 'smart specialisation' assets. These strategies encompass social fairness, economic modernisation and climate ambitions.

Based on this experience, the report presents a toolkit for national and regional authorities, providing concrete solutions to address obstacles to industrial transition in five main priorities.

- Preparing for the jobs of tomorrow
- Broadening and diffusing innovation
- Promoting entrepreneurship and private sector engagement
- Transitioning towards a climate-neutral economy
- Promoting inclusive growth

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1281>

### Parliament elects the Von Der Leyen Commission

Following the conclusion of the hearings process, Parliament approved the new Commissioners, presented to plenary by Commission President-elect von der Leyen on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> Of November 2019.

In a roll call vote that took place at noon on Wednesday, MEPs approved the new College of Commissioners with 461 votes in favour, 157 against and 89 abstentions. During her opening statement, European Commission President-elect Ursula von der Leyen reiterated many of the commitments she made in Parliament's plenary chamber in July, and by the Commissioners-designate during the hearings process. She highlighted that appropriate investment and regulatory frameworks will be put into place for Europe to lead the way internationally on a range of critical issues: environmental protection and climate change, growth, inclusion, innovation and digitalisation, as well as the protection of democracy, European values, citizens' rights and the rule of law. She also confirmed one more portfolio change that Parliament had requested following the hearings, which established the candidates' suitability for the role and for the College of Commissioners.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1295>



## Going Climate-Neutral: Expert-Group recommendations to help Energy-Intensive Industries Contribute to the Eu's 2050 target

On 28 November, the Commission published recommendations by a group of experts on how to transform the EU's energy-intensive industries so they help reach EU-wide objectives for a circular and climate-neutral economy by 2050.

These objectives were put forward in the Commission's A Clean Planet for All strategy in November 2018.

The expert group gathers representatives from 11 industries, which make up more than half of the EU industry's energy consumption, such as aluminium, steel and cement. They have developed a policy framework aiming to strike the right balance between Europe's climate ambitions and the need for our industries to remain competitive. Their input will feed into the Commission's future European Green Deal and EU Industrial Strategy.

The recommendations include actions that could provide the right market signals to attract new investments and help companies implement cost-effective solutions towards climate-neutrality. They also focus on the need to ensure a just transition, underline the importance of equipping workers with the right skills for the future and of helping communities that depend on these industries to manage the transition.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1301>

## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

### EIT Presents Regional Innovation Scheme Report for 2018

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) has published its report for the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) for 2018. The Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) is a tool to engage with a broader range of stakeholders. The report outlines the main on-the-ground activities and highlights success stories of start-ups and innovators in parts of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe.

The objective of the EIT RIS is to widen participation in the EIT Innovation Communities' activities by engaging players from countries that have lower participation in EIT Innovation Communities. The EIT RIS is designed for EU Member States and Horizon 2020 Associated Countries in Europe who are modest and moderate innovators, and where Innovation Communities have few or no partners. In 2018, EIT innovation Communities invested €15 million of the EIT grant in their EIT RIS activities and programmes. More information on the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme is available on the dedicated EIT Webpage.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1253>

### Over €170 million available for projects addressing Societal Challenges

A call for project proposals, addressing Europe's societal challenge in a changing world, across 24 different topics is open for application as of 5 November 2019 until 12 March 2020.

It makes available €178.00 million in total for projects working on migration, socio-economic and cultural transformations stemming from the fourth industrial revolution, and governance for the future.

The proposals that have passed the evaluation will be known by mid-August 2020, and the grant agreements with the project teams should be signed by the end of November 2020.

#### What are the requirements for participation?

The requirements for submitting a research proposal are detailed in the call documents published on each topic page. You will also find there rules on funding, such as the list of eligible countries, submission rules, types of projects and their funding rates, as well as other useful information for preparing the project proposal.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1316>

### Connecting Europe Facility (Cef) Telecom Call 2019-2 Closed: 95 Proposals to compete for EUR 25 million EU Funding

The Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Telecom 2019–2 call in support of European Digital Service Infrastructures in the areas of Cybersecurity, eHealth, eProcurement, European e-Justice, European Platform for Digital Skills and Jobs and the Public Open Data is now closed. Ninety-five (95) proposals were received, requesting a total of EUR 54.888.829 for EUR 25.000.000 of available funding. The Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA), the contact point for this call, will now launch the evaluation and selection process.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1280>

### Three Widening Days allow Coordinators to share experience and prepare for the Implementation of their projects

On 12 and 14 November, two Coordinators' Days hosted 12 new ERA Chair project coordinators and 37 new Twinning project coordinators who received all the necessary information for successful management of their projects. In the case of Twinning, coordinators from associated countries such as Armenia, Ukraine, Tunisia and Turkey, were present, showing how this programme opens the possibility to newcomers. These fruitful days put new coordinators in contact with those of the ongoing ERA Chairs, and Twinning and Teaming 2 projects, who have more experience and are therefore able to share lessons learnt, for instance in the area of REA's lively policy feedback exchange.

The "Widening Day" on 13 November was attended by Jean-Eric Paquet, Director-General of the European Commission's Directorate General Research and Innovation. He announced that this programme will be reinforced under Horizon Europe with a proposed 3.3% of the overall budget. Mr Paquet also mentioned that countries such as Estonia and Cyprus, which have a large portfolio of Widening projects, can now share their experience with new projects.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1283>

## EU Defence Agency launches “B2B” Partner Search Platform

The European Defence Agency (EDA) has launched its 'B2B' partner search platform, allowing industry to identify other organisations for collaboration on defence projects.

The platform itself is an online tool which aims to facilitate cross-border partnerships between European defence industry stakeholders by allowing them to quickly and easily search for potential partners for defence-related projects and programmes. As such, those research organisations with a specific interest in defence topics are encouraged to register on the B2B platform in anticipation of future calls.

The platform is designed for industrial and research & technology (R&T) entities that are not controlled by entities from outside the EU when it comes to intellectual property rights, security of supply, security of information or export controls. It allows registrants to both create profiles establishing their 'needs' and to react to specific partner search requests. Further guidance from the EDA has also been published in a supporting factsheet document which you can find [here](#).

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1294>

## Innovation Principle makes EU laws smarter and future-oriented, experts say

The innovation principle has the potential to contribute to the quality and future-proof nature of EU legislation, but significant efforts are needed for this potential to fully materialise in law-making.

This is one of the main findings of the independent expert report on the innovation principle published on 25th of November.

The innovation principle is a tool to help achieve EU policy objectives by ensuring that legislation is designed in a way that creates the best possible conditions for innovation to flourish. The report assessed the Commission's initial experience with designing more innovation-oriented EU rules by applying the principle and the pilot innovation deals.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1319>

## Results of the Horizon Europe implementation co-design exercise: towards a sound Implementation Framework

After a broad agreement on the draft Orientations towards Horizon Europe Implementation strategy, simplifications under Horizon 2020 are considered as a good basis for further simplification under Horizon Europe.

However, there is scope for further improvements across the entire project lifecycle under the next EU research and innovation programme.

During the Horizon Europe implementation strategy process, 2 major sets of co-design activities took place between July and October 2019.

- Firstly, an open web consultation on Horizon Europe co-designs implementation that collected 1,549 replies between 31 July 2019 and 4 October 2019. Respondents appreciated the continuity approach taken by the Commission regarding the rules of participation and by extension in a wider sense, to Horizon Europe's implementation.
- Secondly, through meetings and exchanges at the European Research and Innovation Days (24-26 September 2019), which attracted a large stakeholder community of almost 4,000 participants.

The feedback collected will feed into the on-going work on the Horizon Europe Implementation Strategy.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1320>

## European Space Agency gets biggest budget increase in 25 years

The European Space Agency (ESA) has secured an unexpectedly high budget of €14.4 billion for a broad package of projects over the next five years, director general Jan Wörner announced at the end of the triennial meeting of the agency's 22 member states in Seville last week. At €100,000 more than the requested €14.3 billion, this is the agency's biggest budget increase in 25 years. Research ministers voted to continue funding for high-profile programmes such as the International Space Station and approved plans to cooperate with NASA on a return mission to take samples from the surface of Mars. The agency got €400 million more than requested for its earth observation programme, Copernicus. The popularity of this programme is, "driven by more awareness of [climate-related] catastrophes and disasters," Wörner said. Ministers voted to continue funding for studying space weather and clearing space debris. They also backed a satellite mission to sense gravitational waves caused by a collision of black holes.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1303>



## How to use the Horizon Results Platform?

In August 2019, the European Commission launched a pilot for a new Horizon Results Platform, which is intended to support beneficiaries in showcasing the results of their projects in an appealing way, thus increasing the opportunities for networking and attracting potential users. What is the Horizon Results Platform?

In August 2019, the European Commission launched a pilot for a new Horizon Results Platform, which is intended to support beneficiaries in showcasing the results of their projects in an appealing way, thus increasing the opportunities for networking and attracting potential users. The Platform, which was officially launched during the European R&I Days in Brussels, aims to provide beneficiaries with a free online space where they can advertise the results of their projects to the audiences they want to attract.

It currently features more than 600 results grouped into several categories, including policy-related results and IPR transfer offers.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1299>

## The way is open to building world-class supercomputers in Europe

Hosting agreements have been signed between the European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking (EuroHPC JU) and the eight sites where its first supercomputers will be located.

In June 2019, the European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking announced the selection of eight sites for supercomputing centres across the EU. These new supercomputers will be made accessible to European researchers, industry and businesses, to develop new applications in areas such as artificial intelligence and personalised medicine, drug and material design, bio-engineering, weather forecasting, and combatting climate change. Representatives of these eight sites (hosting entities) today in Strasbourg celebrated the signature of hosting agreements with the EuroHPC JU, which has just welcomed its thirtieth member, North Macedonia.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1297>

## ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

### 2,500 Scientists urge EU to reform environmentally ‘Damaging’ Cap

More than 2,500 scientists across the EU have joined forces and reached out to the EU parliament in a letter urging them to “to act on the science, and undertake a far-reaching reform of the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) without delay.”

The letter, sent to the Committee of Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) and the Committee of Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), states that there is an “unequivocal scientific consensus” between the intensification of agriculture and the ever-increasing loss of biodiversity. It outlines the harmful effects that the intensive agriculture model, supported by the current CAP, has on biodiversity, asserting that much of this damage could soon be “irreversible”.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1248>

### EU-Korea Climate action project launches first call

The EU-Korea Climate Action Project has launched its first call for proposals in the area of Renewable Energy and Energy-Efficient Buildings.

The objective of this inaugural Call is to support Joint Research or Pilot Projects which can contribute to Korea’s Green House Gas emissions reduction and climate change adaptation targets. The call has two priority themes, both of which require the involvement of at least one European and one Korean entity. These priority themes also include two sub-topic areas:

#### Renewable Energy:

- Ensuring sustainability and security of Korea’s power supply; and
- Korean social acceptance of utility scale renewable energy power generation.

#### Energy Efficiency in Buildings:

- Ensuring energy efficiency of new residential, commercial and industrial buildings; and
- Improving the energy performance of the existing building stock.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1317>

### A European Fund to support the Circular Bioeconomy

The European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) have announced the completion of the public procurement process for the selection of an investment advisor to set up and manage the European Circular Bioeconomy Fund (ECBF).

The selected investment advisor is ECBF Management GmbH and Hauck & Aufhäuser Fund Services S.A. will act as the Alternative Investment Fund Manager.

The new fund will provide access to finance – in the form of equity, debt or quasi-equity – to innovative circular bioeconomy companies and projects of various sizes. ECBF Management will raise funds from public and private investors with a target fund volume of EUR 250 million and aims for a first close in Q1 2020. A proposal for the EIB to invest up to EUR 100 million in the fund will be submitted to the EIB’s Board of Directors for approval. This investment will be backed by a guarantee from InnovFin – EU finance for Innovators, an initiative of the EIB Group and the European Commission to facilitate access to finance for innovation and research through a wide range of financing tools and advisory services.

The creation of such a fund was recommended by the 2017 Innovfin Advisory study Access-to-finance conditions for Investments in Bio-Based Industries and the Blue Economy which identified an important financing gap in the bioeconomy sector.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1302>

## REGIONAL POLICY

### The map of Wifi4EU Winners

After three successful calls for applications, the physical spread of the municipalities that will benefit of the EU funding under the WiFi4EU scheme can now be portrayed visually.

The WiFi4EU initiative is having a concrete impact on municipalities across Europe by promoting free access to Wi-Fi connectivity for citizens in public spaces including parks, squares, public buildings, libraries, health centres and museums. After three successful calls for applications, it is very interesting to see the map of the municipalities that will benefit from EU funding under the WiFi4EU scheme.

As the map shows, the WiFi4EU initiative is reaching all participating countries, giving citizens from the length and breadth of Europe the chance to benefit from free Wi-Fi connectivity where they live. The blue, red and green dots represent the 7980 winning municipalities from the three calls, which are now in the process of installing the WiFi4EU network. In countries such as Greece, Portugal, Bulgaria, Croatia, Ireland Slovenia and Lithuania, the municipalities granted a WiFi4EU voucher make up more than 70% of the eligible entities in the Member State.

The next time you will be travelling around Europe, don’t forget to check the map of WiFi4EU winners and the list of winners to know where you may be able to connect to the free and public WiFi4EU network!

You can find additional information on all applicants of Call 3 on INEA website.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1314>

**EDUCATION AND CULTURE****Erasmus+: EU will invest over €3billion in Young Europeans to study or train abroad in 2020**

In November, the European Commission published its 2020 call for proposals for the Erasmus+ programme. The expected budget of over €3 billion, an increase of 12% compared to 2019, will provide even more opportunities for young Europeans to study, train or gain professional experience abroad. As part of the 2020 call for proposals, the Commission will launch a second pilot on European Universities. Moreover, the EU aims to create 35,000 opportunities for African students and staff to participate in the

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1252>

**Plan S: Open Access Publishing Update**

Following the recent event "The Future of Research: Assessing the Impact of Plan S" in Leuven on 6 November 2019 organised jointly by Academia Europaea Cardiff Knowledge Hub, the Young Academy of Europe, KU Leuven Libraries and Cardiff University, UKRO has decided to provide a general update on the progress of Plan S and the Open Access movement. As previously reported, Plan S is an initiative that promotes a switch to Open Access publishing models for the communication of research and innovation progress, launched in September 2018, and supported by cOAlition S, an international consortium of research funders. They work with researcher groups, funders, libraries and research organisations in order to determine how best to support and promote a switch from the current subscription-based publishing service to an Open Access-based publishing service.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1277>



enterprise  
europe  
network

## EEN NEWS

Enterprise Europe Network, a network that provides, free of charge, integrated support services to Cypriot enterprises wanting to invest in entrepreneurship, knowledge, research, technology and innovation.

The mission of the Enterprise Europe Network in Cyprus is to contribute to the qualitative improvement of domestic enterprises and to strengthen their competitiveness targeting to expand their presence in international markets.

The Enterprise Europe Network in Cyprus is a member of the European network Enterprise Europe Network and the Consortium consists of the Research Promotion Foundation as the Coordinator, the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the European Office of Cyprus as members.

More information: <http://eencyprus.org.cy/en/>

## €14.35 million to 287 innovate companies

287 innovative companies from 31 countries have been selected - from a total of 3,299 applications - to receive a €50,000 grant to develop their business plans. The companies will also avail of coaching and business acceleration services.

Spain (48), Italy (30) and Switzerland (28) have the highest number of successful applications. Most companies selected for funding are in the field of either information and communication technology (ICT), health and engineering. For more information, see the Map of companies selected and the List of projects selected.

This is the last round of SME Instrument Phase 1 funding allocations. The EIC Accelerator builds on the SME Instrument Phase II with grants (from €0.5m to €2.5m), or blended finance (grants and equity) options.

More information: <http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1315>

## 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	DATES AND PLACE
<b>Science with and for Society Brokerage Event 2020</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1328">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1328</a>	16 January 2020 Brussels, Belgium
<b>HTH Styria Pitch &amp; Partner 2020</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1329">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1329</a>	27 January 2020 Tel Aviv, Israel
<b>CyberTech Conference</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1327">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1327</a>	28 January 2020 Tel Aviv, Israel
<b>Life Science Zurich Impact – The cause of Health</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1330">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1330</a>	03 February 2020 Zurich, Switzerland
<b>Life-on-Chip 2020</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1331">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1331</a>	20 February 2020 Zurich, Switzerland

## EVENTS CALENDAR JANUARY 2020

DESCRIPTION	DATES AND PLACE
<b>European Entrepreneurial Region (EER) 2021 Info Day</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1321">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1321</a>	15 January 2020 Brussels, Belgium
<b>Workshop on Artificial Intelligence Testing and Experimentation Facilities for Smart Manufacturing</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1322">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1322</a>	16 January 2020 Brussels, Belgium
<b>Workshop: Data driven services for Energy Consumers</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1323">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1323</a>	21 January 2020 Brussels, Belgium
<b>DG ECFIN Workshop – "Fiscal rules in Europe: Design and Enforcement"</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1324">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1324</a>	28 January 2020 Brussels, Belgium
<b>Food for the future: Accelerating the Protein Transition</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1325">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1325</a>	29 January 2020 Brussels, Belgium
<b>Trends on collecting policy intelligence</b> More information: <a href="http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1326">http://eoc.org.cy/en/index.php?id=1326</a>	30 January 2020 Brussels, Belgium

**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](mailto: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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