



EUROPEAN  
OFFICE OF CYPRUS

# EUROPEAN NEWS

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## MATHFactor & MATHeatre Competitions - Innovative tools in teaching mathematics -



“Mobilising Europe’s  
Universities for Smart  
Specialisation”

20 June 2014

Brussels, Belgium

[http://](http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/universities)

[s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/  
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Mobility and Career  
opportunities  
for researchers



<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/>

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*With great success were held in Nicosia the final competitions “MATHFactor 2014” for teaching and learning of mathematics through communication activities and “MATHeatre 2014” for teaching and learning of mathematics through mathematical theatre. The two competitions were held on 26 and 27 April 2014 respectively, attracting the interest of many people who attended school students from all over Europe and from third countries to compete while learning! The final stage of competitions was held under the framework of the European Student Conference in Mathematics (EUROMATH 2014) under the auspices of the Minister of Education and Culture Dr. Costas Kadis.*

The Competitions “MATHFactor 2014” and “MATHeatre 2014” are key instruments of the European project “Le-MATH-Learning mathematics through new communication factors” coordinated by the Cyprus Mathematical Society while the European Office of Cyprus (EOC) participates as a partner.

After one and half years, the European Project Le-MATH, has closely completed the development of a new methodology for the learning and teaching of mathematics to students of age between 9 and 18 . This new methodology introduces two new set of tools, which have been specifically created



Highlights of the competitions’  
finals.

in order to be used in the training of teachers who teach mathematics to students aged 9-18.

For these two new tools, a new platform has been created, in which one can find a set of good practices that are used globally in the teaching of mathematics through mathematical theatre activities and through mathematics communication activities.

Furthermore, two guidebooks have been drafted that will help teachers to develop the aforementioned tools in their classroom. The final form of the guidelines will be ready for publication by the summer of 2014, in 10 different languages.

The first draft of the guidelines has been already published on the webpage of the [www.le-math.eu](http://www.le-math.eu) and they were used during the pilot phase of the project, by teachers and students participating in the finals of MATHFactor Europe 2014 and MATHeatre Europe 2014.

*Continued on next page....*



*...continuation of the previous article.*

The whole process of the competitions, MATHFactor Europe 2014 and MATHeatre Europe 2014 serves basically as the pilot procedure of the project that examines the effectiveness of this new methodology. During the first phase of the competitions, more than 200 pupil and teachers participated, by submitting their work electronically. After the evaluation of the contestants, 120 pupils and teachers from Cyprus, France, Czech Republic, Lebanon, Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia have been invited to take part to the competition finals (phase 2).

In MATHFactor Europe 2014, the contestants had three minutes at their disposal to impress the judges and the audience, through a fun and innovative oral presentation that contains mathematical accuracy and at the same time is understandable and enjoyable to a non-mathematical audience. In MATHeatre Europe 2014, the contestants had 5-12 minutes to present a mathematical play.

The participation of schoolchildren "Al-Hadi Institution for deaf, blind and learning disabilities" from Lebanon was quite commendable and moving, and they won the 1st prize in the category MATHeatre aged 14-18 years. **The videos of the presentations and the theatrical plays, which made it to the final phase of the competitions, can be found in the "Le-Math" official website.**

More information: <http://www.le-math.eu/index.php?id=620>

## Election of the new Management Board 2014-2018 of the European Association of Career Guidance

*The EUROPEAN CAREER Guidance Conference 2014, CAREER-EU 2014, was organized between the 28 April to 2 May 2014 in Nicosia Cyprus, by the European Association of Career Guidance, in cooperation with the European Association of ERASMUS Coordinators and the INENTER Network. The main themes of the conference included sessions on strengthening opportunities for international youth, vocational guidance counselling, NGO's in career services, personality and skills diagnostic tools, virtual mobility, bringing youth into employment, effective career guidance via strong employer skills etc. During the CAREER-EU 2014 Conference, the European Association of Career Guidance, EACG, held its General Assembly, during which the new Management Board was elected for the years 2014-2018.*



**The Members of the newly elected EACG Management Board for 2014-2108 are:**

- **President:** Dr. Gregory Makrides, University of Cyprus, Cyprus;
- **Vice President:** Roger Hessel, TOBB Economics and Technology University, Economic Policy Foundation of Turkey, TEPAV, Turkey;
- **Vice President:** Rosemary Strevinioti, Brussels Office, EOC, Belgium;
- **Member:** Nicos Stathopoulos, Career Guidance Expert, Greece;
- **Member:** Christina Kontogoulidou, University of Piraeus, Greece.

**The Appointed members of the EACG Management Board for 2014-2018 are:**

- **Executive Vice President:** Emma Zeniou, University of Cyprus, Cyprus;
- **Executive Secretary:** Christos Katsalis, European Office Brussels, Belgium;

- **Executive Treasurer:** Simoula Christodoulou, University of Cyprus, Cyprus.

The European Association of Career Guidance (EACG) was founded in 2010, within the framework of the European project "CAREER-EUshop: One-Stop-Service-Career-Guidance-Shop for Europe" which is funded by the European Commission under the framework of the Life-Long Learning Programme. EACG is open to all natural and legal entities, and has the following purposes:

European Commission under the framework of the Life-Long Learning Programme. EACG is open to all natural and legal entities, and has the following purposes:

1. **to enable information and experience exchange** by career guidance counsellors and HR practitioners;
2. **to circulate provisions of the Europe 2020 Strategy** and its updates in academic and professional circles;
3. **to support the process of raising education and professional standards and quality** in the territory of the European Union;
4. **to support and contribute to the European Employment and Vocational Education and Training Policies;**
5. **to organize training and train-the-trainer courses** for the promotion of Life-Long Learning (LLP);
6. **to organize seminars and conferences**, which will enable direct communication among the Association members and beyond and for the definition of new areas of the Association activities;
7. **to prepare proposals** within the framework of EU programmes funded by the European Commission;
8. **to cooperate as a coordinator or partner in European projects;**
9. **to produce publications** of interest to EACG members and the interested audience.

More information:

<http://www.eacg.eu/index.php?id=16>

## The Council of Europe awarded the Nicosia Municipality with two awards within the institution “Europa Prize”



*The Council of Europe has announced that the Municipality of Nicosia was awarded for the year 2013 with two separated awards, the “Flag of Honour” and the “Plaque of Honour” for the entire project at European level. These awards come to seal the last award of the Council of Europe with the «European Diploma – Europe Prize». Every year the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Development Council of Europe within the institution “Europe Prize”, prizes in four categories in the municipalities of Europe to promote the European integration. The Nicosia Municipality is the only municipality that had been proposed and was awarded the same time two of the four institutional awards .*

The awards will be presented by members of the committee of the Council of Europe at a special ceremony, open to the public which will be held this autumn in Nicosia.

More information: <http://www.assembly.coe.int/committee/ena/europaprize/EuropaPrizeE.pdf>

## Signature of Pact Towns and Regions for the campaign “One to Five” of Council of Europe



*Signature of Pact*

*The Mayor of Nicosia Mr. Constantinos Yiorkadjis, within the framework of Nicosia’s participation and support in campaign “One in Five” of Council of Europe, signed the pact of Towns and Regions to stop sexual violence against children. The Pact signed in the presence of Congress Thematic Spokesperson on Children, of Council of Europe, Mr. Johan van den Hout.*

The Pact is an initiative of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and aims at involving the local authorities in the campaign, to post information about activities, initiatives and policies of Local Authorities in matters relating to children and sharing good practice with other European cities and regions. The campaign “One in Five” of Council of Europe refers to sexual violence and child abuse. The name of the campaign refers to the range of problem which according on research done in European countries and studies of UNICEF and World Health Organisation, 1 in 5 of the total of 150 millions children in Europe is currently undergoing some form of sexual abuse. The participation of Nicosia municipality in the campaign shows the interest of the municipality for the childhood and the protection of children rights, but it is also an opportunity for more substantial service, information and public awareness.

More information: [http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/1in5/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/1in5/default_en.asp)

## “Rainbow II” for the children By the Municipal Multipurpose Centre of Nicosia

*The Municipal Multipurpose Centre in Nicosia launched an initiative for the implementation of “Rainbow II” programme. The grant agreement for Rainbow II programme was signed on 16 April 2014 by the Director of the Centre Mr. Constantinos Yiorkadjis, at the management authority office which consists of PricewaterhouseCoopers in cooperation with First Elements Euroconsultants Ltd that is co-funded of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, through the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area and Republic of Cyprus.*



**nationally, to enjoy the quality care services and the creative activities of multipurpose Centre, free of charge.**

The programme will be implemented from the consortium of Municipal Multipurpose Centre in Nicosia, the Municipality of Nicosia, and the company NVK Advent Consulting Ltd. An innovative feature of the programme is the new pilot action of Multipurpose, **which envisages the training and**

**employment home carer and the offer of free care services to infants and toddlers.**

Rainbow II constitutes the evolution of the already successful children’s clubs of Municipal Multipurpose Centre in Nicosia since it would provide the **opportunity to children of unemployed parents, single parents families, large families, low income people, children of every**

The permanent objective of Multipurpose Centre in Nicosia is to secure the social cohesion and the support vulnerable groups of citizens, providing support services, care, employment and decreasing at the same time the social exclusion.

More information: <http://www.nicosia.org.cy/el-GR/municipality/multipurpose-centre/rainbow/>

## Mobilizing and Transferring Knowledge on Post-2012 Climate Policy Implications

*The University of Piraeus participates in the European project "Mobilizing and Transferring Knowledge on Post-2012 Climate Policy Implications" (POLIMP) which is a project funded by the European Union's Seventh Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration, under Grant Agreement No 603847. Main objective of POLIMP is to explore for different policy and decision making levels, knowledge gaps about implications of possible directions of international climate policies. Subsequently it will cover these gaps with knowledge packages derived from stakeholder consultation, analysis of climate policy decision at national, EU and UN policy levels and review of ongoing research.*

Within the above framework, POLIMP aims to identify: *Where do knowledge gaps exist? What future international climate policies may look like? What these imply for policy and decision makers internationally and within the EU?*

Throughout the operation and implementation of POLIMP the following results are expected:



- **Creation of a thematic knowledge platform** on climate change mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer, finance and market mechanisms.
- **Enhancement of the insights of policy and decision makers** on possible courses of international climate policy making.
- **Reduction of uncertainty and better understanding of the consequences** of different policies and climate regimes.
- **Trust among policy and decision makers** so that they can strengthen their efforts for implementation of the "Climate and Energy Package (20/20/20 Targets)".

More information: <http://polimp.eu/> or/and **Assistant Professor of the University of Piraeus Alexandros Flamos** [aflamos@unipi.gr](mailto:aflamos@unipi.gr).



## Optimal performance computing systems in the presence of reliability problems and fluctuations in performance



Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου  
Τμήμα Πληροφορικής

*The University of Cyprus led by Associate Professor of the Department of Computer Sciences Giannakis Sazeides and Assistant Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering Chrysostomos Nikopoulos has received 349.912 EUR funding for the research project called «HARPA» (Harnessing Performance Variability). The project was funded with a total amount of 2.797.000 EUR within the framework of the 7th Framework Programme and has a duration of three years (September 2013 - August 2016). Six young scientists have already been recruited in order to deal with the project's needs.*

Over the years, miniaturization of manufacturing technology enables processors to increase the cores in a computer system. Apart from the positive aspects that miniaturization technology offers, there are some effects such as reducing the reliability and deviation from the expected performance of such computational systems. The problems of reliability and performance variations can occur both during construction and during the life of the system. The reduced reliability and the deviations from the expected return can have devastating consequences on critical computer systems. The main objective of the research programme HARPA is addressing the aforementioned effects through mechanisms that can recognize and resolve such problems allowing building future computing systems.

HARPA project is a **collaboration between the academic and industrial sectors**. Apart from the group of the **University of Cyprus**, in HARPA participate the **University of Milan (POLIMI)** who is **coordinating the project**, the **Research Centre IMEC**, the **Institute of Communications and Computer Systems (ICCS)** of the **National Technical University of Athens**, the **Supercomputer Centre IT4I** of **Technical University of Ostrava**, the company **THALES** as well as the company **HENESIS**.

More information: <http://www.harpa-project.eu/>



## The career of Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellows



**Marie (Skłodowska) Curie fellows enjoy greater success in obtaining grants from the European Research Council (ERC) than their peers, according to a report.**

The study from the European Commission finds that researchers who have held a Marie (Skłodowska) Curie fellowship, which funds a period of exchange to a foreign institution, are more likely to be awarded an ERC grant

for research excellence. This also extends to other internationally-recognised awards, with female Marie Curie researchers having a 13 per cent greater probability of obtaining high-profile awards later in their career than non-Marie Curie fellows, reports the study.

Other benefits of the programme include publication success, with Marie Curie fellows recording more articles in higher-profile journals and better citation records.

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index\\_en.cfm?pg=publications](http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index_en.cfm?pg=publications)

### AAL 2014: Call for developing ICT solutions for sustainable models of care

**Ageing demographics and declining health in older adults are predicted to put unaffordable pressures on care systems and society, so change and innovation is required to better cope with these challenges. Old-age support ratios are projected to halve between 2012 and 2050 across OECD countries . There are other factors, such as increased urbanisation and migration that result increasingly in older people living alone and contribute to making current approaches to professional care, informal care and service delivery unsustainable . The 2014 Call Challenge of the Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) Programme aims at funding the development and testing of ICT-based solutions in real life situations which enable and support sustainable care models for older adults.**



Applicants have until **26 June 2014** to submit their proposal that will address the following issues:

- How ICT-based solutions reconcile increased demand with limited resources;
- How ICT-based solutions increase and facilitate the supply of formal and informal care for older adults;
- How ICT-based solutions reduce the demand for care through prevention and self-management;
- How ICT-based solutions can support the shift towards better care at home and in the community

More information: <http://www.aal-europe.eu/get-involved/calls/call-2014-care-for-the-future/>

### EU Atlas of ICT hotspots



**The European Commission has published the new EU Atlas of ICT hotspots. This atlas shows where digital technologies thrive and examines the factors contributing to this success.**

A region's ICT excellence is linked to research and development activities, to the ability to take knowledge to market (innovation) and to building an intense business activity around this innovation. It seems that ICT thriving regions:

- are mostly long standing industrial areas;

have high-standard educational institutions and other key innovation players;

have long-term policies on research and innovation;

have enjoyed historical opportunities (such as being the political national capitals);

tend to cluster together (half of the 34 Poles of excellence are neighbouring regions).

This effect is also observed in places like the Silicon Valley (USA), Bangalore (India) or Changzhou (China).

More information: <http://ipts.jrc.ec.europa.eu/publications/pub.cfm?id=7140>

## Study about the teaching profession

**At a time when several countries are faced with shortages of qualified teachers, a new study undertaken on behalf of the European Commission looks at what Member States could do to attract the best people into the profession.**



The study looks in detail at what makes the teaching profession attractive (or not), maps the different policy measures that countries use (or could use) to attract high-quality recruits, to make careers more attractive, and to enhance the social status and prestige of teaching, and assesses their effectiveness. It also makes recommendations for improvements.

The study concerns teachers in primary and secondary education (ISCED 1, 2 and 3) in 32 countries (the 28 EU Member States plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Turkey). It is based upon a survey of more than 80,000 student teachers, teachers and school leaders, interviews

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/2014/2010428-teaching-profession-attractive\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/2014/2010428-teaching-profession-attractive_en.htm)

with national decision-makers, and a review of the research in the field. The key findings are the following:

- In most European countries, **the teaching profession has lost much of its attraction** for the best candidates because of a decline in prestige, poorer working conditions and relatively low salaries. But Ireland, Finland, Scotland buck this trend.
- **Few countries have specific, long-term strategies** to make the profession more attractive to the best candidates, or even to evaluate the effectiveness of their current policies.
- In many countries, **the teacher shortage is addressed by longer working hours for teachers**, higher pupil-teacher ratios or an increase in the retirement age.

## Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe

**“EPALE - Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe” is a new initiative funded by the European Commission within the latest development in the EU’s long-term commitment to promoting high quality adult learning in Europe. The platform will be open to teachers, trainers and volunteers, as well as policy-makers, researchers and academics involved in adult learning.**

The site will offer interactive networks, enabling users to link with others all around Europe, engage in discussions and exchange good practice. A calendar of European and national events will keep users up to date on professional development opportunities. News feeds and feature articles, written by leading experts in adult learning, will ensure the latest adult education policy and debates are accessible to EPAL users.

More information: <http://ec.europa.eu/epale/el#about-epale>



## Award ceremony for the winners of the EU Young Translator Contest



*The winners from Greece and Cyprus together with the Trainee Officers of the EOC.*

**On 8 April 2014, the 28 teenage winners of the Commission’s annual “Juvenes Translatores” contest for young translators, participated to the ceremony in Brussels, where they received their trophies from Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth.**

More than 3 000 pupils aged 17 participated from schools in each EU country and this was the first time participation for Croatia. Participants had two hours to translate a one-page text on European citizenship - 2013 being the European Year of Citizens – in any of the 552 language combinations possible from among the EU’s 24 official languages. It is worth noting that a total of 157 language combinations were used, the highest to date. The translation tests were marked by Commission translators.



More information:

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-14-112\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-112_en.htm)

## Directive to improve enforcement of workers' rights

**Currently 3.3% of the EU labour force, or 8 million people, live and work in another Member State. An additional 1.2 million people live in one EU country but work in another. The EU's Council of Ministers approved on 14 April 2014 the new Directive to ensure the better application at national level of EU citizens' right to work in another Member State. The Member States now have two years to implement the Directive at national level.**



To overcome these barriers and prevent discrimination, the Directive will require Member States to ensure:

- one or more bodies at national level will provide support and legal assistance to EU migrant workers with the enforcement of their rights
- effective legal protection of rights (including for example protection from victimisation for EU migrant workers who seek to enforce their rights) and

The Directive aims to remove existing obstacles to the free movement of workers, such as the lack of awareness of EU rules among public and private employers and the difficulties faced by mobile citizens to get information and assistance in the host Member States.

- easily accessible information in more than one EU language on the rights enjoyed by EU migrant workers and jobseekers.

These rules will benefit mobile workers but also employers, who will be better informed when hiring people from another EU country.

More information: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-14-288\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-288_en.htm)

## More flexible visa rules



**Many non-EU nationals wishing to travel to the EU are often faced with cumbersome, lengthy and costly visa procedures. The proposals presented on 1 April 2014 will seriously shorten and simplify the procedures for those wanting to come to the EU for short stays, and induce more cost savings and less bureaucracy, whilst maintaining the level of security. Making the access to the Schengen area easier for legitimate travellers will facilitate doing business. It will boost economic activity and job creation in, for instance, the tourism sector as well as in related activities such as restaurant and transport industries.**

Main elements of this package are: (1) Reducing the deadline from 15 to 10 days for processing and taking a decision; (2) Making it possible to lodge visa applications in other EU countries consulates if the Member State competent for processing the visa application is neither present nor represented; (3) Substantial facilitations for regular travellers including mandatory issuing of multiple entry visas valid for three years; (4) Simplified application form and allowing for online applications (5) Possibility for Member States to devise special schemes granting visas at the borders for up to 15 days in one Schengen State; (6) Possibility for Member States to facilitate the issuing of visa for visitors attending major events; (7) A new type of visa (Touring-visa) allowing legitimate travellers to circulate in the Schengen area for up to 1 year (without staying in one Member State for more than 90 days in any 180-day period).

Both proposals must now be approved by the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament, which can be expected at the earliest in 2015. Once the proposals enter into force, the changes will apply to all EU Member States applying the common Schengen visa policy in full as well as the four Schengen associated States (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland). It should be noted that Bulgaria, Croatia, Ireland, Cyprus, Romania and the UK do not take part in the visa policy.

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/malmstrom/news/archives/2014/04/20140401\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/malmstrom/news/archives/2014/04/20140401_en.htm)

## New European Platform against undeclared work



**The European Commission has proposed on 9 April 2014 the creation of a European Platform to improve cooperation at EU level in order to prevent and deter undeclared work more effectively.**

The new Platform would bring together all enforcement bodies involved in tackling undeclared work, such as labour and social security inspectorates and tax and migration authorities, as well as other stakeholders, such as EU-level representatives of employers and employees. The proposal envisages that all Member States should be members of the

Platform, as undeclared work affects all of them, and joint participation of all EU countries is crucial to address cross-border situations.

More information: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2055&furtherNews=yes>

## EU-wide campaign to manage stress at work



*Stress is one of the most frequently reported work-related health problem in Europe and is believed to be the cause of the majority of all lost working days. The "Healthy Workplaces Manage Stress" campaign launched on 7 April 2014 by the European Agency for Safety at Health at Work (EU-OSHA) aims to raise awareness about the psychological, physical and social risks linked to stress at work. Addressing stress and psychosocial risks is one of the challenges covered by the forthcoming EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020, due to be presented in June 2014.*

Workers affected by stress find it difficult to concentrate, make more mistakes and are subject to more frequent accidents at work. Prolonged psychological pressure may result in serious health problems such as cardiovascular or musculoskeletal diseases, leading to poor working performance and more absenteeism. The campaign aims to help employers' and workers' representatives, managers and workers to identify and manage stress and psychological, physical and social risks in the workplace. It also promotes the use of simple tools which can help organisations to effectively manage such risks.

More information: <https://www.healthy-workplaces.eu/en>

## Consultation on EU Corporate Social Responsibility policy

*The European Commission is seeking stakeholders' views about the impact of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy over the past three years and on the role it should play in the future. The Commission's 2011-14 CSR Strategy set an ambitious agenda to strengthen its implementation at international level and created a number of models on how to practically implement its principles.*

More and more CSR is becoming a valuable tool to improve a company's competitiveness: encouraging social and environmental responsibility in the corporate sector



can also bring benefits in terms of cost reductions, access to capital, improved customer relationships, human resource management and innovation capacity. Amongst others, the consultation that the Commission is launching asks for concrete feedback on how successful the Commission's actions have been in enhancing market reward for CSR, further integrating CSR in education, training and research and better aligning European and global approaches to CSR avoiding red tape in particular for SMEs.

The on-line questionnaire will be open for contributions until **15 August 2014**.

More information:

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/public-consultation/>

## Strengthened shareholders' engagement in largest companies

**The European Commission has adopted on 9 April 2014 measures to improve the corporate governance of around 10 000 companies listed on Europe's stock exchanges. This would contribute to the competitiveness and long-term sustainability of these companies. Other proposals would also provide cost-efficient company law solutions for SMEs which operate across borders**

**The proposal to revise the existing Shareholder Rights Directive** would tackle corporate governance shortcomings relating to listed companies and their boards, shareholders, intermediaries and proxy advisors. Key elements of the proposal include stronger transparency requirements for institutional investors and asset managers on their investment and engagement policies regarding the companies in which they invest as well as a framework to make it easier to identify shareholders so they can more easily exercise their rights, in particular in cross-border situations. For the first time, a European "say on pay" would be introduced. **The Recommendation on the quality of corporate governance reporting** ('comply or explain' principle) aims to improve corporate governance reporting by listed companies more broadly. **The proposal for a Directive on single-member private limited liability companies** would standardise requirements for the creation of companies with a single shareholder. It would remove the burdensome process of registering subsidiaries and make it easier for SMEs to operate across the EU.



More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/company/modern/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/company/modern/index_en.htm)

## Watify: Stimulating Digital Entrepreneurship

The main challenge entrepreneurs are facing in Europe is not the lack of great ideas but the fear of turning ideas into reality. Many people with great ideas refrain from entrepreneurship because of their doubts. Only 6% of the adult population of Europe is engaged in a new business, compared with 13% in the US. That's why the European Commission launched on 29 April 2014 the Watify platform together with ICT stakeholders.



prevent them from starting their own business.

This initiative will help them to understand that every successful entrepreneur has had moments of doubt and that success begins to materialise the moment you start making your idea happen.

The platform also aims to help established companies in all industry sectors by showing them there are a lot of opportunities to trans-

Promoting digital entrepreneurship by taking away these doubts, it's estimated that 1, 5 million additional jobs would be created in the EU Internet Economy, if the entire EU mirrors the entrepreneurship performance of the US or Sweden. **Watify aims to help those entrepreneurs/intrapreneurs to overcome the barriers that**

form their business using digital technologies, taking away any doubts they might have and stimulate them into taking action. The Watify initiative will be run throughout Europe for two years.

More information:

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/dem/wotify/about-wotify>

## SMEs find it hard to obtain feedback on their loan applications

A new evaluation published on 15 April 2014 confirms that the smaller a firm, the larger the likelihood that its credit application might be declined by a financial institution. In particular, smaller companies are struggling to obtain feedback from banks on their declined credit applications even if they have the right to ask for it.



parency between banks and representatives of SMEs, to raise awareness of enterprises as regards their rights to obtain feedback and to develop an agreed standard of feedback to SMEs.

To present the results of the evaluation and discuss its recommendations with stakeholders, the dialogue between banks and

SMEs will be reanimated in the course of 2014.

Research results indicate that clear benefits would derive for SMEs from obtaining such feedback: about half of SME respondents to the survey found the feedback received by banks useful as regards obtaining future funding. To tackle the issues reported in the findings, the evaluation recommends the revival of dialogue on trans-

The aim is to improve transparency between banks and SMEs, encourage banks to find ways to improve the feedback they give to SMEs and raise awareness on the relevance of such a feedback on loan applications.

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/finance/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/finance/index_en.htm)

## Finalising the Banking Union

**On 15 April 2014, the European Parliament has adopted three interconnected key texts to complete the legislative work underpinning the banking union, the Bank Restructuration and Resolution Directive (BRRD), the Single Resolution Mechanism, and the recast Directive on Deposit Guarantee schemes.**

**The Bank Restructuration and Resolution directive** sets new rules for all 28 Member States to put an end to the old paradigm of bank bail-outs, which cost taxpayers' hundreds of billions of euros in the crisis. **The Single Resolution Mechanism** implements the BRRD in the Eurozone and any other participating Member State. The agreement is based on a strong and efficient Single Resolution Board at its centre, where the Commission and Council respective role is limited to a minimum. The SRM will allow for the timely and effective resolution of cross border and domestic banks, over a weekend if necessary. Within the Banking Union, the resolution funds will be pooled into one Single Resolution fund. Together with the provisions on preferential treatment for depositors set out in the BRRD rules, **the recast Directive on Deposit Guarantee schemes**, strengthens even further the protection of depositors: with pre-funded guarantee schemes in each Member State, depositors can rest assured that whatever happens to the bank they deposit money in, their savings up to EUR 100,000 remain fully protected from any loss.



More information: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-14-294\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-294_en.htm)

## Report on the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights



*The 4th annual report published on 14 April 2014 by the European Commission on the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, shows that the importance and prominence of the EU Charter continues to rise: the Court of Justice of the EU increasingly applies the Charter in its decisions while national judges are more and more aware of the Charter's impact and seek guidance from the European Court of Justice.*

The report also reveals that there is a high interest among citizens in fundamental rights issues: in 2013 the issues most frequently raised by citizens in their correspondence with Europe Direct Contact Centres were free movement and residence (48% of the total number of enquiries), consumer rights issues (12%), judicial cooperation (11%), questions related to citizenship (10%), anti-discrimination and social rights (5%) and data protection (4%).

More information: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-14-284\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-284_en.htm)

## Gender equality: progress and challenges

*The European Commission published on 14 April 2014 a report that provides an overview of the main EU policy and legal developments in gender equality during the last year, as well as examples of policies and actions in Member States. It also analyses recent trends, on the basis of scientific evidence and key indicators that shape the debate on gender equality, and includes a statistical annex with more details on national performances.*



According to the report progress has been made in the area of addressing the gender pay gap – notably through an initiative by the Commission to improve pay transparency – or increasing the number of women on company boards. But challenges remain: under current rates of progress, it will take almost 30 years to reach the EU's target of 75% of women in employment, 70 years to make equal pay a reality and 20 years to achieve parity in national parliaments (at least 40% of each gender).

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index_en.htm)

## Consultation on effective child protection systems



*The European Commission has kicked off on 10 April 2014 an online public consultation to help Member States develop integrated and effective child protection systems.*

The consultation on child protection systems will gather input so that the EU can, by the end of 2014, issue guidance to Member States in this area building on the results achieved in the course of implementation of the EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child. The guidance will take stock of the various existing EU instruments which may affect the protection of the rights of children and suggest how EU countries can better use or implement those

instruments as part of their child protection systems. It will cover all forms of violence as determined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Any individual or organisation with an interest in child protection can participate in the consultation online until **3 July 2014**.

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/fundamental-rights/opinion/140402\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/fundamental-rights/opinion/140402_en.htm)

## Need for more legal clarity in international families' cases

*The growing mobility of citizens within the European Union has led to an increasing number of families whose members are of different nationalities, live in different EU countries or live in an EU country of which some of them may not be nationals. When families separate, cross-border judicial cooperation is necessary to give children a secure legal environment. A report published by the European Commission on 15 April 2014 highlights legal problems that international couples (spouses from different nationalities) still face across Europe when they try to resolve cross-border disputes concerning their*



*marriage or the custody of their children. The report underlines that more needs to be done to help international families find legal clarity in such situations (for example on which court is competent).*

The European Commission is therefore kicking off a wide public consultation on possible solutions, as well as a campaign to raise awareness of what help and rules exist in case international families decide to separate. Everyone interested can submit contributions to the consultation. The consultation will run until **18 July 2014**.

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/civil/opinion/140415\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/civil/opinion/140415_en.htm)



## CALENDAR JUNE 2014

<b>International Conference on Advances in Social Science, Economics and Management Study - SEM 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://sem.theired.org/">http://sem.theired.org/</a>	1-2 June London, United Kingdom
<b>Oil and Gas Cyber Security</b> More information: <a href="http://tiny.cc/lswlcx">http://tiny.cc/lswlcx</a>	3-4 June Oslo, Norway
<b>InnoTown® Innovation Conference</b> More information: <a href="http://www.innotown.com/">http://www.innotown.com/</a>	4-5 June Aalesund, Norway
<b>World Research and Innovation Congress 2014 - WRIC Health 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://wric-health.com/">http://wric-health.com/</a>	4-5 June Brussels, Belgium
<b>7th Equality, Diversity and Inclusion International Conference</b> More information: <a href="http://www.edi-conference.org/">http://www.edi-conference.org/</a>	8-10 June Munich, Germany
<b>Conference on Innovation in Tourism and Hospitality</b> More information: <a href="http://cit2014.ap.be/">http://cit2014.ap.be/</a>	11-13 June Antwerp, Belgium
<b>5th European Summit on the Future Internet</b> More information: <a href="http://future-internet.uni.lu/">http://future-internet.uni.lu/</a>	12-13 June Luxemburg
<b>WIRE 2014 - Week of Innovative Regions in Europe</b> More information: <a href="http://tiny.cc/k52lcx">http://tiny.cc/k52lcx</a>	12-13 June Athens, Greece
<b>International Conference The Future of Education</b> More information: <a href="http://conference.pixel-online.net/foe2013/">http://conference.pixel-online.net/foe2013/</a>	13-14 June Florence, Italy
<b>ACA Annual Conference 2014: "Europe in the world. Higher education developments across the globe"</b> More information: <a href="http://www.aca-secretariat.be/index.php?id=737">http://www.aca-secretariat.be/index.php?id=737</a>	15-17 June Bordeaux, France
<b>6th International Conference on Intelligent Decision Technologies</b> More information: <a href="http://idt-14.kesinternational.org/index.php">http://idt-14.kesinternational.org/index.php</a>	18-20 June Chania, Greece
<b>Mobilizing Europe's Universities for Smart Specialization</b> More information: <a href="http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/universities">http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/universities</a>	20 June Brussels, Belgium
<b>ESOF - Euroscience Open Forum 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://esof2014.org/">http://esof2014.org/</a>	21-26 June Copenhagen, Denmark
<b>Applications (AMAA 2014)</b> More information: <a href="http://www.amaa.de/">http://www.amaa.de/</a>	23-24 June Berlin, Germany
<b>22nd European Biomass Conference and Exhibition</b> More information: <a href="http://www.conference-biomass.com/">http://www.conference-biomass.com/</a>	23-26 June Hamburg, Germany
<b>European Conference on Networks and Communications 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://eucnc.eu/">http://eucnc.eu/</a>	23-26 June Bologna, Italy
<b>International Scientific Conference on Probiotics and Prebiotics – IPC2014</b> More information: <a href="http://www.probiotic-conference.net/">http://www.probiotic-conference.net/</a>	24-26 June Budapest, Hungary
<b>14th International conference on Railway Engineering Design and Optimization (COMPRAIL 2014)</b> More information: <a href="http://www.wessex.ac.uk/14-conferences/comprail-2014.html">http://www.wessex.ac.uk/14-conferences/comprail-2014.html</a>	24-26 June Rome, Italy
<b>HEALTH+CARE 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://www.healthpluscare.co.uk/page.cfm">http://www.healthpluscare.co.uk/page.cfm</a>	25-26 June London, United Kingdom
<b>International Conference on Climate Change: Impacts and Responses</b> More information: <a href="http://on-climate.com/the-conference">http://on-climate.com/the-conference</a>	27-28 June Reykjavik, Iceland



## CALENDAR JULY 2014

<b>Gender Summit 4 - Europe 2014, From Ideas to Markets: Excellence in mainstreaming gender into research, innovation, and policy</b> More information: <a href="http://www.gender-summit.com/">http://www.gender-summit.com/</a>	30 June-1 July Brussels, Belgium
<b>Workshop WP4: "Institutional support for open access to research data"</b> More information: <a href="http://liber2014.wp.lnb.lv">http://liber2014.wp.lnb.lv</a>	1 July Riga, Latvia
<b>Central Europe: Annual Conference 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://goo.gl/PqF6At">http://goo.gl/PqF6At</a>	1-2 July Vienna, Austria
<b>Strengthening regional parliaments in EU affairs: challenges, practices, and perspectives</b> More information: <a href="http://goo.gl/4vu2mj">http://goo.gl/4vu2mj</a>	2 July Brussels, Belgium
<b>European Orthopaedic Research Society 2014 Conference (EORS)</b> More information: <a href="http://eors2014.org/">http://eors2014.org/</a>	2-4 July Nantes, France
<b>1st European Conference on Social Networks</b> More information: <a href="http://goo.gl/VYS9Wu">http://goo.gl/VYS9Wu</a>	1-4 July Barcelona, Spain
<b>Standards for an Internet of Things: a workshop co-organised by DG Connect and ETSI</b> More information: <a href="http://goo.gl/JsKz8D">http://goo.gl/JsKz8D</a>	3-4 July Sophia-Antipolis, France
<b>The national interest in European Union law and governance</b> More information: <a href="http://www.uaces.org/events/calendar/event.php?id=1055">http://www.uaces.org/events/calendar/event.php?id=1055</a>	3-4 July Budapest, Hungary
<b>ECPR Graduate Student Conference 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://www.ecpr.eu/Events/EventDetails.aspx?EventID=13">http://www.ecpr.eu/Events/EventDetails.aspx?EventID=13</a>	3-5 July Innsbruck, Austria
<b>Robust Manufacturing Conference (RoMaC 2014)</b> More information: <a href="https://www.jacobs-university.de/romac2014">https://www.jacobs-university.de/romac2014</a>	7-9 July Bremen, Germany
<b>EDULEARN14 - 6th Annual International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies</b> More information: <a href="http://iated.org/edulearn/announcement">http://iated.org/edulearn/announcement</a>	7-9 July Barcelona, Spain
<b>ECPR Research Sessions 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://ecpr.eu/Events/EventDetails.aspx?EventID=91">http://ecpr.eu/Events/EventDetails.aspx?EventID=91</a>	8-11 July Colchester, United Kingdom
<b>7th European Workshop on Structural Health Monitoring</b> More information: <a href="http://www.ewshm2014.com/index.php#.U0vjU1WSySp">http://www.ewshm2014.com/index.php#.U0vjU1WSySp</a>	8-11 July Nantes, France
<b>6th International Conference from Scientific Computing to Computational Engineering</b> More information: <a href="http://www.scce.gr/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=article&amp;id=301&amp;Itemid=102&amp;lang=gr">http://www.scce.gr/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=article&amp;id=301&amp;Itemid=102&amp;lang=gr</a>	9-12 July Athens, Greece
<b>17th European Conference on Personality</b> More information: <a href="http://www3.unil.ch/wpmu/ecp17/">http://www3.unil.ch/wpmu/ecp17/</a>	15-19 July Lausanne, Switzerland
<b>2014 International Conference on Energy and Environment Research (ICEER 2014)</b> More information: <a href="http://www.iceer.net/">http://www.iceer.net/</a>	18-19 July Madrid, Spain
<b>The 2014 International Conference on High Performance Computing &amp; Simulation - HPCS 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://hpcs2014.cisedu.info/">http://hpcs2014.cisedu.info/</a>	21-25 July Bologna, Italy
<b>International Conference on Knowledge, Innovation &amp; Enterprise</b> <b>CALL FOR PAPERS</b> More information: <a href="http://www.kiecon.org/index.html">http://www.kiecon.org/index.html</a>	22 July Riga, Latvia



## CALENDAR AUGUST 2014

<b>The 17th International Symposium on Silicon Chemistry (ISOS XVII BERLIN 2014)</b> More information: <a href="http://www.isos2014.de/">http://www.isos2014.de/</a>	3-8 August Berlin, Γερμανία
<b>International Conference 'Europe in Crisis' - CALL FOR PAPERS</b> More information: <a href="http://socialsciencesandhumanities.com/upcoming-conferences-call-for-papers/call-for-papers-europe-in-crisis.html">http://socialsciencesandhumanities.com/upcoming-conferences-call-for-papers/call-for-papers-europe-in-crisis.html</a>	4-5 August Berlin, Germany
<b>Game Developers Conference Europe</b> More information: <a href="http://www.gdceurope.com/">http://www.gdceurope.com/</a>	11-13 August Cologne, Germany
<b>ICEPR 2014 - 4th International Conference on Environmental Pollution and Remediation</b> More information: <a href="http://icepr.org/">http://icepr.org/</a>	11-13 August Prague, Czech Republic
<b>IEEE/WIC/ACM International Conference on Web Intelligence (WI 2014)</b> More information: <a href="http://wi-consortium.org/">http://wi-consortium.org/</a>	11-14 August Warsaw, Poland
<b>ICBES 2014 - International Conference on Biomedical Engineering and Systems</b> More information: <a href="http://icbes.net/">http://icbes.net/</a>	14-15 August Prague, Czech Republic
<b>International Conference on Mechanical Engineering and Mechatronics</b> More information: <a href="http://icmem.net/">http://icmem.net/</a>	14-15 August Prague, Czech Republic
<b>European Conference on Artificial Intelligence (ECAI 2014)</b> More information: <a href="http://www.ecai2014.org/">http://www.ecai2014.org/</a>	18-22 August Prague, Czech Republic
<b>2014 IGU Regional Conference: Changes, Challenges, Responsibility</b> More information: <a href="http://www.igu2014.org/">http://www.igu2014.org/</a>	18-22 August Krakow, Poland
<b>SIG 4 &amp; 17 "Higher Education" and "Qualitative and quantitative approaches to learning and instruction"</b> More information: <a href="http://kuleuvencongres.be/earliconference2014">http://kuleuvencongres.be/earliconference2014</a>	20-22 August Leuven, Belgium
<b>First European Conference on Queueing Theory (ECQT 2014)</b> More information: <a href="http://ecqt2014.ugent.be/drupal7/">http://ecqt2014.ugent.be/drupal7/</a>	20-22 August Gent, Belgium
<b>European Alpbach Forum</b> More information: <a href="http://www.alpbach.org/en">http://www.alpbach.org/en</a>	21-23 August Alpbach, Austria
<b>12th European Biological Inorganic Chemistry Conference (EuroBIC)</b> More information: <a href="http://www.imotif.org/eurobic/">http://www.imotif.org/eurobic/</a>	24-28 August Zurich, Switzerland
<b>39th International Symposium on Mathematical Foundations of Computer Science MFCS 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://www.inf.u-szeged.hu/mfcs2014/?page_id=142">http://www.inf.u-szeged.hu/mfcs2014/?page_id=142</a>	25-29 August Budapest, Hungary
<b>Science and Information Conference 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://thesai.org/SAIConference2014">http://thesai.org/SAIConference2014</a>	27-29 August London, United Kingdom
<b>International Conference on Writing Research 2014</b> More information: <a href="http://cowr.org/">http://cowr.org/</a>	27-29 August Amsterdam, Netherlands
<b>15th biennial congress of the ESHMS</b> More information: <a href="http://www.eshms.eu/conferences/15th-biennial-congress-of-the-eshms">http://www.eshms.eu/conferences/15th-biennial-congress-of-the-eshms</a>	28-30 August Helsinki, Finland
<b>41st Annual Conference of the European Association for Research in Industrial Economics (EARIE)</b> More information: <a href="http://www.earie2014.org/">http://www.earie2014.org/</a>	29-31 August Milan, Italy

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