

## TELEWORK WEEK

# TELEWORKING: A CONCEPT WHOSE TIME HAS COME?

Europe's teleworkers and the companies that create teleworking solutions came together (in person) in November to applaud the winners of the first Telework Awards. The five winners, selected among tough competition by a panel of experts from across the European Union, were chosen because they have made the most significant contributions to the development of the European telework culture this year.

- **IBM - Contributing to competitiveness.** IBM Belgium-Luxembourg's Shared Office implementation, was chosen as the most impressive example of contributing to telework competitiveness, with a high proportion of employees on all company levels teleworking (1,050 people, representing 60% of the IBM B/L population).
- **ISDaC - most original idea.** The European Information Society Disabilities Challenge (ISDaC) was chosen as the most original telework application. This project meets society's challenge to make the Information Society fully accessible to people with disabilities, and challenges people with disabilities to demonstrate their abilities in the Information Society.
- **Promoting sustainable development in The Netherlands.** The Rijkswaterstaat directorate of North Netherlands won the award for its exemplary contribution to sustainability, demonstrating how telework can help to cut back on commuting, help improve the organisation of work and for its continuous efforts to support other regional organisations in adopting the concepts. Here, 60 people - representing 20% of central office personnel are teleworking.
- **The Siemens technological innovation.** Siemens AG/Private Networks, Austria won it's award for a wide-ranging technological contribution to teleworking.
- **Teleworx - best media coverage.** The brand new TELEWORX magazine of Germany won the best media coverage award, in a fierce competition with the well-established Teleworker, magazine published by the British and Irish Telecottages Association.

The awards are the newest feature of the European Telework Week which is now in its third year. The Telework week, typically held in November, is a showcase for teleworking activities that go on throughout the year. Its goal is to promote the concept of Telework as an emerging economic force. This initiative is supported by the European Commission and the European Telework Development project, in a

partnership with Siemens and Toshiba. The European Telework Awards will feature again in ETW '98 to be held in the early part of November 1998.

### The future of Telework

Today telework in Europe, is an important item on the agenda of many corporate and political decision makers, but it remains a minority practice. Telework proponents are confident that its social and economic benefits will drive the popularity of this new work style in the near future. The major limiting factors today - lack of awareness, unclear social and legal policies, and the quality and cost of information and communication equipment and services - must be addressed urgently. The European Commission is an important catalyst that can drive the up-take of teleworking on a large scale, but cooperation with other powerful actors is necessary. This includes industry in taking the opportunities offered by a liberalised telecom market, social partners, national and regional governments, employers and industry.

The Commission's recent Communication on The Social and Labour Market Dimension of the Information Society calls for the creation of an adequate framework for telework as a priority.

To improve the conditions for the development of telework, it has set five objectives:

- Initiate, in the first half of 1998, consultations with the Social Partners on whether and to what extent Community action on the protection of teleworkers is advisable.
- Continue to cooperate with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions to undertake research on working conditions of teleworkers.
- Propose to enhance the role of research on technologies supporting telework and related social and employment implications in the 5th RTD Framework Programme.
- Continue to support awareness raising activities related to telework.
- Study how telework can be promoted within the Commission itself.

Today, although still not a major type of work organisation, at least 2 million Europeans are teleworking in some form or other. The nature of telework has changed as both managers and the workforce are now becoming more aware of the benefits of being able to work where and when it seems most appropriate to do so, from both a commercial and a personal perspective.

For the first time, the Commission proposal for the 5th Framework Programme brings together in one Key Action "New Ways of Working and Electronic Commerce", within the integrated Information Society theme, all actions related to helping companies operate more efficiently, as well as in trading goods and services. But there is still a long road from Commission proposals to operational reality. Assuming the principles remain as they are proposed, the Commission's Services are well on their way in preparing for the Specific Programmes. A first Call for Proposals under the 5th Framework Programme might be launched after the summer of 1998. ■

To find out more about teleworking initiatives, point your browser to: <http://www.eto.org.uk/>  
More details on the European Telework Week (with details on the award winners) at: <http://www.martech-intl.com/etw97>  
Contact: Maarten Botterman  
European Commission DG XIII/B  
Tel: +32 2 2966619  
Fax: +32 2 2962981  
e-mail: [maarten.botterman@bxi.dg13.cec.be](mailto:maarten.botterman@bxi.dg13.cec.be)



Editorial by Jörg Wenzel  
Chief Advisor  
Head of European  
Commission's Information  
Society Activity Centre  
(ISAC)

### BRINGING THE 'IS' TO EVERY CITIZEN

As we approach the close of 1997, the Information Society (IS) is progressing faster than ever. More new developments are expected in the near future, with the liberalisation of the European telecom market just days away. The first two years of activity for the Information Society Activity Centre (ISAC) are also coming to a close, and with this the first phase of many projects coordinated by ISPO, one of its units. For the next stage of its activities, ISAC is looking for partners that can help spread the messages of the Information Society's advantages, opportunities and risks at the local and regional level. This goal is the foundation of the ISAC strategy: the Information Society in Europe will only have reached its true potential when it has become accessible to all European citizens - easily and at a reasonable cost.

The most important thrust of this effort over the coming five years is Promise (Promoting the Information Society in Europe), a new programme to stimulate the establishment of the Information Society in Europe.

Through Promise, 25 million ECUs will be allocated between 1998 and 2002. Some 57% of the funding will be targeted at actions supporting the optimisation of socio-economic benefits of the Information Society; 30% will focus on awareness actions; and international actions such as links with the developing world and the future EU Member States will receive 13% of the total budget. Eligible participants are users, national, regional and local administrations, voluntary organisations, social partners and similar organisations.

**Raising IS awareness across Europe**  
Promise will support the dissemination of information and promotion of actions that create a better understanding of Information Society's opportunities, benefits and possible risks.

Efforts to support the development of the Information Society at regional level will also be funded under this section. This includes developing the cross-border dimension, the promotion of exchange of relevant information between cities and regions, and informing the general public on projects being implemented to serve their needs.

**Bringing out the socio-economic benefits of the IS**

Under this action line, the type of projects that will be covered are: assessments of the opportunities and

Continued on page 2.

EITC AWARDS

# EUROPEAN IT PRIZE WINNERS

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE, ADVANCED MEDICAL IMAGING AND INNOVATIVE INTERNET SERVER WIN TOP PRIZE

Three young companies, from Israel, the Netherlands and Germany were awarded top honours and a ECU 200,000 cash prize each, as the winners of the European IT awards in November.

These winners were selected from a shortlist of 25 by an independent executive jury. The shortlist was chosen from more than 300 entries from companies in 26 European countries as well as from Israel. Each shortlisted company received ECU 5000.

The European IT awards are organised jointly by the European Commission's Esprit programme and Euro-CASE (European Council of Applied Sciences and Engineering), the European Information Technology Prize is now in its third year.

## SpectraCube

The SpectraCube promises a revolution in the medical field by providing more precise diagnosis and therapy of cancer and genetic abnormalities. By combining spectroscopy with imaging this technology allows doctors and researchers to easily identify problems such as genetic aberrations in chromosomes. It is already making a powerful impact on cancer research and is expected to have a similar impact on prenatal diagnostics research. Many other medical and industrial applications have also been identified.

## Company:

*Applied Spectral Imaging Ltd (ASI)*  
e-mail: [asi-ltd@spectral-imaging.com](mailto:asi-ltd@spectral-imaging.com)  
<http://www.spectral-imaging.com>

## LCI-SMARTpen – biometric signature verification

The LCI-SMARTpen redefines electronic commerce, particularly over the Internet. By authenticating the author of a transaction, it provides total security and opens the door for virtually any type of cyber-business. Its advanced microtechnology allows combines the ease of use of a regular pen with the capacity to sign documents electronically. Signature verification with the I-SMARTpen charts the dynamics of the signature, which are strictly personal and unique to each person.

The LCI-SMARTpen can be used in a wide range of applications: consumer protection against credit card fraud; home banking and tele-shopping; privacy protection for medical records and tele-medicine; traceability of drugs; tele-learning; remote writing (white-boarding) on PC or TV; conversion of handwriting to images, etc. The market potential for these applications is in millions of units.

## Company:

*The LCI-SMART pen results from the collaboration between LCI Computer Group N.V. in 's Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands and IMEC, Belgium*  
e-mail: [asseer@nl.lcigroup.com](mailto:asseer@nl.lcigroup.com)  
<http://www.lcigroup.com>

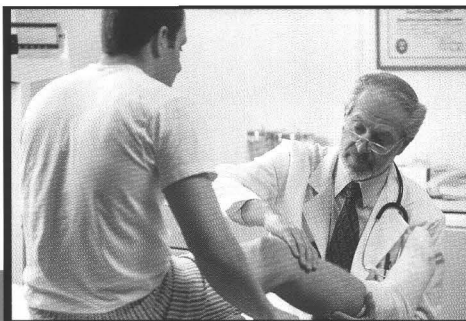
## Hyperwave Information management Server

The Hyperwave Information Management Server makes the administration of large worldwide web databases and Intranet applications less costly and saves significant time in creating a database, particularly if the information requires frequent changes and updates. The server's designers explain that it is ideal for applications on large public and corporate Internet web sites. Designed for multi-user access, Hyperwave offers an enterprise-wide structure where every contributor, developer and administrator can create and manage documents. Unlike common web servers, Hyperwave provides unique structuring and navigational capabilities combined with integrated search engines for full text and document attributes. Hyperwave is designed for handling fairly large numbers of documents and links in a consistent manner, even when they are maintained by a number of people independently.

## Company:

*The Munich-based Hyperwave GmbH was founded in February 1997*  
e-mail: [pniemeier@hyperwave.com](mailto:pniemeier@hyperwave.com)  
<http://www.hyperwave.com>

For more information on the European Information Technology Awards, point your browser to: <http://www.it-prize.org>



BANGEMANN  
CHALLENGE

# GLOBAL BANGEMANN CHALLENGE:

115 PROJECTS AND COUNTING!

Less than one year after its launch, the Global Bangemann Challenge has lived up to its ambition. Today, more than 100 projects are registered worldwide, with 35% coming from the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Other regions, including Asia, South America and some parts of Europe are still being targeted. The project's staff is encouraged by the positive response to its efforts, and is now planning for the activities that will be carried out in 1998. These include:

- Continue to build interest in the Bangemann Challenge international IT Awards Program worldwide.
- Meeting with IT leaders in countries like Japan, Russia and China to understand the excellent services that

they are bringing to citizens and communities.

- Using the Challenge as the worldwide forum to share knowledge of the best IT initiatives that serve people and cities. All participating projects can be consulted on the Challenge's web site: [www.challenge.stockholm.se](http://www.challenge.stockholm.se).

- Forging closer links with initiatives in Latin America, the Middle East and Africa.

A series of promotional trips to countries not yet visited are planned for 1998. The Challenge will also participate in conferences and meetings worldwide, aimed at gaining maximum participation in the Awards Program. Members of the Program's international jury are now being selected. ■

## BRINGING THE 'IS' TO EVERY CITIZEN (continued from page 1).

barriers which disadvantaged social groups and peripheral and less favoured regions may face in using information society products and services; identifying appropriate measures to overcome these obstacles and to grasp the related benefits. The programme will also seek to identify best practices, which encourage the Europe-wide up-take of information society policies, projects and services.

## Enhancing Europe's role in the global Information Society

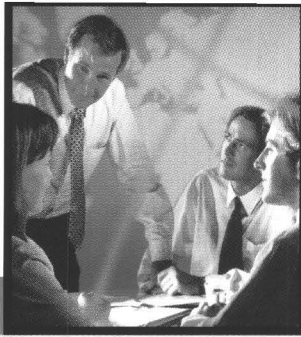
This section will fund projects such as inventories of world-wide IS initiatives; the exchange of information with third countries;

preparation of IS demonstration actions, either bilaterally or in cooperation with international organisations.

I urge all interested individuals, organisations and enterprises to become involved in the future progress of the Information Society. It will be thanks to your ideas that a European Information Society – accessible to the whole of our society – will become a reality. ■

For more information on Promise, point your browser to:  
<http://www.ispo.cec.be>  
ISPO HELP DESK  
Tel: +32 2 2968800/2968900  
Fax: +32 2 2994180  
[ispo@ispo.cec.be](mailto:ispo@ispo.cec.be)





## G7 — ISPO'S PARTNER IN DRIVING THE 'IS'

The G7 countries saw the importance of the Information Society when they launched their Information Society (IS) pilot project scheme during their Brussels conference in 1995. Today this foresight has been confirmed - the IS is at the top every government's agenda, and a clear priority for the European Union - which is funding a wide range of initiatives. The G7 IS projects focus on a variety of applications, including: education, medicine, electronic commerce, government, environment, culture, libraries, emergency situations and even the maritime sector. Others focus on telecommunication, standards and compiling an inventory of initiatives. A steering committee gathering the IS National Coordinators was formed to monitor the pilot phase and determine the future of this activity. During their recent meeting in Washington DC on 20 October they reviewed the state of play of each individual pilot and defined the next steps of the activity. In line with the main conclusions of the Denver G7 summit (<http://www.denversummit.org/news/062297.html>), participants agreed on welcoming Russia to the next sessions of the coordination group and decided to give a specific focus on Africa and the developing countries in 1998. The pilot phase of the IS projects was extended to 1999 to allow better participation of additional countries and better co-ordination of the pilot projects with the National IS action plans which are now emerging in most countries. Another message to come out of these discussions is that a balance should be found between the pure economy of the Information Society, which relies on the normal market economy, and the benefits to be had by every citizen. To achieve this requires concertation and responsibility between

governments. The potential of the IS also needs international consensus of topics such as trusted mechanisms, basic standards for interoperability and the respect of the multicultural and multilingual user needs. There is a clear need for a forum capable of defining a global consensus in these areas, as Commissioner Bangemann recalled in the ITU Telecom Interactive'97 in Geneva, when presenting the concept of the International Charter, that would establish a new world order for global communications. It is obvious that the G8 has a role to play here as it is a unique world class forum that considers all these topics with equal importance and has the experience of running joint pilot projects which have gathered valuable experience. This operational phase will be a valuable framework of best practice for the Information Society on the eve of the next Millennium. Don't miss this rendez-vous! ■

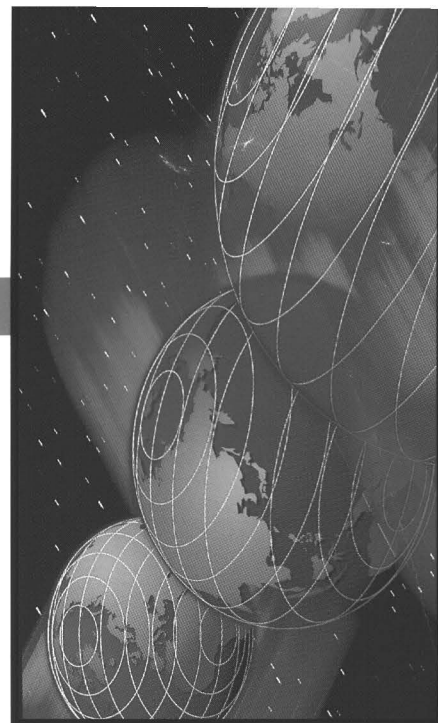
*Contact:*  
European Commission  
ISPO  
Patrice Husson  
e-mail:  
[patrice.husson@ispo.cec.be](mailto:patrice.husson@ispo.cec.be)  
Tel: +32 2 2990265  
Fax: +32 2 2994170  
<http://www.ispo.cec.be/g7/g7main.html>

## PUTTING EUROPE'S ALTERNATIVE NETWORKS IN THE PICTURE

The first available description of alternative networks that provide Information Society telecom infrastructure, services and applications in Europe is available on-line as a part of the new ESIS survey. In recent years, alternative networks have been emerging across Europe, in anticipation of telecom deregulation in 1998. These alternative networks can be energy utilities, railways, water ways, cable TV, highways, etc. The newest

chapter of the ESIS survey of the European Information Society charts this emerging sector - which is challenging former telecom monopolies and bringing interesting alternatives to European users. A complete analysis of these networks and related ventures is presented in the survey. It covers every EU Member State. This analysis will be updated regularly. ■

*For a closer look, point your browser to*  
<http://www.ispo.cec.be/esis/>



## THE FIRST ESIS CONFERENCE WILL TAKE PLACE IN BRUSSELS 18-19 MARCH 1998

The opening day will focus mainly on the development of the Information Society in the EU, with addresses by Commissioner Bangemann on the Information Society and by Ministers from various EU Member States discussing the role of public authorities in formulating IS strategies drawing on the relevant experiences from their own countries. In addition topics will include the creation of incentive mechanisms for the launching of initiatives in Information Society and issues relating to organisational and public awareness aspects of Information Society at national, regional and local level. The second day will consist of two rounds of parallel sessions. The first round will focus on projects in the areas of education; making public

administration directly accessible to the citizens - electronic democracy; social integration and Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs). The second round will concentrate on the arts and culture; sustainable development, consumer protection and empowerment of the user and employability, work organisation and life-long learning. The penultimate item on the agenda is a plenary session at which the moderators of the various parallel sessions will present their reports. The conference culminates in a final round table to determine best practice criteria and identify the most appropriate instruments for their dissemination. ■

*Further information on the conference can be found on the ISPO server at:*  
<http://www.ispo.cec.be/esis/>



## ISPO CORNER

### LASPI PROJECT BRINGS ACCESS FOR ALL

Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish project brings the Information Society closer to disfavoured users

The LASPI project brings together partners in Sweden, Spain and Portugal to encourage groups who would not normally use the Internet to have access to electronic information services. The target users for this effort range from smaller companies, to the unemployed, and citizens in general. An important end result of this effort, say project coordinators, will be to better inform citizens and through this to deepen democracy.

LASPI's five components are: development of new learning approaches; creation of an IT exhibition centre; in-company trainee programmes; creation of electronic links to libraries; and establishing an easy-to-use Web Page communication system for project teams in Sweden, Spain and Portugal to keep in touch rapidly and at low cost. The new learning approaches component is developing a new software tool, to encourage certain groups of people to use Information Society services. These include the elderly, disabled and unemployed. One of the keys to this approach is the development of browser-based education software.

The Spanish partner is developing the IT Information Centre concept, whose aim is to bring middle-aged women and smaller companies closer to these new electronic information services. One of the services offered by the

centre is the creation of home pages for small companies. Here, unemployed computer 'hackers' are used to provide technical support. The centre will also introduce teleworking to new user groups, such as handicapped/disabled and unemployed people through training courses.

The Training objective is working to create a new form of internship, where young people will get on-the-job training in IT tools inside a company. The Swedish partner is developing a new structure for cooperation between the educational system and local SMEs as a model for developing a national trainee concept. The target group is unemployed or people at work, but being threatened by unemployment due to lack of competency or minor physical handicaps, which make them incapable of performing their present occupation. In the area of libraries, partners' ideas are to bring libraries closer to less favoured groups through specially designed information service.

Through these new media, libraries will become an important meeting place for elderly, disabled and unemployed people. The Public Information component of the project will bring citizens on-line information from local government and companies. Future plans will be to have virtual city sites that promote new information technologies in each city (Portugal, Spain), and the tracking and reporting on local elections next year in Sweden. ■

**Contact:**  
**FolkeBrolin.**  
**Tel: +46 304 679052 .**  
**Fax: +46 304 679174**  
**e-mail:**  
**folke.brolin@stenungsund.**  
**mail.telia.com**  
**www.sto-regionen.com/sto/eur/laspi**

## EU/ASIA RELATIONS

### CYBERFORUM: CLOSER EUR-ASIAN DIALOGUE

Imagine bringing together political leaders and opinion makers in Europe and Asia for a two month debate which covers all aspects of European-Asian relations: co-operation between universities, business, information and communication technologies, cooperation between cities active in the field of information society. This is precisely what the European Institute for Asian Studies did in November, when it kicked off its Cyberforum – an Internet based dialogue initiative linking governmental and non-governmental organisations in the Far East with Europe. In addition to on-line forums and discussion groups where the debate on issues of common interest is being held, the Cyberforum Internet site will host a multitude of links to useful web sites on the EU/Asia relations, ranging from Asian Studies collections, business promotion points to Commission funded co-operation programmes and initiatives. ■

Visit the Cyberforum at: [www.net7.net/eias/cyberforum](http://www.net7.net/eias/cyberforum)

### Information Society News

is available free of charge. For a free subscription to the magazine write with full details to: EUR-OP (*Information Society News*) 2, rue Mercier (MER 193-195) L-2985 Luxembourg

**For any subscription amendments** please return to EUR-OP the address enclosed with your newsletter, or quote your subscriber number (8 figures printed on the left next to your name and address) on your correspondence.

**Please note:** EUR-OP regrets it cannot acknowledge receipt of your request or enter into correspondence about subscriptions.

**To receive back copies of the magazine** (if still available), and any other enquiries, please write to: ISPO, BU 24 0/74, rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels e-mail: [ispo@ispo.cec.be](mailto:ispo@ispo.cec.be)

**This newsletter and previous issues are also available on the web at:** <http://www.ispo.cec.be/ispo/newsletter/index.html>

## CALENDAR

### Les collectivités locales et la nouvelle donne des télécommunications

Paris (F)  
29 January 1998  
Observatoire des télécoms dans la ville  
Tel: +33 1 41 464408  
Fax: +33 1 41 464402  
e-mail: [rp@hintzyheymann.fr](mailto:rp@hintzyheymann.fr)

### European Telematics - Advancing the Information Society

Barcelona (E)  
4-7 February 1998  
European Commission  
Telematics Applications Programme  
Fax: +32 2 7213357  
e-mail: [conference@cscdc.be](mailto:conference@cscdc.be)  
<http://www.concord.cscdc.be/barcelona/announce.html>

### Multimedia Access to Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Heritage

Cairo (Egypt)  
17-19 February 1998  
Regional Information Technology Institute  
Fax: +202 339 1380  
e-mail: [culture98@riti.risec.com.eg](mailto:culture98@riti.risec.com.eg)  
<http://www.cultureware.risec.com.eg/culture98>

### ESIS Conference

Brussels (B)  
18-19 March 1998  
European Commission ISPO  
Fax: +32 2 299 41 80  
e-mail: [Androulla.Kaminara@ispo.cec.be](mailto:Androulla.Kaminara@ispo.cec.be)  
<http://www.ispo.cec.be/esis/ESISConference.html>

### 3rd TIDE congress Improving the quality of life for the European Citizen

European Commission DG XIII  
Helsinki (FI)  
22-24 April, 1998  
Ms. Pirkko Kuorehjärvi  
Tel: +358 9 39672073  
Fax: +358 9 39672030  
e-mail: [pirkko.kuorehjarvi@stakes.fi](mailto:pirkko.kuorehjarvi@stakes.fi)  
<http://www.stakes.fi/tidecong>

### ED-MEDIA 98

World Conference on Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia  
Freiburg (D)  
20-25 June, 1998  
Tel: 1 804 973 3987  
Fax: 804 978 7449  
e-mail: [AACE@virginia.edu](mailto:AACE@virginia.edu)  
<http://www.aace.org>

*Information Society News (IS News)* is published under the responsibility of ISPO. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on its behalf is responsible for the use which might be made of the information in this Newsletter.

## ISPO SECRETARIAT

### Free phone service

Austria	0660 5835
Belgium	0800 13891
Denmark	800 1 8888
Finland	0800 113635
France	0800 91 7227
Germany	0130 821943
Greece	0800 3212635
Ireland	1800 553224
Italy	1678 76790
Luxembourg	0800 2929
Netherlands	0800 0222086
Portugal	0505 329635
Spain	900 993290
Sweden	020 791635
United Kingdom	0800 962114

**Payphone:** +32 2 2968800  
or +32 2 2968900

**Fax:** +32 2 2994170  
or +32 2 2994180

**e-mail:** [ispo@ispo.cec.be](mailto:ispo@ispo.cec.be)

**World Wide Web:** <http://www.ispo.cec.be>

**Mail:**  
Information Society Project Office  
BU 24 0/74, rue de la Loi 200,  
B-1049 Brussels