

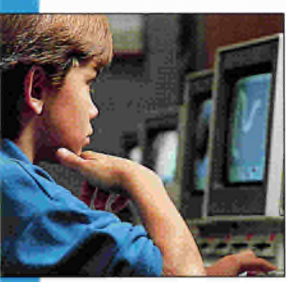


NEWS INFORMATION SOCIETY

WEB FOR SCHOOLS

BRINGING EDUCATION INTO THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

EDUCATION CHANGES MUST BE GLOBAL - BUT CLOSE TO EACH EUROPEAN STUDENT AND TEACHER.



It seems that the Information Society has come along at exactly the right time for Europe's educational sector. The primary preoccupation of this profession for the past decade has been to continue to provide quality education, while responding to society's

and students' changing needs. On the government side, our national administrations are examining how they can maintain high educational standards with increasing pressure on their budgets.

The Information Society provides many opportunities - rapid access to information, sharing of resources between schools, towns and even countries, and links to a wealth of valuable information and new services that lie outside the traditional educational sphere.

While integrating global information tools and processes into today's European educational systems cannot be achieved simply - or tomorrow - the advent of the Information Society is certainly going to change the face of our schools in the years to come.

The first decisive step forward in this area was recently made by the European Union's Web for Schools Project, which was funded by the EU's Esprit Programme and started in March of this year. By the time it draws to a close in December, this initiative will have successfully trained some 600 teachers in 150 schools across Europe. Participating teachers have been introduced to the World Wide Web and taught how to create valuable new educational material for their schools based on this new tool.

The project's work was highlighted in late October at the Web for Schools conference

in Dublin, where the achievements of participating schools were presented.

This action is but one of many different efforts being supported by local and national educational authorities across Europe. Combined, these dozens of efforts that are currently underway will open the way for schools and their pupils to use new information and communications technologies more intensely. So today's challenge is to build the individual momentum of these actions at the local, regional, national and European levels - into a sustained trend for the benefit of all Europe's schools.

The project has triggered debate in the relationship between education and the Information Society. Some of the key issues emerging in this debate are:

Europe's diversity in our global society is an opportunity and a challenge. The educational community in Europe is diverse and widely spread with different traditions, each working in its own context. The globalisation of our economies and society means that all citizens must have access to these traditions - from any point on our globe. Schools must address local and global cultures and values. Schools must be in the vanguard of global technological developments, offering the skills and knowledge associated with technology to their pupils and students.

Recognising the importance of changes brought by the Information Society. While most people agree with these broad objectives, the hard part is to find a way of achieving them. The work must start by looking at our large, institutionalised - and very different - educational systems that exist in each Member State today. We must work together and extract common lessons from the actions we are undertaking. This will help us to guide each other and follow those who seem have found the best answers. To achieve this, we must be prepared to review our existing systems, with the goal of achieving fundamental change. Like it or not, technology is moving very rapidly; this is what sets the pace. And it would be an illusion to believe that we can avoid this. Waiting for these problems to go away, or delaying change will not work. The 'slow' school will over time just become useless and redundant.

Clues for new education management methods. The Web for Schools gives us some tips for solving this transition problem. It also gives us clues to a new way of managing education, where technology should be rapidly integrated. But the main task remains with the schools and local authorities themselves. Education must be close to the pupil and student, and this is where the changes must happen.

(continued on page 3)

This newsletter is also available on the ISPO Web: <http://www.ispo.cec.be>



DEFINING EUROPE'S PRIORITIES FOR THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

At the initiative of the Irish Presidency of the European Union, the Council of EU Industry Ministers met in Luxembourg on 8 October to discuss key

issues surrounding the Information Society. Final decisions were made on two important issues:

- A Council Resolution for new policy priorities for the Information Society.
- A Council Decision on a programme to promote the linguistic diversity of the Information Society.

The Resolution underscores the importance of advancing the Information Society agenda, both at the European and individual Member State levels. It reflects the need to improve the competitiveness, in its broadest sense, of Europe's information and communication technologies (ICT), to reposition Europe's economy in the face of global competition, and to boost employment. A real impetus can be given to job creation if all of our energies - including industry, Member States, the Commission and the Council - are focused on developing the potential of the Information Society. The Resolution agreed at the October meeting provides that basis. Included in the Resolution is a recognition of the need for a common approach to the use of global information networks (for example Internet). Germany will host an international conference on this subject next year. The ministers also agreed on a multiannual programme to promote the linguistic diversity of the EU in the Information Society. The budget for this will be 15 million Ecu over three years. The Programme is aimed at stimulating the use of technologies to reduce the cost of information transfer between languages and promoting the linguistic diversity of language industries and multilingual services. Another important meeting on 8 October, when the EU Ministers had an exchange of views with their colleagues from Central and Eastern Europe, followed the second EU-CEEC Forum on the Information Society in Prague. The topics discussed included developing Information Society strategy and policy; increasing awareness of the potential of the Information Society; education and training issues; and the application of ICT in public administrations. The Industry Ministers' work in developing the Information Society could be built upon by heads of State and Government in their deliberations at their December Summit in Dublin. The 'Corfu to Dublin' agenda is only the beginning, but this latest initiative, coupled with the Commission's intention to produce an updated Action Plan, will establish strong foundations for the Information Society to develop for the benefit of all of our citizens. ■

Richard BRUTON
Irish Minister for Enterprise and Employment



**BUSINESS
UPDATE**

DOING BUSINESS IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

Your first step is the European IT Conference in Brussels, November 25-27.

What is electronic commerce?

What are the legal implications of doing business in the electronic marketplace?

Whether you're a seasoned surfer or a net-neophyte, the 1996 European IT Conference (EITC) will bring you new contacts and answers to all your questions about how to become a player in today's electronic marketplace. The conference is organised by Esprit, the European Union's Information Technology Programme.

EITC is probably the most complete forum to focus on the theme of electronic commerce, as it examines the emerging Information Society from the commercial, legal and European institution viewpoints. Organisers expect some 1,500 participants from industry, research organisations, the European institutions and national administrations across Europe.

Under the theme 'Doing Business in the Information Society', a series of high-level speakers will give their insight into how electronic commerce is changing the way we work and live.

Keynote speakers are Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the World Wide Web, and Director of the WWW Consortium; Christian Thomessen, General Manager of IBM Global Network for Europe, Middle East and Africa, and Lajos Nyíri, President of Hungary's National Committee for Technological Development, who will give a view from Central Europe.

Entrepreneurs and technology developers intent on turning their ideas into marketable products will find a wealth of advice in the sessions focusing on Access to Financial Markets. These are structured in 10 workshops and case studies that will give participants concrete examples of successful innovator-investor partnerships. Other sessions will examine the impact of information technology on business, and the issue of how companies are training their staff to acquire IT-related skills.

Another highlight will be the presentation, by EU President Jacques Santer, of cheques for ECU 200,000 to each of the three winners of the European Information Technology Prize, awarded to the creators of IT-rich products or services with excellent market potential. ■

For complete information on the conference, contact:

DG III Information and Communications Office
Fax +32 2 299 19 26
WWW Home Page
<http://www.cordis.lu/esprit/src/eitc96.htm>

**CALLS
UPDATE**

ISPO/ISAC CALL GENERATES 116 NEW PROPOSALS

Responding enthusiastically to the recent ISPO/ISAC Call for Proposals for actions to promote the development of the Information Society and bring it closer to the European citizen (see article in *ISPO News* n° 5, September 1996), 116 proposals were received, some covering several areas.

The next step is evaluation, which should be completed by mid-November. The contractual process will be started soon after.

Distribution of Proposals received by areas

Area	Number of proposals received
1. Design of new communication methodologies and public orientated pedagogical tools	33
2. Analysis of experiences and potentialities of the Information Society, notably for women	11
3. Analysis and promotion of information systems and services for less favoured social groups	10
4. Development and demonstration actions, in particular in small communities	27
5. Analysis and promotion of electronic systems to assist individual consumers	3
6. Analysis and promotion of methods for validation of information made available on the Internet	6
7. Organisation of events promoting awareness and demonstrating best practice	24
Total	114*

* Two proposals were received without any clear definition of area

LEGAL FRAMEWORK



RETHINKING LEGAL GUIDELINES FOR THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

THE ROLE OF THE EU'S LEGAL ADVISORY BOARD (LAB)

The Information Society is developing so rapidly that it has already changed many long-standing market rules and business practices, and made others obsolete. One area where rapid rethinking is required is the review of the legal basis for many aspects of the Information Society.

With each passing month we gain more practical knowledge of how these changes are affecting our lives, and it is becoming clear that many of the existing legal tools are designed for a different age, and may not be appropriate for the realities of today's 'electronic marketplace'.

To face these changes from a legal perspective, the European Commission created the Legal Advisory Board (LAB), whose task is to increase the awareness of these legal challenges among government and industry, and to submit ideas and recommendations to the Commission.

All LAB members are experts invited in a personal capacity, and not as representatives of a particular organisation or Member State. But there are members from every country. They come from a variety of professional backgrounds related to the legal profession, such as academics and practising lawyers, lawyers working for government departments and commercial companies.

Under the guidance of its chairman, Dr. Herbert Burkert, the LAB focuses on the areas of access to public sector information; computer crime; consumer protection in electronic transactions; convergence between telecommunications and audio-visual technologies; data protection; and intellectual property issues.

The LAB currently has Task Forces examining the topics of access, convergence and intellectual property. Outside of this work the entire LAB membership meets two or three times yearly. Recent meetings included a Conference in Stockholm entitled: *Access to Public Information: a key to commercial growth and electronic democracy*, which was attended by over 300 participants.

The next meeting will examine computer crime, a topic which is particularly topical in view of the recent EU Communication on illegal and harmful content on the Internet and the Green Paper on Protection of Minors and Human Dignity. ■

For full details of LAB activities, including on-line ordering of LAB documents, contact: <http://www.echo.lu/legal/en/labhome.html>
Fax: +352 4301 33190



EU GETS ITS 'ACTS' TOGETHER ON ADVANCED COMMUNICATIONS

SUPPORTING TOMORROW'S HIGH- PERFORMANCE, MULTIMEDIA INFORMATION SOCIETY

As technology evolves and as computers, communications and media technologies continue to merge, what will be the technical infrastructure that supports tomorrow's high-performance multimedia Information Society?

This question is being examined in detail by the 157 research projects that are being undertaken by consortia of companies and universities across Europe as part of the European Union's Advanced Communications Technologies and Services Programme (ACTS).

Building on the successful results of RACE, ACTS has become the world's most extensive set of 'linked trials' in the field of applications, services and technologies.

All ACTS projects are linked with technology or service trials which are taking place across the European Union and other countries including the United States and Japan. Trials of all sizes are currently underway - from small and focused local events to very large scale international demonstrations of advanced communications.

Building consensus paving the way to standardisation is a unique feature of ACTS. Project teams are required to openly share information about their work and findings. ACTS programme managers are confident that the results generated through this cooperative research will make a substantial contribution to the creation of new standards and to useful guidelines for longer-term policy goals in the European communications sector.

In addition to helping create the global communications infrastructure of the future, the ACTS programme is helping Europe choose the right strategic decisions in a balanced way. Because all the world's trading blocks are caught between the urgent need for a high performance telecommunications infrastructure and the enormous investment that is required to build it, no one company or government can assume the cost, or risk, of designing and building these systems on its own. 'Backing the wrong horse' would prove to be a very costly and perhaps fatal mistake for any single organisation or country acting alone. The only sensible decision for the world's developed countries and their major organisations is to cooperate to determine the basic standards that will set the framework for open competition

and rapid commercial take-up of advanced communications services. This is where ACTS plays a vital role.

Other international initiatives such as the G7 Pilot Projects and in particular GIBN (Global Integration of Broadband Networks) are also important catalysts for developing this new infrastructure and the Information Society as a whole.

Following two European Union Calls for Proposals, the full scope of research foreseen for ACTS is underway and a coherent, well-structured programme of projects has been established. As ACTS progresses and individual results emerge, there may be further scope for extending the practical demonstrations and having a wider consultation on programme results and a general broadening of awareness.

For further information, please contact:

*ACTS Central Office
European Commission, DG XIII-B
Fax: +32 2 295 0654
e-mail: aco@postman.dg13.cec.be*

*Extensive information on the ACTS Programme, its projects and their results is also published on the Internet, and may be seen through the ACTS Information Window (World Wide Web):
<http://www.infowin.org>*

WORLDWIDE COOPERATION

In 1994 ACTS became the first research programme to be open to worldwide participation.

Today, some 33 countries are involved in the programme. In addition to the 15 Member States, 18 countries outside of the EU are participating, including 9 Central and Eastern European nations. This brings together some 1,000 different organisations with a strong interest in advanced communications. Five Japanese companies and one company from Singapore are involved in the programme. This complements a similar presence from Canada and the United States (8 companies participating respectively). Two Australian organisations are also involved.

From its extended base of international expertise, ACTS is building practical experience in advanced communications with all other major research centres around the world. Interconnection Trials are already planned with the G-7 Global Interconnection of Broadband Networks project. This will link Japan, the United States and Canada to the G-7 countries of Europe, and through them, to the wider experiments being conducted within individual Member States, or collaboratively through European programmes such as ACTS.

(continued from page 1)

The role of national and regional administrations. The challenge for the national or regional administration is to provide the resources and incentives that will allow change to occur in their schools, local administrations, and in the profiles of their teachers training and professional staff. The European Union will help where it can, by highlighting shared experiences and best practice across borders, and by linking schools across borders.

Building our local/national/European education plan. There is call for a plan. Not one single plan, but a plan which is the sum of the plans of change for everyone involved in the education system today. We will need workshops and discussion groups to put all our plans together so that they fit, and offer a coherent educational system in our global society. This must be done over several months, maybe years. But we must start now.

Every player must be a partner for change. We are at the start of a difficult challenge, which ultimately requires concrete and rapid changes - in schools, curricula, the teaching profession and in education budgets. We must not forget that it is each of our task to maintain the momentum in this change process. Education is the responsibility of everyone, for the benefit of everyone.

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<http://wfs.vub.ac.be>

SUCCESS STORIES

PAVING OUR ROADS WITH INFORMATION

The key to competitiveness in the road-building sector is faster, more automated and more intelligent heavy duty construction systems. The RoadRobot, a new European solution to automated road paving, has been developed as a part of the European Union's Esprit Programme, to provide a new European solution. The RoadRobot gives users a simplified interface, fully-automated operation of the entire paving process - from planning and scheduling to the actual paving of vast stretches of roadway. This is the first European solution of its type, in a sector where the EU has traditionally been less competitive.

Contact:
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BANGEMANN CHALLENGE

THE BANGEMANN CHALLENGE GOES GLOBAL

PHASE 2 OF CHALLENGE INVITES USA AND JAPAN TO COMPETE

Not content to challenge its sister cities across the European Union to produce the best possible information services for citizens, the city of Stockholm has thrown down the Bangemann Challenge gauntlet to all cities in the world - bringing the United States and Southeast Asia into what is now a global competition.

When it was created two years ago by the City of Stockholm, the Bangemann Challenge's goal was to encourage cities of more than 400,000 inhabitants to bring forth their best electronic information services that are currently in operation for citizens. The Challenge officially ends in Stockholm on 22 January 1997, when the King of Sweden will preside the ceremony where the winning cities receive their awards.

The Global Bangemann Challenge picks up where this first competition leaves off, according to Mats Hulth, the Mayor of Stockholm, who announced the Challenge's new worldwide dimension in October. "The best European information technology projects are now ready to compete with the best that



the United States and Japan have to offer," he explained.

But Hulth stressed that the emphasis will be on cooperation over competition: "Our primary goal is to encourage participants to share their experience and compare project ideas, so that we can stimulate advances in information technology."

Since 1995, 25 major European cities have entered more than 100 projects in the competition. They demonstrate services covering: Teleworking, Distance Learning, University Networks, Telematics for SMEs, Road Traffic Management, Air Traffic Control and Health Care. ■

For further information, contact:
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<http://www.stockholm.se>

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 e-mail: ispo@ispo.cec.be

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BUSINESS UPDATE

WORKSHOP ON ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

Everything you wanted to know about electronic commerce but didn't know where to look.

A detailed report on the EU workshop on electronic commerce in Paris has been published on the World Wide Web. The report highlights the discussions of some 150 experts, and their recommendations to governments and the European Commission.

The workshop covered a range of topics, including: information networks; globalisation; deployment; legal and regulatory framework; interoperability; financial issues and pilot projects. ■

For a copy of the full report, please contact:

EC DG III-Industry G7 Project Secretariat
 Fax: +32 2 296 8387
 e-mail: emmanuelle.minne@dg3.cec.be
<http://www.cordis.lu/esprit/src/comwork.htm>

CALENDAR

European Telework Week 4-11 November 1996

Three major events:

3rd European Assembly on Telework and New Ways to Work
 Vienna (AT)

4-6 November
 Fax: +43 1 495044240
 e-mail: j.hochgerner@magnet.at
<http://www.bco.co.at/bco/tw96/>

Tomorrow's Workplace
 London (UK)

6-8 November 1996
 Fax: +44 1734 622230
 e-mail: teleworkevents@cx.compulink.co.uk

CYBERCITIES - The everyday life in the digital cities

Rome (I)
 6-7 November 1996
 Francesco Marcolini
 Fax: +39 6 36001144
 e-mail: publica@m.vox.vol.it

Workshop on providing multilingual support in middleware
 Bled (Slovenia)

11-12 November 1996
 Fax: +386 61 123 2118
<http://www.e5.ijs.si/i18n/ws-bled.html>

Telework Deutschland '96 : New Ways to Work and Employment
 Bonn (D)

11-13 November 1996
 Werner B.Korte, Empirica GmbH
 Fax: +49 228 9853012
 e-mail: konferenz@empirica.de
 CompuServe: 100065,1675
<http://www.empirica.com>

Web internationalisation & Multilingualism Symposium
 Sevilla (E)

20-22 November 1996
 Fax: +34 5 427 46 23
<http://www.w3.org/pub/WWW/International/Sevilla-96>

The information society and government information in Europe

The Hague (NL)
 21-22 November 1996
 Fax: +31 70 347 55 75
<http://www.sdu.nl/overheid/congres/>

ACTS Mobile Communications Summit

Granada (E)
 27-29 November 1996
 José Luis de Miguel
 Fax: +34 1 3374402
<http://www.telefonica.es/acts.mobile>

Systems 96

Munich (D)
 21-25 October 1996
 Tel: +49 89 51 07 - 175
<http://www.systems.de>

European IT Conference and Exhibition '96 - EITC

Brussels (B)
 25-27 November 1996
 European Commission DG III Industry
 Fax: +32-2-640-66-97
 e-mail: eitc96@dg3.cec.be
<http://www.cordis.lu/esprit/src/eitc96.htm>

JENC8 - 8th Joint European Networking Conference

Edinburgh (GB)
 12-15 May 1997
 JENC8 Secretariat, c/o TERENA
 Tel: +31 20 639 1131
 Fax: +31 20 639 3289;
 e-mail: jenc8-sec@terena.nl
<http://www.terena.nl/jenc8>

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