

# News@SEFI – December 2009

The December issue of the SEFI newsletter contains information about SEFI as well as a summary of the latest stories in education, in particular engineering education, in Europe and worldwide. [News@sefi](mailto:News@sefi) is sent for free to SEFI members.

Please note that previous issues are available on [www.sefi.be](http://www.sefi.be) "members only".

## Do your colleagues receive [News@sefi](mailto:News@sefi)?

All staff and students of an institutional member of SEFI are entitled to receive free copies of the newsletter. So, if you know anybody interested in getting a free copy, please contact us.

## IN THIS ISSUE

### A message from the SEFI HQ

### FROM MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

- ECCE kick-off Meeting
- MODERN Conference

### FROM EUROPE

- Very little autonomy for universities from state control
- Knowledge and Innovation Communities
- EU 2020: Why Skills are Key for Europe's future
- Higher Education reform in Europe: no time to sit back
- 

### From the European Commission

- Public consultation on EU2020 Strategy
- New Commissioner for Research and Innovation
- 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Helsinki Group on Women and Science

### From the UK

- Redrawing ranking rules for clarity, reliability and sense

### From France

- A report from Prof. Béraud on the Promethea Conference

### FROM THE WORLD

- UNESCO's strategy to address climate change
- Japan-EU relations
- China-EU relations

### FOR YOUR CALENDAR



## A message of the SEFI HQ



Dear readers,

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. We thank you for making 2009 a great year and we are looking forward to working with you even more in 2010! We have many items on our SEFI's agenda, and a lot of enthusiasm, shared by the SEFI's leaders, to successfully run them all!

*Françoise Côme, Secretary General*  
*Aisling Mc Niffe, Membership/Information Assistant*

## FROM MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

### **ECCE kick-off Meeting**

This is the first meeting of the Engineering observatory on Competence based Curricula for job Enhancement – ECCE, a LLP project supported by the DG Education and Culture of the EC, and contracted to the Fondazione Politecnico di Milano (FPM). The meeting held in Milan on 16-17 October, began with a short presentation of representatives of each of the ten partners: CEFI (France), ACET (Spain), ELTE (Hungary), FPM, SEFI, U. Birmingham, U. Stuttgart, DEKRA Akademie (Germany), UNI Global Union (Switzerland), and Mechanics Dept. of Politecnico di Milano (Italy). Ms. C. Marinoni from the FPM then illustrated the project objectives, the overall task being to identify the set of learning outcomes (LO) sought by the labour market through consultation of stakeholders.

Besides the project management workpackage (WP1), the project lists: model sharing (WP2), network building (WP3), translation and mapping (WP4), project evaluation and QA (WP5); dissemination (WP6), and consultation/enlargement of observatory (WP7). For each one of the WPs a leader was identified among the participating bodies. During the discussion different ways of classifying LOs were considered (from CDIO, EUR-ACE, EQF). The need for a better understanding of the meaning of qualification frameworks by employers was pointed out (by Claude Maury of CEFI). The next meeting was fixed for March 18-19 at CEFI in Paris, and an intermediate virtual meeting via Skype is planned for February 16 at 10:30 (cet).

*F. Maffioli*  
*Representative of SEFI in ECCE*

### **MODERN Conference on "Funding in Higher Education Institutions", London, 29 January 2010**

The conference will be based on an executive report on the state of the art of funding reforms in European higher education institutions which will be made available to all registered participants prior to the conference. The conference will start with a networking dinner on 28 January, giving you the opportunity to meet colleagues from across Europe. On 29 January, the programme will be split into morning plenary sessions with key senior level speakers, i.e. policy

makers and decision-makers from academia and the European Commission, and afternoon highly specialised and interactive workshops on key themes of funding.

MODERN, the European Platform Higher Education Modernisation, is a strong initiative of 38 European associations and academic providers of higher education management programmes to address the modernisation agenda for European universities. Further information and the online registration for the Conference on Funding are available on [www.highereducationmanagement.eu](http://www.highereducationmanagement.eu).

**SEFI is an associate member of MODERN, which gives you the opportunity to register at the reduced rate of 250€**, using the following username and password in the login form on the MODERN website: Username: PARTNERMEMBER - Password: MODERNPLATFORM

We would also be grateful to get as many views as possible from the SEFI members for our survey on "Training needs for leadership and management professions in European Higher Education Institutions". The link may of course be forwarded to the right place for completion within each institution.

*Please do not hesitate to contact Anja Busch (MODERN Secretariat, [programmes@esmu.be](mailto:programmes@esmu.be), +32 2 289 2462), should you have any questions.*

## FROM EUROPE

### **Very little autonomy for universities from state control**

A new EUA study analysing and comparing university autonomy and governance across 33 European countries highlights that universities still lack genuine autonomy.

The new report, written by Thomas Estermann, highlights that in practice public authorities still play too central a role in the regulation of the higher education system and, in a large number of countries, still exert direct control.

Despite the fact that public authorities in a number of European countries have moved away from direct state control towards more 'indirect' steering mechanisms, universities generally still lack autonomy in many crucial areas, in particular in terms of managing finances. At a time when the overall levels of public funding in education are stagnating across Europe, and universities are increasingly being asked to look for alternative funding sources, EUA believes this lack of autonomy is a real threat for the sustainability of Europe's universities.

The study focuses on more than 30 different indicators in four key areas of autonomy: organisational, academic, financial and staffing autonomy.

This report by EUA will form the first basis of a new two-year project to develop a scorecard that will benchmark university autonomy (on the national level) across Europe. The Autonomy Scorecard will be a major tool both at the national level and at the individual institutional level, serving as a reference for national governments wishing to benchmark their progress on governance reforms vis-à-vis other systems, whilst also helping to raise awareness among universities of the differences that exist in Europe.

To download the report visit:  
<http://www.eua.be/eua-news/view-item/article/965/>

## Knowledge and Innovation Communities



On the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009 the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) were announced. These will be highly integrated public-private partnerships of universities, research organisations and businesses.

The first three KICs that were designated from a shortlist were:

- 1) Climate-KIC
- 2) KIC InnoEnergy
- 3) EIT ICT Labs

These KICs will be co-located all around Europe- London, Berlin, Paris, Eindhoven, Leuven, Krakow, Stockholm and Helsinki to name but a few of the locations.

According to the Chairman of the EIT Governing Board, Dr. Martin Schuumanns:

"With the selection of the first three KICs, the EIT marks the starting point of a new approach to innovation and knowledge sharing. The KICs will be our test-beds for an entirely new type of collaborations across the innovation web, bringing together our most excellent resources from higher education, research, business and entrepreneurship.

Through the KICs we want to generate real impact in terms of new business creation, entrepreneurship and societal benefit. "

Each KIC shall receive 3 million euro from the EIT to start-up and should be fully operational towards mid-2010.

For more information, please go to

[www.eit.europa.eu](http://www.eit.europa.eu)  
<http://eit.europa.eu:80/>

### EU 2020: Why Skills are Key for Europe's Future

As part of the Lisbon Council's reflection on the Lisbon Agenda Post-2010, a new policy brief has been published. Its author, Paul Hofheinz, president of the Lisbon Council, argues that the new EU 2020 agenda should move more ambitiously to offer education and educational opportunities to all. He calls on EU heads of state and government to stop delegating skills and education policy to cabinet ministers and to take charge of this key policy area themselves.

To download the policy brief on the Lisbon Council website by visit:

<http://www.lisboncouncil.net/news-a-events/147-skillseuropesfuture.html>

### Higher Education reform in Europe: no time to sit back

According to a news article by the ACA (Academic Cooperation Association), reform in the HE sector is far from complete:

"On 25 November, the European Commission published its 2009 report on progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training as well as the draft bi-annual progress report on the implementation of the "Education and Training 2010" work programme.

The report shows that while some progress in reforming the education systems of Europe has been made, the overall progress has been too slow, as in the previous couple of years: unsurprisingly, the Commission warns that four out of the five education and training objectives set for 2010 will not be reached. Indeed, only the target in the increase of maths, science and technology graduates has been reached, while the benchmark on the reading ability of 15 year-olds has even deteriorated since 2000. On the positive side, however, the mobility of students in tertiary education has increased by more than 50 percent since 2000.

The draft 2010 progress report on the implementation of "Education and Training 2010" agenda, to be adopted jointly by the European Council and the Commission, assesses overall progress and sets out priorities for the future. The Some of the remaining challenges include, among others, the implementation of lifelong learning, increasing mobility, and making education and training more open and relevant to the needs of the labour market and society. While the investment per student has increased since 2000 at all educational levels, the growth has been slower in tertiary education than elsewhere. The EU member states would need to invest on average around EUR 10 000 more per student each year to reach the levels of the US. The key messages will feed into the new strategy for growth to be discussed by the Spring European Council 2010.

Accompanying background documents and additional information is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020>. "

To see the ACA article in full, please go to:

[http://www.aca-secretariat.be/04news/SingleNewsletterDetail.asp?c\\_year=2009&c\\_month=11&news\\_id=1965](http://www.aca-secretariat.be/04news/SingleNewsletterDetail.asp?c_year=2009&c_month=11&news_id=1965)

### From the European Commission

#### Public consultation on EU2020 Strategy

The public consultation on the EU2020 Strategy launched by President Barroso at the beginning of December is now available on [http://cordis.europa.eu/home\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/home_en.html)

The Strategy has three priorities:

- 1) creating value by basing growth on knowledge,
- 2) empowering people in inclusive societies,
- 3) creating a competitive, connected and greener economy. Gender is mentioned once in Priority 1 under education (A greater emphasis on vulnerable groups, gender equality and social cohesion is needed to ensure that no one is excluded from knowledge), but not under research, and also once in Priority 3, referring to the need to improve employment rates for women.

There is no mention, however, of the role of "women in science" in European research.

If you are concerned about the limited role of women in the Strategy, please take part in this public consultation.

Women have much to contribute in defining and resolving the major challenges facing Europe: climate change, innovation, sustainable economic growth, employment and education, social cohesion.

For further information: [vera.fehnle@ec.europa.eu](mailto:vera.fehnle@ec.europa.eu)

#### New Commissioner for Research and Innovation

Maire Geoghegan-Quinn, recently member of the European Court of Auditors and former Irish minister, has been nominated by José Manuel Barroso on 27 November 2009 as new Commissioner for Research and Innovation.

The new Commissioner must gain approval from the European Parliament before she takes office for a term of office running until 31 October 2014.

Source: Newsletter n° 27 on scientific culture and gender issues

#### 10th anniversary of Helsinki Group on Women and Science

The Helsinki Group on Women and Science, established by the Commission as a result of the 1999 European Council Resolution on Women and Science, and the European Commission's 1999 Communication on the same topic, is an advisory body comprised of representatives of all countries associated with the Framework Programme. The first meeting was held in November 1999 in Helsinki, so in November 2009 we are marking the 10th Anniversary of the "Helsinki Group on Women and Science". Over the ten years,

the Helsinki Group has been continuously in dialogue with the Commission on the promotion of women in scientific research, and has also been valuable in the exchange of good practice between the participating countries. The Helsinki Group has been looking to the future by preparing a Position Paper to be presented to the new Commission.

Source: Newsletter n° 27 on scientific culture and gender issues

#### From the UK

##### Redrawing ranking rules for clarity, reliability and sense

"A key message from the first THE round table on the future of the rankings was that these far-reaching consequences must be treated with the utmost seriousness.

The event, attended by 15 of the sector's most senior figures, including vice-chancellors and policy experts, was held as the magazine starts to develop a more rigorous and transparent methodology with its new rankings partner, Thomson Reuters.

A research ranking would alienate many, warned one contributor, proposing that a better aim may be to assess an institution's "intellectual capital".

While it was strongly desirable to include measures of teaching quality, there was widespread concern about how to find reliable indicators in this area - and rule number two was the need for verifiable data.

"If you do focus on research, you lose a lot of the data problems," said one attendee, who argued that the ranking otherwise ran the risk of being seen as "interesting but unreliable".

THE's old methodology used student-staff ratios (SSRs) as a proxy, which, another argued, "tells us nothing" about teaching quality. And whereas in the UK, the Higher Education Statistics Agency collects and publishes data, in other countries SSRs are self-reported. Rule number three was the need for transparency when it came to the data and methodology. Under the old method, "institutions could not access their raw data" and this meant that universities wanting to track improvements "couldn't see how it happened".

But the "most arbitrary" aspect of any ranking was the weighting given to the different elements, argued another.

According to Phil Baty, deputy editor of THE and editor of the World University Rankings, who chaired the meeting, said: "We are listening carefully as we move towards the new and improved methodology."

Article written by Rebecca Attwood in the Times Higher Supplement, published 15/15/09

For the full article:

<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=409501&c=1>

#### From France

In October 2007 a first international Conference was organized in the frame of the PROMETEA European research project by the four French partners of the project.

The objective of this conference was to gather specialists to exchange on gender issues in engineering and technology research careers and bring new perspectives on engineering and technology research in itself. Four questions were discussed:

- Gender dynamics of male and female careers,
- Differential effects of organisational cultures,
- Recognition of excellence in engineering and technology research,

- Identification and evaluation of good practice

One of the main identified problems is the question of temporalities, so it was decided for the second PROMETEA conference which took place in the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, November 26-27, 2009, to discuss scientific and technological careers of women and men; private temporalities, professional temporalities: public and corporate policies.

The surveys dedicated to time sharing in households show great inequalities between men and women. In the countries where long series of data are available, there are only slight evolutions toward equality. It seems that in this field too there is no natural tendency to equality.

A first inequality appears in the time devoted to paid work, which is significantly longer for men; however huge differences exist between European countries, reflecting the different types of involvement in the job market.

There are also inequalities in household chore specialization: women prepare the meals, wash up the dishes, do the washing, the ironing, whereas men do odd jobs in the house; more generally, it appears that women take care of the daily, repetitive tasks whereas men do the occasional ones. Having children has an important impact on these inequalities, which are made worse, as the specialization of roles is intensified.

These inequalities were analyzed, focusing on the most qualified individuals pursuing scientific and technological careers. Are they confronted with different imbalances? Are there significant differences between countries?

The presentations and discussions showed that there is no simple solution; passing legislation is indispensable (i.e. laws, regulations, compulsory policies in institutions and organizations) but part of the problem lies in the life of the family and the couple. Some regulations which, at first sight, may seem to be solutions become traps for women (i.e. part time, maternal/parental leaves etc. . .). Lastly, if there are differences between countries, there is no ideal situation, forms of discrimination may change but inequalities remain, sometime softened by gender sensitive policies.

Another Conference will be organized in Paris in June 2011. It will deal with the issue: "Innovative degree courses in E&T in Europe. How to attract more young women and young men in Engineering and Technology?"

By Prof. Béraud

(1) Ecole Normale Supérieure de Cachan, INSA de Lyon, Conférence des Directeurs des Ecoles Françaises d'Ingénieurs (CDEFI), Association Egalité des chances dans les études et la profession d'ingénieur en Europe (ECEPIE). The Conference took place in the Palais du Luxembourg, Paris. The Chairperson of the Scientific Committee was Pr Claudine Hermann. Conference web site: <http://www.prometea.info/conference2007>

(2) The 2007 Conference Proceedings are available: "Women in Engineering and Technology Research", Proceedings of the PROMETEA Conference, Paris October 2007, Anne-Sophie GODFROY-GENIN Ed., LiT Verlag, 2010, 725 p

(3) The Chairperson of the Scientific Committee was Pr Danièle Meulders Conference web site: <http://www.prometea.info/conference2009>

(4) It will be organized in the frame of the HELENA European research project. Project web site: <http://www.fp7-helena.org>

See also our report published in news@sefi, November 2009

## FROM THE WORLD

### From UNESCO



#### UNESCO's Strategy to Address Climate Change

The Intersectoral Platform for Action to Address Climate Change is tasked to oversee UNESCO's Strategy for Action on Climate Change as approved at the Organization's 179th Executive Board in April 2008. Subsequently an Enhanced Plan of Action to implement the

Strategy has been prepared at the Board's request. The Platform reports to the Executive Board each autumn session on its progress. UNESCO's work is currently built around three strategic objectives: building and maintaining the climate change knowledge base: science, assessment, monitoring and early warning;

- promoting mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, including through enhanced education and public awareness; and
- moving towards a climate-neutral UNESCO.

Climate change is affecting our environment, our societies, and our common natural and cultural heritage. Finding solutions to mitigate the negative impacts and adapt to changing conditions requires an approach that unites sound, unbiased science with a range of environmental, economic, informational, social, attitudinal and behavioural factors. All sectors of the Organization and many Field Offices, Centres and Institutes are addressing climate change. Therefore UNESCO and in particular through its Intersectoral Platform, provides a unique forum for addressing climate change and its impacts on the environment and human society. These activities are incorporated into the UN system-wide strategy, "Acting on Climate Change: The UN System Delivering as One".

For further details:  
 UNESCO & Climate Change  
[http://portal.unesco.org/science/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=5296&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/science/en/ev.php-URL_ID=5296&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

Source, Edu Info, UNESCO, 9/12/09

#### Japan-EU relations

"The European Community (EC) and Japan marked a firm commitment to strengthen their collaboration in research by signing a Science and Technology (S&T) Cooperation Agreement on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

This agreement will help them identify common research priorities and areas of common interest, such as energy and environment, in which joint research efforts could be particularly promising. It will also provide a framework to establish mechanisms for enhanced S&T cooperation, such as reciprocal participation in research programmes, exchange of researchers, and coordinated calls for proposals.

The S&T agreement will further reinforce their cooperation. For example specific cooperative activities, such as coordinated calls,

will be planned through regular meetings of a "Joint Committee". Discussions are already well advanced in some fields, such as energy and new materials."

More information on international science and technology cooperation: [www.ec.europa.eu/research/inco](http://www.ec.europa.eu/research/inco)

To read the EU press release in full, please go to:  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1844&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN>

#### China-EU relations

##### Brussels angry about new Chinese tech wall

"Brussels-based ICT federations are in the middle of a public procurement battle with China as the country is pursuing a "protectionist" new law favouring home-grown technology over foreign innovation, according to industry insiders.

The European Parliament voted in February 2009 to urge China to remove non-tariff trade barriers amid concerns over a growing protectionist trend in the country. Insiders and diplomats reveal that Brussels is putting pressure on their Chinese counterparts to lobby against a public procurement law favouring home-grown Chinese technology.

The law's provisions, according to sources, stipulate that at least some of a product's component parts or technology should be developed locally in order to be considered for government tenders.

Sources say the law will affect all ICT and clean-tech companies and is the extension of an earlier spat over leaks of confidential information from foreign companies to Chinese competitors. Government agencies that demanded detailed data on clean-tech products were caught leaking product information to home-grown firms "

Source: Euractiv, 10/12/09  
 To read the Euractiv article in full:  
<http://euractiv.com/en/infosociety/brussels-angry-new-chinese-tech-wall/article-188219>



### FOR YOUR CALENDAR

#### JANUARY

MODERN Project Conference on Funding  
 (SEFI being partner of MODERN)  
 28-29 January 2010, London  
[www.esmu.be](http://www.esmu.be)

#### FEBRUARY

EU-Drivers Steering Committee  
 1 February 2010, Brussels  
[www.esmu.be](http://www.esmu.be)

4th EC University-Business Cooperation Forum  
 2-3 February 2010, Brno

[eac-university-business-cooperation@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eac-university-business-cooperation@ec.europa.eu)

Launch of the Leuven Engineering and Science Education Center (LESEC)  
3 February 2010, Leuven  
<http://set.kuleuven.be/LESEC/>

PBL 2010 International Conference  
"Problem-Based Learning and Active Learning Methodologies"  
8-12 February 2010, Sao Paulo, Brazil  
[www.uspleste.usp.br/pbl2010](http://www.uspleste.usp.br/pbl2010)

CLAIU Conference 2010  
12-13 February 2010, Brussels  
[www.claiu.eu](http://www.claiu.eu)

### MARCH

EUR-ACE SPREAD Project- Mid Term Conference  
1 March 2010, Istanbul  
[http://www.feani.org/webenaee/projects/eur-ace\\_spread/eur-ace\\_spread\\_home.html](http://www.feani.org/webenaee/projects/eur-ace_spread/eur-ace_spread_home.html)

EUGENE Management Committee II

2 March 2010, Istanbul  
[Eugene@unifi.it](mailto:Eugene@unifi.it)

International Conference on Ethics and Human values in Engineering  
5-7 March 2010, Barcelona  
[www.catedravno.org](http://www.catedravno.org)

Intertech 2010  
XI International Conference on Engineering and Technology Education Ilheus, Bahia, Brazil  
"Engineering and Technology Education Innovative for Growth"  
7 March 2010  
[www.copec.org.br/intertech2010/](http://www.copec.org.br/intertech2010/)

EUA TRENDS 2010  
11 March 2010  
<http://www.eua.be/index.php?id=1274>

SEFI Bureau Meeting  
12 March 2010, Brussels

**TO KEEP IN MIND BY THOSE CONCERNED**  
**SEFI Bureau meeting, Brussels , 13 March**  
**SEFI Council Meeting, Paris, 7 May**  
**SEFI Council meetings, Trnva, 19 & 22 September**

We hope that you enjoyed this December issue  
of [News@SEFI](mailto:News@SEFI)

Please send suggestions and contributions to  
[info@sefi.be](mailto:info@sefi.be)

**Deadline 25 January 2010**

