

# EU News Bulletin

The latest monthly EU funding opportunities, news, publications and events of relevance to Ireland's local and regional level

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### Inside in News & Policy...

- **Budget reform proposals: not in line with Lisbon Treaty?**
- **Mandatory 'Green renovation'?**
- **Local Government & climate change**
- **Flexibility on 'match funding' & decommitment rules**
- **'Life+ project approvals: Ireland fails to feature**
- **'Macro-regional' approach gains Council approval**
- **Sustainable Energy Action Plans template**
- **Local & Regional views on Economic Recovery Plan**
- **€53 billion investment plan for low carbon technologies**
- **Financial Regulation review**
- **Funding workshops**
- **€28 million for NSS Gateways/Hubs**
- **Social procurement**
- **ICT for a low-carbon economy**
- **Cultural and creative industries**
- **Social Dimension of Growth & Jobs Strategy**
- **PEACE Network**
- **Integrated Maritime Policy**
- **2010 Year against Poverty**

## FUNDING & NETWORKING

### Lifelong Learning

The European Commission has published the 2010 General call for proposals of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) whose overarching aim is to develop and foster interchange, cooperation and mobility to improve education and training systems in accordance with the Lisbon strategy. A budget of approximately €1 billion accompanies this call across the six sectoral programmes: i) Comenius (school education); ii) Erasmus (higher

education); iii) **Leonardo da Vinci (vocational education and training)**; iv) **Grundtvig (adult education)**, v) the Transversal programme and vi) Jean Monnet (academic teaching).

Increased focus is given this year to projects promoting the policy objectives of 'ET 2020' (the updated Strategic Framework for European Cooperation to reform education and training systems, launched in May), and fostering creativity and innovation in these fields. Reference is also made to the following key EU policy developments: the 'New Skills for New Jobs' Communication; the EU Forum for University Business Dialogue; and the Green Paper on Youth Mobility.

An information day will be held in Brussels on 7 December (see 'events' section')

*Deadlines: variously in early 2010*

[Call Strategic Framework for European Cooperation 'New Skills for New Jobs' Communication](#)

### FP7 ICT – Digital libraries and Mobility

The Commission is expected to launch the sixth call of FP7 Cooperation's Information & Communications Technologies theme on 24 November. Areas covered will include: **Digital libraries and digital preservation** (Scalable systems and services for preserving digital content; Advanced preservation scenarios; Innovative solutions for assembling multimedia digital libraries; Adaptive cultural experiences; Interdisciplinary research networks; Promoting the uptake of EC-funded research); and **ICT for Mobility of the Future** (Field Operational Tests for Integrated Safety Systems and Co-operative Systems; and ICT-based

systems and services for Smart Urban Mobility and new Mobility Concepts.

Other areas include Future Emerging Technologies. Applications may relate variously to 'small or medium-scale focused research actions', 'Large-scale integrating projects'; 'Networks of Excellence'; or 'Coordination and support actions'.

*Budget: €286 million.*

*Deadline: 13 April.*

[Call](#)

### MEDIA

Several calls for proposals have been launched under the MEDIA programme:

i) Approximately €3.5 million is being made available to finance audiovisual festivals, in which a minimum of 70% European films from at least 10 Member States will need to be showcased. Deadlines: 27 November and 30 April 2010.

ii) €2 million is available for financing projects developing on- and off-line digital interactive works. Deadlines: 27 November and 12 April 2010.

[Audio-visual festivals](#)  
[Digital interactive works](#)

### DAPHNE III

The next call for proposals for transnational projects under the DAPHNE III programme (preventing violence against women, children, youth and at-risk groups) is expected to be published in early 2010. Approximately €14.4 million will be available for financing approximately 50 projects in the following areas: i) Street and peer violence; ii) Media violence; iii) Corporal punishment; iv) Capacity building for law enforcement agents and legal

practitioners related to intimate violence; v) Field work at grass-roots level. The eligibility criteria for projects will remain the same as last year's call for proposals: projects will need to last either 12 or 24 months, and EU grants will vary between €75,000 and €300,000 for a 12 months period, with EU co-financing of up to 80% of eligible costs.

#### [Call](#)

### **European Green Capital**

The search has begun to find the cities that will become the next European Green Capitals (2012 and 2013). The prestigious award recognises cities (above 200,000 inhabitants) that are taking the lead to make urban areas more healthy, sustainable and attractive places to live. Entries will be assessed on the basis of 11 environmental criteria, including local management of waste production and disposal, nature and biodiversity, transport, air, water, and climate change,

*Deadline: 1 February 2010.*

[Link](#)

### **2012 European Youth Capital**

Applications are now open for the 2012 European Youth Capital award. The competition, managed by the European Youth Forum, is in its fourth year and offers the successful city the opportunity to showcase its initiatives on youth in the area of culture, formal and informal education, social inclusion, political participation and economic development.

*Deadline: 22 January 2010*

[Link](#)

### **Crime Prevention – 2010 funding priorities**

The 2010 Annual Work Programme of the Prevention of and Fight against Crime programme was published on 20 October. It sets out an allocation of approximately €47 million next year for financing national and transnational projects in this field. Priority areas are: i) Radicalisation leading to terrorism; ii) Financial and economic crime; iii) Trafficking in human beings; iv) Prevention of crime, including urban,

juvenile and drugs-related crimes; v) Police and customs cooperation.

Calls for proposals are expected to be published shortly (with a January 2010 deadline) and again in spring (with a May deadline). An information day on this and other programmes in the area of Security will be held in Brussels on 26 November.

[Annual Work Programme: Info day](#)

### **Eurostars**

The Eurostars Programme enables SMEs with a background in research activities to lead international collaborative research and innovation projects. Applications may be based on any technological area developing a new product, process or service with a civilian purpose.

*Deadline: 25 February 2010.*

[Link](#)

### **Call for project evaluators**

The European Commission is currently looking for experts to take part in the evaluation of project proposals in two separate fields.

The Fundamental Rights and Citizenship programme requires expertise in: i) Protection of the rights of the child; ii) Combating racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism; iii) Fight against homophobia; iv) Active participation in the democratic life of the Union; v) Training and networking between legal professions; vi) Legal practitioners; vii) Data protection and privacy rights. Meanwhile DG Education and Culture is looking for experts to deal with project proposals, project reports, and to carry out site visits.

[Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Culture](#)

#### **Other recent calls:**

[www.iro.ie/funding/news/funding\\_calls/](http://www.iro.ie/funding/news/funding_calls/)

#### **Partner Searches received by the IRO from other regions:**

[www.iro.ie/funding/news/partner\\_searches/](http://www.iro.ie/funding/news/partner_searches/)

## **NEWS & POLICY**

### ***Budget reform proposals: not in line with Lisbon Treaty?***

The recent leaking of the Commission's first draft Communication on the reform of the EU Budget post-2013 has provoked a storm of controversy in Brussels and beyond. Three future EU spending priority areas are identified in the 'non-paper' - sustainable growth and jobs; sustainable resource management in a low-carbon society (energy and climate); and the EU's role in the world – but at a major implied cost to other areas of current spending.

As expected, the CAP is a target for reform and significant reduction with a refocus of single farm payments on agricultural products as 'public goods', and intensify spending on climate-related challenges to allow direct support for farmers in areas such as biodiversity and sustainable farming practices.

More surprisingly, another striking message of the document is directed at Regional Policy with the Commission apparently seeing cohesion-related issues as something more suited to being managed at national government level, and as being best achieved by an almost total concentration of resources on the 12 newer Member States – an approach previously mooted prior to the 2004 Enlargement. The draft also calls for Cohesion Policy to be closely integrated with rural development and maritime policies as well as national strategies, such as the Lisbon National Reform Programmes.

The proposals leave the future of spending on Competitiveness & Employment ('Objective 2') priorities – Ireland's main source of Structural Funding – in jeopardy. The draft poses questions as to the added value achieved from providing EU aid under individual national/regional Operational Programmes for purely internal consumption within wealthier parts of the Union as opposed to what is being and can be achieved by strengthening Territorial Cooperation (Interreg – Objective 3) which brings together regions from different Member States in joint actions. It hints that the mainstay of any future scaled-down Objective 2 may lie in providing a redistributive mechanism to address pronounced

regional disparities within national jurisdictions.

These proposals have drawn the collective ire of organisations representing Europe's local and regional authorities who have reacted by suggesting that if implemented, "they would challenge sustainable recovery and development in Europe", "do not reflect the goal of territorial cohesion, as introduced in the Lisbon Treaty" and would "ignore the demonstrable potential of integrated approaches at the territorial level" in any given Community policy field by being overly-sectoral in focus.

The European Parliament's Budgets Committee has already questioned the appropriateness of an outgoing Commission bringing forward such "provocative content". Parliament will undertake hearings of all newly proposed Commissioners later in November. These issues are certain to crop up when the new Regional Policy and Budgetary Commissioners, in particular, present themselves.

[Open letter from Assembly of European Regions](#)

### **Mandatory 'Green renovation' plan?**

A major proposal whereby 15 million buildings across Europe would undergo 'green renovation' over the next decade, in a bid to help meet EU energy-efficiency targets, is being considered by the Commission as part of a broader plan due for release in November. Draft versions of '7 measures for 2 million new EU jobs' - a scaled-back but more tightly focused revision of the Commission's 2006 Energy-Efficiency Action Plan - extols the employment-creating potential of energy-efficiency, suggesting the green buildings initiative alone would create 1.4 million jobs (300,000 directly and 1.1 million indirectly) annually.

Under the plan, it is thought EU Member States would face binding energy-saving targets (either sector-specific or across the entire economy) in line with the objective of achieving 20% greater energy efficiency by 2020. Already a voluntary commitment to this aspiration is in place but this is looking increasingly unrealistic on current national performances. In fact, little energy savings have yet been achieved in the buildings sector which is

responsible for 40% of Europe's consumption.

Specific additional EU funds are not likely to be set aside for this initiative (beyond European Investment Bank loans and, perhaps, Economic Recovery Fund money unused by 2013). Instead, National Energy Efficiency Funds would be established and revenues from emissions trading used. Nonetheless, the Commission's ambitions may well correspond with likely Irish Government plans to bring forward retrofitting schemes for residential housing and public buildings over the coming years. Other measures contained in the plan include the Smart Cities initiative (see September's *Bulletin*), efforts to boost the energy-efficiency of utilities, and tapping into the potential of SMEs which could equally be in line with Ireland's recent shift towards embracing the green economy.

[Link](#)

### **Local Government & climate change**

The European Parliament's Environment Committee has formally recognised the crucial role played by cities, municipalities and regions in implementing practical climate actions. In adopting a Resolution on the EU strategy for December's Copenhagen Conference on climate change (COP15), the Committee included an amendment drafted and supported by associations of local authorities to convince the European Institutions to recognise the contribution of this level in the EU position at the negotiations.

In particular, the adopted amendment calls for the EU to promote the engagement of cities, local and regional authorities in the development and implementation of national climate change strategies, including Mitigation Action Plans and Adaptation Programmes of Action. The resolution will be on the agenda of the European Parliament during the November plenary session.

[Link](#)

Meanwhile, the LG Action - "Networking action to involve Local Governments in the EU and international energy and climate debate" (a project co-funded under the Intelligent Energy Europe programme) is providing a unique

opportunity for all local governments and their associations to engage in the European and international climate and energy debate, to share their positions and experiences as to what the particular needs, barriers and opportunities at this level are, and to mobilise local action.

All input to their online survey will be put towards devising a collective grassroots position on the local response to climate change - including contributing to the shaping of the debate in Copenhagen and providing more detailed reflection afterwards. This campaign is part of the wider Local Government Climate Roadmap - which is drawing attention to the crucial role and interest of local government in climate protection with a view to creating a comprehensive future climate regime.

[Online questionnaire](#)  
[Local Government Climate Roadmap](#)

### **Flexibility on 'match funding' & decommitment rules**

Talks to simplify the implementation of the Structural Funds have been continuing between the EU institutions. The focus has been on working out a compromise solution to the proposal presented by the European Commission in July, but rejected by the Council of Ministers, to temporarily abolish the national co-funding requirement for projects receiving aid under the European Social Fund (including Ireland's National Human Resources Programme under the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment) during 2009 and 2010. The logic behind this approach was that it would allow projects which have been agreed for EU support on the grounds that they may be particularly useful during the economic crisis period to get underway immediately despite liquidity barriers within the organisations involved. In a bid to break the deadlock, the Commission has since made two alternative proposals.

The first is to pay additional 'pre-financing' advances to the Member States totaling an estimated €3.2 billion (on top of an already agreed amount of €11.25 billion) so as to allow the various programmes the leeway to fully launch their operations. The idea has received a broadly positive welcome from a Council working group although the proposed amount may yet be halved and the scope of the measures curtailed to states whose economies have suffered most

from the crisis, before agreement is reached. The other proposal is to make decommitment rules more flexible. Currently, EU funds granted to a programme are lost if not spent by projects within two years ('N+2', in the case of Ireland) following the year of approval. The Commission is proposing to allow an extra year's grace (to the end of 2010) by merging the years 2007 and 2008 with respect to the states' deadlines for the submission of payment requests. Again, the Member States have thus far signalled a broad welcome for this approach.

### **Life+ project approvals: Ireland fails to feature**

The process to approve applications to last year's annual call for proposals under Life+, the European financial instrument for the environment, concluded in late October. Funding to the value of €207.5 million has been approved for 196 new projects (from over 600 bids) to cover actions in the fields of nature conservation, environmental policy, and information and communication.

None of the (three) Irish applications were deemed to be of adequate quality, meaning that the indicative national allocation from the EU for 2008 of almost €4 million has been lost to this country and reallocated. Only Lithuania, Luxembourg and Malta are similarly unrepresented on this occasion. This poor performance by Irish applications forms part of a continuing trend following the approval of just a single project under the 2006 call and two for 2007. Meanwhile countries of comparable population such as Finland (11 approvals) and Denmark (10) have been much more competitive over the last 3 year period. The next opportunity to compete is likely to open in May 2010.

[Link](#)

### **Macro-regional' approach gains Council approval**

On 30 October, the meeting of Heads of State and Government endorsed the new approach to regional development proposed in the comprehensive EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. This integrated macro-regional framework has been drawn up by the Commission and the concerned Member States to identify collective needs and challenges and

aspirations in fields such as fisheries, transport, research, energy and the environment and to set about matching them to available resources through co-ordination of appropriate policies, in order to enable the area to enjoy a sustainable shared future.

Noting the innovative nature of this Integrated Strategy and the potential it represents, the Council placed particular emphasis on the need to speed up the integration of infrastructure and markets between neighbouring Member States and for this process to be achieved through a well thought-out joint governance structure. It is felt that the Baltic example presents a blueprint for similar approaches in other parts of the EU.

With the future of the EU's Atlantic seaboard - a somewhat vaster and more open space - specifically in mind, as part of October's Open Days week of Regions and Cities, the Irish Regions Office partly organised a well-attended seminar for maritime stakeholders from nine nations and regions across Ireland, UK, France, Spain and Portugal to draw on the Baltic Sea model and reflect on experiences of and opportunities for mutually-beneficial cooperation across national frontiers. Among the contributors were representatives of the Marine Institute and the Dublin Regional Authority as part of the Irish Sea Platform.

[Link](#)

### **Sustainable Energy Action Plans template**

The European Commission has unveiled an online interactive instrument to help Local Authorities to better manage their energy performance by turning good intentions into action. The Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAP) template and guidelines is intended to help cities and municipalities to bring together the relevant information for establishing their own baseline inventory of emissions, to structure their overall energy strategy, and to detail concrete measures foreseen in delivering upon objectives.

This is part of the further roll-out of the Covenant of Mayors initiative which now brings together over 700 European Local Authorities in a permanent network to make better use of energy and commit to reducing local CO2 emissions beyond the EU 20% by 2020 target. This is to be achieved by each signatory developing, adopting and implementing their own

SEAP, which, thanks to the online template will be evaluable and readily usable for exchanges of experience. The Covenant's signatories will soon be able to access flexible loans and financial engineering instruments under the newly created ELENA (European Local Energy Assistance) fund for projects contributing to the development of their respective SEAPs.

[Link](#)

### **Local & Regional views on Economic Recovery Plan**

The Lisbon Monitoring Platform of the Committee of the Regions is inviting all regional and local authorities to take part in an online survey on 'The European Economic Recovery Plan in Regions and Cities: One Year On'.

The aims of the survey are:

- to assess the impact of the economic and financial crisis at local/regional level,
- to provide an initial evaluation by local and regional authorities of actions taken on the ground under the EERP,
- to stimulate a debate on past, ongoing and future anti-crisis measures and the involvement of local and regional authorities.

The results will be presented early next year and fed into the EU policy-making process.

*Deadline: 30 November*

[Link](#)

### **€50 billion investment plans for low carbon technologies**

The Commission presented its strategy to accelerate the development and deployment of cost-effective low carbon technologies on 7 October. This financing element of the technology pillar (SET-Plan) of EU energy and climate policy calls for increased efforts to develop the necessary technologies to address climate change, secure energy supply and ensure the competitiveness of European economies by 2020.

Together with industry, the Commission has identified six priority energy technology research initiatives in which an estimated additional investment of €53 billion (from public and private sectors at national and EU level to

European Investment Bank funds) is foreseen over the next 10 years to create jobs:

- European Wind Initiative. 2020 Target: 20% of EU electricity produced from wind energy; creating 250,000 skilled jobs. Key challenges: reducing costs, increasingly moving to offshore, and resolving grid integration issues. Cost: €6 billion.
- Solar Europe Initiative. Target: generating up to 15% of EU electricity; creating more than 200,000 skilled jobs. Key challenges: helping these technologies become more competitive and gain mass market appeal. Cost: €16 billion.
- European Electricity Grid Initiative. Target: Half of all European networks enabling the seamless integration of renewables and effectively matching supply and demand in an internal energy market. Key challenge: integration of intermittent energy sources and management of suppliers and customers interactions. Cost: €2 billion.
- Sustainable Bio-energy Europe Initiative. Target: 14% of the EU energy mix from cost-competitive sustainable bio-energy; creating 200,000 local jobs. Key challenges: commercialisation of promising technologies, with a view to large-scale, sustainable production and highly efficient combined heat and power from biomass. Cost: €9 billion.
- European CO2 Capture, Transport and Storage. Target: wide commercialisation of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies, while reducing costs and demonstrating the full CCS chain. Cost: €13 billion.
- Sustainable Nuclear Fission Initiative. Key challenge: developing a new generation of reactor prototypes for long-term sustainability. Cost: €7 billion.

### [Strategy](#)

## **Financial Regulation review**

The European Commission's DG Budget is seeking the views of beneficiaries of EU funding (e.g. project managers and financial controllers) to inform the second review of the EU Financial Regulation (1605/2002), which is due to be launched in mid-2010. Among the areas being prioritised for examination are the

improvement of information systems, co-financing requirements, eligibility conditions, not-for-profit rules, ceiling for small grants, and other aspects linked to applying to and spending EU funding.

*Deadline: 18 December*

[Link](#)

## **Funding workshops**

During October, the staff of the Irish Regions Office, Brussels, delivered a series of workshops on EU funding across Ireland. This initiative, in association with the Regional Authorities, was undertaken to raise Local Authority awareness of the possibilities for direct funding offered by the Community Action Programmes and to assist them in competing proactively and successfully - thereby providing some relief to deteriorating public finances.

Over 80 officers representing 31 local authorities attended at the four venues – the Custom House, Dublin; South-East Regional Authority, Clonmel; Athlone Town Council; and Clare County Council, Ennis. The presentations, which address general aspects of transnational funding and project development; the EU funding programmes and some project examples, and other (non-funding) initiatives of relevance to Local Authorities are available from the Funding Tracker section of the IRO website.

[General funding issues](#)  
[Programmes, project examples & other initiatives](#)

## **€28 million awarded to NSS Gateways & Hubs**

The Border, Midland & Western (BMW) and the Southern & Eastern (S&E) Regional Assemblies have announced grants totaling €28 million to co-finance Urban Regeneration and Sustainable Urban Transport projects in the National Spatial Strategy Gateways and Hubs. The funding has been achieved through an advance payment of European Regional Development Fund support to the two Regional Operational Programmes (Structural Funds).

The selected projects, which are to be largely completed by the end of 2010, are intended to greatly enhance the attractiveness and economic,

environmental, social and cultural development of urban centres. The 5 BMW designated Gateways - Galway, the Midlands triangle (Athlone, Tullamore, Mullingar), Sligo, Letterkenny and Dundalk - have collectively been awarded €10.85m, towards strategic transport, urban regeneration and cultural investments; while the Hub towns of Ballina, Castlebar, Cavan, Monaghan and Tuam will benefit from an investment of €6.3m. In the S&E Region, €11 million have been awarded to the Gateway cities of Cork, Dublin, Limerick and Waterford for public realm improvements, green transport routes, arts centres and tourist visitor attractions.

[Link](#)

## **Social procurement**

With the European Commission expected to publish a guide on socially responsible public procurement (SRPP) by the end of the year, a joint statement calling for clarification as to the EU framework on social procurement has been published by the Employers' Platform of the Council of European Municipalities (CEMR-EP) and the European Federation of Public Services Union (EPSU).

The statement recognises how social procurement can be an opportunity for local and regional authorities to act responsibly when buying goods and services but points out that they must equally also have the freedom to consider a full range of economic, social and environmental costs and benefits arising from a choice of supplier; the necessary information to assess the pros and cons of procurement as a delivery method against different options; as well as the opportunity to monitor and evaluate how a given local service is provided in practice in order to ensure criteria including quality and value for money

[Link](#)

## **ICT for a low-carbon economy**

On 9 October the Commission launched a Recommendation on mobilising ICT to facilitate the transition to an energy-efficient, low-carbon economy. The document urges public administrations at national, regional and local level to make

better use of ICT tools for energy simulation and modelling, including the training of professionals in the buildings, transports and logistics sectors whose potential in this regard is viewed as being largely untapped and ripe for development. Authorities can also boost the uptake of a more energy efficient technology by factoring it into their public procurement policies. The Recommendation additionally asks EU Member States to agree on common specifications for smart metering by the end of 2010.

[Recommendation](#)

### **Cultural and creative industries**

The Commission is to launch a Green Paper on Culture and other Creative Industries during the first half of 2010. The paper will be based on three studies: 1) The Impact of Culture on Creativity; 2) the role of culture in regional economic development, as part of European Regional policy; and 3) The entrepreneurial dimension of cultural and creative industries.

[‘The Impact of Culture on Creativity’ study \(June 2009\)](#)

### **Social Dimension of Lisbon Strategy**

The European Commission has adopted a report calling for a stronger social dimension to the future Growth and Jobs Strategy post-2010. The document, prepared by the EU Social Protection Committee (SPC), compares the situation in which Member States stand in terms of facing the social impacts of the crisis and the measures put forward for tackling it. The document also outlines that, over the past decade, inequalities have often increased across the EU, and poverty and social exclusion remain a major issue in most Member States.

[Report:](#)

### **PEACE Network**

Members of the Peace Network - set-up to communicate the unique experience of managing, evaluating and implementing EU PEACE funding in Northern Ireland and the Border Region - were in Brussels

during early October's 'Open Days' to hold a seminar on progress with the ongoing development of the Network.

Attracting a number of key EU officials the event was also designed to widen membership of the Network from other parts of Europe. Jokin Bildarratz, President of EUDEL the Association of Basque Municipalities, outlined the opportunities membership provides for the Basque country in relation to 'Community based Approaches to Peace Building. Another seminar, where the Network will be sharing some practical examples of peace building, will take place in San Sebastian on 23 November.

Andreas Ashiotis, member of the Council of Reconstruction and Resettlement in Cyprus, outlined the importance of working with children and young people to help them become ambassadors of peace and reconciliation within their own communities. A forthcoming Peace Network seminar in Cyprus will share their practical experiences with Northern Ireland's on youth work initiatives.

Building on its own experiences, the Network is also aiming to foster links between on-the-ground projects and initiatives of a similar nature across Europe.

### **Integrated Maritime Policy**

The European Commission presented a Progress Report on 15 October taking stock of the achievements of EU Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) over its first two years since its original 2007 Action Plan set out a vision to, *inter alia*, raise the visibility of Europe's maritime dimension and improve its economic and environmental situations. Work towards addressing those initial objectives has since entailed the implementation of a wide range of specific recommended actions.

The current report also looks to the future by setting out six strategic policy areas: integration of maritime governance; development of cross-cutting policy tools; definition of limitations to maritime activities as necessary in order to guarantee sustainability; development of sea-basin regional strategies; development of the international dimension of IMP; and renewed focus on sustainable economic growth, employment and innovation. These areas are to be advanced through consultation with stakeholders to agree upon suitable

projects and initiatives which will be detailed in a policy document to be published during 2010.

[Link](#)

### **2010 Year against Poverty launch**

A conference on 'Poverty: Perceptions and Reality - The Communication Challenge' took place in Brussels on 28-29 October to launch the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The purpose of the Year is to promote solidarity, equality and tolerance while combating stereotypes and stigmatisation through a Europe-wide campaign including hundreds of events to raise public awareness and draw national governments' attention to specific issues. An estimated 80 million EU citizens live in a state of poverty and social exclusion. A recent Eurobarometer survey revealed that 89% of Europeans want urgent governmental action to tackle the issue.

[2010 Survey](#)

## **EVENTS**

***On request and whenever possible, IRO staff can attend meetings and seminars in Brussels on behalf of local & regional authorities.***

### **16 & 17 November, Brussels, 'Strategic' Interreg funding**

Project development meetings to bring forward applications based on 6 topics especially designated by the programme authorities ('strategic initiatives') are being organised by INTERREG IVB North West Europe (NWE). The intention is to identify a "critical mass" of especially relevant actors from across the programme area who are clearly interested in developing ambitions into firm project proposals with the programme's assistance.

The project ideas to be discussed are:

- Renewable "Energy Agency" - NWE network of centres
- Biomass Energy Development

- Energy from Algae/Bio-solar-safe: tapping energy from green cells
- Economic cluster development across NWE
- NWE network of centres co-operating on innovation and technology transfer
- Freight telematics and logistics chains management (including transnational corridors).

[Register](#)

Contact: [ajordan@seregassembly.ie](mailto:ajordan@seregassembly.ie)

### **18-19 November, Ghent Urban mobility training**

A free CIVITAS training workshop on urban mobility is open to all interested parties and will address successful transport decision-making through ensuring proper decision-making and management structuring on the one hand, and stakeholder consultation and engagement processes on the other. CIVITAS is a European initiative working for cleaner, better and more sustainable transport in European cities.

[Link](#)

### **19 November Belfast, Interreg Programmes**

The 'Making Transnational Co-Operation a Reality: INTERREG IVB and IVC Programmes: 2007-2013' conference and project fair, including an address by European Commissioner for Regional Policy, Paweł Samecki, will set out the remaining opportunities for funding under the various transnational and interregional Interreg programmes relevant to Ireland and the UK. Direct advice about individual project ideas may also be availed of on the day from the various Programme Secretariats, and Programme Contact Points.

[Link](#)

### **19-20 November, Copenhagen Carbon neutral districts**

Local government representatives may participate in an expert workshop on carbon neutral urban development organised by ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability). The event will cover themes such as city planning, Integrated Energy Systems, investments, financing and organisation.

[Link](#)

### **25-28 November, Stockholm Urban Development**

The theme of this year's Eurocities conference will be 'Urban Challenges - Sustainable Solutions' and will focus on climate change and economic growth. A 'speed-networking' session, hosted by individual cities with particular ideas to develop, will serve as a platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience.

[Link](#)

The URBACT integrated sustainable urban development networking initiative's conference will also take place in Stockholm (25 November) and offers workshops on innovation and creativity, human capital & entrepreneurship, demographic change, urban identity, governance, regeneration, the Leipzig Charter, and city responses to the economic crisis.

[Link](#)

### **26 November, Tullamore Green Business**

Offaly County Enterprise Board, County Council and the Committee of the Regions in the form of Cllr. Connie Hanniffy, Chair of its Economic and Social Commission, are hosting two events to highlight the potential of 'Green Collar' Jobs. A Green Opportunities Business Breakfast will include contributions from Joe Harford, chair of the Government's High Level Action Group on Green Enterprise, who will speak on what must be done to grow this exciting sector in Ireland. The spin-offs expected from Bord na Mona's ambitious plans for developing the energy, fuel and tourism sectors in an eco-friendly manner will also be profiled. This will be followed by a seminar on a joint County Council-EPA Pilot Programme for SMEs to reduce operating costs and maximising efficiencies in water, waste and energy through adopting greener processes.

[Link](#)

### **7 December, Brussels Lifelong Learning Programme**

A conference on the 2010 funding opportunities available under the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) will offer an opportunity to learn more about the current call's priorities and to establish

initial contacts with organisations interested in applying.

[Link](#)

### **7-8 December, Brussels New Skills for New Jobs**

A 'Restructuring Forum' on the role of skills needs anticipation in employment, education and training policy will discuss a set of recently published studies that look at emerging and future skill needs up to 2020 across 18 industrial sectors. The event is being jointly organised by the European Commission, Parliament, Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the Committee of the Regions.

[Link](#)

### **10-11 December, Brussels Innovation through transport**

The POLIS transport network's annual conference theme is "Unlocking the economic and environmental potential of innovation in urban and regional mobility." This offers an opportunity to learn about the innovative transport actions and policies pursued by cities and regions against a backdrop of the economic downturn as well as the future direction of urban and regional mobility in relation to reducing the environmental impact of road transport; more effectively managing the movement of people and goods; delivering more secure transport networks; and financing arrangements.

[Link](#)



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