

## Council adopts “Horizon 2020” R&D programme

The Council has adopted the "Horizon 2020" programme for research and innovation for the years 2014 to 2020. This final adoption by the Council of Horizon 2020 follows an agreement at first reading with the European Parliament. The Parliament voted at its plenary session of 21 November 2013. Horizon 2020 will replace the EU's 7th Research Framework Programme (FP7), which runs until the end of 2013. Compared with FP7, the new programme is expected to further eliminate fragmentation in the fields of scientific research and innovation. Horizon 2020, which has a budget of around 77 billion euros, will underpin the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs, as well as the goal of strengthening the scientific and technological bases by contributing to achieving a European Research Area in which researchers, scientific knowledge and technology circulate freely. Horizon 2020 focuses on three priorities, namely generating excellent science in order to strengthen the Union's world-class scientific excellence and make the Union research and innovation system more competitive, fostering industrial leadership to speed up the development of technologies that will support businesses and innovation, including for small companies, and tackling societal challenges in order to respond to the priorities identified in the Europe 2020 strategy by supporting activities covering the entire chain from research to market.

(Source: Council of the European Union)

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/139875.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/139875.pdf)



## Council agrees its position on alternative fuels infrastructure

The Transport Council has agreed a general approach on a proposal aimed at building up minimum infrastructure for alternative fuels across the EU. The directive is part of the Clean Power for Transport initiative. Under the general approach, each member state will adopt a national policy framework for the market development of alternative fuels infrastructure. Talks with the European Parliament on this high-priority dossier will be launched as soon as possible. The directive will also have to be approved by the Parliament to be adopted. The frameworks will include, inter alia:

- an evaluation of the current state and future development of infrastructure
- national targets for putting in place new infrastructure
- deployment measures, including the yearly budget allocated to infrastructure deployment and to supporting manufacturing plants for alternative fuels technologies.

Following this, the general approach states that member states must set targets for the following infrastructure:

- the number of electric vehicle recharge points
- LNG and compressed natural gas (CNG) filling stations for motor vehicles
- hydrogen refuelling points (if the member state decides to include hydrogen in its national policy framework)

The Commission will publish the national targets, based on reports submitted by member states. The minimum infrastructure should be in place by 2030.

(Source: Council of the European Union)

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/trans/139936.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/trans/139936.pdf)

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## Production falls, but confidence grows in EU

European manufacturing output fell in September by 0.3% compared to August 2013 but showed an improvement (+0.7%) on a year-on-year basis. The

positive evolution of both business and sentiment indicators in November for the fourth consecutive month can be interpreted as an indication of expansion in economic activity. However, GDP growth in the fourth quarter is expected to be very modest across the EU. Perceived risks to the integrity of the euro related to the sovereign debt crisis have disappeared, but downside risks in the external environment have increased. Public R&D spending in the EU grew throughout the crisis as governments strived to keep up their R&D investments and thus incentivise businesses to do likewise, but recent data point to a potential reversal of this trend. Although the innovation performance of the EU is improving, the innovation divide between the member states is widening. The leading innovator countries are becoming even stronger while moderate and modest innovators fail to catch up. Among other policy initiatives, regulation, standards, public procurement and an innovation-friendly environment are the main factors that drive (or impede) demand for innovation. (Source: DG Enterprise and Industry)

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/economic-crisis/monthly\\_notes\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/economic-crisis/monthly_notes_en.htm)

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## ACEA elects new President

The European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA) has elected Philippe Varin, CEO of PSA Peugeot Citroën, as its new President. Mr Varin will lead ACEA until the end of his mandate as CEO of PSA Peugeot Citroën. The presidency of ACEA was previously held by Sergio Marchionne, CEO of Fiat SpA and CEO and Chairman of Chrysler Group LLC. Mr Marchionne was voted in as ACEA President for the year 2012 and subsequently re-elected for 2013. (Source: ACEA)

[http://www.acea.be/index.php/news/news\\_detail/press\\_release\\_european\\_automobile\\_manufacturers\\_association\\_elects\\_new\\_pres](http://www.acea.be/index.php/news/news_detail/press_release_european_automobile_manufacturers_association_elects_new_pres)

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## Commission proposes standards to improve quality of traineeships

The European Commission has proposed guidelines to enable trainees to acquire high-quality work experience under safe and fair conditions, and to increase their chances of finding a good quality job. The proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships would in particular call on member states to ensure that

national law or practice respects the principles set out in the guidelines, and to adapt their legislation where necessary. Traineeships are a key element of the Youth Guarantee proposed by the European Commission in December 2012 and adopted by the EU's Council of Ministers in April 2013. Currently one in three traineeships is substandard with regard to working conditions or learning content, according to a recent Eurobarometer survey. The Commission suggests that many of these substandard traineeships are used by employers to replace entry level jobs. The guidelines would increase transparency with regard to traineeship conditions, for example by requiring that traineeships be based on a written traineeship agreement. The agreement should cover learning content (educational objectives, supervision) and working conditions (limited duration, working time, clear indication whether trainees would be paid or otherwise compensated and whether they would qualify for social security). Indeed, traineeship providers would be asked to disclose in the vacancy notice whether the traineeship would be paid. The proposed Framework does not cover traineeships that form part of university degree or that are mandatory to access a specific profession.

(Source: European Commission)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-1200\\_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1200_en.htm?locale=en)

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## Week ahead

### European Commission

Wednesday 11 December

The European Commission will announce the areas of research and innovation that it proposes to fund in the first two years of Horizon 2020, the biggest ever EU research framework programme with a seven year budget worth nearly €80 billion.

### Council of Ministers

Thursday 12 December

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council: Reaching a political agreement on indirect land use change (ILUC).

### European Parliament (Plenary, Strasbourg)

Monday 9 December

CARS 2020: towards a strong, competitive and sustainable European car industry

Tuesday 10 December

Reindustrialising Europe to promote competitiveness and sustainability: vote