



## FEDERATION NEWS

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### ***Protecting the industry's intellectual investments***

*A major concern about the competitive dialogue is how engineering consultants can ensure the observance of confidentiality of their solutions, brought forward to clients.*

The Project Financing Committee examined current intellectual property rights and the scope of protection under international and European legal systems. In particular, it looked into whether statutory (i.e. legal) rights for intellectual property would be applicable to innovative ideas and solutions, which participants in the competitive dialogue submit.

Following a legal analysis, it seems that presently only provisions related to 'unregistered Community design' may be

marginally relevant to the protection of innovative design during tendering.

EFCA will further investigate the subject-matter of the desired protection, and reflect on possible ways for improving the protection of intellectual 'ownership' of innovative and original engineering designs.

### ***EFCA talks 'competitive dialogue' with contractors***

*The engineering consultancy industry and the construction industry share common concerns and parallel views on the rules of competition under EU public procurement law.*

EFCA invited representatives of FIEC (European Construction Industry Federation) to explore possible common positions on the competitive dialogue and Public Private Partnerships.

Eventually, such examination of areas of mutual interest would be beneficial for both industries, and increase the influence of the professional federations.

The first part of the detailed debate focused on a range of issues related to the competitive dialogue.

This procedure, introduced by the 2004 public procurement directive, is a special procedure for the procurement of particularly complex projects.

Concurrent concerns relate to the contracting authority's potential abuse of the procedure for the definition of project solutions that could be determined by conventional procedures (i.e. the free use of the professionals' expertise), the danger of

'cherry picking' and the change of project requirements and specifications during the dialogue phase.

EFCA particularly welcomed the contractors' assent in principle of the view that ideas and solutions brought forward by the participants during the dialogue must be considered a part of the total project cost, and the engineering consultants' work for the development and adjustment of proposed solutions should be properly compensated.

As a result of the meeting, FIEC will examine the EFCA position and guidance in order to pro-actively address common concerns.

### ***EFCA addresses industry's concerns about H&S responsibilities***

*As a result of the national transposition and implementation of Directive 92/57, substantial differences exist in national health & safety (H&S) legislation, which can result in different roles, definitions, responsibilities and penalties for designers.*

To assist member states in developing national policies for the protection of health and safety on construction sites, the Commission decided to prepare to tender the preparation of a guidance document. The guidance will also provide principles and practical knowledge to both clients and designers.

EFCA and the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE) are both sitting on the advisory committee as the voice of the European design community.

EFCA is also developing a position paper, whereby it is aimed at ensuring that the designers' duties and responsibilities in the project preparation and the project execution stage are clearly delineated.

The position paper will assist the associations whenever national H&S law – necessarily within the set European legislative framework – is reviewed.

### ***EFCA arranges Young Professionals Meeting in Brussels***

*EFCA is engaging with young professionals in raising awareness that 'Europe' impacts on the firms' business environment and markets.*

Besides inspiring young engineering consultants with best practices and views of their fellow professionals, a fundamental objective of the programme is achieving a better understanding of EU issues that affect the business.

On 10-11 October 2007, a multi-national group of young professionals will see and hear at first-hand how European Union policy impacts on the sector, and have the opportunity to raise key issues with policy-makers themselves.

They will learn about EFCA's role in influencing the EU to develop favourable business conditions for engineering consultancies.

EFCA will provide practical guidance on how to access information on EU policies, opportunities that the EU provides at personal and professional level through career and business development, and EU funding opportunities.

The Dutch and UK Young Professionals will showcase their networks to further the European-wide interest of their peers.

<http://www.efcanet.org/pages/news.aspx?item=3903>

Public Procurement Committee	Brussels	09.10.2007
Standardisation Working Party	Brussels	16.10.2007
D&S meeting	Bucharest	26.10.2007
Professional Liability Committee	Brussels	22.11.2007
Working Party on Directive 92/57 (H&S)	Brussels	28.11.2007 [tbc]
Board of Directors	Ljubljana	06.12.2007
Partnership for Development Committee	Brussels	11.12.2007 [11:00-16:00]

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*2nd European Consultants' Cooperation Forum*

**Networking for a Future in Europe**

-  Young Professionals meet in Vienna
-  Focus on the Structure of Europe
-  Intensifying Cooperation Opportunities
-  Interactive Working Groups

Date      **Friday, October 19th 2007**

Location   **MuseumsQuartier**  
**Ovalhalle and Arena21/q21**  
**Museumsplatz 1**  
**A-1070 Vienna**

Registration and additional Information under  
**[www.eccf.at](http://www.eccf.at)**



## ***The way forward to industry-led and society-driven innovation***

*Innovation is the catalyst for company growth, and contributes to competitiveness at regional, national and EU level.*

*The EFCA Bulletin takes a tour of various EU initiatives to support and strengthen the industry's innovation performance.*

### **EUREKA**

Pan-European network for market-oriented, industrial R&D. EUREKA is an intergovernmental initiative to support market-oriented R&D and innovation projects by industry, research centres and universities across all sectors. It is composed of 38 members, including the European Community. With its flexible and decentralised Network, EUREKA offers project partners rapid access to skills and expertise across Europe and national public and private funding schemes. By encouraging and assisting businesses to innovate, EUREKA is fully complementary with the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme.

<http://www.eureka.be/home.do>

### **Community Research & Development Information Service**

The Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) (<http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/>) is the EU's main instrument for funding research over the period 2007 to 2013.

CORDIS (<http://cordis.europa.eu/>) is the official portal for participating in FP7 and following related developments in European science and technology.

Contact details of individuals and organisations providing information, assistance and advice on research and development programmes as well as on innovation issues are available at <http://cordis.europa.eu/contacts/>

### **Innovation Relay Centres (IRC) network**

71 regional IRCs in 33 countries support innovation and transnational technological cooperation in Europe with a range of specialised business support services.

IRC services are primarily targeted at technology-oriented small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), but are also available to large companies, research institutes, universities, technology centres and innovation agencies.

<http://www.innovationrelay.net/>

### **Technology Marketplace**

On line service, where you can find research and technological development results and search for innovative business opportunities in emerging technologies.

<http://cordis.europa.eu/marketplace/home.html>

### **Gate2growth**

Pan-European gateway to business and innovation financing.

The portal includes online business plan self-assessment tools for entrepreneurs, brings together entrepreneurs, investors and service providers, and explores ways to promote SME involvement and investment in the RTD process.

<http://www.gate2growth.com/>

### **BICs - Business Innovation Centres**

EBN is the European network, gathering 160 Business and Innovation centres (BICs) and similar organisations.

<http://www.ebn.be/>

### **Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP)**

With small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as its main target, the programme supports innovation activities (including eco-innovation), provides better access to finance and delivers business support services in the regions.

The CIP is divided into three operational programmes:

- Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP)
- Information Communication Technologies Policy support Programme (ICT PSP)
- Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE).

[http://ec.europa.eu/cip/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/cip/index_en.htm)

### **Europe INNOVA**

Pan-European platform for innovation professionals to develop, discuss, exchange and test good practices, ideas, tools and policy recommendations.

<http://www.europe-innova.org/index.jsp>

### **European e-Business Support Network (eBSN) for SMEs**

The European e-business policies portal serves as one-stop-shop and on-line environment for all European e-business initiatives, launched by (or in collaboration with) public authorities at national, regional or local level, that aim at promoting the adoption of ICT and e-business among SMEs.

It provides information about e-business policy initiatives, statistical data about the take-up of e-business among European SMEs, examples of best practice, news, announcements, articles, etc.

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/e-bsn/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/e-bsn/index_en.html)

### **Intellectual Property Rights HelpDesk**

The IPR Helpdesk offers on-line information on protection rules and intellectual property in transnational research projects.

It provides access to national patent offices and public research facilities.

<http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org/controlador/principal?seccion=principal&len=en>

### **CONSTRINNONET**

Construction related innovation project, which aims at finding instruments to increase the input-output ratio of RTD in the construction sector.

The project seeks to find out what mechanisms stimulate SMEs to innovate faster, with less risk and in an effective manner – from idea to implementation in the market place.

<http://www.eucluster.net/index.338.html>

**CONNET**–Gateway to Information and Advice on the Built Environment

CONNET provides a technology transfer network for the construction sector. Established as an open portal, the site offers an active notification service that connects users with relevant information about the built environment. It also links with a number of national sub-sites which provide data on issues such as manufactured products, specialist equipment and best practice initiatives. The site offers a sophisticated search facility and help desk.

<http://www.connet.org/index.jsp>

**European Construction Technology Platform (ECTP)**

ECTP was launched in October 2004 with the aim of improving the sector's performance and competitiveness.

The platform seeks to harness innovation and R&D.

<http://www.ectp.org/>

**PRO INNO Europe**

This is an initiative of Directorate General Enterprise and Industry. It aims to become the focal point for innovation policy analysis, learning and development in Europe, with the view to learning from the best and contributing to the development of new and better innovation policies in Europe.

<http://www.proinno-europe.eu/>

**Innovating Regions Network**

Its aim is to facilitate exchange of experience and good practice among European regions through the development and implementation of regional innovation strategies and schemes.

<http://www.innovating-regions.org/>

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## EUROPEAN BRIEFING

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## EU FUNDS & PROGRAMMES

### ***Regional policy: member states ready to implement new projects***

*26 member states have had their national strategic frameworks officially validated by the Commission to date.*

*Negotiations on the operational programmes (OPs) are well advanced.*

The Commission approved 15 new programmes for the **Hungarian** regions. The transport OP is the biggest programme (nearly 6.2 billion euro). The 'Environment and Energy' programme will receive nearly 4.2 billion euro investments. The economic development OP will focus on support for small and medium-sized enterprises and enterprises involved in R&D activities. One programme, 'Social Infrastructure', funded by the ERDF (1.9 billion euro), will help to modernise the education sector (schools) and hospitals. EU support from the European Social Fund will be channelled through two operational programmes:

'Social Renewal' (3.5 billion euro) and 'State Reform' (146,5 million euro). Overall, Hungary will benefit from 25 billion euro under the 2007-2013 period.

The Commission adopted the first five operational programmes for **Poland**. They concern the regions of Pomerania (Pomorskie), Silesia (Śląskie), Lower Silesia (Dolnośląskie), Greater Poland (Wielkopolskie) and Little Poland (Małopolskie). These regions will receive aid of 6.7 billion euro, or 10% of the total allocated to Poland for 2007-2013. Poland will be the principal beneficiary of aid under the new programming.

The Commission approved an operational programme for Hessen (**Germany**). The total budget of the new Hessen operational programme is 557 million euro. Its main aim is to create and safeguard sustainable, competitive and well-paid jobs by enhancing the competitiveness of businesses in Hessen. The programme also addresses urban issues and actions for interregional cooperation with partners from France, Italy and Poland.

The two approved programmes for **Lithuania** will help strengthen local development in, improve public services, support small and medium enterprises and help construct or renew 1165 km of public roads.

The first approved programme is aimed at promoting cohesion (2.6 billion euro), the second at economic growth (receiving 3.09 billion euro in aid). On-site project selection will soon be able to commence.

The total budget of **Bulgaria's** first of seven operational programmes under the Cohesion Policy and the Structural Funds is 1.16 billion euro.

The remaining programmes will be approved by the end of this year.

A contribution of 4.53 billion euro is provided for from the European Regional

Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) for the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) of **Latvia**.

Priorities are: urban development, development of human resources and training, and improving the effectiveness of public administration and infrastructure. Latvia intends to divide the NSRF into three operational programmes.

**Finland** will use 1.6 billion euro of EU resources in the next seven years to promote regional economies' competitiveness and innovation, making Finnish regions more attractive by improving quality of life and enabling the workforce to become more adaptable and better qualified.

These broad priorities will be translated into seven operational programmes: five regional programmes for Eastern Finland, Northern Finland, Western Finland, Southern Finland, and for the Åland Islands, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, and two thematic programmes for mainland Finland and Åland Islands co-financed by the European Social Fund.

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/atlas2007/fiche/fi\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/fiche/fi_en.pdf)

### ***Cohesion policy: four cross-border programmes on the starting blocks***

*The Commission adopted the first 2007-2013 cross-border programmes.*

The 2007-2013 cohesion policy is structured around three new objectives: convergence; regional competitiveness and employment; territorial co-operation.

The territorial component includes three strands: cross-border cooperation; trans-national cooperation; and interregional cooperation.

A total of some 50 programmes will be validated by the Commission over the coming months, involving all the member states.

The four programmes which have just been adopted are: '**Italy-Austria**' (total budget of

80 million euro), '**Bavaria-Austria**' (72.1 million euro), the '**Meuse-Rhine Euroregion**' (144.8 million euro, for Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium) and '**Ireland-Wales**' (70 million euro).

### ***First programme for R&D-performing entrepreneurs***

*The Eurostars programme dedicated to research- and innovation-performing SMEs, is launched on 2 October 2007.*

In creating the Eurostars Programme, EUREKA (European Research Coordination Agency) wishes to target and support ambitious and innovative SMEs operating on the international market.

More specifically, Eurostars is dedicated to research-performing SMEs, enterprises that invest 10% or more of FTE (Full Time Equivalent) or turnover in their research activities.

Eurostars will be centrally managed and receive financial backing from both national funding bodies and the European Union through the Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7). The programme has also adopted the EC's guidelines for the definition of an SME. This definition includes an enterprise that is autonomous, has fewer than 250 employees, and has an annual turnover that does not exceed EUR 50 million.

Currently, the 27 countries participating in the Eurostars programme through the EUREKA network are: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey.

<http://www.eurostars-eureka.eu/tiles/main.html>

<http://www.eureka.be/home.do>

## MISCELLANEOUS

### **Help the EU to design more efficient business legislation**

*The Commission created an online consultation to give EU businesses the possibility to voice their concerns directly to the European Commission.*

The initiative is part of the action programme for reducing administrative burdens in the EU by 25% by 2012.

Unnecessary administrative burdens relate to information obligations and reporting requirements (e.g. duplication, frequency, inconsistencies).

Problems and suggestions can be submitted at: [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/admin-burdens-reduction/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/admin-burdens-reduction/index_en.htm)

### **Effective use of various EU instruments to boost innovation**

*The Commission required member states to better coordinate spending of the cohesion policy instruments with grants from the EU's 7th Framework Research Programme (FP7), as well as the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP).*

The European Commission proposes various actions to make better use of the various programmes, including the development of a practical guide to identify the most appropriate source of funding, and improved information exchange between all parties involved.

Member states should also work with regional and local authorities to improve the arrangements for preparing actions under the various programmes in a more coordinated way.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52007DC0474:EN:NOT>

### **EIB opens Baltic regional office in Helsinki**

*The new European Investment Bank (EIB) regional office in Helsinki aims to enhance the presence of the EIB in the Baltic Sea region and to reinforce cooperation with the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB).*

The NIB and the EIB have been cooperating in co-financing projects in the member countries and the neighbouring areas, including building power plants, water supply and treatment networks in Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The principal operational role of the new office is to further develop the EIB's activities in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Easier access from the EIB's new Helsinki base should facilitate the identification of projects and ensure greater coverage of priority sectors for the bank.

Furthermore, the office will liaise with governmental authorities in the region as well as with various organisations in the Baltic Sea region.

<http://www.eib.org/index.htm>

<http://www.nib.int/en/index.html>



## DOCUMENTS & WEB SITES OF INTEREST

### EU LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

#### Proposals & Regulation

#### **A Europe of Results – Applying Community law**

Commission proposals to improve the application of Community law by member states. The Commission, as part of its better regulation priority, aims at having Community law implemented more effectively and at resolving more quickly complaints made by citizens and business.

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2007/com2007\\_0502en01.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2007/com2007_0502en01.pdf)

#### **Strategy for the Outermost Regions: Achievements and Future Prospects**

The Commission plans to allow the seven ultra-peripheral regions of the EU (the Azores, the four French overseas departments, the Canaries and Madeira) to take part in the Lisbon Strategy so as to make their economies more competitive. The idea is in particular to encourage the creation of research and innovation centres by means of specific actions under the 2007-2013 cohesion policy, but also under the Seventh Framework Programme for research and development.

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/rup2007/rup2007\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/rup2007/rup2007_en.pdf)

#### **Building a Global Climate Change Alliance between the European Union and poor developing countries most vulnerable to climate change**

Commission proposal to establish a Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA), to tackle the combined challenge of the fight against poverty and climate change. Measures will include better preparedness for natural disasters which are expected to become more frequent and intense through global warming.

[http://ec.europa.eu/development/ICenter/Pdf/com\\_Climate\\_changes2007\\_0540en01.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/development/ICenter/Pdf/com_Climate_changes2007_0540en01.pdf)

'Climate Change and Development Cooperation' is the subject of the second edition of the European Development Days (Lisbon, 7-9 November 2007).

For more information contact: [dev-days@ec.europa.eu](mailto:dev-days@ec.europa.eu)

### REPORTS

#### **EU budget 2006 - Financial Report**

The five largest countries received 57.8 billion euro (i.e. 60% of the total). In ranking order they are: France, Spain, Germany, Italy and the UK.

The share of EU10 practically doubled as compared to their year of accession, 2004. The figure for 2006 is 11.5 billion euro (i.e. 12% of total spending in the EU25). The main recipients were: Poland (5.3 billion euro), Hungary (1.8 billion euro) and the Czech Republic (1.3 billion euro).

[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/publications/fin\\_reports\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/publications/fin_reports_en.htm)

## Final accounts for the financial year 2006 of the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th **European Development Funds**

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2007/com2007\\_0458en01.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2007/com2007_0458en01.pdf)

## **Report on Policy Coherence for Development**

The overall conclusion is that the coherence between EU policies and development objectives has improved but more can be achieved.

[http://ec.europa.eu/development/ICenter/Pdf/COMM\\_PDF\\_COM\(2007\)545\\_FINAL\\_EN.pdf#zoom=100](http://ec.europa.eu/development/ICenter/Pdf/COMM_PDF_COM(2007)545_FINAL_EN.pdf#zoom=100)

## **Trans-European Transport Network: Coordinators' second annual reports** Inventory, as at 19 July 2007, of each of the six priority projects.

[http://ec.europa.eu/ten/transport/coordinators/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/ten/transport/coordinators/index_en.htm)

## **Labour market and wage developments in 2006**

This annual report examines labour market developments in 2006 from a macroeconomic perspective, shedding light on the interaction of employment trends with other macroeconomic developments such as GDP and productivity growth. It comprehensively presents the main findings on recent trends and prospects on both the quantity side (employment, participation, unemployment) and the labour cost side (wage and labour cost developments).

[http://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/publications/european\\_economy/labour\\_mkt\\_wage2007\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/labour_mkt_wage2007_en.htm)

## **OECD Economic Survey of the European Union**

OECD assessment and recommendations on the main economic challenges faced by the EU.

[http://www.oecd.org/document/8/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_34111\\_38958856\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/8/0,3343,en_2649_34111_38958856_1_1_1_1,00.html)

## **Transparency International 2007 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)**

The publication looks at perceptions of public sector corruption in 180 countries and territories and is a composite index that draws on 14 expert opinion surveys. It scores countries on a scale from zero to ten, with zero indicating high levels of perceived corruption and ten indicating low levels of perceived corruption.

[http://www.transparency.org/news\\_room/in\\_focus/2007/cpi2007](http://www.transparency.org/news_room/in_focus/2007/cpi2007)

## **Report on Business Insurance Sector Inquiry**

The report raises concerns about the operation of two areas of business insurance. First, long-standing and widespread industry practices in the reinsurance and coinsurance markets involving the alignment of premiums, which may lead to higher prices for large risk commercial insurance. Second, the Commission also confirms its concerns as to transparency of remuneration and conflicts of interest in insurance brokerage which may inflate prices and reduce choice, in particular for SMEs.

[http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/antitrust/others/sector\\_inquiries/financial\\_services/business.html](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/antitrust/others/sector_inquiries/financial_services/business.html)

## CONSULTATIONS

### **Reforming the Budget, Changing Europe**

What should be the structure and direction of the EU's spending priorities to meet the challenges of the globalised world in the next decade and beyond? What is the best way of providing the resources necessary to fund EU policies?

[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/index_en.htm)

### **Towards a new culture for urban mobility**

Green Paper on urban transport. It was adopted on 25 September 2007 and opens a debate on the key issues of urban mobility: free-flowing and greener towns and cities, smarter urban mobility and an urban transport which is accessible, safe and secure for all European citizens.

Deadline: 15 March 2008

[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/clean/green\\_paper\\_urban\\_transport/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/clean/green_paper_urban_transport/index_en.htm)

## MISCELLANEOUS

### **Construction output stable in the euro area - July 2007 compared to June 2007**

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/PGP\\_PRD\\_CAT\\_PREREL/PGE\\_CAT\\_PREREL\\_YEAR\\_2007/PGE\\_CAT\\_PREREL\\_YEAR\\_2007\\_MONTH\\_09/4-20092007-EN-AP.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/PGP_PRD_CAT_PREREL/PGE_CAT_PREREL_YEAR_2007/PGE_CAT_PREREL_YEAR_2007_MONTH_09/4-20092007-EN-AP.PDF)

### **The EU Electricity & Gas markets: third legislative package (September 2007)**

The package of proposed measures puts consumer choice, fairer prices, cleaner energy and security of supply at the centre of the Commission's approach. It promotes sustainability by stimulating energy efficiency and guaranteeing that even smaller companies, for instance those that invest in renewable energy, have access to the energy market. A competitive market will also ensure greater security of supply, by improving the conditions for investments in power plants and transmission networks, and thus help avoid interruptions in power or gas supplies. Guarantees of fair competition with third country companies are also strengthened.

[http://ec.europa.eu/energy/electricity/package\\_2007/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/electricity/package_2007/index_en.htm)

### **Impact assessment of certain aspects of the Working Time Directive**

A primary purpose of the Working Time Directive (WTD) is to safeguard worker's health and safety across the EU. The current WTD sets a maximum weekly limit of 48 hours averaged out over four months, but there are derogations relating to specific occupations and industrial sectors, and there is the possibility of extending the reference period to six months or one year if certain conditions are met, or through collective bargaining.

According to the study, the implementation of a uniform reference period of one year will facilitate the introduction of more flexible working time practices across the EU.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004\\_2009/documents/dv/wtdstudy/wtdstudyen.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/dv/wtdstudy/wtdstudyen.pdf)

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