

# EU News Bulletin

The latest monthly EU opportunities, news & policy, publications and events of relevance to Ireland's local and regional levels.

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## FUNDING, NETWORKING & PROJECTS

### ***Calls: PROGRESS***

A set of Calls for Proposals under the EU's employment and social solidarity programme (PROGRESS) were published in late April. The programme supports studies and awareness campaigns on relevant subjects, and provides financial support for policy practitioners, expert networks and NGOs fighting social exclusion and discrimination.

**"Anti-discrimination and diversity - Action Grants 2011"** will support national activities aimed at combating discrimination (ethnic origin, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation) and promoting equality. Funded actions may include developing instruments to improve knowledge on key concepts (e.g. equality impact assessment); policy design including mainstreaming efforts; identifying transferrable best practice particularly relating to the Roma; and information campaigns.

Budget: Up to €250,000 per project (80% co-financing)

**Deadline: 15 June**

#### [Further details](#)

Two further Calls under the Working Conditions sub-programme have also been launched:

**"Actions for Cooperation and Information on Social Security Coordination"** aims to develop capacities among institutions in this field (including NGOs) by transnational cooperation and improving public information on associated rights and obligations attached to the free movement of persons across

the EU. National electronic data exchange (EESSI) initiatives may also be supported.

Budget: Up to €200,000 per project (80% co-financing)

**Deadline: 31 May**

**"Restructuring, well-being at work and financial participation"** is intended to support the promotion of exchanges of information concerning occupational health and well-being during employment restructuring processes with a view to promoting the financial participation of workers. Priority will be granted to projects to support or promote the creation or activation of partnerships for the anticipation, preparation or responsible management of restructuring.

**Deadline: 14 June**

#### [Further details](#)

On 4 April, the Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion launched a public consultation on a post-2013 successor to PROGRESS. Stakeholders are asked to provide their insights on the current programme and suggestions regarding the design, added value, objectives, actions, budget and delivery of a successor instrument.

**Deadline: 27 May**

#### [Consultation](#)

### ***Call: Eco-Innovation***

The 2011 Call for Proposals for the Eco-Innovation Programme (within the CIP Programme for industry competitiveness) was published on 27 April. This year's priority themes are:

- Materials recycling

- Sustainable building products
- Food and drink sector
- Water
- Greening businesses

The programme aims to support the uptake of new manufacturing processes, products or services, and management and business methods that are likely to prevent or reduce the effects of negative environmental impacts or which contribute to the optimal use of resources. Although priority will be given to SMEs and private beneficiaries, the call may also be of interest to enterprise-support organisations. Clusters of applicants and projects which demonstrate a European added value and have a high potential for market replication are strongly encouraged.

Video footage and presentations from the programme's recent information day in Brussels are available online. A budget of €36 million (50% grant rate) is available.

**Deadline: 8 September**

[Further details](#)

### Call: Sport

On 3 May the 2011 Call for Proposals under the Preparatory Action for Sport was published. This initiative will support transnational projects put forward by public bodies or not-for-profit organisations in order to identify and test suitable networks and good practices in the following areas:

- prevention of and fight against violence and intolerance in sport;
- promoting innovative approaches to strengthen the organisation of sport in Europe.

The main objective of the Preparatory Action is to prepare future EU instruments in the field of sport, on the basis of priorities set in the 2007 White Paper on Sport and the 2011 Communication on Developing the

European Dimension in Sport. Applications should use this as a basis.

**Deadline: 29 July**

[Further details](#)

### Call: Audio-visual Industry

Various Calls for Proposals under the MEDIA 2007 programme were launched on 19 April. These relate to support measures for the European audio-visual and cinematic sector:

- facilitating and encouraging the promotion and movement of works at trade shows, fairs and festivals, including networking of professionals;
- improvement of links between the production and distribution chains;
- adaptation to market developments, notably through utilisation of ICT;
- digital distribution of European works;
- improving the continuous vocational training of professionals.

**Deadlines: mid-June (various)**

[Further details](#)

### Call: 'Knowledge Partnerships'

In recognition of the significant potential of 'Knowledge Partnerships' – structured partnerships between education institutions and innovation players as outlined in the Innovation Union flagship initiative of the Europe 2020 Strategy – the European Parliament has decided to allocate €1 million to a pilot action for testing out this concept. This reflects the acceptance that innovation is increasingly being driven by facilitating the appropriate combination of people, talent and ideas in order to promote excellence in education and skills development.

**Deadline: 30 June**

[Further details](#)

**Catch up on other recent calls for proposals through previous issues of this Bulletin: [March](#), [February](#) and [January](#).**

### Two new local energy investment supports unveiled

Along with the launch of the European Energy Efficiency Fund (EEE-F) which will provide €200 million towards risk capital finance in the form of loans, guarantees and equity participation as well as financial and technical assistance grants towards the preparation of sustainable energy investment projects by local authorities (see March *Bulletin*) at the recent European Sustainable Energy Week in Brussels, two separate energy financing initiatives which are forthcoming were also unveiled.

Based on the model of the European Investment Bank's ELENA (European Local ENergy Assistance) programme which helps local authorities to efficiently structure major energy investment projects with budgets in excess of €50 million so they can attract the required finance from other sources, the new instruments represent an effort to bring smaller- and medium-scale investments into the fold.

- **KfW-ELENA** will use participating financial intermediaries to deploy a combination of technical assistance grants, global loans and carbon crediting (payments for verified greenhouse gas emission reductions achieved by projects and linked into the European Emission Trading Scheme) in order to mobilise municipal sustainability investments;
- **CEB-ELENA** will provide technical assistance for the development of investment projects targeting social housing. It is financed by the Council of Europe Development Bank.

It is important to bear in mind that ELENA operates on a permanently open basis (i.e. without the need to conform to set Call for Proposals timetables) and has no transnational requirements.

[EEE-F](#)

[KfW-ELENA](#)

[CEB-ELENA](#) (*Intelligent Energy Europe 2011 Work Programme*)

**Culture programme info day online**

On 30 May, the live streaming of the Culture Programme's 2011 Information Day in Brussels will set out how this year's Call for Proposals will encourage applications for support based on mobility, cooperation and exchange activities among European cultural operators, agencies and productions.

[Further details](#)

**Project: Electric vehicles for Cork & Dublin**

Cork and Dublin City Councils (the latter through the CODEMA Energy Agency) are among a consortium of cities, research institutions (including Trinity College), utility companies (including ESB eCars) and vehicle industry bodies set to avail of a major EU-backed pan-European "electromobility" initiative which is now underway.

Green eMotion, a four-year project worth €41.8 million with €24.2 million being provided by the Seventh Research Framework Programme, aims to exchange and develop know-how and experience in twelve regions (eight Member States) in dealing with electric vehicle issues and different technological approaches, as well as to facilitate the market roll-out of the new generation of cars. It will cover different types of electric vehicles, the development of Smart Grids (see News & Policy section), innovative Information & Communication Technologies solutions, and urban mobility concepts.

The project is part of the European Green Cars Initiative and also relates directly with the Commission's Transport 2050 Roadmap (see March *Bulletin*) which

places a major shift in cities to electric vehicles at the core of ambitions to half the number of conventionally fuelled cars in European cities by 2030 and to phase them out completely by 2050 – thereby significantly reducing Europe's dependency on oil for transport and slashing CO<sub>2</sub> levels by at least 60 percent.

Both Irish cities will serve as demonstration regions focusing on direct current (DC) charging stations; billing systems based on kilowatt hour usage; and supplier choice. Other sites in Spain, Germany, Italy and Denmark will address issues including plug-in hybrid vehicles; battery swapping; vehicle-to-grid (V2G) and battery-to-grid (B2G) power generation; renewable energy integration; alternative business models; and consumer behaviour.

[www.greenemotion-project.eu/](http://www.greenemotion-project.eu/)

[Green Cars Initiative](#)

**2012 RegioStars Awards**

DG Regio has launched the competition for the 2012 RegioStars Awards to celebrate innovative and good practice projects which are funded through the EU's Cohesion Policy. There are 5 categories:

- Smart Growth: Innovative projects or schemes supporting service innovation in its different forms.
- Sustainable Growth: Investments in ecosystem services and green infrastructure leading to sustainable regional development.
- Inclusive Growth: Strategies, initiatives or projects addressing the challenge of demographic change and supporting active ageing (2012 will be the European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity).
- Citystars: Integrated strategies for the development of deprived urban areas.
- Information & Communication: Informing the public through online

means about projects benefiting from EU Regional policy.

*Application deadline: 15 July.*

[Apply](#)

**NEWS & POLICY**

**Ireland's plan for Europe 2020 growth strategy**

On 29 April the Government submitted to the European Commission Ireland's National Reform Programme (NRP) – the plan detailing which structural changes are required in Ireland in order to deliver towards the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and socially-inclusive growth.

The document is intended to set out measures that will be undertaken to achieve a set of established targets, which, in an Irish context include:

- (a) to raise the employment rate for persons aged 20-64 to 69-71% (current rate being 64%);
- (b) to increase public and private sector investment in R&D to approximately 2% of GDP (or 2.5% of GNP);
- (c) to reduce greenhouse gas emission by 20% compared to 2005 levels, increase the share of renewables in energy consumption to 16%, and move towards a 20% increase in energy efficiency;
- (d) to reduce the percentage of 18-24 year-olds with low education levels to 8% and increase the share of 30-34 year-olds with a tertiary education to at least 60%;
- (e) to reduce the number experiencing consistent poverty to 2-4% by 2012, with the aim of eliminating consistent poverty by 2016, lifting at least 186,000 people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion.

Ireland's NRP will operate within the framework of the National Recovery Plan, published last November and a number of the actions are central elements of the Programme for Government which are set to be fleshed out under forthcoming actions, such as the Government's Jobs Initiative.

All 27 NRPs will now be assessed by the Commission, who will issue recommendations for each country in June. Ireland's draft NRP was subject to a brief consultation process during April whereby stakeholders including the two Regional Assemblies; the Association of Irish Regions and the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions were given an opportunity to make comments. These stakeholders were somewhat critical of the approach taken, feeling that, by not setting any sub-national targets, outlining any specific measures to address regional imbalances, nor proposing actions to build on regional development potentials, the NRP does not adequately take account of the territorial dimension. There was also disappointment that the expectation that the partnership principle would be better applied in the NRP preparation, implementation and monitoring arrangements, to engender a greater sense of ownership and, in turn, enhance its implementation prospects, has not been met.

#### [Ireland's National Reform Programme](#)

#### **Smart Grids**

As part of the EU Sustainable Energy Week, the European Commission adopted a new Communication, 'Smart Grids: from innovation to deployment' on 12 April. The paper sets out policy directions to drive forward the deployment of future European electricity networks.

A Smart Grid is a bolstered network to which two-way digital communication between electricity supplier and user; intelligent metering; and monitoring control, communication, and self-repair technologies systems have been added.

This is thought to offer unprecedented possibilities for consumers to directly manage their individual consumption patterns, providing, in turn, strong incentives for efficient energy use if combined with time-dependent electricity tariffs. It is estimated that smart electricity grids should reduce CO2

emissions in the EU by 9% and annual household energy consumption by 10%.

#### [Further details](#)

#### **Energy taxation revision proposal**

Proposals from the European Commission to update rules on the taxation of energy sources in the EU were released on 13 April. The proposed revision of the Energy Taxation Directive aims to remove current imbalances and anomalies and to take into account both the polluting effects and amount of energy required for heating, electricity and transport purposes.

The 2003 Directive's minimum rates are based entirely on volume, rather than energy content, meaning that products with lower energy consumption (e.g. biofuels) tend to carry a heavier tax burden compared to conventional fossil fuels. The proposal favours a restructuring to provide renewable energy options with a distinct competitive advantage as less polluting energy sources and to incentivize more sustainable choices by users.

Additionally, the Directive currently does not address the general need to reduce greenhouse gases or the EU's formal ambitions on CO2 emissions, energy efficiency and renewable energy. Its scope is also incoherent with that of the EU Emission Trading System (ETS) where, it is proposed to place a graduated tariff on CO2 emitted by sectors outside the system - households, transport, small businesses and agriculture.

The overall taxation rate for a fuel product would be determined by a combination of CO2 and energy content elements. Member States would be free to set their own rates above the EU minima, and design their own structure for these taxes provided that all fuels used for the same purpose (motor fuels or other fuels) are treated in the same manner.

The Commission is also arguing that a coordinated EU approach to minimum levels of CO2 taxation, rather than a

"patchwork of environmentally friendly tax policies amongst Member States" (Ireland is one of four Member States to have established a carbon tax to date), would create a level playing field for industry across Europe, and make cross-border activity more straightforward and affordable. This is being promoted as part of a drive to instigate a growth-friendly shift in taxation away from labour and productivity towards consumption in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy's ambitions to deliver a low-carbon and energy-efficient economy.

It is envisaged that transitional periods in the region of a decade will leave time for industry to adapt to the new taxation structure. The proposal will now be discussed by the European Parliament and the Council and its final form is expected to enter into force as of 2013.

#### [Further details](#)

#### **Renewables in transport target**

Under the Renewable Energy Directive, each Member State has committed to ensure that, by 2020, at least 10% of the overall national energy consumption by transportation is delivered by renewable sources. A public consultation which opened on 14 April concerns the method of accounting for renewable electricity, hydrogen and biomethane towards the Directive's target. The exercise aims to seek views on what conditions and methods could be reasonably applied to the calculations used in achieving this target.

**Deadline: 14 June**

#### [Further details](#)

#### **Wind energy: Experts call for capacity and design rethink**

The potential for Europe to maximise its wind energy potential in a cost-effective manner depends largely on a major upscaling of turbine capacity and wind farm design according to a study published at the recent European Wind

Energy Association's (EWEA) annual event in Brussels. Research by the UPWIND ('Integrated wind turbine design') project (6<sup>th</sup> Research Framework Programme) has determined that massive 20 megawatt turbines which would quadruple the output of today's (5MW) models are now technologically feasible and could be deployed by the turn of the decade if their development is supported in the interim period by policy and funding instruments.

The project helped identify how the complicated process of constructing such large turbines could be achieved by reference to identifying fundamental innovations in the design, materials and operation which significantly differentiate them from the current standard model.

Among the main innovations UPWIND suggests for 20 MW turbines is the need to change the layout of wind farms by lowering the power output of the first row of turbines to allow for higher overall efficiency. Moreover, the report claims that the future smart wind turbine would be able to adapt its position and the pitch of its blade to local wind conditions. The study also mentions a variety of ways in which the blades should be changed to improve efficiency and make them easier to transport. Finally, it highlights how technological advances would allow future wind turbines to be better maintained than the current generation of machines.

The EWEA forecasts that wind energy will meet 26.34% of Europe's electricity demand by 2030, with almost as much electricity coming from offshore turbines as from those onshore. In an Irish context, the ESRI has recently published a report which may have significant implications for future Irish energy policy, in particular the promotion and support of both onshore and offshore wind.

#### [Report](#)

[EWEA Wind Resource Assessment Technology Workshop](#) (10-11 May, Brussels)

['A review of Irish energy policy' \(ESRI\)](#)

### ***Roma Inclusion Strategy***

On 5 April, the Commission brought forward its overarching plan for the better integration of the Roma. 'An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020' seeks to boost the economic and social integration of what is Europe's largest ethnic minority, including Ireland's Traveler Community (proportionally the eight largest national Roma presence across the EU), by guiding concerted action at all levels and providing funding to address the multiple causes of exclusion.

The Framework, by which forthcoming national plans are to be assessed and monitored for tangible progress, focuses on four pillars of access: housing and public utilities such as water and electricity; at least primary-level education; employment opportunities; and healthcare. This is in line with the EU's broader Europe 2020 targets for jobs, social inclusion and education.

The set of measures received a broad welcome at the European Parliament's monthly plenary session – this body having already had a heavy influence on its development. Nonetheless, MEPs stressed the need to secure binding targets. The EU framework will now be examined by Member States with a view to adoption by the European Council in June.

#### [Further details](#)

### ***Single Market Act: 12 measures for growth***

On 13 April, the European Commission adopted the Single Market Act – a set of measures to relaunch the Single Market within the next two years in order to "make life easier for businesses, citizens, consumers and workers".

Initial plans were set out last October to bring forward new initiatives to boost free movement of goods, services, people and capital and remove remaining cross-border administrative and enforcement barriers. A public consultation on a list of 50 proposals to lever growth,

competitiveness and social progress that could be put into action in the near future was carried out over the winter. Responses received have focused attention on 12 instruments in particular.

The ideas range from habitual EU concerns – reducing regulatory and administrative constraints; boosting social entrepreneurship; intellectual property rights; consumer confidence – to some newer and more controversial ambitions including developing carbon taxation; the introduction of legislation to facilitate access to venture capital across Europe; a new system of standardisation for the services sector; and the simplification of public procurement legislative framework. The Commission will make proposals during the coming months with the aim being to gain final approval for legislation from the European Parliament and the Council before the end of 2012.

#### [Further details](#)

### ***GMO crops: environmental impacts and socio-economic implications***

On 12 April, MEPs from the Environment Committee voted to give Member States a choice in the authorisation of GM (genetically modified) crop cultivation on their territory by adding environmental impacts to a list of grounds on which restrictions or prohibitions could be imposed. It is intended that this intervention will provide for greater legal certainty in the event of challenges by GM proponents to negative decisions. The original, more restrictive, proposals to overhaul EU policy in this controversial field were drafted by the European Commission in July.

At present, EU Member States are only able to restrict GM crop cultivation under strict conditions, as authorisation licences are valid across the entire EU single market. While MEPs argue that the EU approval system – via European Food Safety Authority risk assessment – should be maintained, they are also keen that certain environmental and agricultural effects (e.g. pesticide resistance,

invasiveness of certain crops, and biodiversity threats), as well as the associated socio-economic impact linked to contamination, should be citable by Member States in order to justify a ban or limit on GMO cultivation.

Further grounds for restrictions backed by MEPs relate to the socio-economic impacts where risk of cross-contamination of conventional crops "cannot practicably be managed" or as a means of protecting other types of agriculture, such as organic farming, although the prospect of buffer zones has not been provided for in either case. Bans on health grounds would equally not apply.

[Further details](#)

Meanwhile the current limitations in available information by which to assess the socio-economic implications of GM crops in the EU have been set out in a Commission report which was presented on 15 April. The paper, which is intended to provoke an objective discussion on the potential role of socio-economic factors in the management of GMO cultivation, reveals that existing information on the issue is often statistically limited and frequently coloured by preconceived notions. It also provides a review of the findings of EU-funded research projects addressing the issue.

[Further details](#)

**Waste Reduction – best practice**

The most outstanding awareness-raising initiatives as part of last November's 'European Week of Waste Reduction' have been formally recognized at a ceremony in Brussels. Among a total of 4,346 actions involving administrations and public authorities; associations and NGOs; business and industry; and educational establishments, the winning initiatives and campaigns related to:

- A broad set of strategies promoting repair and reuse, responsible consumption, preference for tap water, and composting (Barcelona);

- Working with supermarkets to encourage consumer purchase of products with less packaging (Provence);
- Reducing the weight of glass in drinks bottle manufacturing without negative impact on product sales (Catalonia);
- Limiting food and packaging wasted in school lunches by collecting and weighing (Scotland);
- Creating a sustainable market for reclaimed building materials, and providing an instrument to promote creativity through reuse (Malta);
- Collecting and reselling unwanted items in reuse centres (Spain).

[www.ewwr.eu/press](http://www.ewwr.eu/press)

**Boost for aquaculture sector**

European Commissioner for Fisheries Maria Damanaki has announced that the European Commission is to give consideration to the ways in which the aquaculture sector, including freshwater, could be supported and developed. Speaking after the Council meeting of Fisheries Ministers held in Luxembourg on 14 April, the Commissioner emphasised the growing role of aquaculture, saying that the upcoming Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) reform will include organisational and funding changes designed to boost the sector. She emphasised aquaculture's job creation potential, in line with the Europe 2020 strategy and as a "conservation measure" alternative to overfishing.

As part of the CFP reform, Damanaki is proposing the establishment of an 'advisory council' on aquaculture to include the input of the sector and other stakeholders, as well as local authorities on a "shared competence" basis. National management plans on aquaculture are also planned. A consultation will be launched in June inviting the industry, environmental organisations and public authorities to provide their views. The Commission has announced that additional aid may be provided in the

future to ensure adequate financing of the sector.

*Further details to follow.*

**Maritime Spatial Planning & Integrated Coastal Zone Management**

The Commission has launched a consultation to gather stakeholder feedback about the status and future of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) in the EU, and to assess where further EU action would be most useful. The information gathered through the anonymous online questionnaire will be used as part of an impact assessment and may be used to prepare draft proposals on MSP and/or ICZM in the future. Contributions may be made until 20 May.

A public hearing to discuss whether future EU action is warranted to support the implementation of ICZM is being organised to take place in Brussels on 30 May.

[Questionnaire](#)

[Public hearing on ICZM](#)

**Impacts of fisheries policy on communities**

How changes brought about by the Common Fisheries Policy in recent years have affected not only the sector itself but wider coastal communities dependent on fisheries, has until now been largely unknown despite being integrated as a concern of the European Fisheries Fund's Axis 4. A newly-published study by the Commission DG for Maritime Affairs explores this issue by considering the role of other factors as drivers of change and how communities have adapted and responded. Among the 24 detailed case studies included as annexes is one on Killybegs, Co. Donegal.

['Regional social and economic impacts of change in fisheries-dependent communities'](#)

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## **European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) consultation**

On 14 April the European Commission launched a public consultation on the future strategy of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) approach – building on the lessons learned from its initial phase as a new form of cross-sectoral EU collaboration to drive innovation and entrepreneurship.

The EIT headquarters is in Budapest with 16 cross-border, public-private partnership satellite sites planned for roll-out throughout Europe. These 'Knowledge and Innovation Communities' (KICs) are to bring together excellence in higher education institutions, research centres and businesses. To date, three KICs have been created, focusing on sustainable energy (InnoEnergy KIC), climate change (Climate KIC) and the information and communication society (EIT ICTLabs).

The consultation will feed into a 'strategic innovation agenda' for the EIT which the Commission is due to propose by the end of this year. The agenda will outline the Institute's main priorities until 2020, focusing on its mission and objectives, funding and future themes. This complements a broader debate on the future of EU research and innovation funding launched in February.

*Deadline: 30 June*

[Further details](#)

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## **Regional Airports state aid**

The Commission launched a public consultation in early April to get stakeholders' views on the application of the 2005 Guidelines on the public financing of airports and of the start-up of new route services from regional airports. The exercise is being carried out to determine whether prevailing market conditions require changes to this guidance and to the 1994 EU Aviation Guidelines on the assessment of social and restructuring aid for airlines.

*Deadline: 6 June*

[Further details](#)

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## **Open Days 2011 regional partnerships selected**

206 regions and cities from across the EU and beyond have been selected to take part in Open Days 2011, the European Week of Regions and Cities from 10-13 October. As part of a wider programme of events, 23 partnerships, through their member regions' Brussels offices, will each jointly organise a workshop on a specific EU Regional Policy theme relating to either the Europe 2020 growth strategy; better delivery of programmes; or the issue of geographic factors. Local events on a related theme will also be scheduled in the participating regions.

This year, the Irish Regions have elected to collaborate on a 'Maritime Knowledge Network' consortium along with local and regional administrations in Portugal, Spain, France and the UK. This reflects progress on the development of an Integrated EU Strategy for the Atlantic Area. The full programme of events and registration will be available in July.

[Further details](#)

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## **EU Task Force returns to Northern Ireland**

European Commission officials visited Belfast in early April to kick-start a second phase in the work of the Northern Ireland Task Force. The original 'Barroso Taskforce' was formed in 2007 as a sign of faith in the agreement to re-establish power-sharing arrangements at Stormont. Its role was to take stock of Northern Ireland's development prospects in a climate of peace and stability, and to identify strategic options for making the most of the opportunities that European policy initiatives and programmes could offer as a means to modernise various sectors of the economy. A comprehensive roadmap report was delivered in April 2008 to

further political and operational co-operation.

The new taskforce under EU Regional Policy Commissioner Johannes Hahn will be focusing on aligning future Northern Ireland government priorities to grow the economy, tackle disadvantage and deliver efficient public services with EU level strategies, including the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. This renewed momentum is thought likely to have a significant influence on future funding prospects.

[Further details](#)

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## **EVENTS**

### **Sustainable Peri-Urban Regions**

**Dublin, 23-24 May**

This year's General Assembly meeting of the European Peri-Urban Regions (PURPLE) will be hosted by the Dublin Regional Authority and include the conference: 'Enabling sustainable communities: the role of peri-urban regions'.

As well as providing a broader European context on the issue of changing the way we design, use, consume and dispose of products and services while maintaining our environment, the event will profile the Dublin Region's particular approach to sustainable communities. This is based on developing regional and local government level policies which provide the background to sustainable living while also engaging with local communities, schools and business to develop joint community/government action in order to achieve buy-in.

Contact: [sbolton@dra.ie](mailto:sbolton@dra.ie) to attend.

[www.purple-eu.org/](http://www.purple-eu.org/)

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### **Green Week**

**Brussels, 24-27 May**

The biggest annual conference on European environmental policy, Green Week, offers 40 workshops and other side events over 4 days on the challenges and opportunities associated with promoting a shift towards using the earth's resources in a more sustainable manner and the strategies being put in place.

[Further details](#)

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### **Donegal in Europe**

**Brussels, 24 May (6pm)**

The launch of this July's 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Earagail Arts Festival will take place at the European Parliament along with a broader Donegal Cultural Showcase (including performances by Clannad's Moya Brennan and LUXE carnival artists) hosted by the Office of Pat the Cope Gallagher MEP and Cllr Patrick McGowan (Committee of the Regions) as well as a buffet provided by Bord Bia and the Donegal Food Coast Initiative (a programme of the Donegal County Enterprise Board).

To attend contact: [Nadine Coyle](#): (include full name, address, date of birth and passport/identity card number).

[www.eaf.ie](http://www.eaf.ie)

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### **Regional Policy and Sport**

**Brussels, 24 May**

This European Olympic Committees conference will focus on the role of sport as a tool for regional development. The event will also address the question of how sport can contribute to the objectives of the Europe 2020 growth strategy and boost sustainable development of Europe's regions in the future.

[Further details](#)

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### **Diversity in cities for growth**

**Brussels, 25 May**

The Open Cities project – part of the URBACT urban development programme and including the involvement of Dublin City Council – is holding its final conference entitled “Open Cities and Economic Recovery: Why city openness matters in times of recession”. The project has been examining how openness can allow cities to be more competitive in the long-term by attracting international populations. The event will present local initiatives and new tools under the themes of leadership and governance; integration and inclusion; and internationalisation; with a view to helping city authorities to meet the ‘Europe 2020’ growth agenda targets.

[Further details](#)

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### **Week of Innovative Regions**

**Debrecen, Hungary, 7-9 June**

This year's Week of Innovative Regions in Europe (WIRE) conference will focus on topics relevant to regional and local authorities such as how smart specialisation can be deployed; the key support role of clusters, support systems and networks; and how to make more efficient use of research and innovation resources at these levels. Particular emphasis will be paid to developing possible synergies between research infrastructure and clustering policy – notably by reference to the Europe 2020 Strategy.

[www.wire2011.eu/](http://www.wire2011.eu/)

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### **Local homeless strategies**

**Brussels, 17 June**

The Committee of the Regions together with the HABITACT European exchange forum on local homeless strategies and FEANTSA (European federation of national organisations working with homeless people) will host the 6<sup>th</sup> European seminar on local homeless strategies on the theme of ‘Governance of homeless service provision at local level.

The objective is to take a critical look at different models of organisation and provision of homeless services, their financing arrangements in the face of austerity measures, and the impact of European legislation on their work. Local authority representatives are also welcome to attend the HABITACT steering group the previous day.

**Registration deadline: 20 May**

[Further details](#)

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### **Smart Cities & Communities**

**Brussels, 21 June**

The European Commission will launch its Smart Cities & Communities Initiative with a conference to inform stakeholders about the outcome of the current public consultation (see *March Bulletin*) plus a forthcoming Call for Proposals.

The initiative aims to accelerate the large-scale deployment of energy efficiency and innovative low carbon technology solutions in Europe's cities, focusing in particular on energy systems, transport, buildings and ICT. This will entail the innovative integration of different technologies and require the commitment and close collaboration of actors including local authorities.

[Further Details](#)



**Irish Regions**  
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