



Euro News

The UK Network of Euro Info Centres

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Question:

What is the RoHS directive?

Answer:

The RoHS Directive approximates the laws of EU Member States on restrictions of the use of hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment, and aims to contribute to the protection of human health and the environmentally sound recovery and disposal of waste electrical and electronic equipment. From 1 July 2006, new electrical and electronic equipment containing more than agreed levels of lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium, polybrominated biphenyl (PBB) and polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) flame retardants cannot be put on the EU market. Placing non-compliant products on the market is an offence. If a person places a non-compliant product on the market, it does not matter that he or she intended to do no wrong or was unaware of requirements, the fact that he or she contravened the law is sufficient to allow a court to convict.

The phrase 'put on the market' refers to the initial action of making a product available for the first time on the EU market. This is considered to take place when a product is transferred from the stage of manufacture with the intention of distribution or use on the EU market. The transfer of the product takes place either from the manufacturer, or the manufacturer's authorised representative in the EU, to the importer established in the EU or to the person responsible for distributing the product on the EU market. The transfer may also take place directly from the manufacturer, or authorised representative in the EU, to the final consumer or user. The product is considered to be transferred either when the physical hand-over occurs or when the transfer of ownership has taken place. This transfer can be for payment or free of charge, and it can be based on any type of legal instrument. Thus, a transfer of a product is considered to have taken place, for instance, in the circumstances of sale, loan,

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hire, leasing and gift.

The National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) has been awarded the contract to set up the UK's national RoHS enforcement body. The NWML will be delivering RoHS enforcement when the regulations are fully implemented.

For more information, see: www.rohs.gov.uk

Love EU Tender

Here we have another success story - how a North-West building services firm scooped a £2 million deal using the EIC information service.



A North-West building services company clinched a £2 million deal to maintain housing association properties in Cumbria. Integral UK, which is based in Bootle, beat off stiff competition to land the four-year contract to provide 'round-the-clock maintenance and repair services to 2,000 Eden Housing Association homes around the Penrith area. The deal confirms Integral's position as the country's leading independent building services' operator. It also means that the firm's Merseyside office now manages more than 60,000 properties across the country.

Integral learned of the opportunity via a daily public tenders' alert service offered by the Euro Info Centre North West. Integral's quantity surveyor Ray Barrow paid tribute to the tenders' bulletin: 'Quite simply, without the alert service we might not have won the Cumbria contract. After we learned of the tender, we spoke to the Euro Info Centre to make sure that our proposal met the necessary criteria. We had already done some work with the association but this new deal is a major extension of our involvement with them. The Euro Info Centre was incredibly helpful and played a significant part in our success.'

Integral employs 250 staff in Bootle specialising in a range of trades. The company already looks after housing association properties in Barrow-in-Furness, St Helens, Wirral, Macclesfield, Barking, Brent, Norris Green and Sefton.

The Euro Info Centre North West is part of the European Commission's flagship business information and advice network. Hosted by local business support agencies, there are 280 such offices spread across 44 countries providing assistance to firms

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wanting to secure private or public sector work throughout the continent's internal market.

Euro Info Centre North West manager Mark Critchley said Integral's success underlined the centre's value: 'We are here to provide highly-specialised support to regional businesses wishing to secure public sector contracts and find private sector partners across Europe. For a growing number of businesses from Carlisle to Crewe, we are now the first and last port of call for this kind of help.'

More details about the Euro Info Centre North West and the tender's alert service can be found at www.itc4gm.co.uk.

Tapping Into Technology

Finding technology partners in Europe is easier than you might think. Here Tim Benzie of London Technology Network explains how.

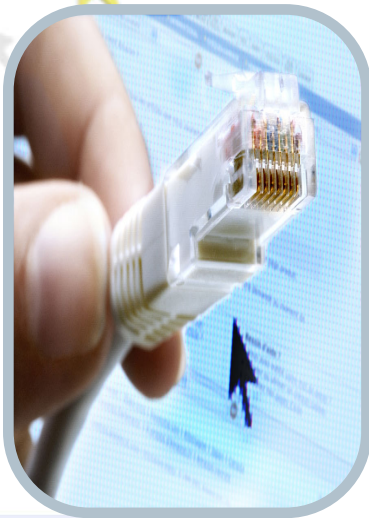


Image: © European Community, 2006

As part of its commitment to innovation in Framework Programme 7 the European Commission determined something many small business owners have known for years. The technology is out there, but for many SMEs, accessing the innovation can be difficult, daunting, expensive and time-consuming.

One of the EC's many ongoing solutions to the problem is the Innovation Relay Centre Network, a series of 71 centres and more than 200 business development offices across 33 countries. The Network's aim is to encourage innovation transfer across nations - and you may be surprised to learn that this free service has outlets across the UK and in London.

Innovation transfer specialists London Technology Network (LTN) was chosen to host the London hub of the Innovation Relay Centre in 2004, a service also funded by the London Development Agency. London IRC provides access to a vast online database, where participants can search (by keyword) for technology offers/requests in their field - and also submit their technology to possible European partners. London IRC has put London companies and researchers in successful contact with organisations in Spain, Turkey and Austria, as well as holding international brokerage events attracting attendees from all over Europe.

First steps

For businesses in the UK, the first step to visit www.ircuk.org.uk/ and type in your postcode - this will reveal your local IRC. A visit to the main IRC Network website (www.ircnet.lu/) is also worth a look to read success stories of ways the IRC has helped UK

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companies, including:

- A patented Norwegian water filtration system is now available for installation across the UK and further afield, thanks to a new partnership forged by the IRC network.
- Large glass panels that can respond to a small vibration are the subject of a new technology transfer agreement between a Parisian high-tech company and a UK marketing company.

For London-based companies, London IRC has the added bonus of being hosted by LTN - who also assists with innovation transfer through 'technology matching' and networking events. In the first process - 'technology matching' - companies or universities contact a member of the group's team of technology analysts/consultants with a particular need regarding innovation. The team refine this need into either a technology offer or technology request - and put the word out to an immense network of academic and industry contacts. Successful matches are made possible because LTN's scope is vast and impartial, with contacts in 130 departments in 25+ universities, including Imperial College London, University College London, Oxford University, and Queen Mary University of London.

The second way LTN can help is through networking events - although attendance at such evenings is no simple matter. The events are strictly invitation-only and highly targeted - with equal numbers of academic and industry attendees. Events have been held on diverse topics such as grid computing, waste management and vascular health, with attendees invited because they represent an institution doing cutting-edge research.

Company executives in attendance come from small enterprises right up to multinationals, but they all have one thing in common: a serious commitment to innovation.

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There are a few restrictions. LTN will not help companies apply for funding - but can put them in contact with agencies who may be able to help. They also do not provide professional intellectual property or patent law assistance - participants must take responsibility for these matters themselves.

LTN and London IRC are definitely worth a look for the serious entrepreneur, inventor, SME or researcher. To find out more visit www.ltnetwork.org, www.london-irc.org, or call 0870 765 7602 for a preliminary chat.

Linking With The Poles And Going Dutch

EICs Southampton and Kent, with the support of UK Trade and Invest are managing two large match-making events in November 2006. The first takes place in Windsor on 21 November and the second is on 23 November in Gatwick.



The main objective is to help SMEs from three high-growth regions (the South-East of England, Noord Brabant in the Netherlands and Malopolska in Poland) meet each other with a view to forming international collaborations. Each pre-arranged meeting will take 30 minutes and is an opportunity for SMEs to do some worthwhile business in a very short space of time.

SMEs will also have the opportunity to attend six hotspots covering such topical issues as internationalising your website, getting paid abroad and opportunities in Poland and the Netherlands.

In addition, international technology centres, R&D organisations, business support and environmental bodies will be on hand to advise and share knowledge.

The event details can be found on: www.growintoeurope.com

For more information and to book a place contact Richard Hall or Toni Saraiva of the Southampton EIC on 02380 832866

The Free Movement Of Workers In Europe: A UK Focus



The European Commission has named 2006 the European Year of Workers' Mobility and the initiative is aimed at raising awareness and increasing the understanding of the benefits of working abroad. Here we provide a representative picture of what 'workers' mobility' in Europe means or can mean both for employers and employees.

A few figures

'The EU offers job flexibility and the freedom to travel within its boundaries.' That is the view of the majority of Europeans, according to the new Eurobarometer survey on geographical mobility. The percentage of people living abroad however remains low (around 2%) and findings reveal that mobility is perceived differently among the Member States. In Denmark and Sweden, where the level is the highest, respondents firmly believed in the benefit of job mobility. In Belgium, Germany, Estonia and Greece however, more than two thirds of the population showed their scepticism.

The UK situation

The figures indicate that 447,000 people from eight new Member States have applied to work in the UK since the enlargement in May 2004:

- 427,000 workers from the EU-8 successfully applied for work in the UK
- 62% are Polish
- 82% are aged 18-34
- 56% work in factories
- The Anglia region has the highest proportion of workers (15%).

According to a joint report, 'Accession Monitoring Report May 2004-June 2006', accession workers are continuing to go where

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the work is, helping to fill the gaps in the UK labour market, particularly in administration, business and management, hospitality and catering, agriculture, manufacturing and food, fish and meat processing.

Why do Europeans move to another country?

Love and wellbeing are cited as the main factors prompting Europeans to change country. A third of European migrants move to be with their partner or family and a quarter to find a better quality of life. Only 0.5% of those living in a country other than their own move because of employment alone.

Young people tend to move to the UK and Germany for work or study.

Legal background

The free movement of people is one of the four fundamental freedoms provided for in EU legislation. It comes in tandem with the free movement of goods, services and capital.

Treaty rights

Enshrined in the European Community Treaty since the very beginning of the Economic Community (1957), the section covering the 'free movement of persons, services and capital' focuses in particular on the free movement of workers.

Article 39 of the European Community Treaty entails, as a principle:

- the right to look for a job in another Member State
- the right to work in another Member State
- the right to reside there for that purpose
- the right to remain there

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- the right to equal treatment in respect of access to employment, working conditions and all other advantages which could help to facilitate the worker's integration in the host Member State.

Article 39 applies to the so-called migrant workers, who leave their European country of origin and go to work in another Member State. They must undertake genuine and effective work, under the direction of someone else, for which they are paid. It applies to workers (and not to self-employed people, students, retired or non-active persons).

Certain rights of migrant workers are extended to their family members. They have the right to live with the worker in the host Member State and the right to equal treatment as regards education and social advantages, for example. Indeed, according to Regulation 1612/68/EEC, amended by Directive 2004/38/EC, family members have the right to work in the host Member State even if they do not have the nationality of one of the Member States.

The free movement of workers versus posting of workers

The free movement of workers has to be distinguished from the 'posting of workers'. Indeed, the relevant piece of legislation here is Directive 96/71/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework regarding the provision of services. For the purpose of the Directive, 'posted worker' means a worker who, for a limited period of time, carries out his or her work on the territory of a Member State other than the Member State in which he or she normally works. The basic principle of the Directive is that working conditions and pay in effect in a Member State should be applicable both to workers from that State, and those from other EU countries posted to work there.

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Transitional measures

The enlargement treaty of May 2004 contained some transitional provisions for EU-8 workers to access the labour market of the old Member States (EU-15). Those transitional provisions can be seen as an exception to the free movement of workers.

First phase: 1 May 2004-30 April 2006

For the first two years following accession (1 May 2004-30 April 2006), EU-15 Member States had the possibility to restrict their labour market to workers from the EU-8 and to apply their national law. In practical terms, this meant that a worker from the EU-8 was likely to need a work permit.


During this first phase, three EU-15 Member States (Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom) liberalised access to their labour markets. The UK adopted however a mandatory Worker's Registration Scheme. Under this scheme, workers from the EU-8 Member States must register with the UK Home Office within 30 days of starting their employment in the UK. The remaining EU-15 Member States maintained their work permit systems, albeit with some modifications, sometimes combined with a quota system.

In return, three EU-8 Member States (Poland, Slovenia and Hungary) applied reciprocity to EU-15 Member States applying restrictions. None of the EU-8 Member States applied for permission to restrict access to workers from the other EU-8 Member States.

Second phase: 1 May 2006-30 April 2009

The Member States had until 30 April 2006 to notify the Commission as to their intentions for the next phase, which started on 1 May 2006 and will end on 30 April 2009.

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The situation for the second phase is that Member States which have opened their labour markets completely (in addition to the UK, Ireland and Sweden which already did so during the first phase) are Spain, Finland, Greece, Portugal and very recently Italy (on 21 July 2006). The United Kingdom continues its mandatory registration scheme. Member States which maintain restrictions but with announced simplifications are France, Belgium, Denmark, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. For example, France partially lifted restrictions, providing fast-track work permits in certain priority areas where recruitment is a problem. These include restaurant services, industrial maintenance, construction, public works and health. Since 2004, Denmark has allowed workers from the EU-8 to look for a job for up to six months. If they find one, they can have residence and a work permit.

Member States which will maintain restriction during the second period are Germany and Austria. However, workers can now move freely between 18 of the EU's 25 Member States.

Third phase: 1 May 2009-1 May 2011

A Member State can ask the European Commission for authorisation to continue applying national measures for a further two years, but only if it is experiencing serious disturbances in its labour market.

From 2011, seven years after accession, there will be complete freedom of movement for workers from all Member States.

It is important to note that if a Member State has stopped applying national measures, it can ask to be authorised to re-impose restrictions if it undergoes serious problems in its labour market, or there is a threat of this. This is called the 'safeguard clause'.

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Free movement of workers in the future enlarged Europe

Romania and Bulgaria are acceding countries and will join the EU on 1 January 2007, unless they fail to meet the criteria. Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have candidate status and aim to join the EU at a later date. The question will rise amongst the Member States whether or not to open their labour market to Romanian and Bulgarian nationals. According to a UK Home Office spokeswoman, 'any decision will be based on various factors including an evaluation of the UK's labour market needs, the impact of previous enlargement in 2004 and the position of other Member States'.

EU-8 = the eight New Member States (Poland, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia)

EU-15 = the 15 old Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom).

For a full overview of workers' mobility consult the European Commission report on the Functioning of the Transitional Arrangements set out in the Accession Treaty (period 1 May 2004-30 April 2006).

If you need more information on the free movement of workers in Europe (EU or UK legislation), please do not hesitate to contact us on 01727 813 693 or email info@hertseic.co.uk

Safestart!

European Week for Safety and Health at Work, 23-27 October 2006



Image: © European Community, 2006

Young people, under the age of 25, represent the next generation of our workforce. Your role is to get them off to a safe and productive start. As an employer, you have a responsibility to make sure they work safely by providing a good health and safety management system which protects everyone. The fact sheet provides advice on your role. Other fact sheets cover more details on legal requirements to protect young workers, and advice for supervisors, for young people and for parents.

Young people can be at particular risk because they lack experience, training and awareness. They need good advice, information and supervision as well as suitable, safe and healthy jobs. Common causes of injury to young workers are from doing jobs they are not trained to do, inadequate supervision, and using dangerous machinery or substances. According to Canadian research, new and young, inexperienced workers are over five times more likely to be injured during their first four weeks of employment than other workers.

The benefits of good practice:

Apart from complying with the law, there are clear benefits from paying attention to the health and safety of young workers.

- Good safety management is good for business and is a feature of an efficiently run organisation.
- Measures to keep young people safe will help protect all employees.
- By properly training and educating young people, you can benefit from their energy, enthusiasm and willingness to learn while keeping them safe on the job.

Safestart!

- Good supervision will help you to assess how young people are getting on in the job and monitor the effectiveness of their training.

Your reputation as a good employer will help you to attract good quality, young recruits.

It is important that you demonstrate your own commitment to health and safety, establish procedures and measures and keep them up-to-date, emphasise that unsafe practices are unacceptable and respond promptly to health and safety concerns.

The information contained in this article is taken from Young Worker Safety - Advice for Employers, a fact sheet produced by OSHA as part of the Safestart campaign.

Further information on young worker safety is available from the Agency website at <http://ew2006.osha.eu.int/>

Prevention advice and links to good practice for specific risks and workplaces are available at: <http://osha.eu.int/> Sources of advice include national authorities, trade unions and trade associations.

Grants in October 2006

The current period for most European funding programmes comes to an end at the end of 2006 which means that the number of grants and funding opportunities from EU sources will be limited for the rest of the year. The new funding period will run from 2007-2013 and it will be interesting to see what areas will be the main focus in the years to come.



URBAN-Thames Gateway to Kent is available to public, private and voluntary sector groups that have projects in the Dartford area. They have to fit into the following themes:

- Social inclusion
- Developing access to learning
- Improvement of business structure and regeneration.

The application deadline is 23 November 2006.

Eurostat Grants provides for the growing need for official statistics which ensure a common statistical reference base within the EU. The grants are available to professional bodies, commercial enterprises, universities, etc. There is a periodically open call for funding to cover the costs of statistical projects.

The **European Young Investigator Awards'** aim is to enable and encourage outstanding young researchers of any nationality to work in a European environment for the benefit of the development of European science and the building up of the next generation of leading European researchers. A grant of 750,000 to 1,250,000 euro over a five-year period is available. The application deadline is 30 November 2006.

The **European ICT Prize** is an annual award for innovative projects and services. Projects need to be a demonstratable prototype with a high information content and evident market potential. If already marketed, products should not have been on the market for more than 18 months. A total of 50 to 70 nominees will be selected for a prize of 5,000 euro and the top

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three projects will receive an additional 200,000 euro each. Organisations in the EU or associated countries may apply: the 2006 deadline is 4 December.

Under **Common Agricultural Policy - Information Measures** financial support is available for measures to disseminate information about the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), particularly issues surrounding its reform and aspects relating to rural development, traditional farming, competitiveness and trade. Any organisation capable of carrying out a specific information measure or an information measure work programme can apply. Grants range from 12,500 to 100,000 euro, which will be equivalent to between 50% and 75% of the costs of a project. Priorities for 2007 are included in the call which has been issued in that year's budget. The deadline is 24 November 2006.

The above grants are only a selection of the grants which are available at the moment. Further information on these and other grant opportunities is available from your local Euro Info Centre.

Peter Matthews worked for the European Commission and now advises on how to complete applications for Grantfinder projects. He also specialises in global trade and investment funding support and soft loans from the EU to Eastern Europe, Northern and Sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia.

Please contact your local Euro Info Centre for more information on these programmes. A one-page summary of the programmes generated from Grantfinder will be sent to you free of charge.

Consultations

Here we provide a selection of current consultations that are of interest to SMEs.



Meeting the challenges of standardisation in ICT

The European Commission has launched a study to prepare recommendations that will ensure the EU's standardisation policy for the information and communication technology sector meets the challenges of today's fast moving markets. All standardisation stakeholders are invited to respond to the opinion survey which will be used to help compile the report being prepared by an outside contractor.

The analysis is being conducted against the background of major changes in the ICT sector. The combination of liberalisation and globalisation has brought competition within and between sectors, strategic partnerships between companies and a decreasing role for governments. The most striking development is the shift from hardware to software and the impact this has on traditional standardisation policy.

The results of the study, and its proposals, will be presented at an open workshop in spring 2007.

More information can be found on: <http://www.ictstandardisation.eu>

Commission asks for input on future policy for EU metals industry

Industry is faced with a pressure on access to raw materials for metal production. Prices for all sorts of metals have reached record levels following increasing demand of the new emerging economies. As metal is a fundamental input material for most EU manufacturing industries (automotive, aerospace, chemicals,

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electrical and mechanical machinery, etc) and the construction sectors, these developments represent a challenge to EU companies. Based on a new European Commission analysis of the metal sector in terms of structural changes and major trends, the Commission intends to adopt a future Communication proposing policy action to allow the EU metals industry to adapt to the new context of globalisation. To prepare its communication, the Commission has launched a stakeholder consultation to collect comments, views and suggestions on future policy options in the fields of waste, energy, trade and research.

Commission Vice-President Günter Verheugen, responsible for enterprise and industry policies, said: 'The EU metals industry plays an important role in itself and for other manufacturing industries. We need to improve its access to raw materials in a context of fair international competition and to secure and affordable energy.'

The Commission analysis shows that raw materials and energy are the most important competitiveness factors for the EU's metals industry. Depending on the sub-sector, energy and raw material costs represent roughly between 50% and 90% of the total costs of refined metals production.

The new competitive challenges and the structural changes are evident: With the exception of copper (Chile) and nickel (Russia), China has become the biggest producer of metals and a major competitor of the EU on the metals' raw materials world market. As regards consumption of metals, the EU was still in the lead for aluminium, copper, lead and nickel in 2004. However, China is catching up and is already the biggest consumer of steel and zinc.

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Amongst others items in its consultation, the Commission seek the views of stakeholders on the following:

- How to support the development of design standards to enhance metals recycling?
- How technical guidance related to alloys should be best prepared under the new REACH programme?
- How a rapid and full implementation of the energy markets liberalisation can impact on the competitiveness of the sector?
- How to ensure fair competition world-wide in both production and trade of metals?

The public consultation can be found here:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/steel/index_en.htm

Distance Selling Directive: state of play and public consultation

The European Commission adopted a Communication on the implementation of Directive 1997/7/EC on Distance Selling and has launched a consultation in order to assess the need to update the Directive. All EU Member States have transposed the Directive, but some problems have emerged with its practical application. For instance, reliance on new technologies, such as 'mobile commerce' through SMS, and the popularity of certain marketing methods, such as on-line auctions, underlines the need to consider the effectiveness of the regulation of distance selling. The use of the 'minimum clause', allowing Member States to introduce more stringent provisions to ensure a higher level of consumer protection, has also led to differences in the degree of protection from one Member State to another. This may have led to divergences and distortions in the internal market.

Markos Kyprianou, Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, said: 'Member States have shown they are engaged in ensuring a high level of consumer protection across the EU.'

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Some of them have gone even further in transposing this key piece of EU legislation into national law. What I am most worried about are possible loopholes or areas of legal uncertainty created by new and fast-growing distance selling products and technologies, which might create confusion for consumers and serious business alike, or be exploited by rogue traders. The consultation we are launching will help us gather valuable stakeholder feedback on whether and how to update the Distance Selling Directive. It will also feed into our broader review of the Consumer Protection body of legislation next year.¹

The consultation addresses issues such as the clarity and adequacy of legal terms used in the Directive, the need to modify exemptions, requirements for prior information, written confirmation, right of withdrawal, performance of distance contracts, and other questions including links to EU legislation on privacy and electronic communications.

The consultation on Distance Selling will last until 21 November 2006. A summary of responses will be published on the Commission's website. In parallel, later this year the Commission will publish a Green Paper launching a broader consultation on other aspects of EU Consumer Protection legislation. These consultations will be pooled together to decide whether and how the Consumer regulatory framework should be revised.

For more information, see:

http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/cons_int/safe_shop/dist_sell/index_en.htm

Green Paper on detection technologies for law enforcement, customs and other security authorities

On 1 September 2006 the Commission adopted a Green Paper on detection technologies in the work of law enforcement, customs and other security authorities (COM (2006) 474). The

Consultations

Hague Programme: strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union, adopted by the European Council in November 2004, and the Communication on 'Prevention, preparedness and response to terrorist attacks' of October 2004 highlight Public-Private Security Dialogue as a tool for private and public sectors to engage in a meaningful dialogue on Europe's security needs.

The Commission calls on all interested persons to send in their replies and any other useful contributions by no later than 10 January 2007 to the following e-mail address:

European Commission

Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom and Security

Unit D1 - Fight against terrorism, trafficking and exploitation of human beings, and law enforcement cooperation

Office LX46

B - 1049 Brussels

E-mail: JLS-D1-Detection@ec.europa.eu

Fax: +32-2/2967616

All responses from both public and private sectors will be published on the Commission's internet site unless respondents explicitly state that they wish to keep particular information confidential.

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The European Qualifications Framework

The Commission has adopted a proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF). The EQF will provide a common language to describe qualifications which will help Member States, employers and individuals compare qualifications across the EU's diverse education and training systems. Further information at: <http://europa.eu/rapid/>

EU Ombudsman supports a culture of service in the European Commission

The European Ombudsman, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, has welcomed the European Commission's new system for dealing with complaints. The new system, designed by Vice-President of the Commission, Margot Wallström, directly involves Commissioners in responding to the Ombudsman's inquiries. During the meeting, the Ombudsman highlighted his dual role - he is not just an external control, but also a resource for those who are trying to create an organisational culture of service to citizens and of respect for their rights. The Ombudsman also emphasised his willingness to help the Commission to identify and overcome difficulties in its administration. According to the Ombudsman, mistakes occur in any administration and do not necessarily imply bad intentions. When a mistake occurs, matters should be put right if possible and an apology given if appropriate. A mistake begins to become a problem when it is denied.

The European Ombudsman investigates complaints about maladministration in the EU institutions and bodies. Any EU citizen, resident, enterprise or association in a Member State, can lodge a complaint with the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman offers a fast, flexible and free means of solving problems with

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the EU administration. For more information:

<http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu>

Guidebook to working abroad

Do you want to work in another EU Member State? Then you can find out about your rights in a guidebook published in the framework of the European Year of Workers' Mobility 2006, which has been organised to raise awareness and understanding of the benefits of working abroad. The information contained within it can be obtained from http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/free_movement/index_en.htm

European Year of Workers' Mobility 2006

The Business Benefits Information Seminar, Wednesday 25 October 2006, Hillington Park Innovation Centre, Hillington, Glasgow

The European Commission has named 2006 as the 'European Year of Workers' Mobility' to raise awareness and understanding of the business benefits gained in employing workers from other European countries.

Come along to the Euro Info Centre's free seminar to find out from a series of expert speakers how you and your business can benefit from employing migrant workers, and the positive effect the mobile European worker can have on the Scottish economy. Speakers will include representatives from EURES, the Scottish Executive's Relocation Advisory Service and Airlink Limited.

For further information on the Business Benefits Information Seminar, please contact Joanne Flanagan, joanne.flanagan@scotent.co.uk or tel: 0141 204 8380