

## European Science, Engineering and Technology Highlights<sup>1</sup> FEBRUARY 2015

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<sup>1</sup> Note: If you would like additional information or background, please feel free to contact [NSFEurope@nsf.gov](mailto:NSFEurope@nsf.gov)

### **New EU initiative to build capacity for technology transfer**

On January 20th, PROGRESS-TT, a new Horizon 2020 project was launched in Brussels. This marked the beginning of a European Commission initiative to improve the capacity of public research organizations to convert investment in research into commercial returns through innovation.

Full article available at:

[http://cordis.europa.eu/news/rcn/123030\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/news/rcn/123030_en.html)



### **EU: Commission helps bring Europe's best innovations to the market**

With the support of the European Research Council (ERC) "Proof of Concept" grants, 59 researchers in Europe will now get the chance to turn their inventions into viable products. Among these mould-breaking ideas are such innovations as a simple blood test to diagnose breast cancer, a timber wood tracking device to help prevent illegal deforestation, and artificial veins modelled on marine sponges. Worth up to €150,000 (\$170,125), these grants will allow selected ERC grantees to build start-ups, establish intellectual property rights for their inventions or explore other ways to test their ideas on the market.

Full article available at:

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-4084\\_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-4084_en.htm?locale=en)



### **Towards science-based policies for the Baltic Sea**

The challenges affecting a regional sea cannot be tackled effectively by individual countries acting alone. Nor can they be addressed without a thorough understanding of the relevant facts and processes. The states bordering the Baltic Sea are cooperating in a joint research program to provide policy-makers with the information they need to achieve greater sustainability.

Full article available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/infocentre/article\\_en.cfm?id=/research/headlines/news/article\\_15\\_01\\_30\\_en.html?infocentre&item=Infocentre&artid=33839](http://ec.europa.eu/research/infocentre/article_en.cfm?id=/research/headlines/news/article_15_01_30_en.html?infocentre&item=Infocentre&artid=33839)



### **Latvian EU presidency research priorities**

Latvia, for the first time, is assuming the presidency of the EU Council from January 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015 taking over from Italy. The priorities of the Latvian Presidency regarding research and innovation were presented at the European Parliament's Industry, Research, and Technology (ITRE) Committee by Latvian Education and Science Minister Mārīte Seile (*picture*).

The Latvian presidency's efforts will concentrate on better integration of the Innovation Union and the European Research Area (ERA), fostering Europe-wide networks without barriers while fully exploiting the potential of national research and innovation systems. The presidency will place an emphasis on the enhancement of the ERA through the ERA Roadmap, to be released by mid-2015 and in which EUREKA is contributing as a key stakeholder. In this regard, the Presidency will already focus on the roadmap's implementation and particularly on the optimal use of public investments in research. (EUREKA is an EU program that will spend 1.1 billion Euros over the next seven years to support collaboration among universities, research centers, and small businesses to enhance industrial innovation.

Full article available at:

[http://www.eurekanetwork.org/about/-/journal\\_content/56/10137/4549154?refererPlid=10195](http://www.eurekanetwork.org/about/-/journal_content/56/10137/4549154?refererPlid=10195)



### **Russia: Universities to launch foreign student recruitment hub**

The 15 Russian universities that make up the Global Universities Association are creating a unified center to recruit foreign applicants.

Maxim Khomyakov, the director of the center and vice-rector for international affairs at Ural Federal University in Yekaterinburg said that the center would open at the beginning of this year. However, "it will only have a minimal impact on the group [of foreign students] in 2015".

Full article available at:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20150122210443683>



### **UK: Quality of European research 'threatened by cuts'**

British universities risk losing their position as world-leading institutions if proposed cuts to the European Union research budget go ahead, according to the president of the umbrella organization Universities UK.

Professor Sir Christopher Snowden, who is also vice-chancellor of the University of Surrey, has warned against cuts to the EU's Horizon 2020 budget, a major source of funding to UK universities and research centers. Horizon 2020 is worth £67 billion (US\$102 billion) over the next six years (2014-20), with UK academics in line to receive £2 billion (US\$3 billion) in the first two years of the program.

Full article available at:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20150122205544131>

