Latest News

NEWS ARTICLE

First AAL call attracts 117 proposals

*(16 September 2008)*The first call for proposals (AAL-2008-1) of the Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme has attracted 117 transnational project proposals. Organisations from all AAL Partner States are represented in AAL proposals and project coordinators stem from 19 countries of the 23 AAL Partner States. 950 partners are counted in the transnational project proposals. Total costs of some 370 Mio € were indicated and 230 Mio € are requested as public funding, i.e. short below 2 Mio € per project proposal on average. The total request constitutes a four times oversubscription compared to an announced indicative total funding of 57.7 Mio €. The final selection of the projects is scheduled for 20 and 21 October at the General Assembly of the AAL Association, i.e. the legal entity that is responsible for the AAL Joint Programme. The Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme is a joint research and development (R&D) funding activity by 20 European Member States and three Associated States with the financial support of the European Community based on article 169 of the EC Treaty.

NEWS ARTICLE

Entries to the European e-Inclusion Awards closed on 12th September 2008. 469 submissions were received.

*(23 September 2008)*The e-Inclusion Awards were established by the European Commission to raise awareness, encourage participation and recognise excellence and good practice in using ICT and digital technology to tackle social and digital exclusion across Europe.

Contact: **EINCLUSIONEVENT2008@ec.europa.eu**
See also: **More about the e-Inclusion Ministerial Conference 2008**

PRESS RELEASE

Broadband Internet for all Europeans: Commission launches debate on future of universal service

*(25 September 2008)*How can the EU achieve that all Europeans – from the North of Finland to the South of Italy, from the Western Ireland to Eastern Romania – have access to broadband Internet? This is the main question raised in a Commission report today. From 2003-2007 broadband use in the EU tripled to 36% of households. However, 7% of the EU's population are still not connected (30% in rural areas). There are striking gaps in the EU: 100% of the population is covered in Denmark, Luxembourg and Belgium, but more than 60% in Romania (75% in rural areas) do not have broadband access. Even in strong economies such as Italy and Germany, 18% and 12% respectively of the rural population are not covered. With broadband increasingly important in daily life, policy tools like radio spectrum management and mobile satellite services should accompany a broad debate about the universal service in telecoms – a safety net guaranteeing a minimum level of services, such as connection to a phone network and basic Internet access, filling basic needs that the market does not.

See also: **The Commission's 2008 Report on the Scope of the Universal Service in Telecoms: Frequently Asked Questions**

Social Networking Sites: Commissioner Reding stresses their economic and societal importance for Europe

*(26 September 2008)*Viviane Reding, Commissioner for Information Society and Media, will today give a speech on Social Networking. It will be the first public statement of the Commissioner on this subject. The speech will be given at today's Safer Internet Forum that takes place in Luxembourg and focuses on Safer Internet and children this year. Commissioner Reding will underline the importance of self-regulation and will also meet representatives of the social networking companies Myspace and Dailymotion.

See also: **Speech : "Social Networking in Europe: success and challenges"**

EUROCITIES Knowledge Society Forum Conference

23 October 2008 - 26 October 2008 Amaroussion, Greece

This year's edition of the EUROCITIES Knowledge Society Forum will focus on the theme of "eServices for Inclusion". Participants will have an opportunity to exchange know-how and best practices on ways of making Information Communications Technology (ICT) and online services more accessible and inclusive for all citizens.

"eInclusion of immigrants and ethnic minorities" workshop

13 November 2008 Brussels, Belgium

This new ePractice.eu workshop will explore immigrants and ethnic minorities issues in relation to three key themes: Theme 1: Local community development and entrepreneurship. This will focus on how ICTs are being used to support challenges that are faced by some communities with regard to poor economic opportunities; low levels of digital literacy and e-skills and issues around social cohesion. It will explore in particular how ICTs are being used to develop individual and social capital and community capacity, and to support entrepreneurship. Theme 2: Language and identity in a culturally diverse Europe. Language is a complex and contested issue in e-inclusion. On the one hand, ICTs are being deployed to promote 'multi-lingualism' – for example to help new immigrants improve their job opportunities by learning the language of the 'host country'. On the other, they are being used to promote a different inclusion agenda – that of promoting cultural diversity by preserving the culture and language of 'minority' and therefore excluded cultures. This theme will reflect on these issues as well as related issues around 'identity' within a European society, and how identity is itself being re-shaped through ICTs. Theme 3: Introduction initiatives and services, inclusive eGovernment and participation. This theme will focus particularly on the problems faced by newly-arrived immigrants and how ICTs can be used to better support their integration.

Swiss National conference "The ICT as means for integration - possibilities and limits"

27 November 2008 Bern, Switzerland

This national conference is organized by the Coordinating Office Information Society in the Federal office of Communications (OFCOM) in collaboration with the Members of the network "Swiss Digital Integration". The objective of the

conference is to gather all Swiss actors in the field of e-inclusion to discuss the possibilities and limits of ICT as a means for social integration. The focus will be on certain groups of society that are still not using the ICT, such as older people, migrants and the disabled. The conference is part of the implementation of the Strategy of the Swiss Government to promote an inclusive information society.

New in the Library

REPORTS AND STUDIES

Report of the workshop on "Ethical Aspects of Inclusion in the Information Society"

23 September 2008

The report of the workshop held in Bled, Slovenia, on 12 May 2008, is now available. Presentations done at the workshop can be downloaded also at the same location.