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April 14, 2007

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## New EU Legislation Needed to Implement Lisbon Agenda

A European think tank said new EU legislation should be introduced to monitor progress on the Lisbon Agenda, provide more measurable goals and timelines, move the European Research Area (ERA) up on the political agenda. The Stockholm Network also called for the harmonization of the European patent system.

The Stockholm Network's report suggested the EU may have bitten off more than it can chew with the Lisbon agenda, which is a ten-year development plan adopted in 2000. The report floated the idea of a Lisbon Directive that "would expedite major changes essential for the implementation of the Lisbon Agenda", said the EU's Community Research & Development Information Service (Cordis). The legislation should focus on strategic areas with a feasible chance of being accepted politically by the Member States, such as intellectual property, public-private cooperation, use of publicly-funded research and supporting small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Renewed political support in increasing the level of investment in research and development in the ERA is needed, the report said: "Resources are still disproportionately allocated to other areas that arguably are less valuable to EU citizens in terms of the contribution to the economy and to society."

The report recommends new pan-European legislation to level the playing field among Member States in terms of legal tools, structural mechanisms and cultural perceptions on commercializing research outputs, as well as the creation of a more supportive environment for knowledge exploitation and technology transfer activities. Investment in research has to rise to 3% of GDP by 2010, it argues, to put it on equal footing with for example, the Common Agriculture Policy.

The adoption and unilateral implementation of the London Agreement and the European Patent Litigation Agreement would provide the legal instruments to improve the EU system until consensus can be reached on a Community patent, Cordis said.

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