

EU proposes accessibility standards in public procurement

21 June, 2006

EU Policy | Access to information

In a ministerial meeting that took place in Riga on 12 June 2006, ministers from European countries have signed a declaration to diminish the gap in Internet usage for groups at risk of exclusion, but also to increase broadband coverage.

The Riga Ministerial Declaration was signed by ministers of 34 European countries from EU Member States, accession and candidate countries, and EFTA/EEA countries. The declaration shows the commitment of the countries to an "Internet for all" action plan that should allow the disadvantaged groups to access the Internet.

One of the conclusions of the meeting was the necessity to assess the need for legislative measures in the field of e-Accessibility, and to take into account accessibility requirements in the review of the electronic communications regulatory framework beginning in June 2006. Another

EU report recommends open access to publicly funded scientific research

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The EU report drafted by economists from Toulouse University and the Free University of Brussels on the economic and technical evolution of scientific publishing in Europe, published on 31 March 2006, recommends public access to scientific research funded by the European taxpayer.

The report proposes the development of a European policy that would allow researchers receiving EU funding to place copies of articles published in subscription journals on web-based archives that can be accessed by everyone for free. It also expressed the need to "specify standards that will insure that the archives are accessible, interoperable, and have cross-searching facilities. In addition, set up a general European archive for researchers with access to a subject-based or institutional archive."