Under the auspices of Prof. Dr. Caroline Pauwels (VUB), IES Senior Research Fellow Prof. Dr. Harri Kalimo and and Prof. Dr. Jukka Mähönen (University of Turku), the IES Spring Lecture Series on “Rethinking European Media and Communications Policies” started on the 27th of February, with an introductory session on the current media and communication landscape. The lectures took place (in principle) every Wednesday until the end of May. The first lecture in the series took place on 27 February, with Tony Mary, Timo Ruikka and Ioannis Maghiros speaking.

The focus on communication changed from place to person, and the new technical developments led to changes in people’s behaviour. The big challenge is the way society will adapt to the new communication environment, by integrating it in its everyday processes.

Timo Ruikka, Policy Advisor at Nokia, adopted a practitioner’s perspective on the changes undergone by the media and communications environment. He underlined the idea of convergence between different types of networks, allowing markets to become location-independent, which leads to the disappearance of the concept of territoriality. He described what has happened in the last number of years as experiments lacked a sustainable business direction, and estimated that it will take some time for new rules to be established.

Another speaker was Ioannis Maghiros, Principal Scientific Officer in the Information Society Unit of the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS). The IPTS is part of the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission. He focused his presentation on convergence seen from a content point of view. He presented the various content-related processes (content creation, distribution, access, user interaction, etc.), giving examples of some of the latest applications developed. In his opinion, the demand for new content must be dealt with by taking into account technological, regulatory as well as market-related issues. He concluded with the idea that the creative content sector is under transformation, and that the role of the users should become more prominent.

The first speaker was Tony Mary, former CEO of the VRT (photo). He described the developments that took place in the last 25 years in the area of media and communication as a huge revolution, with implications for the whole of society as well as for the media environment.

Vu Heesvelde, General Administrator of the Belgian Institute for Postal Services and Telecommunications, as Associate Professor of the University of Ghent, provided a detailed introduction to the new package. He summarised its key features and emphasized the innovative aspect of some of the proposed measures, such as the use of the ‘functional separation’ principle as a remedy for market deficiencies. He notably welcomed the reduction of the number of sub-markets to be considered relevant for separate consideration for market analysis, as well as the foreseen European approach to frequency management. Market regulation was examined in great detail, especially regarding the limitations imposed on national regulators, which i.e. cannot directly regulate telecommunications retail prices.

Van Heesvelde took the occasion to express dissatisfaction with the EC proposed creation of a European Electronic Communications Market Authority (EECMA), a central authority designed to assess decisions by national regulators and ensure a wide common application of rules and standards. He argued that the measure was inappropriate and risky in the light of existing strong differences between national markets. Moreover, he shared with the audience his scepticism in the approach of the European Communications Market Authority (EECMA), a central authority designed to assess decisions by national regulators and ensure a wide common application of rules and standards.

Hannu Nieminen, Professor of Media Policy at the University of Helsinki, centred his presentation on the rights of the citizen with regard to communication. He proposed a delimitation of the content of ‘citizen’s communication rights’, and underlined the interest of carefully evaluating the implementation period, which is expected to start only in 2009-2010.

Dirk Voorhoof focussed on ‘Co-regulation and European Basic Rights’. He described co-regulation as a new approach, to be situated between self-regulation and ‘traditional regulation’. Co-regulation developed in the last 5 years and is found in media (advertising regulations, ethics of journalists, electronic commerce, etc.). Reliance on co-regulation is found in both the Council of Europe’s norms (Declarations, Recommendations, European Court on Human Rights case-law) and EU legal rules such as the Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

Dirk asserted that the approach held by the legislators and Courts is the application of Human Rights standards to the Internet (e.g. the cases Copland v. UK (03.04.2007), Wyppych v. Poland (25.10.2005), and Perrin v. UK (18.10.2005)). He concluded that human rights requirements can be used as a way of improving

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New faces @ the IES

Following the acquisition of an FWO project and the subsequent vacancy launched earlier last year, Polish-born Justyna Pozarowska started at the IES on 1 April 2008 to work under the auspices of Prof. Dr. Sebastian Oberthür on the FWO-project entitled "Governance through Regulatory Complexes: The International and European Management of Genetic Resources". Justyna holds MA degrees in International Relations and Latin-American Studies from the University of Warsaw and a degree in European Studies from the Centre for European Studies in Strasbourg.

Visiting fellow Bruno Tornheim was appointed as a research assistant at the IES on 21 April 2008. Being already integrated as a visitor for several months, Bruno will work on a part-time basis for and under the auspices of Senior Research Fellow Harri Kalimo. Bruno has French and American nationality and holds an MSc. in Industrial Ecology from Chalmers University (Gothenburg, Sweden), and an MSc. in engineering from the Ecole des Mines de Douai (France). Prior to his work at the IES, Bruno worked as research assistant at the Department of Environmental Economics of the University of Gothenburg.

Since beginning of March, Petra Ahrens joined the IES for a 4-month-research fellowship focusing on gender equality policy in the European Union. Her dissertation title "Negotiating transversal issues in a system of multilevel governance – the case of the "Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010". The aim of her research project is to investigate, how actors negotiate, set agendas and cooperate on the topic of gender equality policy.

Petra is a Doctoral Candidate from the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences BGSS based at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, the university where she also obtained her Diploma in Social Sciences.

Finally, Keti Medarova-Bergstrom is a PhD candidate at the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. She was visiting the IES as a research fellow in the beginning of 2008 conducting research as part of her PhD dissertation on the topic of environmental policy integration in regional development in Bulgaria. During her stay at the IES, she focused on the EU perspective looking at the multi-level governance system for regional development policy in new member states.

IES Call for Projects 2008: The Institute for European Studies calls for applications for two positions of full-time doctoral researchers for two new research projects. Final year students, young researchers and other prospective PhD candidates are herewith invited to submit project proposals in the areas of European Foreign and Security Policy and Information Society as they relate to European Studies.

The IES also opened a vacancy for a full-time postdoctoral researcher in the field of Migration, Diversity and Human Rights. Successful candidates must possess an advanced university degree (Ph.D. or equivalent) in law or in another relevant discipline such as political science or sociology (preferably with relevant legal experience/expertise), research experience and publications related to the field of migration, diversity and human rights and must be fluent in English.

More information and application forms can be found on our website:

http://www.ies.be/iesvacancies/

IES Vacancies

For the fourth lecture in the series ‘Rethinking EU media and communications’, the IES had the honour of receiving an all-female panel to discuss the new European Audiovisual Services Directive. In a packed lecture theatre, Anna Herold - currently working as a policy officer for DG Information Society and Media - first briefly introduced the new directive, elaborating on both the background and the substance of the document. Peggy Valsike - professor Media and Communication law at the KULeuven – subsequently raised some critical points about the new directive, elaborating on both the background and the substance of the document. Miert insisted we still had a way to go before we wound when actual competition increases, but Van Arino finally addressed some of the difficulties regarding the implementation of the new Audiovisual Services Directive. A lively Q&A session concluded all three presentations.

The fifth lecture in the series aimed at contextualizing the topic in a more general discussion of ‘Competition in a Converging Market Place’. Kicking off the debate, Karel Van Miert, former Commissioner DG Competition sketched a broad outline of ‘the crucial role of competition policy’. Referring to the tremendous development of EU competition policy, he insisted that it should be seen as an instrument to serve the general public interest rather than a religion. Heavy-handed regulation can only be unwound when actual competition increases, but Van Miert insisted we still had a way to go before we would achieve a truly single European market, as the example of energy markets makes clear.

Thomas Vinje, a Partner in the renowned law firm Clifford Chance, discussed the issue of intellectual property in relation to competition law. By means of a detailed discussion of the Microsoft interoperability case, he made clear that competition affects everyone alike. A large firm has a stake in an aggressive market presence while small firms need a level playing field. Competition ideally benefits consumers by providing them with choice, better quality and lower prices, while at the same time fostering innovation.

State Secretary Ministry of Employment and Economy argued that we need to keep thinking about new incentives for innovation. In his view, the protection of intellectual property rights still plays a significant role in enhancing innovation. It is in this sense that patents should not be seen as being in conflict with competition policy. In the lively Q&A session that followed, the merits and problems of patents were discussed and all speakers did not hesitate to give incisive comments, based on their personal experiences, about the intense competition battles that unfold every day.

More reports on the lecture series will be published in our next newsletter.

nications Policies” take off

ing co-regulation and developing co-regulation’s potential. He emphasized the need to guarantee transparency and the involvement of civil society; the necessity of implementing “good practices”; the remaining role of judicial review (‘traditional procedures’) as the final safety net, and the need to work on human rights awareness and internalization.

The Institute for