

Irish EU Presidency to “protect software inventions” in May

<http://swpat.ffii.org/news/04/ieeu0109/index.en.html>

Workgroup

swpatag@ffii.org

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The Irish vice prime minister has unveiled a brochure which describes the agenda of the Competitiveness Council of the Irish EU Presidency. The brochure places high emphasis on the Community Patent and the IP Enforcement Directive and somewhat lower emphasis on the software patent directive, although it asserts that “effective instruments” for “protection” of “software inventions” form an “important underpinning” of the “knowledge based economy”. The IE Presidency will try to bring about an agreement on the software patent directive at the May meeting of the Competitiveness Council.

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1 Annotated Links

- **Ireland and Software Patents¹**

Irish members of the European Parliament have to a large part voted against software patents (i.e. for amending the software patent directive) in September 2003. Irish ICT associations have been more sceptical of this directive than some of their counter-parts of other countries. Ireland

¹<http://swpat.ffii.org/players/ie/index.en.html>

is taking the EU presidency in the first half year of 2004. Ireland provides a tax haven for patent royalty fees and harbours (partially for this and similar reasons) much of the finance flow of large US companies, so that, according to some statistics, Ireland appears to be Europe's largest software producing country. Trinity College in Dublin is a leading European facility for training patent lawyers. So far the Irish presidency has kept a low profile on the software patent issue.