

May 2016



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

EU integration process in CEE countries

Joint Conclusions on the Economic Reform Programmes

The Western Balkans and Turkey deepen economic and social reforms with the EU. In 2016, all enlargement countries have submitted their second annual Economic Reform Programmes covering the period 2016-2018. They have been assessed by the European Commission and the European Central Bank. Based on these assessments, Joint Conclusions with country-specific policy guidance were agreed and adopted by all seven enlargement partners and the EU at ministerial level on 25 May. The implementation of the reforms outlined in the programmes, and in particular of the recommendations agreed upon in the dialogue with the EU, will be reviewed in next year's ERP exercise.

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-16-1912_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-16-1912_en.htm)

Joint statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Johannes Hahn on the latest developments in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The Constitutional Court's ruling clears the way for Parliament to reconvene and to cancel the 5 June elections, the conditions for which were not there. This is a renewed opportunity for the country to address a number of serious issues at the heart of the prolonged political crisis. The way forward must be defined by all main political parties together, since it is only a mature dialogue, inclusiveness and commitment to democratic principles and to the necessary reforms and their implementation that will bring the country back on a Euro-Atlantic path.

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release STATEMENT-16-1831_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-16-1831_en.htm)

Pros, advantages and obligations resulting from EU membership

State aid: Commission clears €2.13 billion aid to alleviate social and economic impact of closing 26 uncompetitive coal mines in Spain

The Commission has found Spanish plans to grant €2.13 billion for the orderly closure of 26 uncompetitive coal mines to be in line with EU state aid rules. The aid aims to alleviate the social and environmental impact of the mine closures without unduly distorting competition in the Single Market.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1910_en.htm

Spring 2016 European Semester package: Commission issues country-specific recommendations

Member States are making progress with reforms and addressing macroeconomic imbalances, but more is needed to consolidate Europe's recovery. The European Commission proposes its 2016 **country-specific recommendations (CSRs)**, setting out its economic policy guidance for individual Member States for the next 12 to 18 months. In addition to efforts already identified and ongoing at European level, this guidance focuses on priority reforms to strengthen the recovery of Member States' economies by boosting investment, implementing structural reforms and pursuing fiscal responsibility.

<http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific->

	recommendations/index_en.htm
General development of the EU	<p>Commission proposes new e-commerce rules to help consumers and companies reap full benefit of Single Market</p> <p>The European Commission tabled a package of measures to allow consumers and companies to buy and sell products and services online more easily and confidently across the EU. Delivering on its Digital Single Market and Single Market strategies, the European Commission has presented a three-pronged plan to boost e-commerce by tackling geoblocking, making cross-border parcel delivery more affordable and efficient and promoting customer trust through better protection and enforcement.</p> <p>http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1887_en.htm</p>
Introduction to EU institutions and their functioning	<p>More transparent and balanced interest representation: Commission adopts new expert group rules</p> <p>On 31st of May, the Commission has adopted new rules on the creation and functioning of the advisory expert groups which provide external expertise to help inform the policy-making process. The Decision provides a single set of rules and principles aimed at increasing transparency, avoiding conflicts of interest and ensuring a balanced representation of interests. The new rules are binding on all Commission departments. First Vice-President Frans Timmermans said: "When we design rules and policies we need the help of outside expertise to help us get it right. ..Today's decision follows fruitful consultations with Members of the European Parliament, the European Ombudsman and representatives of civil society organisations, who are key partners in delivering a transparent approach to EU policy-making. This is another step forward in changing the way 'Brussels' works."</p> <p>http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1923_en.htm</p>
Introduction to EU law	<p>Back to Schengen: Council adopts Commission proposal on next steps towards lifting of temporary internal border controls</p> <p>The Council has adopted the Commission's proposal to prolong proportionate controls at certain internal Schengen borders in Germany, Austria, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, for up to six months. These countries had already introduced measures to address the threat to public policy and internal security resulting from the secondary movements of irregular migrants from Greece. Last week, the Commission proposed a recommendation to extend these measures, in line with the Schengen Borders Code, as, and despite significant progress made by Greece, not all of the serious deficiencies identified could be adequately and comprehensively addressed within the three months' limit.</p> <p>http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1723_en.htm</p>
Decentralized management of EU funds	<p>14 new primary health care centres to be built across Ireland, supported by the Investment Plan for Europe</p> <p>Fourteen new Primary Care Centres are to be built across Ireland following a new EUR 70 million, 27-year loan from the European Investment Bank. The loan benefits from support from the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the heart of the Investment Plan for Europe. This project represents the EIB's first support for healthcare investment in Ireland and the first dedicated backing for Primary Health Care anywhere in Europe by the EIB. The new PPP-based</p>

	<p>scheme will support the shift from hospital based healthcare to community based care closer to patients. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1903_en.htm</p> <p>Forty years of investments have improved Europe's bathing water The European Union's efforts to ensure clean and healthy bathing water began forty years ago when the first Bathing Water Directive was issued. The annual bathing water report published today proves the value of the legislation and the years of investment in waste water infrastructure and other pollution reduction measures. It shows that bathing water quality has improved continuously over time leading to 96 % of monitored bathing sites in the EU meeting the minimum standards for water quality in 2015. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1759_en.htm</p> <p>EIB backs EUR 5.3 billion new loans - reinforces SME support and takes investment supported under the Investment Plan for Europe to EUR 100 billion The Board of Directors of the European Investment Bank today approved EUR 5.3 billion of new loans to support small business lending and finance new investment in schools, corporate research and development, water infrastructure, local transport schemes, and urban regeneration. EIB financing for 8 of the 26 projects is expected to be guaranteed by the EU budget guarantee under the Investment Plan for Europe. http://www.eib.org/infocentre/press/releases/all/2016/2016-119-european-investment-bank-backs-eur-5-3-billion-new-loans-reinforces-sme-support-and-takes-investment-supported-under-the-investment-plan-for-europe-to-eur-100-billion.htm</p>
<p>Multi-level governance</p>	<p>The Urban Agenda for the EU: European cities get their say in EU policy making The informal Ministerial meeting on urban matters agreed on the "Pact of Amsterdam", which sets out the principles of the Urban Agenda for the EU. The Commission is taking part in the informal meeting in Amsterdam of the 28 Ministers in charge of urban matters, along with representatives from other EU Institutions and representatives of European cities, on the Urban Agenda for the EU. The aim of this meeting is to endorse the 'Pact of Amsterdam' which establishes the Urban Agenda for the EU and lays out its key principles. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1924_en.htm</p> <p>EU and Eastern Partnership cities and regions call for capacity-building tools Members of the Conference of Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP) have welcomed an invitation by the EU and governments of the six Eastern Partnership countries to attend a ministerial meeting on 23 May, praising it as recognition of the importance of local and regional government to economic and political development in Europe's neighbourhood. http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/eastern-partnership-capacity-building.aspx</p>

Introduction to different negotiation chapters

Chapter 1: Free movement of goods

Chapter 2: Freedom of movement for workers

Chapter 3: Right of establishment and freedom to provide services

Chapter 4: Free movement of capital

Chapter 5: Public procurement

Chapter 6: Company Law

Chapter 7: Intellectual property law

Chapter 8: Competition

Chapter 9: Financial services

Chapter 10: Information society and media

Chapter 11: Agriculture and rural development

Chapter 12: Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy

Chapter 13: Fisheries

Chapter 14: Transport policy

Chapter 15: Energy

Chapter 16: Taxation

Chapter 17: Economic and monetary policy

Chapter 18: Statistics

Chapter 19: Social policy and employment

Chapter 20: Enterprise and industrial policy

Chapter 21: Trans-European networks

Chapter 22: Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments

Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights

Chapter 24: Justice, freedom and security

Chapter 25: Research and development

Chapter 26: Education and culture

Chapter 27: Environment

Chapter 28: Consumer and

Reduction of CO2 emissions from new vans slowed in 2015

The fuel efficiency of new vans registered in the European Union (EU) increased slightly in 2015 compared to the previous year. Average emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) fell by less than 1 gramme (g) of CO₂ per kilometre, according to preliminary data published today by the European Environment Agency (EEA). This is the smallest annual reduction since monitoring of emissions from new light commercial vehicles started in 2012.

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/reduction-of-co2-emissions-from>

Better integration of land use impacts needed across EU policies

Land is a valuable and limited resource. The environmental impact of land used for building new roads, houses or energy grids should be better integrated into European Union policies, according to a report released today by the European Environment Agency. A preliminary review on how land is used in the EU found that more attention should be paid to environmental concerns.

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/better-integration-of-land-use>

DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET – COMMISSION UPDATES EU AUDIOVISUAL RULES AND PRESENTS TARGETED APPROACH TO ONLINE PLATFORMS

The platform economy presents major innovation opportunities for European industry, SMEs and startups to develop new business models, products and services. Creating the right environment is essential to retain, grow and foster the emergence of new online platforms in Europe. A coherent EU approach is needed to avoid fragmentation and obstacles in the Digital Single Market. Different national rules can otherwise create uncertainty for economic operators, make scaling-up more difficult for startups and limit the availability of digital services. In this respect, the Commission will in early June adopt a European agenda for the collaborative economy, including guidance on how EU law applies specifically to collaborative economy platforms and recommendations to Member States on how to ensure a balanced development of this market.

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-16-1895_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-16-1895_en.htm)

US Labor Department, European Commission roundtable addresses ways to help the long-term unemployed get back to work

The roundtable offered the leaders opportunities to exchange policy approaches and best practices in combating long-term unemployment. On May 6, 2016, U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez announced the nation's unemployment rate had fallen to 5 percent with two-thirds of the rate's decline in the last year coming from the ranks of the long-term unemployed. In the EU, long-term unemployment decreased in 2015 by 1.2 million, a 10 percent improvement compared to 2014. EU and U.S. leaders discussed the progress made and the need for concerted action to reduce long-term unemployment, including strong partnerships between business, local governments and community organizations.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release STATEMENT-16-1756_en.htm

Most young Europeans feel marginalised by the crisis, says Eurobarometer poll

More than half of young Europeans aged 16-30 feel marginalised in their own country due to the economic crisis, but few want to move abroad because of it,

<p><i>health protection</i> <i>Chapter 29: Customs union</i> <i>Chapter 30: External relations</i> <i>Chapter 31: Foreign, security and defence policy</i> <i>Chapter 32: Financial control</i> <i>Chapter 33: Financial and budgetary provisions</i></p>	<p>finds the latest Eurobarometer poll, commissioned by the European Parliament and published on May. Nevertheless, for almost all respondents it is important to learn about the EU and how its institutions work. This Eurobarometer survey, for which 10,294 Europeans aged 16-30 were interviewed in the 28 EU member states between 9 and 25 April 2016, found marked differences among countries on most of the issues addressed. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/20160504PVL00110/Eurobarometer</p> <p>New rules to attract non-EU students, researchers and interns to the EU Harmonised EU entry and residence rules to make it easier and more attractive for people from third countries to study or do research at EU universities were approved by Parliament on May. The new rules clarify and improve conditions for non-EU interns, volunteers, school pupils and au pairs. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20160504IPR25749/New-rules-to-attract-non-EU-students-researchers-and-interns-to-the-EU</p>
<p>Specific issues relating to the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European arrest warrant, • Stockholm programme: Europe of rights, Europe of justice, Europe that protects, Access to Europe, Europe of solidarity, Europe in a globalised world • Third pillar: the pillar devoted to police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, which came under Title VI of the Treaty on European Union <p>Recognition of professional qualifications</p>	<p>Towards a sustainable and fair Common European Asylum System On 4th of May the European Commission is presenting proposals to reform the Common European Asylum System by creating a fairer, more efficient and more sustainable system for allocating asylum applications among Member States. The basic principle will remain the same – asylum seekers should, unless they have family elsewhere, apply for asylum in the first country they enter – but a new fairness mechanism will ensure no Member State is left with a disproportionate pressure on its asylum system. Today's proposals also include transforming the existing European Asylum Support Office (EASO) into a fully-fledged European Union Agency for Asylum to reflect its enhanced role in the new system and reinforcing of the EU's fingerprinting database, Eurodac, in order to better manage the asylum system and to help tackle irregular migration. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1620_en.htm</p> <p>EU supports UNICEF and WHO with €3 million in humanitarian aid for polio vaccinations in Syria On 3rd of May, the European Commission has announced €3 million in humanitarian funding for a UNICEF and World Health Organisation-led nationwide polio vaccination campaign in Syria. The campaign aims to reach 2 million children in areas where medical access remains critical, such as in besieged, hard-to-reach and under-served areas. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1650_en.htm</p> <p>Safeguarding your privacy: MEPs scrutinise new data protection agreement with US After the European Court of Justice invalidated Safe Harbour, the EC and the US had to negotiate a new agreement that addressed the court's concerns. The aim was to prevent national data protection authorities from abruptly halting the flow of data from EU to the US could have had grave economic consequences. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20160523STO28427/Safeguarding-your-privacy-MEPs-scrutinise-new-data-protection-agreement-with-US</p>

Introduction to different sector policies (regional policy, trade policy, agricultural policy, social policy).

Rural development key to delivering jobs and growth

The potential of rural areas to drive innovation and social and economic cohesion in Europe was the focus of a conference held by the Commission for Natural Resources (NAT) of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR). Rural and mixed areas account for 91% of Europe's surface area and 43% of gross value added; 56% of jobs are in such areas, and around 60% of the population live there. The Alpine region is one of the richest and most economically successful regions in the world, but even here the disparity between towns and the countryside is steadily increasing. The conference was part of a series of events taking place in Innsbruck, Austria, organised by the CoR on the occasion of Europe Day.

<http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/nat-conference-innsbruck.aspx>

Urban Agenda for the EU - 7 out of 10 city dwellers aged 20 to 64 are employed - Almost a quarter of all city dwellers at risk of poverty or social exclusion

Home to a large share of the population aged 20 to 64 in the European Union (EU), cities can be viewed as both the source of and solution to many of today's economic, social and environmental challenges. Among EU city dwellers aged 20-64, 70% were in employment. The risk of poverty or social exclusion affected around 24% of all city dwellers.

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7411586/1-30052016-AP-EN.pdf/15823330-b9c3-4813-a8e4-706acc967b3>

Overview: the European Parliament's work on taxation

The fight for fair taxation in the EU has been high on Parliament's agenda long before LuxLeaks and the Panama papers. Since the start of the economic and financial crisis, MEPs have been pushing for greater transparency and an end to tax unfair practices. Later this year the Commission is planning to propose legislation on a common corporate tax base. In addition it is expected to publish a proposal on a common list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions, more commonly known as tax havens.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20160502STO25468/Overview-the-European-Parliament's-work-on-taxation>

Promotion of EU upcoming events and news

7th European Summit of Regions and Cities

08 - 09 July 2016

Under the title 'Invest and Connect', EU leaders and representatives from both the public and private sector will consider how to strengthen connections between Europe's people, places, ideas and resources through investment. A number of side events, such as concerts and public debates, are also planned over the two days.

<http://urbact.eu/7th-european-summit-regions-and-cities>

HOPE FOR EUROPE! CULTURE, CITIES AND NEW NARRATIVES

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), Brussels

20 & 21 June 2016

Concretely, the conference will explore four themes:

- Culture as a vehicle for economic growth

- Culture as an instrument for reconverting cities and territories
- Culture as a tool for integration and inclusiveness
- Reshaping European identity within Europe and beyond.

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-europe-culture-cities>

2016 EESC Civil Society Prize - Migrants
Rewarding excellence in civil society initiatives
9 September 2016, Brussels, Belgium

The 2016 prize will reward initiatives carried out by civil society organisations and/or individuals and aimed at improving migrants' lives and fostering their integration in society. The aim of the Civil Society Prize, which is awarded annually, is to reward and encourage tangible initiatives and achievements by civil society organisations and/or individuals that have made a significant contribution to promoting European identity and integration. Its overall objective is to raise awareness of the contribution that civil society organisations and/or individuals can make to the creation of a European identity and citizenship in a way that underpins the common values that shore up European integration.

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-civil-society-prize-2016>

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.