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## EU integration process in CEE countries

### **EU and the Republic of San Marino sign new tax transparency agreement**

The new agreement marks the end of bank secrecy between San Marino and the EU. As of 2017, San Marino and EU Member States will automatically exchange information on the financial accounts of one another's residents.

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_STATEMENT-15-6275\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-15-6275_en.htm)

### **EU announces more than €100 million for Ukraine to support decentralisation reform and re-enforcement of local governance**

A €97 million programme jointly funded by the EU (€90m), Germany (€6m) and Poland (€1m) will strengthen governance and accountability at local, regional and central levels to better respond to the needs of the population. An additional support of €10 million funded by the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace will be allocated for the restoration of governance, reconciliation and peacebuilding in the eastern part of Ukraine

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-6263\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6263_en.htm)

### **Meeting of heads of state or government with Turkey - EU-Turkey statement**

The Leaders of the European Union met in Brussels with their Turkish counterpart. Turkey has been a candidate since 1999 and negotiating for accession since 2005. They discussed the importance of overcoming the common challenges ahead. In line with the conclusions of the European Council of 15 October, they agreed that the accession process needs to be re-energized.

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_STATEMENT-15-6194\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-15-6194_en.htm)

### **EU provides €100 million to support reform and economic development in Georgia**

The European Commission has adopted a new assistance package to Georgia totalling €100 million to support reforms related to the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (AA) and agreements on mobility.

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-6182\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6182_en.htm)

### **The sixth Informal Eastern Partnership Dialogue**

Hosted by Georgia, the meeting brings together Ministers and high level officials of the six Eastern Partnership countries - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine - for a high level exchange on foreign affairs as well as on health cooperation

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-6170\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6170_en.htm)

## Pros, advantages and obligations resulting from EU membership

### **Greece has taken three actions to address the refugee crisis, activating EU mechanisms designed to assist in crisis situations**

Greece has today activated the EU Civil Protection Mechanism to benefit from material support to help cope with the influx of refugees and asylum seekers in the country. Greece has requested items such as tents, generators, beds, sanitary equipment and emergency first aid kits. This voluntary delivery of aid is coordinated by the European Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre

	<p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6249_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6249_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>Commission refers Belgium to the Court of Justice of the European Union for failing to transpose the Single Permit Directive</b>  The Single Permit Directive enables non EU workers to obtain work and residence permits via a single procedure, rather than requiring separate applications for residence and work permits. It also aims at providing a clear set of rules for third country nationals working legally within the EU so that they can benefit from common rights, similar to those of EU nationals, regarding working conditions, pensions, social security and access to public services.  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6011_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6011_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>Erasmus+ backs €30 million in Master's study loans in France</b>  The Erasmus+ Master loan scheme will make available € 30 million in new study loans in France. This is thanks to a guarantee agreement signed today by the European Investment Fund (EIF) and the French BPCE bank, with the backing of the EU's Erasmus+ programme. The loans will be open to graduates from France taking their Master's degree in one of the 33 countries participating in Erasmus+, as well as to students from these countries moving to France for a Master's degree.  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6207_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6207_en.htm</a></p>
<p><b>General development of the EU</b></p>	<p><b>The European Commission has welcomed the news that Greece has now successfully ratified the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for the Single Resolution Mechanism (SRM).</b>  The ratification of IGA means that the Single Resolution Board, which is the resolution authority established in 2015 to deal with euro zone banks in difficulty, will become fully operational and that the Single Resolution Fund will start being filled up from national resolution funds in the euro area. It also ensures that the full resolution powers of the Single Resolution Board will apply as of 1 January 2016 to allow for the timely and effectively resolution of banks in the EU's Banking Union.  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-15-6258_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-15-6258_en.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Introduction to EU institutions and their Functioning</b></p>	<p><b>Vice-President Dombrovskis's remarks at ECOFIN meeting</b>  Discussion covered a number of issues, including the launch of the new European Semester, Taxation, Terrorism Financing, Flexibility in the Stability and Growth Pact  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-15-6277_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-15-6277_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>EU Internet Forum: Bringing together governments, Europol and technology companies to counter terrorist content and hate speech online</b>  The forum brings together EU Interior Ministers, high-level representatives of major internet companies, Europol, the EU Counter Terrorism Co-ordinator and the European Parliament. The goal is to reach a joint, voluntary approach based on a public-private partnership to detect and address harmful material online.  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6243_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6243_en.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Introduction to EU law</b></p>	<p><b>Commission presents a new Aviation Strategy for Europe</b>  The European Commission adopted a new Aviation Strategy for Europe, a milestone initiative to boost Europe's economy, strengthen its industrial base and reinforce its global leadership position. These are three core priorities of President Jean-Claude Juncker, on</p>

	<p>which the Strategy will deliver, by ensuring that the European aviation sector remains competitive and reaps the benefits of a fast-changing and developing global economy.  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6144_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6144_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>Commission adopts ambitious new Circular Economy Package to boost competitiveness, create jobs and generate sustainable growth</b>  The proposed actions will contribute to "closing the loop" of product lifecycles through greater recycling and re-use, and bring benefits for both the environment and the economy. The plans will extract the maximum value and use from all raw materials, products and waste, fostering energy savings and reducing Green House Gas emissions.  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6203_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6203_en.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Decentralized management of EU funds</b></p>	<p><b>The Commission adopted a new Regional Policy programme for the Italian region of Campania, worth over €4 billion, with more than €3 billion coming from the European Regional Development Fund</b>  As for all programmes adopted for the 2014-2020 period, investments under the Campania programme are strategically focused on four key growth-generating areas: research and innovation, digital technologies, support to small businesses and to the low-carbon economy  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6237_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6237_en.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Multi-level governance</b></p>	<p><b>COOPENERGY event: Multi-level governance in sustainable energy planning</b>  COOPENERGY, co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme, has supported the development of more effective collaborative working between regional and local public authorities to maximise coherence in energy planning and actions between levels of governance.  <a href="http://www.fedarene.org/featured/coopenergy-finalconf-11030">http://www.fedarene.org/featured/coopenergy-finalconf-11030</a></p>
<p><b>Introduction to different negotiation chapters</b></p>	<p><b>EU Transport Scoreboard shows Transport is improving in the Member States</b>  The European Commission published the second edition of the "EU Transport Scoreboard", which compares how Member States perform in 29 transport categories. The objective of the Scoreboard is to help Member States to identify areas requiring priority investments and actions, in order to create a Single European Transport Area with high standards, notably in terms of sustainability.  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6117_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6117_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>European Neighbourhood Policy reviewed and explained</b>  Since its launch in 2004, the ENP has evolved considerably. Over time, our offer was stepped up significantly, to include visa free regimes, Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas offering massive access to the EU market, the possibility to participate in EU programmes and much more. But there have also been radical changes in a large number of the countries that surround the EU. We see conflicts and political tension in the region, which also affect the EU  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-6122_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-6122_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>"Creating jobs and boosting growth" - Contribution of the European Structural and Investment Funds to the 10 Commission Priorities</b>  European Commission President Juncker wants Europe to return to growth, while reducing new debt. Besides making structural reforms and promoting responsible</p>

	<p>financial management, investment levels need to rise to create and maintain jobs and growth. For the 2014-2020 programming period, EUR 454 billion has been allocated to the European Structural and Investments Funds (ESIF) to kick-start growth and job creation. Adding to this figure national co-financing, which is expected to reach some EUR 183 billion, the total investment will amount to at least EUR 637 billion. Using this budget, the ESIF are the EU's main investment instruments.</p> <p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2015/12/15-12-2015-creating-jobs-and-boosting-growth-contribution-of-the-european-structural-and-investment-funds-to-the-10-commission-priorities">http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2015/12/15-12-2015-creating-jobs-and-boosting-growth-contribution-of-the-european-structural-and-investment-funds-to-the-10-commission-priorities</a></p>
<p><b>Specific issues relating to the</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>European arrest warrant,</b></li> <li>• <b>Stockholm programme</b></li> <li>• <b>Third pillar</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Recognition of professional qualifications</b></p>	<p><b>Measures to Address the Refugee Crisis</b></p> <p>The European Agenda on Migration adopted by the Commission in May 2015 set out the need for a comprehensive approach to migration management. Since then, a number of measures have been introduced – including the adoption of two emergency schemes to relocate 160,000 people in clear need of international protection from the Member States most affected to other EU Member States, and the endorsement of the Commission Action Plan on Return.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6134_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6134_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>International Aviation: an opportunity for growth and jobs in the EU aviation sector</b></p> <p>The aim is to boost the international competitiveness of the EU's aviation industry and ensure high quality services for the passengers. Once signed, nearly 75% of all passengers flying in and out of the EU, or more than 240 million passengers per year, would be covered by EU-level aviation agreements.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-6145_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-6145_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>Commission welcomes agreement on new entrance and residency rules for third-country national students and researchers</b></p> <p>Justice and Home Affairs Ministers have agreed on common new entrance and residency rules for third-country national students, researchers and trainees and for volunteers who come to the EU under the European Voluntary Service (EVS) scheme.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6256_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6256_en.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Introduction to different sector policies (regional policy, trade policy, agricultural policy, social policy).</b></p>	<p><b>The European Commission adopted the new EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation</b></p> <p>PEACE IV worth almost 270 million euro, with 229 million euro coming from the European Regional Development Fund. PEACE IV is a unique Cohesion Policy programme aiming to reinforce a peaceful and stable society by fostering reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6191_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6191_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>Agricultural Outlook Conference Speech by Phil Hogan, Commissioner for Agriculture &amp; Rural Development</b></p> <p>This conference comes one year into Phil Hogan's mandate as Commissioner and he used this opportunity to look forward to the rest of that mandate and beyond, to give analysis of the challenges ahead and his vision for a strategy for EU agriculture, to outline the role that the Common Agricultural Policy can play.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-15-6208_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-15-6208_en.htm</a></p>

**Promotion of EU  
upcoming events and  
news**

**Conference of the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on raw materials and  
Horizon 2020 brokerage event on raw materials**

**09/12/2015 - 10/12/2015 / Brussels, Belgium**

This third annual conference presents a comprehensive overview of developments in the fields covered by the EIP, including successful raw materials commitments; regional approaches and investment in raw materials;

[http://europa.eu/newsroom/calendar/events/2015/12/09\\_eip\\_conference\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/newsroom/calendar/events/2015/12/09_eip_conference_en.htm)

**3rd Urban Development Network**

**18/02/2016 / Brussels, Belgium**

In this seminar, the Commission will offer its expertise and support with regard to some of the key areas, such as the involvement of stakeholder(s) participation, setting up the strategy, how to organise administrative capacity, the division of roles and responsibilities between the MA and cities, the project pipeline and the selection of projects.

<http://www.cvent.com/events/urban-development-network-3-seminar/custom-18-543c649ad3584ffaa86084bd7a1d32f4.aspx>

**Financial Instruments delivering ESI Funds**

**21/01/2016 / Ljubljana, Slovenia**

The seminar in Ljubljana on 21 January 2016 is part of a seminar series covering 25 EU Member States.

The purpose of this seminar is to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to learn more about the advantages, features and suitability of financial instruments in delivering the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) 2014-2020 objectives, with a specific focus on the thematic priorities of Slovenia.

<https://www.fi-compass.eu/event/787/financial-instruments-delivering-esi-funds-ljubljana-21-january-2016>

**Pilot peer-review workshop on Integrated Sustainable Urban Development  
Strategies**

**28/01/2016 - 29/01/2016 / Seville, Spain**

On behalf of the European Commission and the city of Seville, it is our pleasure to invite you to a pilot peer-review workshop on Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Strategies. The peer-review workshop will be organised in the context of the Urban Development Network, by the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission together with the city of Seville.

<http://www.cvent.com/events/udn-peer-review-workshop/custom-18-b0febec82f2244148c9e9e2a9a26b0e9.aspx>

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