

July 2015



Co-funded by the
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<p>EU integration process in CEE countries</p>	<p>Statement on the latest developments in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, welcomes the outcome of the political leaders meeting held on June 19th in Skopje in the presence of EU and US Ambassadors. http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news_corner/news/2015/06/20150619_en.htm</p> <p>Getting the fundamentals right – Public administration reform in the Western Balkans Simon Mordue, Director for Strategy and Turkey, DG NEAR, participated on 16 June at a Policy Dialogue on "Getting the fundamentals right - Public administration reform in the Western Balkans". The event was organised by the Inter-Institutional Relations and Communications unit of DG NEAR in partnership with the European Policy Centre. http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news_corner/news/2015/06/20150616_en.htm</p>
<p>Pros, advantages and obligations resulting from EU membership</p>	<p>Information from the European Commission on the latest draft proposals in the context of negotiations with Greece In the interest of transparency and for the information of the Greek people, the European Commission is publishing the latest proposals agreed among the three institutions (EC, ECB and IMF), which take into account the proposals of the Greek authorities of 8, 14, 22 and 25 June as well as the talks at political and technical level throughout the week. http://ec.europa.eu/news/2015/06/20150628_en.htm</p> <p>INVESTMENT PLAN FOR EUROPE: BULGARIA TO CONTRIBUTE €100 MILLION Bulgaria has announced that it will contribute €100 million to projects benefiting from finance by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), at the heart of the €315 billion <u>Investment Plan for Europe</u>. The contribution will be made through co-financing of projects approved by the <u>Bulgarian Development Bank</u>. Bulgaria is the 8th Member State after Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland and Slovakia to announce a contribution, even before the EFSI becomes operational. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5280_en.htm</p> <p>RegioStars Awards 2015: Jury selects 17 finalists as Europe's most outstanding regional projects The European Commission announced the finalists for the RegioStars 2015 awards which honour Europe's most inspirational and innovative regional projects supported by EU Cohesion Policy Funds. An independent RegioStars Awards Jury, led by MEP Lambert Van Nistelrooij as Jury President, selected <u>17 finalists</u></p>

	<p>from 143 entries on the basis of four key criteria: innovation, impact, sustainability and partnership. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2015/06/regiostars-awards-2015-jury-selects-17-finalists-as-europe-s-most-outstanding-regional-projects</p>
<p>General development of the EU</p>	<p>FIRST THINGS FIRST: MEPS DISCUSS PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY IN 2016 If you want to get results, you need to plan ahead: the European Commission is drafting its working programme for next year and MEPs are always keen to help shape it. The development committee organised on 23 June a discussion on what should happen concerning development policy in 2016 with Neven Mimica, the commissioner for international cooperation and development. The meeting was opened by UK S&D member Linda McAvan, chair of the development committee. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150623STO69504/html/First-things-first-MEPs-discuss-priorities-for-development-policy-in-2016</p>
<p>Introduction to EU institutions and their Functioning</p>	<p>MEPS DEBATE EUROPEAN COUNCIL: MIGRATION, SECURITY, GREECE The best way to help Greece and tackling the migration crisis in the Mediterranean were hotly debated by MEPs during the plenary session on 24 June. The debate was held ahead of the European Council on 25-26 June when European leaders will be discussing migration, security and economic governance. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150623STO69765/html/MEPs-debate-European-Council-migration-security-Greece</p> <p>OPENING: NEW EUROPE OF NATIONS AND FREEDOM GROUP DECLARED FORMED Parliament's new 36-strong Europe of Nations and Freedom group, launched on 15 June, has filed its foundation declaration in due form, announced Vice-President Antonio Tajani (EPP, IT), at the opening. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150622IPR69217/html/Opening-new-Europe-of-Nations-and-Freedom-group-declared-formed</p> <p>MEPS VOTE ON NEW FUND TO PUT EU INVESTMENT PLAN INTO PRACTICE MEPs vote on 24 June on the establishment of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), that should help implement the EU's €315 billion plan to overcome the crisis-induced shortage of investment in the European economy. This ambitious initiative, launched by the European Commission under Jean-Claude Juncker, should entail no extra financial burden for taxpayers. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150417STO42603/html/MEPs-vote-on-new-fund-to-put-EU-investment-plan-into-practice</p>

<p>Introduction to EU law</p>	<p>LATVIAN PRESIDENCY REACHED A POLITICAL AGREEMENT ON NEW PLANT HEALTH REGULATION</p> <p>In COREPER) the ambassadors of the Member States politically supported the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on protective measures against pests of plants. They gave the mandate to the Presidency to resume the dialogue negotiations with the European Parliament. https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/2515-latvian-presidency-reached-a-political-agreement-on-new-plant-health-regulation</p> <p>SEAL PRODUCTS TRADE: AGREEMENT TO ADAPT THE BAN TO WTO RULES</p> <p>Member States approved a compromise text agreed with the European Parliament to bring the EU regulation on trade in seal products into compliance with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules. https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/2500-seal-products-trade-agreement-to-adapt-the-ban-to-wto-rules</p> <p>FIGHTING CARTELS - COMMISSION SANCTIONS RETAIL FOOD PACKAGING CARTEL AND SENDS STATEMENT OF OBJECTIONS IN SUSPECTED CAR BATTERY RECYCLING CARTEL</p> <p>The Commission has decided to impose fines totalling over €115 million euros on ten companies for running cartels in retail food packaging. In fact, eight manufacturers and two distributors ran five separate cartels concerning trays used for retail packaging of food such as cheese, meat, fish and cakes. The kind of trays we are all familiar with when we do our shopping. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-15-5260_en.htm?locale=en</p>
<p>Decentralized management of EU funds</p>	<p>EXTRA €69.6 MILLION FOR MIGRATION MEASURES APPROVED IN BUDGETS COMMITTEE</p> <p>The three EU agencies managing migration flows and various EU funds dealing with migration should get a €69.6 million budget boost, said the Budgets Committee on Tuesday as it approved proposed changes to this year's European budget. The budget increases still need to be approved by Parliament as a whole and the Council of Ministers. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150622IPR69261/html/Extra-%E2%82%AC69.6-million-for-migration-measures-approved-in-Budgets-Committee</p> <p>EIB PROVIDES CO-FINANCING TO NATIONAL PROJECTS ELIGIBLE FOR EU FUNDS IN SLOVAKIA IN THE 2014-2020 PROGRAMMING PERIOD</p> <p>The European Investment Bank (EIB) is lending EUR 600 million, the first tranche of an approved loan of EUR 1.16 billion, to Slovakia to co-finance priority projects receiving support from EU funds within the period 2014-2020. The EIB funds will cover the national co-financing contribution in line with the Partnership Agreement and Operational Programmes. http://www.eib.org/infocentre/press/releases/all/2015/2015-151-eib-provides-co-financing-to-national-projects-eligible-for-eu-funds-in-slovakia-in-the-2014-2020-programming-period.htm?media=rss&language=en</p>

	<p>FOREIGN BANKS' FUNDING TO EMERGING EUROPE CONTINUED TO DECLINE IN LATE 2014, BUT TREND MAY BE REVERSING</p> <p>The decline in Western banks' funding to Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe (CESEE) accelerated in the fourth quarter of 2014, while domestic credit growth remained lackluster in much of the region, but this trend may have started to reverse in early 2015.</p> <p>http://www.eib.org/infocentre/press/releases/all/2015/2015-150-foreign-banks-funding-to-emerging-europe-continued-to-decline-in-late-2014-but-trend-may-be-reversing-new-report-shows.htm?media=rss&language=en</p>
<p>Multi-level governance</p>	<p>Regions and cities commit to implementing the new European Neighbourhood Policy by promoting decentralisation and local democracy</p> <p>The debate highlighted the contribution of regions and cities to support the EU in dealing with challenges ranging from the Ukraine crisis to the management of the last waves of migration.</p> <p>http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/regions-and-cities-commit-to-enp.aspx</p> <p>Markku Markkula welcomes the Parliament's green light to EFSI: "CoR will mobilise regions and cities to put forward quality projects for the Investment Plan"</p> <p>The adoption by the European Parliament of the regulation for the European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI) was welcomed by the President of the European Committee of the Regions, Markku Markkula: "We are happy see the new regulation taking on board the CoR's call for creating incentives for higher risk projects to boost growth while ensuring consistency with the economic, social and territorial cohesion across the EU. We also welcome that the 315bn Investment plan will work in synergy with the Structural and Investment funds and in the same time avoid any overlapping in order to ensure a clear added value of EFSI projects."</p> <p>http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/markkula-welcomes-parliaments-green-light-to-EFSI.aspx</p> <p>President Markkula: "EU-China partnership is a historic opportunity to deliver smart urban development through digital networks and energy efficiency"</p> <p>Speaking at the China-EU Urbanisation Partnership Forum 2015, the President of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), Markku Markkula, stressed the importance of city pairings and partnerships between regions and cities in energy efficiency, smart services, urban sustainability and the circular economy. He called on the European Commission to increase the role and impact of the Covenant of Mayors and provide a dedicated investment platform supported by the European Fund for Strategic Investment.</p> <p>http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/eu-china-partnership.aspx</p>
<p>Introduction to different negotiation chapters</p> <p><i>Chapter 1: Free movement of goods</i></p> <p><i>Chapter 2: Freedom</i></p>	<p>ANIMAL HEALTH LAW: AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE BACKS INFORMAL DEAL WITH THE COUNCIL</p> <p>An informal deal on the wording of draft EU law on transmissible animal diseases, negotiated by MEPs, the Latvian Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the European Commission, was backed by the Agriculture Committee on Wednesday. The law will merge and update many scattered items of old legislation, so as to</p>

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

help prevent and halt new outbreaks of animal diseases such as avian flu or African swine fever and keep pace with scientific progress.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150617IPR67303/html/Animal-health-law-Agriculture-Committee-backs-informal-deal-with-the-Council>

EURO AREA ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE: "LET'S MAKE THINGS BETTER", MEPS SAY

Today's economic governance rules for the euro area are not working as well as they should. This is because they are too complex, lack ownership and are not consistently enforced, say Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee MEPs in a resolution voted on Tuesday. This draft text, which assesses the record of the economic governance architecture so far and recommends improvements, will become Parliament's input to the 25 June European Council.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150615IPR66483/html/Euro-area-economic-governance-Let's-make-things-better-MEPs-say>

EU COPYRIGHT REFORM MUST BALANCE Rightholders' AND USERS' INTERESTS, SAY MEPS

Forthcoming proposals to reform EU copyright law for the digital era and EU digital single market must protect Europe's cultural diversity and citizens' access to it, whilst striking a fair balance between the rights and interests of rightholders and users, say Legal Affairs Committee MEPs in a non-legislative resolution voted on Tuesday.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150615IPR66497/html/EU-copyright-reform-must-balance-rightholders%E2%80%99-and-users%E2%80%99-interests-say-MEPs>

EYE 2016: PARLIAMENT'S SUCCESSFUL YOUTH EVENT RETURNS WITH A SECOND EDITION

The European Youth Event (EYE) will return next year and you could be a part of it! #EYE2016 organisers are looking for enthusiastic young people and organisations that want to help shape the event's programme. Check out the Facebook page for the latest news, including all the information about the previous edition in 2014 and its follow-up phase.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150617STO67458/html/EYE-2016-Parliament's-successful-youth-event-returns-with-a-second-edition>

BAN NOT JUST ANIMAL CLONING, BUT CLONED FOOD, FEED AND IMPORTS TOO, SAY MEPS

A draft law to ban the cloning of all farm animals, their descendants and products derived from them, including imports, in the EU was voted by the Environment and Agriculture committees on Wednesday. MEPs beefed up the European Commission's initial proposal, citing high mortality rates at all development stages of cloning and EU citizens' animal welfare and ethical concerns.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150617IPR67269/html/Ban-not-just-animal-cloning-but-cloned-food-feed-and-imports-too-say-MEPs>

<p>Chapter 25: Research and development</p> <p>Chapter 26: Education and culture</p> <p>Chapter 27: Environment</p> <p>Chapter 28: Consumer and health protection</p> <p>Chapter 29: Customs union</p> <p>Chapter 30: External relations</p> <p>Chapter 31: Foreign, security and defence policy</p> <p>Chapter 32: Financial control</p> <p>Chapter 33: Financial and budgetary provisions</p>	<p>ALBRECHT ON DATA PROTECTION REFORM: PEOPLE WILL BE BETTER INFORMED</p> <p>Parliament and the Council are set to embark on informal talks to come up with a compromise on a reform of data protection rules. Although MEPs already adopted their position in March 2014, member states have only agreed an approach now. We talked to German Greens/EFA MEP Jan Philipp Albrecht, who will be leading negotiations on behalf of Parliament, what the benefit of the new rules will be for consumers and companies and what issues still need to be resolved.</p> <p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150616STO66729/html/Albrecht-on-data-protection-reform-People-will-be-better-informed</p> <p>SPURRING ECONOMIC RECOVERY: PARLIAMENT APPROVES JUNCKER PLAN RULES</p> <p>The €315-billion “Juncker” investment plan, announced by the European Commission last November to encourage the financing of viable investments in Europe, was backed by the European Parliament in a vote on Wednesday. Parliament modified its financing structure, won a say in selecting its leadership and ensured more democratic oversight in negotiations with the Council.</p> <p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150622IPR69218/html/Spurring-economic-recovery-Parliament-approves-Juncker-Plan-rules</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>TRADE SECRETS: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION MUST BE PROTECTED, SAY LEGAL AFFAIRS MEPS</p> <p>Plans to help businesses obtain legal redress against the theft or misuse of their trade secrets were backed by the legal affairs committee on Tuesday. The committee clarified the draft rules to ensure respect for freedom of expression and information, including media freedom, and provide adequate protection for whistle-blowers.</p> <p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150615IPR66493/html/Trade-secrets-freedom-of-expression-must-be-protected-say-legal-affairs-MEPs</p> <p>NOVEL FOODS: FOOD SAFETY MEPS BACK DEAL WITH COUNCIL</p> <p>Draft plans to encourage food innovation via a new, simplified authorisation procedure for novel foods, already informally agreed with the Council of Ministers, were endorsed by the Environment Committee on Thursday. In talks, MEPs insisted that foods from cloned animals must be clearly included in the scope of the regulation, as must the precautionary principle, measures to keep nanomaterials under scrutiny and animal testing restrictions.</p> <p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150623IPR69710/html/Novel-Foods-food-safety-MEPs-back-deal-with-Council</p>

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

LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE VOTES ON NEW COPYRIGHT APPROACH

Nearly half of all people have failed to use streaming services from their own country while on holiday abroad. This practice known as geo-blocking is because of copyright protection. Current copyright rules date from 2001, but the European Commission will propose an update by the end of the year. German Greens/EFA member Julia Reda has drafted a report to serve as Parliament's input to the new legislation. The legal affairs committee votes on it on Tuesday 16 June.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150615STO66409/html/Live-legal-affairs-committee-votes-on-new-copyright-approach>

EURES NETWORK: HELPING PEOPLE TO FIND A JOB IN ANOTHER EU COUNTRY

Although some parts of Europe suffer from high unemployment rates and employers in other parts struggle to fill vacancies, relatively few people decide to look for a job in another EU country. The European network of Employment Services (Eures) was launched in 1993 to help with this. The employment committee votes on Tuesday 23 June on proposals to improve the Eures network as well as to further integrate Europe's labour markets and facilitate workers' access to mobility services.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150622STO69009/html/Eures-network-helping-people-to-find-a-job-in-another-EU-country>

LATVIAN PRESIDENCY REACHED A POLITICAL AGREEMENT ON NEW PLANT HEALTH REGULATION

On 30 June, at the meeting of the European Union Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) the ambassadors of the Member States politically supported the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on protective measures against pests of plants. They gave the mandate to the Presidency to resume the triologue negotiations with the European Parliament.

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/2515-latvian-presidency-reached-a-political-agreement-on-new-plant-health-regulation>

LATVIAN PRESIDENCY DISCUSSES WITH THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES THE NEW INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT TO LIMIT CLIMATE CHANGE

On 25-26 June in Riga, the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union together with the European Commission met with the Eastern Partnership countries, to reach a consensus in international climate change negotiations and to promote conclusion of the new international agreement in December 2015, in Paris.

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/2486-latvian-presidency-discusses-with-the-eastern-partnership-countries-the-new-international-agreement-to-limit-climate-change>

EU AND CENTRAL ASIAN MINISTERS AGREE ON COOPERATION IN HIGHER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The development of qualification frameworks and standards, quality assurance

and accreditation, and employment and labour market needs will be the main areas of cooperation between the EU and Central Asian countries in the field of higher education and vocational education during the next two years. The Ministers for Education and high-level officials from the EU and five Central Asian countries agreed on these priorities on 26 June in Riga at the first meeting of the EU and Central Asian Ministers for Education.

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/2464-eu-and-central-asian-ministers-agree-on-cooperation-in-higher-and-vocational-education>

EU ONLY HALFWAY TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY

On 25 June, the Parliamentary Secretary at the Latvian Ministry of Welfare, Reinis Uzulnieks, took part in one of the panel discussions at a conference in Brussels organised by the European Institute for Gender Equality to launch the European Gender Equality Index 2015.

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/2456-eu-only-halfway-towards-gender-equality>

MINISTERS APPROVE EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY ASPECTS OF THE 2015 EUROPEAN SEMESTER

On Thursday, 18 June, the Minister for Welfare Uldis Augulis chaired the meeting of the EU Employment and Social policy Ministers (EPSCO) in Luxembourg. During the meeting the EU Member States discussed the European Semester, youth employment and gender gap in pensions.

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/2314-ministers-adopt-guidelines-for-the-employment-policies-in-the-member-states>

HOME AFFAIRS MINISTERS DISCUSS MIGRATION, FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM AND INTERNAL SECURITY STRATEGY

On Tuesday, 16 June, the Minister for the Interior Rihards Kozlovskis chaired the meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council (JHA) in Luxembourg. During the meeting, the EU Member States discussed migration, fight against terrorism and internal security strategy.

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/2267-home-affairs-ministers-discuss-migration-internal-security-strategy-and-fight-against-terrorism>

Promotion of EU upcoming events and news

WORKSHOP AT THE EXPO MILAN 2015: 'BEST PRACTICES IN IMPROVING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF AGRICULTURE'

06/07/2015-06/07/2015, *Milan, Italy*

The theme of EXPO Milan 2015 is "Feeding the planet, Energy for life". In this context, the workshop will showcase best practices to improve the environmental performance of the agricultural sector in three key areas: **soil quality management, nutrient management planning and irrigation.**

http://europa.eu/newsroom/calendar/events/2015/07/06_sustainable_agriculture_expo_en.htm

CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOOD SECURITY: CHALLENGES FOR PLANT HEALTH, PLANT BREEDING AND GENETIC RESOURCES

14/07/2015-14/07/2015, *Milan, Italy*

The conference falls under the umbrella of a series of events promoting the long

term sustainability of the food chain to ensure food security.
http://europa.eu/newsroom/calendar/events/2015/07/14-climate_change_en.htm

2015 EUROPEAN URBAN RESEARCH ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE - TRANSFORMING CITIES, TRANSFORMATIVE CITIES

17 to 20 September 2015

Location: Sibiu, Romania

The European Urban Research Association and the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania organize the EURA 2015 conference in Sibiu, Romania. The conference will focus on the multiple dimensions of transformation within cities and the transformations cities bring about in the wider society

<http://www.eura2015.org/>

The Future of Cohesion Policy beyond 2020

On 13 July the Committee of the Regions -in the framework of its project "Future of the Cohesion Policy"- will organise the second of a series of seminars aiming at providing input in the context of the future cohesion policy.

The seminar "From challenges to models" will gather representatives of other EU institutions, as well as experts and other key stakeholders.

<http://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Pages/future-cohesion-policy.aspx>

Harmonious Development, Common Prosperity and the Transformation of Cities and Regions

25/11/2015 - 27/11/2015

Hangzhou, China

The aim of this conference is to consider the ways in which (1) cities and regions throughout the world are facing up to and can adapt to these challenges, (2) cities and regions can help create an architecture and construct relationships that can contribute to the development of a world that is more harmonious (people-people and people nature) and capable of promoting common prosperity and (3) the map of economic and social development is consequently changing.

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/events/2015/11/harmonious-development-common-prosperity-and-the-transformation-of-cities-and-regions

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