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EU integration process in CEE countries

EU and Switzerland sign historic tax transparency agreement

The EU and Switzerland signed a historic new tax transparency agreement, which will significantly improve the fight against tax evasion. Under the agreement, both sides will automatically exchange information on the financial accounts of each other's residents from 2018. This spells an end to Swiss bank secrecy for EU residents and will prevent tax evaders from hiding undeclared income in Swiss accounts.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5043_en.htm

EU and Ukraine sign Memorandum of Understanding for €1.8 billion in financial assistance

European Commission Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis, Ukraine's Finance Minister Natalie Jaresko and the Governor of the National Bank of Ukraine Valeria Gontareva signed a Memorandum of Understanding and loan agreement for the third EU Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA) programme to Ukraine. The agreements set out the conditions for Ukraine to benefit from an additional €1.8 billion in EU financing.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5024_en.htm

EU to unlock €2 billion worth of investment for small businesses in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine

At the Eastern Partnership Business Forum in Riga, the European Commission launched the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) Facility for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The Facility will provide some €200 million worth of grants from the EU budget over the next 10 years. This contribution is expected to unlock new investments worth at least €2 billion for the SMEs in the three DCFTA countries: Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5012_en.htm

The Eastern Partnership – a policy that delivers (European Commission's fact sheet)

The Eastern Partnership, a joint undertaking of the EU and its Eastern European partners Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, has advanced in concrete terms across a range of bilateral and multilateral cooperation areas since the 2013 summit in Vilnius.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-5019_en.htm

Pros, advantages and obligations resulting from EU membership

Negotiations on the Regulation for a European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) successfully concluded

EU legislators successfully concluded negotiations on the Regulation for a European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the core of the Investment Plan for Europe. This means that the Fund will become operational and start financing projects at the end of the summer.

	<p>http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release STATEMENT-15-5064 en.htm</p> <p>Free movement: new Commission report on mobility of Croatian workers The European Commission has published a new report on transitional arrangements on free movement for Croatian workers, concluding that future potential flows of Croatian workers to other EU Member States are likely to be small and unlikely to lead to labour market disturbances. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release IP-15-5067 en.htm</p> <p>Commission requests 11 Member States to apply EU rules on Bank Recovery and Resolution The European Commission has requested Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Malta, Poland, Romania and Sweden to fully implement the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD). This Directive is a centrepiece of the EU's Banking Union that was put in place to create a safer and sounder financial sector in the wake of the financial crisis. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release IP-15-5057 en.htm</p>
<p>General development of the EU</p>	<p>Financing for development: EU countries to stick to foreign aid commitments MEPs urged EU member countries to respect their Official Development Assistance (ODA) target of 0.7% of national income and to set timetables for reaching it by 2020 in a resolution adopted on Tuesday. They also stressed the need to mobilise domestic resources efficiently in developing countries as a key source of financing. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150513IPR55438/html/Financing-for-development-EU-countries-to-stick-to-foreign-aid-commitments</p>
<p>Introduction to EU institutions and their Functioning</p>	<p>Parliament wins on Juncker Plan cuts The Commission, which had presented its signature plan for investment for Europe in November 2014, gave in to MEPs, who charged that the cuts were too large. http://www.euractiv.com/sections/eu-priorities-2020/Parliament%20wins%20on%20Juncker%20Plan%20cuts-314844</p> <p>Commission proposes draft EU budget 2016: focus on jobs, growth, migration and global action The Commission proposed a 2016 EU budget of €143.5 billion in payment credits to support the recovery of the European economy and help improve lives in Europe and beyond. The money will be invested to boost innovation, create jobs, help convergence among Member States and among regions, deal more effectively with migration and further strengthen the role of the EU as a global player. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release IP-15-5046 en.htm</p> <p>Negotiations on the Regulation for a European Fund for Strategic</p>

	<p>Investments (EFSI) successfully concluded EU legislators successfully concluded negotiations on the Regulation for a European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the core of the Investment Plan for Europe. This means that the Fund will become operational and start financing projects at the end of the summer. The European Commission acted as an honest broker and facilitator throughout the negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release STATEMENT-15-5064 en.htm</p>
<p>Introduction to EU law</p>	<p>ANTI-FRAUD CHIEF DEFENDS CRIME-FIGHTING RECORD The head of the European Union’s fraud-fighting agency OLAF has hit back at critics of his success rate, saying Tuesday that his investigators had earned their keep last year by identifying €901 million that can now be returned to EU coffers. http://www.politico.eu/article/anti-fraud-chief-defends-crime-fighting-record/</p> <p>BIG ENERGY PUSHES CARBON TRADING SCHEME Six of the world’s leading oil and gas companies are offering to help set up a carbon pricing system that would encourage a switch to cleaner fuels — and also shift away from polluting coal — a sign they want a seat at the table for the upcoming climate summit in Paris. http://www.politico.eu/article/big-energy-pushes-carbon-trading-scheme/</p> <p>OMBUDSMAN CLAIMS DISCRIMINATION IN EU PROJECTS In a new report, European Ombudsman Emily O’Reilly found that many EU-funded projects are not in line with the Charter of Fundamental Rights — the main EU legal text protecting human and social rights. Signed in 2000, attached to the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, and upheld by the European Court of Justice in a ruling in 2014, the charter holds that human rights should be part of EU law. http://www.politico.eu/article/ombudsman-goes-after-discrimination-in-eu-projects/</p>
<p>Decentralised management of EU funds</p>	<p>FIVE SUBPLOTS IN THE EU BUDGET While the broad outlines of the EU budget have already been determined for the 2014-2020 period, the annual budget allows wiggle room for certain priorities. For its €153.5 billion proposal for 2016, which must be approved by Parliament and EU countries, the Commission took pains to point out that it is shifting more resources to crisis issues, like the migration problem in the Mediterranean and conflicts in Syria and Ukraine. http://www.politico.eu/article/five-subplots-in-the-eu-budget/</p> <p>COMMISSION ASKS THE PUBLIC FOR IDEAS TO DEVELOP THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY The European Commission has opened a public consultation to collect views on the main policy options for developing an ambitious new approach on the</p>

	<p>Circular Economy. Stakeholders' input will help feed the preparation of the new action plan, to be presented by the end of 2015. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5049_en.htm?locale=en</p> <p>Fighting tax evasion: EU and Switzerland sign historic tax transparency agreement</p> <p>The EU and Switzerland signed a historic new tax transparency agreement, which will significantly improve the fight against tax evasion. Under the agreement, both sides will automatically exchange information on the financial accounts of each other's residents from 2018. This spells an end to Swiss bank secrecy for EU residents and will prevent tax evaders from hiding undeclared income in Swiss accounts. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5043_en.htm?locale=en</p>
<p>Multi-level governance</p>	<p>Strengthening dialogue between Civil Society from the Southern Neighbourhood and the EU</p> <p>Representatives of more than 100 civil society organisations, academics, media, government representatives, local authorities and international organisations from the Southern Neighbourhood and Europe gathered at the European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the regions headquarters in Brussels for the second annual Southern Mediterranean Civil Society Forum. The Forum is part of an overall initiative aiming at an enhanced and more strategic engagement with civil society. http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/strengthening-dialogue-between-civil-society-from-the-southern-neighbourhood-and-the-eu.aspx</p> <p>EU Better Regulation: CoR President welcomes recognition of Territorial Impact Assessment</p> <p>The President of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), Markku Markkula, has welcomed the stronger focus on subsidiarity and proportionality in the Impact Assessment guidelines which form part of the Better Regulation Package published yesterday. He highlighted the inclusion of territorial impact assessments as an important element of the European Commission's strengthened approach to evaluate the impact of EU legislation. The President also expressed the CoRs' commitment for a result-oriented approach between all EU institutions in the context of the proposed new Agreement on Better Law-making. http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/cor-president-welcomes-recognition-of-territorial-impact-assessment.aspx</p>
<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</p>	<p>Benchmarks: restoring confidence in the financial markets</p> <p>Benchmarks are widely used to track market developments, however financial scandals involving benchmarks such as Libor and Eurobiber have shown that they are susceptible to manipulation. On 18 May MEPs debate new rules to ensure the full transparency of all benchmarks used in the EU and vote on them the next day. Dutch ALDE member Cora van Nieuwenhuizen, who wrote the report with recommendations, said: "It is a major step forward in ensuring the future robustness and accuracy of benchmarks."</p>

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 health protection

Chapter 29: Customs union

Chapter 30: External relations

Chapter 31: Foreign, security and defence policy

Chapter 32: Financial control

Chapter 33: Financial and budgetary provisions

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150328STO38902/html/Benchmarks-restoring-confidence-in-the-financial-markets>

MEPs propose blueprint for safer healthcare

Suggested ways to improve patient safety, including tackling growing resistance to human and veterinary antibiotics, using today's treatments more responsibly and promoting innovation, are set out in a resolution voted on Tuesday. MEPs note that 8 - 12% of patients in EU hospitals suffer adverse events, such as healthcare-related infections, which are implicated in 37,000 deaths a year and place a heavy burden on limited health service budgets.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150513IPR55317/html/MEPs-propose-blueprint-for-safer-healthcare>

Digital single market: creating opportunities for European companies

Could creating a digital single market in the EU and removing barriers online help give a boost to European companies? The European Commission outlined its strategy on 6 May, while it will also feature on the agenda of the European Council on 25-26 June. Meanwhile the Parliament is planning to respond with an own-initiative report on the digital market. They debated the issue on 19 May, during which MEPs highlighted the challenges and potential benefits involved.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150518STO56031/html/Digital-single-market-creating-opportunities-for-European-companies>

Five a day: how the EU will help children to learn about healthy eating

Children are eating fewer and fewer fruit, vegetables and dairy products in Europe, but a new proposal could help them to adopt a healthier diet. Under the plan two existing EU schemes for handing out fresh milk, fruit and vegetables to pupils would be combined, reducing the administrative burden and creating more opportunities for teaching children about balanced diets.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150413STO41754/html/Five-a-day-how-the-EU-will-help-children-to-learn-about-healthy-eating>

TTIP: more US market access, reform investment protection, retain EU standards

An EU-US trade deal should deepen EU access to the US market, but must not undermine EU standards or the right to regulate in the public interest, say Trade Committee MEPs in draft recommendations voted on Thursday. Tools for resolving disputes between investors and states should be reformed and improved, they add.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150528IPR60432/html/TTIP-more-US-market-access-reform-investment-protection-retain-EU-standards>

Cyber-attacks: how to best protect the media and critical infrastructure

	<p>Several major Western news organisations have been hit by politically motivated cyber-attacks over the past few years, mostly in retaliation for their critical coverage of events, countries or movements such as the Syrian regime or Islamic State. MEPs discussed on 27 May how the EU could help to counter such attacks. Check out our timeline to learn more about the attacks and read on to find out how the EU could help.</p> <p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150526STO59635/html/Cyber-attacks-how-to-best-protect-the-media-and-critical-infrastructure</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>Day against Homophobia: “The fight for equality continues”</p> <p>The International Day against Homophobia is marked every 17 May to raise awareness about the importance of non- discrimination of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people around the world. This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the decision by the World Health Organization to remove homosexuality from the list of mental disorders. MEPs highlighted the importance of fighting discrimination during a discussion with experts in the Parliament on 12 May.</p> <p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150511STO54582/html/Day-against-Homophobia-%E2%80%9CThe-fight-for-equality-continues%E2%80%9D</p> <p>Tougher rules on money laundering to fight tax evasion and terrorist financing</p> <p>The ultimate owners of companies will have to be listed in central registers in EU countries, open both to the authorities and to people with a "legitimate interest", such as investigative journalists, under new rules already agreed with the Council and endorsed by Parliament on Wednesday. The new anti-money laundering directive aims to step up the fight against tax crimes and terrorist financing. New rules to make it easier to trace transfers of funds were also approved.</p> <p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150513IPR55319/html/Tougher-rules-on-money-laundering-to-fight-tax-evasion-and-terrorist-financing</p> <p>Insolvency: throwing a lifeline to struggling companies</p> <p>Struggling companies will be given a second chance to improve their financial situation under new rules on insolvency approved by MEPs on 20 May. Every year 1.7 million jobs are lost in the EU due to companies going bankrupt. Under the new legislation on cross-border insolvencies, companies in financial difficulties but otherwise sound are given another opportunity to turn the situation around. The plans also include measures to help firms before they go bust.</p> <p>http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150519STO56499/html/Insolvency-throwing-a-lifeline-to-struggling-companies</p>
<p>Introduction to different sector policies (regional policy, trade policy, agricultural policy, social</p>	<p>EU CONSTRUCTION WEEK 2015 TO FOCUS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SECTOR</p> <p>On 2-5 June, under the Latvian Presidency of the EU Council, the</p>

policy).

Construction Week 2015 will take place in Riga, during which the participants will discuss the implementation of the "Strategy for the sustainable competitiveness of the construction sector and its enterprises".

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/1941-eu-construction-week-2015-to-focus-on-sustainable-development-of-the-sector>.

EU-US JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS MINISTERS TO DISCUSS TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

On 3 June, the EU-US Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial Meeting will take place in Riga. It will bring together representatives from the European Commission, the United States, the Latvian and incoming Luxembourgish Presidency, Eurojust, Frontex and Europol. At the end of the meeting, the representatives are expected to reach an agreement on the Joint Statement on "Enhancing transatlantic cooperation in the area of Freedom, Security and Justice".

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/1940-eu-us-justice-and-home-affairs-ministers-to-discuss-transatlantic-cooperation>

MINISTERS ADOPT CONCLUSIONS ON DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF EUROPEAN INDUSTRY

On Thursday, 28 May, the Minister for Economic Affairs, Dana Reizniece-Ozola chaired the meeting of the EU Competitiveness Council (COMPET) in Brussels. During the meeting, the EU Member States expressed their views on the Digital single market, reached agreement on travel packages and Single-member private limited liability company.

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/1925-ministers-adopt-conclusions-on-digital-transformation-of-european-industry>

EXPRESSED PROPOSALS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF DEAF PERSONS AND INCLUSIVE LABOUR MARKET

A series of discussions on employment of the deaf persons within the project „Active for the Future" aimed at promoting the development of an inclusive labour market in the European Union is now completed with the summary of different proposals. The members of the European Commission, representatives of the government and Parliament of the Republic of Latvia, social partners and more than 120 representatives of EU public organisations of the deaf persons were engaged in the discussions.

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/1912-expressed-proposals-for-employment-of-deaf-persons-and-inclusive-labour-market>

INVESTING IN EUROPEAN PROJECTS: COUNCIL AND PARLIAMENT AGREE RULES ON EUROPEAN FUND FOR STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

Latvian Presidency and the European Parliament on 28 May 2015 after lengthy discussions over 12,5 hours, turning to be the longest trilogue in the ECOFIN history, reached a provisional agreement on a regulation on a European fund for strategic investments (EFSI) aimed at stimulating the economy.

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/1907-investing-in-european-projects-council-and-parliament-agree-rules-on-european-fund-for-strategic->

	investments
Promotion of EU upcoming events and news	<p>Smart City Event From the 2nd until the 5th of June 2015, the Smart City Event will take place for the 5th time in Amsterdam. This large scale European conference hosts various cities, system operators, energy companies, industrial organizations and technological parties. http://www.eukn.eu/events/upcoming-events/detail/smart-city-event/</p> <p>Resilient Cities 2015 Resilient Cities - The Annual Global Forum on Urban Resilience and Adaptation - is the global platform for urban resilience and climate change adaptation, hosted every year in Bonn. After five successful editions, the 6th edition of the Resilient Cities congress series will take place June 8-10, 2015 in Bonn, Germany. http://www.eukn.eu/events/upcoming-events/detail/resilient-cities-2015/</p> <p>Green Summit 2015 From the 9th until the 10th of June 2015, the Green Summit 2015 will take place in the University of Lichtenstein, Vaduz. The event is focused on new agriculture, social sufficiency initiatives, new architecture, energy and resource autonomous urban change and property finance and development opportunities in this rapidly rising industry. http://www.eukn.eu/events/upcoming-events/detail/green-summit-2015-university-of-lichtenstein-vaduz/</p> <p>Europe level up = governance level down. Decentralisation and multilevel governance as key factors for a stronger Europe, 04.06.2015 The event intend to open a discussion on condition of the European Union's self-government level. Although benefits that decentralisation brings are not questioned, the process itself is not finished yet. There is a need to continue financial decentralisation and reinforce regional and local level, also by introducing a multilevel governance principle, to make them a real partner contributing to European growth and jobs. http://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Pages/europe-level-up.aspx</p> <p>The EU at the G7 summit in Germany - Sunday 7 and Monday 8 June. The G7 summit will take place from 7 to 8 June in Schloss Elmau, Bavaria (Germany) under German presidency. The European Union will be represented by the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, and the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk. http://www.g7germany.de/Webs/G7/EN/Home_en/home_node.html</p> <p>Visegrad Capital Cities and Regions Forum 2015, 10/06/2015 The forum, organized by the Bratislava Self-Governing Region in co-operation with the Capital City of Bratislava, will be held under the auspices of the President of the Slovak Republic, H.E. Andrej Kiska. The event will provide a unique opportunity to intensify a dialogue between regions and cities of the Visegrad Group and Austria aimed at promoting a</p>

	<p>closer collaboration and coordination in relation to the EU institutions. The Forum will bring together local and regional policy-makers, experts on regional development, representatives of EU institutions, journalists as well as business leaders.</p> <p>http://www.inbsk.sk/v4/</p>
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