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EU integration process in CEE countries

EU and Liechtenstein sign new tax transparency agreement

Under the new agreement, Liechtenstein and EU Member States will automatically exchange information on the financial accounts of each other's residents from 2017, marking another important step forward in the fight against tax evasion.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5929_en.htm

Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and Kosovo signed

A Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) between the European Union and Kosovo was signed on October 27th in Strasbourg. The European Union will continue to support Kosovo's progress on its European path through the stabilisation and association process, the policy designed by the EU to foster cooperation with the Western Balkan countries as well as regional cooperation. Stabilisation and Association Agreements are a core component of this process.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5928_en.htm

EU must press Turkey on press freedom

Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit to Brussels earlier this month came at an exceptionally challenging time for both Turkey and the European Union. As hundreds of thousands of refugees continue to cue up at Europe's borders, fleeing atrocities in their homelands and encountering a continent unprepared (or unwilling) to admit their staggering numbers, the EU needs to work with Turkey toward a sustainable solution to this humanitarian crisis.

<https://euobserver.com/opinion/130829>

Pros, advantages and obligations resulting from EU membership

Progress following Western Balkans Route Leaders' Meeting

Upon the initiative of President Juncker, leaders representing Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia met in Brussels at the Commission. They agreed to improve cooperation and step up consultation between the countries along the route and decided on pragmatic operational measures that could be implemented immediately to tackle the refugee crisis in the region.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5924_en.htm

European Commission grants additional € 5.9 million to Greece as emergency funding

The European Commission has awarded € 5.9 million of emergency assistance from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) to Greece to support the country in coping with the high number of arrivals of migrants and refugees on the Eastern Aegean islands.

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_AC-15-5908_en.htm

<p>General development of the EU</p>	<p>New guidelines for a better use of EU money: Commission helping Member States with public procurement issues</p> <p>The "Public Procurement Guidance for practitioners on the avoidance of the most common errors in projects funded by the European Structural and Investment Funds" contains examples of good practices, case studies and useful links to help those who are involved in the planning, selection and implementation of EU-supported projects.</p> <p>It is part of the Commission's comprehensive action plan on public procurement, aiming to help Member States improve the performance of both administrations and beneficiaries in applying public procurement for EU investments during the 2014-2020 programming period.</p> <p>http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5913_en.htm</p>
<p>Introduction to EU institutions and their Functioning</p>	<p>Juncker Commission adopts second annual Work Programme: Maintaining focus and delivering on 10 priorities</p> <p>On 27 October, the European Commission adopted its 2016 Work Programme, the second of the Juncker Commission, reaffirming the commitment to the ten political priorities of its Political Guidelines. The new initiatives which the Commission will deliver in 2016 include: initiatives on Better Migration Management, and proposals on Border Management; implementation of the Digital Single Market, Follow-up to the Single Market Strategy, a Space Strategy for Europe, and a European Defence Action Plan; a Circular Economy, Next Steps for a Sustainable European Future, and legislation to implement the Energy Union; a New Skills Agenda for Europe, a New Start for Working Parents, and a Pillar of Social Rights as part of a deepening of Economic and Monetary Union; a Corporate Tax package and an Action Plan on VAT</p> <p>http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5923_en.htm</p> <p>EU budget 2016: Council calls for realism</p> <p>On 19 October 2015, the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council signalled a note of caution and realism ahead of the conciliation talks with the European Parliament on the EU budget for 2016. "We all agree that we are facing major political challenges which require us to take exceptional measures and to mobilise extraordinary financial support. But we cannot continue simply to increase the EU budget without any limits. We have to address the current situation whilst fully respecting the constraints on our finances in the light of clearly justified priorities", said Pierre Gramegna, minister for finance of Luxembourg and President of the Council at a trilogue-meeting with representatives of the European Parliament and the Commission.</p> <p>http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/10/19-eu-budget-call-for-realism/</p>
<p>Introduction to EU law</p>	<p>European Parliament adopts Commission proposal to improve transparency of the shadow banking sector</p> <p>Commissioner Jonathan Hill, responsible for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union said: "Today's rules will increase transparency in securities financing markets. They will allow market participants to use them for financing the economy, while making it easier to monitor and assess the risks involved. This is another element in making our system more resilient in the wake of the financial crisis. I am grateful to the European Parliament, and in particular</p>

	<p>rapporteur Renato Soru, for their hard work in reaching this agreement. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5930_en.htm</p>
<p>Decentralized management of EU funds</p>	<p>October infringements package: key decisions In its monthly package of infringement decisions, the European Commission is pursuing legal action against Member States for failing to comply with their obligations under EU law. These decisions, covering many sectors and EU policy areas, aim to ensure proper application of EU law for the benefit of citizens and businesses. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-5826_en.htm</p> <p>EU provides €365.5 million to support Southern Mediterranean countries EU provides €365.5 million to promote private sector development, democratic reforms and better living conditions in Southern Mediterranean partner countries (Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco). Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, commented: "Today's new EU assistance package will directly benefit citizens in partner countries by creating jobs, stimulating growth and improving living standards, including among the most vulnerable. This EU support is crucial given the various challenges our Southern Mediterranean partners are currently facing". http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/news_corner/news/2015/10/20151027_en.htm</p> <p>The Investment Plan for Europe has financed €1 billion in financing for small businesses across Europe so far in 2015 Since the start of 2015, the European Investment Fund (EIF) and equity funds across Europe have signed investment agreements worth over €1 billion which will provide equity financing for businesses. These 28 transactions benefit from the support of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) the heart of the Investment Plan for Europe. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5902_en.htm</p>
<p>Multi-level governance</p>	<p>Eurobarometer confirms views of local and regional leaders: EU needs to understand citizens better Regional and local leaders are asking the European Union to redouble efforts to listen to local communities by introducing annual EU-wide regional surveys. The members of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) were reacting to the latest study of 62,511 citizens conducted by Eurobarometer which surveyed public opinion in 209 EU regions. Unemployment was identified as the most important problem by 46% of respondents, a 9% point decline since 2012. There were also increases in those who described the economic situation in their region as 'good' (55%, up from 45%) and described their quality of life as 'good' (76%, up from 70%). However, concern about unemployment remains high across the continent, with increases in anxiety recorded in five of Spain's regions, three regions in France, in the Belgian region of Flanders, in Finland and across Austria. http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/Eurobarometer-confirms-views-of-local-and-regional-leaders-EU-needs-to-understand-citizens-better.aspx</p>

	<p>Regions and cities need simpler rules and more flexibility to fully use to EU funds and deal with refugee crisis</p> <p>CoR's COTER commission and the European Parliament's REGI committee jointly met last Tuesday to discuss cohesion policy implementation with Commissioner Crețu. The persisting complexity of European Structural and Investment Funds' (ESIF) regulations, coupled with the delayed start of investment plans 2014-2020, was the main concern shared by regional and local leaders of the CoR Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget (COTER) and the members of the European Parliament's Committee on Regional Development (REGI). The need for greater flexibility was also emphasised to allow regions and cities to mobilise regional policy in dealing with the refugee crisis.</p> <p>http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/regions-and-cities-need-simpler-rules-and-more-flexibility-to-fully-use-to-EU-funds-and-deal-with-refugee-crisis.aspx</p> <p>The Inclusive City: Approaches to combat urban poverty and social exclusion in Europe</p> <p>The European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN) presented at the beginning of the Italian Presidency of the EU a report on the socio-economic and spatial dimensions of poverty in Europe. The study provides an overview of urban poverty in the European context and analyses good practices in various European cities. The study was commissioned by Greece, the previous President of the Council of the European Union, and by Belgium and the Netherlands. It is part of the European Urban Agenda that is prepared by EU Member States and the European Commission.</p> <p>http://www.eukn.eu/news/detail/the-inclusive-city-approaches-to-combat-urban-poverty-and-social-exclusion-in-europe-1/</p>
<p>Introduction to different negotiation chapters</p>	<p>Migration sharpens Mediterranean region's debate on urban, employment policies</p> <p>Two papers – one on a sustainable urban agenda and the other on 'employment and territorial development in the Mediterranean region' – were debated in a meeting of the Commission for Sustainable Territorial Development of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM), a political forum created by the European Committee of the Regions (CoR).</p> <p>http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/migration-employment-policies.aspx</p> <p>A deeper and fairer Single Market: Commission boosts opportunities for citizens and business</p> <p>The European Commission has presented a roadmap to deliver on President Juncker's political commitment to unleash the full potential of the Single Market and make it the launchpad for Europe to thrive in the global economy. The Single Market is one of Europe's greatest achievements, designed to allow goods, services, capital and people to move more freely. It offers opportunities for professionals and businesses and a greater choice and lower prices for consumers.</p> <p>http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5909_en.htm</p> <p>Agriculture and Fisheries Council</p> <p>Ministers reached a political agreement on fishing opportunities in the Baltic Sea which fixed for 2016 the maximum quantities of fish which can be caught for the commercially most important stocks in the Baltic Sea.</p>

	<p>http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/agrifish/2015/10/22-23/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Agriculture+and+Fisheries+Council%2c+22%2f10%2f2015+-+Main+results</p> <p>Climate change: EU shows leadership ahead of Paris with 23% emissions cut The European Union is on track towards meeting and overachieving its 2020 target for reducing greenhouse emissions by 20%, according to a report published today by the European Environment Agency (EEA). The "Trends and projections in Europe 2015" report reveals that greenhouse gas emissions in Europe decreased by 23% between 1990 and 2014 and reached the lowest levels on record. Latest projections by Member States show that the EU is heading for a 24% reduction by 2020 with current measures in place, and a 25% reduction with additional measures already being planned in Member States. The EU is already working towards its 2030 goal of an emissions reduction target of at least 40% —the EU's contribution towards the new global climate change agreement in Paris in December. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5868_en.htm</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>Plenary highlights: refugee crisis, roaming, GMOs, Sakharov Prize The refugee crisis and its potential to disrupts politics in Europe was debated during October's third plenary session, with MEPs warning that some could use the issue to undermine the EU. MEPs also adopted plans to abolish roaming charges and better regulate net neutrality as well as proposals to tighten rules on GMOs and simplify the approval of novel foods, such as for example insects. In addition Raif Badawi was announced as the laureate of this year's Sakharov Prize. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151023STO99027/html/Plenary-highlights-refugee-crisis-roaming-GMOs-Sakharov-Prize</p> <p>Commission Issues Opinion on Temporary Reintroduction of Controls at Internal Borders: Germany and Austria acting in compliance with Schengen Borders Code The European Commission has published today its Opinion on the temporary reintroduction of controls at internal borders by Germany and Austria. The Commission has concluded that the initial reintroduction of controls at internal borders by Germany and Austria, as well as the subsequent prolongations, are in compliance with the Schengen Borders Code. The Opinion assesses the necessity and proportionality of the measures introduced by Germany on 13 September and Austria on 16 September. The two Member States resorted to this extraordinary measure, foreseen in the Schengen Borders Code, to cope with a large influx of persons seeking international protection. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5900_en.htm</p>
<p>Introduction to different sector policies (regional policy, trade policy, agricultural policy, social policy).</p>	<p>Regional and local leaders push for the development of aquaculture in Europe In the opinion, which was drafted by Jesús Gamallo Aller (Spain/EPP), the CoR stresses that aquaculture is of strategic importance as a source of food and as a source of jobs, especially in economically weaker parts of Europe. The aquaculture sector in Europe comprises 14,000 firms, directly employs 85,000 and accounts for 20% of fish production. http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/development-of-aquaculture-in-europe.aspx</p>

	<p>Easier access to the European Structural and Investment Funds: High Level Group on Simplification tackles bottlenecks</p> <p>The High Level Group on Simplification, launched by the Commission in July, held its first meeting in Brussels. The chairman of the Group, former Commission Vice-President Siim Kallas and the newly-appointed members met with European Commission Vice-President in charge of the Budget Kristalina Georgieva and Commissioners Corina Crețu and Marianne Thyssen in charge of Regional Policy and Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, respectively. In line with the initiative "An EU budget focused on results" and with the Commission's efforts in the field of Better Regulation, the Group's purpose is to reduce the administrative burden for beneficiaries to access and use the five European Structural and Investment Funds.</p> <p>http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5867_en.htm</p>
<p>Promotion of EU upcoming events and news</p>	<p>Gender Summit 7 Europe 2015 - Mastering gender in research performance, contexts, and outcomes</p> <p><i>6 - 7 November 2015, dbb forum, Berlin, Germany</i></p> <p>The Summit takes place in Berlin and precedes the Falling Walls celebration as a reminder that gender inequality is a 'wall' that also must fall. GS7 Europe will demonstrate how to apply the gender lens to improve effectiveness of research and innovation, and how to transform policy context through strategic, high-level policy alliances to enable lasting change to take place. 300 participants will hear from 75 speakers focusing on <i>The benefits of gender equal and gender sensitive research and innovation</i> (Day 1) and <i>Enhancing the capacity of policy actions to achieve lasting change</i> (Day 2).</p> <p>https://gender-summit.com/g7-about</p> <p>Valletta Summit on migration</p> <p><i>11-12/11/2015</i></p> <p>The Valletta Summit in Malta (11-12 November) will bring together European and African Heads of State and Government in an effort to strengthen cooperation in the area of migration and address the current challenges and opportunities. A large number of international and regional organisations, such as the African Union Commission, the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission, the UN, the UN's Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), have also been invited to participate.</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/news/2015/11/20151109_en.htm</p> <p>G20 summit</p> <p><i>Antalya, 15-16/11/2015</i></p> <p>G20 leaders will meet in Antalya, Turkey, on 15-16 November 2015. Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, and Jean Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, will represent the EU at the summit. They will focus on six key issues: Refugee crisis; Jobs, growth and investment agenda; Youth employment and social inclusion; Tax transparency; Political momentum for trade opening; UN negotiations on climate change.</p> <p>https://g20.org/</p>

Police-Population Relations: Challenges, Local Practices and Recommendations – EU conference

Brussels, 16 November 2015

The police are a key actor in the crime prevention chain. A good relationship between police officers and citizens is key in providing efficient and sound policing, which in turn contributes to the population's feeling of security. However, relations are reportedly conflictive in some European countries and cities.

<http://www.eukn.eu/events/upcoming-events/detail/police-population-relations-challenges-local-practices-and-recommendations-eu-conference-16-n/>

Communicating European Development Policy

Civil Society Media Seminar 2015, Luxembourg, Luxembourg, 26-27 Nov 2015

The 2015 seminar will not only look at how the EU communicates on development issues, but will also shine the spotlight on people in partner organisations working on development and how they use communication to achieve their goals.

We will look at DG DEVCO's storytelling communication campaign and at the work of civil society, journalists and other actors in communicating on development issues as well as the communication campaign for the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-media-seminar-2015>

“Growing together in a barrier-free Europe” – Celebrating the Day of Persons with Disabilities

Brussels, Belgium, 07- 08 December 2015

The conference will focus on children and young people with disability. Presentations and discussions will be on the current situation of children with disabilities in Europe, on their access to education and how it contributes to the equal participation of children and young people with disabilities in society. On 8 December, at a ceremony during the conference, the Commissioner for employment, social affairs, skills and labour mobility, Marianne Thyssen, will announce the winners of the 2016 Access City Award, the European wide award that rewards cities for their efforts in making them accessible to all.

http://europa.eu/newsroom/calendar/events/2015/12/07_disabled_day_conference_en.htm

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