

October 2015 II



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<p>EU integration process in CEE countries</p>	<p>25 years since German reunification: The role of the European Parliament Germany celebrates on 3 October 25 years of reunification. After the Berlin wall fell in 1989, East and West Germany reuniting became an obvious next step. Parliament set up a special committee to look at the possible impact of this. "German reunification was, in a way, an informal form of enlargement of the European Union," said Elmar Brok, who was a committee member and is still an MEP today. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151001STO95135/html/25-years-since-German-reunification-The-role-of-the-European-Parliament</p>
<p>Pros, advantages and obligations resulting from EU membership</p>	<p>Commission welcomes European Parliament support for the Jobs and Growth Plan for Greece The European Commission welcomes today's vote of the European Parliament which paves the way for swiftly implementing the Jobs and Growth Plan for Greece presented by the Commission on 15 July. The aim is to allow Greece to make full use of EU funds and inject liquidity into the Greek economy. Greece is set to receive more than €35 billion that is already earmarked for the country from the EU budget over the years 2014-2020 under the European and Structural and Investment Funds. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2015/10/commission-welcomes-european-parliament-support-for-the-jobs-and-growth-plan-for-greece</p>
<p>General development of the EU</p>	<p>Parliament approves €401.3 million more for migration An extra €401.3 million in EU funding to manage the refugee crisis was endorsed by Parliament. The funds, proposed by the EU Commission and approved by Parliament's Budgets Committee, would go to the EU countries hardest hit by the refugee inflow, to non-EU countries hosting most Syrian refugees and to three EU agencies handling most refugee-related tasks. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151013IPR97349/html/Parliament-approves-%E2%82%AC401.3-million-more-for-migration</p>
<p>Introduction to EU institutions and their Functioning</p>	<p>Things we learnt in plenary: Hollande and Merkel, Volkswagen scandal and Kunduz bombing French President Francois Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel debated with MEPs the challenges facing Europe, from the refugee crisis to the situation in Syria, during October's first plenary session. MEPs also discussed the Volkswagen scandal with the European Commission, which is preparing new legislation to tighten vehicle testing. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151007STO96560/html/Things-we-learnt-in-plenary-Hollande-and-Merkel-Volkswagen-and-Kunduz-bombing</p>

	<p>EP this week: migration, GMOs, organic food, climate change MEPs vote this week on Parliament's position regarding December's climate change conference in Paris as well as on measures to tackle the refugee crisis during the plenary session. In addition the agriculture committee votes on a plan to improve the reliability of EU labels on organic food, while the three finalists of this year's Sakharov Prize will also be presented this week. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151012STO97117/html/EP-this-week-migration-GMOs-organic-food-climate-change</p> <p>Romanian president discusses refugee crisis and EU reforms with Schulz Romanian President Klaus Iohannis met EP President Martin Schulz on 15 October to discuss the refugee crisis, EU reforms that might be needed in the near future and the freedom of movement within the Union. This was the Romanian president's first visit to the European Parliament, after taking up office last December. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151015STO97932/html/Romanian-president-discusses-refugee-crisis-and-EU-reforms-with-Schulz</p>
<p>Introduction to EU law</p>	<p>SAFE HARBOUR RULING: MEPS CALLED FOR CLARITY AND EFFECTIVE PROTECTION MEPs debated the impact of the recent European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruling that the Safe Harbour agreement on data transfers to the US is not safe. MEPs called on the Commission to clarify the legal situation following the ruling and demanded immediate action to ensure effective data protection for EU citizens. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151015IPR97903/html/Safe-Harbour-ruling-MEPs-called-for-clarity-and-effective-protection</p> <p>MANDATORY EXCHANGE OF TAX RULINGS PROPOSAL: A "MISSED OPPORTUNITY" SAY MEPS The EU Commission proposal to make it mandatory for EU member states to exchange information on their tax rulings received only a lukewarm welcome in Parliament's Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee. However, the report by Markus Ferber (EPP, DE), voicing dismay at the directive's limited scope and late entry into force, has already been overtaken by last week's ECOFIN Council deal, which watered down the Commission proposal even further. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151013IPR97373/html/Mandatory-exchange-of-tax-rulings-proposal-a-missed-opportunity%E2%80%9D-say-MEPs</p> <p>COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON STRENGTHENING THE USE OF MEANS OF FIGHTING TRAFFICKING OF FIREARMS EMPHASISING that the renewed Internal Security Strategy 2015-2020[1] identified inter alia tackling and preventing terrorism, reinforced border security and preventing and fighting serious and organised crime as priorities for the coming years in the field of European Union internal security, and recognised the serious threat the illegal firearms pose to the European Union internal</p>

	<p>security, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/10/08-jha-fighting-trafficking-firearms/</p>
<p>Decentralized management of EU funds</p>	<p>EIB LENDS EUR 100 MILLION FOR GEORGIA'S WATER SECTOR REHABILITATION PROGRAMME The European Investment Bank (EIB) is lending EUR 100 million to finance wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure in Kutaisi, Georgia's second largest city. The total project cost, which addresses water supply and wastewater investments in several municipalities in western Georgia, is EUR 280 million, co-financed by the Asian Development Bank (EUR 172 million) and with grants from the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (EUR 4.75 million) and the Eastern Partnership Technical Assistance Trust Fund (EUR 3.25 million). http://www.eib.org/infocentre/press/releases/all/2015/2015-227-eib-lends-eur-100-million-for-georgias-water-sector-rehabilitation-programme.htm?media=rss&language=en</p> <p>PARLIAMENT APPROVES €401.3 MILLION MORE FOR MIGRATION An extra €401.3 million in EU funding to manage the refugee crisis was endorsed by Parliament on Wednesday. The funds, proposed by the EU Commission and approved by Parliament's Budgets Committee, would go to the EU countries hardest hit by the refugee inflow, to non-EU countries hosting most Syrian refugees and to three EU agencies handling most refugee-related tasks. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151013IPR97349/html/Parliament-approves-%E2%82%AC401.3-million-more-for-migration</p> <p>COMMISSION INVESTS €16 BILLION IN FUNDING FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION OVER NEXT TWO YEARS The European Commission will invest almost €16 billion in research and innovation in the next two years under Horizon 2020, the EU's research and innovation funding scheme, following a new Work Programme for 2016-17. The new funding opportunities offered by the Work Programme are directly aligned with the policy priorities of the Commission of President Jean-Claude Juncker and will substantially contribute to the Jobs, Growth and Investment Package, the Digital Single Market, Energy Union and Climate change policy, Internal Market with stronger industry and making Europe a stronger global actor. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5831_en.htm?locale=en</p>
<p>Multi-level governance</p>	<p>Cross-border cooperation: local and regional leaders call for simpler rules and endorse special legal arrangement Strengthening cross-border cooperation is the main objective of the opinion approved by European local and regional leaders during the plenary of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) on 13 October. The opinion, drafted by Nikola Dobroslavić (HR/EPP), highlights the importance of cross-border cooperation for regional urban and rural development, and welcomes the initiative of Luxembourg's Presidency of the European Union's Council of Ministers to enhance the cross-border regulatory framework with new tools. It</p>

	<p>also backs the European Commission's plans to analyse the gaps, solutions and best practices in cross-border cooperation. http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/Cross-border-cooperation.aspx</p>
<p>Introduction to different negotiation chapters <i>Chapter 1: Free movement of goods</i> <i>Chapter 2: Freedom of movement for workers</i> <i>Chapter 3: Right of establishment and freedom to provide services</i> <i>Chapter 4: Free movement of capital</i> <i>Chapter 5: Public procurement</i> <i>Chapter 6: Company Law</i> <i>Chapter 7: Intellectual property law</i> <i>Chapter 8: Competition</i> <i>Chapter 9: Financial services</i> <i>Chapter 10: Information society and media</i> <i>Chapter 11: Agriculture and rural development</i> <i>Chapter 12: Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy</i> <i>Chapter 13: Fisheries</i> <i>Chapter 14: Transport policy</i> <i>Chapter 15: Energy</i> <i>Chapter 16: Taxation</i> <i>Chapter 17: Economic and monetary policy</i> <i>Chapter 18: Statistics</i> <i>Chapter 19: Social policy and employment</i> <i>Chapter 20: Enterprise and industrial policy</i> <i>Chapter 21: Trans-European networks</i> <i>Chapter 22: Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments</i> <i>Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights</i> <i>Chapter 24: Justice, freedom and security</i> <i>Chapter 25: Research and development</i></p>	<p>Step It Up!: A Partners Guide to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities Individuals and partners working together can make walking a national priority and create a national walking movement. A role exists for all sectors of society, including transportation, land use, and community design; parks, recreation, and fitness; education; business and industry; volunteer and nonprofit; health care; media; and public health. Families and individuals also have an important role to play. This guidebook is a resource for partners for the movement toward a more walkable nation. http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/walking/call-to-action/pdf/partnerguide.pdf</p> <p>EU cities and regions offer to deliver Digital Single Market at local level According to the President Markku Markkula, the European Committee of the Regions is ready to play an active part as a strategic advisory partner in experimenting and implementing the Digital Single Market http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/eu-cities-and-regions-offer-to-deliver-dsm.aspx</p> <p>End of energy isolation in the Baltics: how the Gas Interconnector Poland-Lithuania (GIPL) works The Governments of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, the European Commission, have reached an agreement that will allow the construction of the Gas Interconnector Poland-Lithuania (GIPL) by December 2019. The objective is to end the long lasting gas isolation of the Baltic Sea region. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-15-5845 en.htm?locale=en</p> <p>MEPs want better protection for local products rooted in traditional know-how EU-wide protection of geographical indication should be extended from agricultural products to include regionally and locally manufactured goods and handicraft products, MEPs say in a non-binding resolution adopted. This would support local economic development, boost tourism, strengthen consumer confidence and help preserve cultural heritage and traditional know-how. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151002IPR95308/html/MEPs-want-better-protection-for-local-products-rooted-in-traditional-know-how</p> <p>Car industry: MEPs debated manipulation of exhaust emission tests with the Commission MEPs debated the unfolding Volkswagen exhaust emissions scandal, on the basis of a parliamentary question. They asked Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska to clarify whether emission test manipulation took place in Europe. Many speakers said the ongoing scandal endangers the credibility of the whole car sector, and called on the Commission to speed up the introduction of real drive emissions testing. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-</p>

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

[room/content/20151002IPR95304/html/MEPs-debated-car-emissions-tests-fraud-with-the-Commission](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151002IPR95304/html/MEPs-debated-car-emissions-tests-fraud-with-the-Commission)

Capping emissions from medium-sized combustion plants

Proposed EU sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emission limits for medium-sized combustion plants, such as electricity generators or heating systems for domestic, residential or industrial use, were backed by MEPs. They had already been informally agreed with EU ministers. In areas where these emissions breach EU air quality standards, EU countries would be required to assess whether to introduce stricter limits.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151002IPR95362/html/Capping-emissions-from-medium-sized-combustion-plants>

COP21: the road leading to the vital climate change conference in Paris

Only two months left before world leaders gather in Paris to hammer out a global agreement to fight climate change. Parliament will send a delegation of 15 MEPs to the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in December to help obtain a successful result. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151012STO97118/html/COP21-the-road-leading-to-the-vital-climate-change-conference-in-Paris>

Opening up the online payments market, so as to reduce fees and fraud risks

Updating EU rules on payment services will cut the cost of paying bills, by enabling new market players to use mobile and online tools to make payments on a client's behalf, said MEPs voting a law.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151002IPR95307/html/Opening-up-the-online-payments-market-so-as-to-reduce-fees-and-fraud-risks>

Environment MEPs oppose national GMO import bans proposal

A draft EU law that would enable any member state to restrict or prohibit the sale and use of EU-approved GMO food or feed on its territory was opposed by Environment Committee MEPs. Members are concerned that the proposal might prove unworkable and lead to the reintroduction of border controls between pro and anti-GMO countries. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151012IPR97161/html/Environment-MEPs-oppose-national-GMO-import-bans-proposal>

Ukraine: timeline of events

One year after the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement was ratified, MEPs debate the current situation in the country with Věra Jourová, the commissioner responsible for justice .

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20140203STO34645/html/Ukraine-timeline-of-events>

Specific issues relating to the

- **European arrest warrant,**

Pay gap between men and women: MEPs call for binding measures to close it

Despite the EU's 2006 Directive on equality between men and women in the

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Recognition of professional qualifications 	<p>labour market, differences in their pay persist and are even growing, say MEPs in a non-legislative resolution. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151002IPR95366/html/Pay-gap-between-men-and-women-MEPs-call-for-binding-measures-to-close-it</p> <p>EYE 2016: registrations for Parliament's youth event are now open Registrations for Parliament's European Youth Event (EYE) are now open and the first programme has also been released. The first edition took place in May 2014 when thousands of young Europeans discussed the future of Europe at the Parliament in Strasbourg before submitting concrete proposals to parliamentary committees. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151007STO96558/html/EYE-2016-registrations-for-Parliament's-youth-event-are-now-open</p> <p>European Citizen's Prize 2015 winners honoured in Brussels They are the people and organisations making Europe a better place by promoting contribution and mutual understanding. On 14 October the laureates of the 2015 European Citizen's Prize were honoured for their efforts at a ceremony held in the European Parliament . http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20151015STO97852/html/European-Citizen%E2%80%99s-Prize-2015-winners-honoured-in-Brussels</p>
<p>Introduction to different sector policies (regional policy, trade policy, agricultural policy, social policy).</p>	<p>SME initiative: Bulgaria to use €102 million of EU funds to support small businesses The European Commission adopted an Operational Programme worth €102 million from the <u>European Regional Development Fund</u> to boost the competitiveness of Bulgaria's small and medium-sized enterprises through increased access to finance. Investments under this programme, in the form of bank guarantees, are expected to generate between €400 million and €600 million of fresh loans for SMEs, thanks to the leverage effect of private investment. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2015/10/sme-initiative-bulgaria-to-use-eur102-million-of-eu-funds-to-support-small-businesses</p> <p>Eurostat regional yearbook 2015: A statistical portrait of the EU across the regional spectrum The European Union (EU) places considerable emphasis on regional policies. The regional yearbook, published every year by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, provides an overview of European regional statistics covering a wide range of fields. It is thus a helpful tool to understand the regional diversity that exists within the EU and also shows that considering national figures does not always reveal the full and sometimes complex picture of what is happening across the EU. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2015/10/eurostat-regional-yearbook-2015-a-statistical-portrait-of-the-eu-across-the-regional-spectrum</p>

Promotion of EU upcoming events and news

Police-Population Relations: Challenges, Local Practices and Recommendations – EU conference, 16 November 2015, Brussels

Date 16 to 17 November 2015 / Location: Brussels

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://efus.eu/en/topics/responses/police/news-impulse-project/efus/9837/>

SMART CITY EXPO 2015 WORLD CONGRESS

Date: 17 to 19 November 2015 / Location: Barcelona

SCEWC is the world leading smart city event. It brings together global, national, and regional urban representatives, thought leaders, academic institutions, research centers, incubators, entrepreneurs, investors, and top corporations that have the kind of decision-making power that drives smart cities and empower its citizens.

<http://www.smartcityexpo.com/en/congress>

SOCARP 2015 CONGRESS

19/10/2015-23/10/2015 / The Netherlands, Belgium and Germany

The ISOCARP2015 congress comes at a time of unprecedented global urbanization. Voices from the global level down to the ground - in both the public and private sector - are calling for a 'planning' approach to address the complex challenges that this brings. <http://www.eukn.eu/events/upcoming-events/detail/isocarp-2015-congress/>

Walk 21 Vienna Stepping Ahead

20/10/2015-23/10/2015 / Vienna/Austria

XVI International Conference on Walking and Liveable Communities. The City of Vienna hosts the Walk21 conference from 20 to 23 October 2015. The motto "stepping ahead" promotes activities and innovations towards the future of our resilient cities and healthy living environments

<http://www.eukn.eu/events/upcoming-events/detail/walk-21-vienna-stepping-ahead/>

Go SMART - GO RAIL

28/10/2015-30/10/2015 / Munich/Germany

In the wake of the Smart City, rail transport has a key role to play in the transformational efforts to move millions of people more efficiently. The 2015 UITP Rail Conference will analyze whether our sector is embracing the potential the Smart cities concept brings: Is the smart city concept driving change in the rail industry? Can local rail companies run smarter operations?

<http://www.eukn.eu/events/upcoming-events/detail/go-smart-go-rail/>

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