

JANUARY 2015



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

<p><b>EU integration process in CEE countries</b></p>	<p><b>First EU-Ukraine Association Council</b> The European Union and Ukraine held the first meeting of the Association Council under the new Association Agreement. The EU and Ukraine reconfirmed the common objective to build a democratic, stable and prosperous country. <a href="http://eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/2014/161214_eu-ukraine_en.htm">http://eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/2014/161214_eu-ukraine_en.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Pros, advantages and obligations resulting from EU membership</b></p>	<p><b>Parliament backs GMO opt-out for EU member states</b> New legislation to allow EU member states to restrict or ban the cultivation of crops containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) on their own territory <a href="http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150109IPR06306/html/Parliament-backs-GMO-opt-out-for-EU-member-states">http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150109IPR06306/html/Parliament-backs-GMO-opt-out-for-EU-member-states</a></p> <p><b>Cutting red tape: Savings of up to €48 million thanks to new rules for cross-border judgments</b> New rules applying from 10<sup>th</sup> January mean businesses and consumers will be able to resolve cross-border legal disputes more easily – bringing expected savings of up to €48 million each year in the EU. <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-3080_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-3080_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>Commission presents law for the European Fund for Strategic Investments</b> The European Commission adopted the legislative proposal for the European Fund for Strategic Investments, which will be established in close partnership with the European Investment Bank (EIB). <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-3222_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-3222_en.htm</a></p>
<p><b>General development of the EU</b></p>	<p><a href="http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/european-year-for-development-opening.aspx">http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/european-year-for-development-opening.aspx</a> <b>European Year for Development 2015: EU local and regional authorities can tackle global poverty by offering aid adapted to the needs of local communities</b> The President of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), Michel Lebrun, joined EU leaders including President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, and the Prime Minister of Latvia, Laimdota Straujuma, for the launch of the European Year for Development in Riga, Latvia. During his speech he stressed the importance of local and regional government in not only raising awareness among citizens of the importance of development aid, but how they can share knowledge to make aid more efficient and effective. <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/news/2015/01/20150109_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/news/2015/01/20150109_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>Increased public support for development as European year begins</b> A new Eurobarometer shows that the number of Europeans in favour of increasing aid to developing countries has gone up to 67%. The European Year of Development was officially launched last week during the visit by the College to Riga. <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/news/2015/01/20150113_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/news/2015/01/20150113_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>€315 BN INVESTMENT PLAN: FUND FOR STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS PROPOSED</b> At its weekly meeting the Commission has adopted the legislative proposal for the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). It also issued guidance on how it will apply the rules of the Stability and Growth Pact to encourage structural reforms, investment and fiscal responsibility.</p>

	<p><a href="http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150109IPR06322/html/Members-to-review-Italian-Presidency-achievements">http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150109IPR06322/html/Members-to-review-Italian-Presidency-achievements</a></p> <p><b>MEMBERS TO REVIEW ITALIAN PRESIDENCY ACHIEVEMENTS</b></p> <p>Members will review the work of the Italian Presidency of the Council with Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker on Tuesday (15.01.2015) starting at around 9.10.</p> <p><a href="http://italia2014.eu/en/news/press-release/trade-mark-pack/">http://italia2014.eu/en/news/press-release/trade-mark-pack/</a></p>
<p><b>Introduction to EU institutions and their functioning</b></p>	<p><b>Joint statement by the European Parliament negotiating team and the Italian Presidency of the Council with regards to the trade marks package</b></p> <p>During the autumn of 2014 all three Institutions of the European Union have been working very hard to achieve without any undue delays an adoption of the Trade Marks package.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-2784_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-2784_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>EU BANKING UNION FIT FOR SERVICE: COUNCIL APPOINTS PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SINGLE RESOLUTION BOARD AND ADOPTS THE METHODOLOGY FOR BANKS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RESOLUTIONS FUNDS</b></p> <p>Council formally appointed the Chair, the Vice-Chair and the four other permanent members of the Single Resolution Board.</p> <p><a href="http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/committee-of-the-regions-calls-for-new-actions.aspx">http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/committee-of-the-regions-calls-for-new-actions.aspx</a></p> <p><b>Committee of the Regions calls for new actions to overcome delays in delivering EU cohesion policy</b></p> <p>EU regions and cities are calling on the European Commission and the Member States to intervene to speed up the adoption and launch of 2014-2020 cohesion policy investment plans.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-3222_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-3222_en.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Introduction to EU law</b></p>	<p><b>COMMISSION PRESENTS LAW FOR THE EUROPEAN FUND FOR STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS</b></p> <p>For the ambitious Investment Plan for Europe that wants to boost jobs and growth, the European Commission adopted the legislative proposal for the European Fund for Strategic Investments, which will be established in close partnership with the European Investment Bank (EIB).</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-3080_en.htm?locale=en">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-3080_en.htm?locale=en</a></p> <p><b>CUTTING RED TAPE: SAVINGS OF UP TO €48 MILLION THANKS TO NEW RULES FOR CROSS-BORDER JUDGMENTS</b></p> <p>New rules applying as of 10 January 2015 mean businesses and consumers are able to resolve cross-border legal disputes more easily –are expected savings of up to €48 million each year in the EU. The rules abolish the costly and lengthy procedure, which is currently used 10,000 times per year to get judgments in civil and commercial matters recognised in other EU countries.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-3222_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-3222_en.htm</a></p> <p><b>DELIVERY OF €315 BILLION INVESTMENT PLAN ON TRACK: COMMISSION PRESENTS LAW FOR THE EUROPEAN FUND FOR STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS</b></p> <p>Just 50 days after announcing its ambitious Investment Plan for Europe to boost jobs and growth, the European Commission today adopted the legislative proposal for the European Fund for Strategic Investments, which will be established in close</p>

	<p>partnership with the European Investment Bank (EIB)  <a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/midday-express-09-01-2015.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/midday-express-09-01-2015.htm</a></p>
Decentralised management of EU funds,	<p><b>EU-UKRAINE: COMMISSION PROPOSES FURTHER € 1.8 BILLION IN MACRO-FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE</b>  On 8 January the European Commission proposed new macro-financial assistance (MFA) to Ukraine of up to €1.8 billion in medium-term loans. The new MFA programme, which is to be approved by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers of the EU, is intended to assist Ukraine economically and financially.  <a href="http://insideurope.eu/node/531">http://insideurope.eu/node/531</a></p> <p><a href="http://insideurope.eu/node/523#sthash.8KulP5W0.dpuf">http://insideurope.eu/node/523#sthash.8KulP5W0.dpuf</a>  <b>FINANCIAL CORRECTIONS AND RECOVERIES 2013</b>  The corrections and recoveries for ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund confirmed/decided in 2013 decreased by approximately 10% compared to 2012. The total amount of financial corrections and recoveries implemented for ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund in 2013 decreased by roughly 42% compared to 2012.</p>
Multi-level governance	<p><a href="http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/regional/Pages/members-call-for-increased-solidarity.aspx">http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/regional/Pages/members-call-for-increased-solidarity.aspx</a>  <b>CIVEX members call for increased solidarity in migration policy and "multi-level" protection of the rule of law</b>  Efforts to promote genuine solidarity on a real European migration policy and the role of local and regional authorities in protecting fundamental rights were among the main focus of debate at the last Committee of the Regions' commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs (CIVEX). The meeting was followed by a joint meeting with the Governance Committee of the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities with a view to deepening the debate on the protection of the rule of law in Europe, regionalisation and devolution, and the new forms of local governance</p>
<p>Introduction to different negotiation chapters</p> <p>Chapter 1: Free movement of goods</p> <p>Chapter 2: Freedom of movement for workers</p> <p>Chapter 3: Right of establishment and freedom to provide services</p> <p>Chapter 4: Free movement of capital</p> <p>Chapter 5: Public procurement</p> <p>Chapter 6: Company Law</p> <p>Chapter 7: Intellectual property law</p> <p>Chapter 8: Competition</p> <p>Chapter 9: Financial services</p> <p>Chapter 10: Information society and media</p> <p>Chapter 11: Agriculture and rural development</p> <p>Chapter 12: Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy</p>	<p><a href="http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/TTIP-clarified.aspx">http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/TTIP-clarified.aspx</a>  <b>Rapporteur Markus Töns (DE/PES) stresses risks in public procurement and public services sectors and calls for greater involvement of CoR</b>  A <b>draft opinion</b> on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) adopted on 17 December by the Committee of <b>the Regions'</b> Commission for Economic and Social Policy (ECOS), warns that the trade agreement's impact on local and regional authorities has not been sufficiently clarified, especially with regards to public procurement and public services.</p> <p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/news/2015/01/20150113_2_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/news/2015/01/20150113_2_en.htm</a>  <b>REPORT ON INVESTMENT PROTECTION IN EU-US TRADE TALKS NOW OUT</b>  The European Commission published today its analysis of the almost 150,000 replies to its online consultation on investment protection and investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).</p> <p><a href="http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/COP20-climate-change.aspx">http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/COP20-climate-change.aspx</a>  <b>UN climate deal "another missed opportunity"</b>  The Committee of the Regions has acknowledged the international climate deal struck during the UN talks in Peru. Annabelle Jaeger, member of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and representing the Committee within the EU's delegation in Lima, warned however that though it was a step forward, a far greater level of ambition was needed to stop temperatures rising above 2°C when the major climate talks are held in Paris next year. She also described the last minute decision to delete the reference to local government as "another missed opportunity".</p>

<p>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</p>	<p><a href="http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/debt-obligations-are-likely1216-7877.aspx">http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/debt-obligations-are-likely1216-7877.aspx</a>  <b>Debt obligations are likely to reduce resources available at a local level</b>  The results of the CoR Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform "survey on public investments, growth and the national co-financing of ESIF" have shown that a large majority of cities and regions fear that the EU rules on public deficits have a negative impact on local investments.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-2742_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-2742_en.htm</a>  <b>State aid: Commission extends information enquiry on tax rulings practice to all Member States</b>  The European Commission has enlarged the enquiry into the tax ruling practice under EU state aid rules to cover all Member States. The Commission will ask Member States to provide information about their tax ruling practice, in particular to confirm whether they provide tax rulings, and, if they do, to request a list of all companies that have received a tax ruling from 2010 to 2013.</p>
<p>Specific issues relating to the 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  Recognition of professional qualifications</p>	<p><a href="http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/146502.pdf">http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/146502.pdf</a>  <b>Statement by Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, on the attack against the newspaper Charlie Hebdo</b>  The European Union stands side by side with France after this terrible act. It is a brutal attack against our fundamental values, against freedom of expression which is a pillar of our democracy. The fight against terrorism in all its forms must continue unabated.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-14-2762_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-14-2762_en.htm</a>  <b>Statement of Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos at EP Plenary session debate on 'Renewing the EU Internal Security Strategy'</b>  In the EU we are committed to the struggle against terrorism and we are working closely with our partners so as to protect, the right to life of all people irrespective of race, religion and nationality. The renewed EU Internal Security Strategy - the new European Agenda on Security - should be a common agenda.</p> <p><a href="http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-2782_en.htm">http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-2782_en.htm</a>  <b>Statement from Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos, on the occasion of 'International Migrants Day'</b>  The Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris Avramopoulos, on the occasion of 'International Migrants Day' made the following statement:  "On International Migrants Day, we are reminded that migrants are an important part of our daily lives. Migration has helped us grow stronger economically, culturally and</p>

	socially.”
<p><b>Introduction to different sector policies (regional policy, trade policy, agricultural policy, social policy),</b></p>	<p><a href="https://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/cretu/blog/my-top-priority-2015_en">https://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/cretu/blog/my-top-priority-2015_en</a> Newly appointed European Commissioner for Regional Policy sets its priorities for 2015 – primary focus from its agenda: assisting the member states in investing the remaining commitments of regional funds.</p> <p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/speeches/hogan-ifa-06-01-2015_en.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/speeches/hogan-ifa-06-01-2015_en.pdf</a> European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development vowed to tackle the problems in the food supply chain. According to him, his future agenda will focus on working with his fellow commissioners to improve the situation.</p> <p><a href="http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/jan/05/european-commission-david-reject-cameron-eu-migration">http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/jan/05/european-commission-david-reject-cameron-eu-migration</a> <b>EUROPEAN COMMISSION SET TO REJECT DAVID CAMERON’S MIGRATION DEMANDS AS</b> Brussels advises that the demanding of citizens having a job offer before travelling to UK risks infringing one of EU’s founding principles. David Cameron is to be warned by the European Commission that a central demand in his renegotiation of Britain’s EU membership terms is likely to be rejected as unacceptable on the grounds that it risks infringing the founding principle of the EU on the free movement of people.</p> <p><a href="http://www.eukn.org/Interviews/2015/EUKN_the_Urban_Agenda_and_Territorial_Cohesion">http://www.eukn.org/Interviews/2015/EUKN_the_Urban_Agenda_and_Territorial_Cohesion</a> This year the EUKN will be celebrating its 10th Anniversary. To start 2015, the EUKN talks to its director Mart Grisel, about the topic of territorial cohesion and how the EUKN is involved in the European Urban Agenda and EU regional policy. Mart has been involved with the EUKN since the beginning, back in 2004.</p> <p><a href="http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/reprogramming-and-freezing-powers-risk.aspx">http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/reprogramming-and-freezing-powers-risk.aspx</a> <b>Reprogramming and freezing powers risk jeopardising cohesion policy</b> Between 2015 and 2019 the European Commission will have the power to demand the reprogramming or suspension of structural funds if Member States fail to respect EU economic governance rules. But reprogramming will be extremely expensive and difficult for national, regional and local authorities to manage. Furthermore, according to a draft opinion adopted on 16 December by the Committee of the Regions' Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy (COTER), local and regional authorities responsible for implementing EU cohesion policy programmes will be unfairly penalised as in most cases they are not accountable for excessive national deficits.</p>
<p><b>Promotion of EU upcoming events and news</b></p>	<p><a href="http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/europe-in-spain-citizens-dialogue.aspx">http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/europe-in-spain-citizens-dialogue.aspx</a> <b>Europe in my City - Citizens' Dialogue</b> On the 23rd of January the Committee of the Regions, the city of Santander and the FEMP - Spanish association of municipalities and province will organise a Citizens' Dialogue – "Europe in my City", which will take place in Santander-Palacio de la Magdalena <a href="http://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Pages/y-factor-where-is-your-future-putting-youth-on-the-eu-agenda.aspx">http://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Pages/y-factor-where-is-your-future-putting-youth-on-the-eu-agenda.aspx</a> <b>YFactor: where is [y]our future? Putting youth on the EU agenda</b> In the wake of the new EU legislature in the Council, Parliament and Commission, 2015 provides an especially unique opportunity to discuss future challenges regarding EU policies from the perspective of young EU citizens on February 5th. Jean-Claude Juncker's recent 10 points agenda is perhaps the most operational tool to drive change within the EU's cities and regions.</p> <p><a href="http://www.cor.europa.eu/europe2020midterm">www.cor.europa.eu/europe2020midterm</a> <b>A territorial perspective on growth, jobs and investment in Europe: Regions, cities, the</b></p>

**mid-term review of the Europe 2020 strategy and the European Semester CoR Conference, NEW DATE: 5 March 2015**

The Europe 2020 strategy, launched in 2010, is currently undergoing a mid-term review, launched by an EC stocktaking communication in March 2014. The European Commission's public consultation closed on 31 October 2014 and the Italian presidency's summary of the Council's thematic discussions will contribute to the review. The practical implementation and monitoring of Europe 2020 is closely linked with the European Semester. Both the strategy and the semester should be given a territorial dimension. The CoR conference will provide an opportunity for EU local and regional authorities to voice their concerns and produce practical recommendations on how to make Europe 2020 deliver, building on existing good practice. Coupled with the new investment package of the European Commission, the renewed strategy would deliver more visible results in terms of growth and jobs.

The conference will address these themes: • The first results of the Europe 2020 mid-term review process; • The territorial dimension as a prerequisite for the successful implementation of the strategy in 2015-2020; • Long-term vision or annual trouble shooting? Practical implementation and monitoring of the strategy through the European Semester cycle. More information: