



EURO-NET

The Youth European Network

Our Europe our future!



EUROPE DIRECT BASILICATA centre
promoted by the association EURO-NET
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the framework of the namesake project

Bimonthly newsletter:

- *to spread European opportunities and initiatives,*
- *to disseminate the respect of human rights and the awareness about the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity,*
- *to fight discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance and racism,*
- *to help, with youth activities, the democratic stability and social inclusion in Europe,*
- *develop active European citizenship and civil society by giving impetus to the training of youth leaders and youth workers working within a European dimension;*
- *to promote European youth activities, such as exchanges, seminars, conferences, debates and training courses,*
- *to encourage exchange of ideas, proposals, experiences and good practises at international level.*

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1. European Youth Week 2015 - coming soon!

Countries across Europe will be celebrating European Youth Week with hundreds of events and activities, from the 27th of April to the 10th of May 2015.

A total of 33 different European countries will be organising events and activities for young people around the themes of participation, inclusion and employment. Each country will run its



week at some time during the period 27th of April to the 10th of May 2015. The official European Youth Week website will be live at the start of April, and you will be able to see the events that are being organised by your country. The theme of European Youth Week 2015 is encouraging and helping young people to take part in civil society and in the employment market. We want to raise awareness about how important it is to participate in society and make sure your voice is heard. We also want to help you to understand how developing a wide range of different skills, often outside of

school or university, will help you to find a job. And check out what is being planned via the **"European Youth" Facebook page**, and via **Twitter and Instagram with the hashtag #youthweek**.

2. EU Solidarity Fund for Bulgaria, Italy and Romania after severe flooding

The Commission granted aid worth €66.5 million from the European Union Solidarity Fund to Bulgaria, Italy and Romania following three natural disasters in 2014. The aid — €1.98 million to Bulgaria, €56 million to Italy and nearly €8.5 million to Romania — aims to partially cover the emergency costs of recovery operations following floods. It will particularly help restore vital infrastructure and services, reimburse the cost of emergency and rescue operations, and cover some of the clean-up costs in the disaster-stricken regions. Commissioner for Regional Policy **Corina Crețu** said: *"The EU Solidarity Fund is one of our strongest symbols of solidarity in times of need. In many cases, the financial aid proposed in the decision will help some of Europe's least developed regions to get back on their feet; it also demonstrates the EU's solidarity with the 130,000 affected people who need to overcome the consequences of devastating floods."* Many of the Programmes co-financed by European Structural and Investment Funds for 2014-2020 aim to invest in preventing floods and mitigating the impact of climate change, for which there is a sustained need.



Background

- **Italy:** In October and November 2014, five Italian regions (Emilia-Romagna, Liguria, Lombardy, Piedmont and Tuscany) suffered recurrent severe weather with heavy rainfall leading to flooding, mudslides and landslides. In February 2015, Italian authorities applied for financial aid from the Solidarity Fund. Their report details the devastation, in particular in Liguria, where rivers burst their banks, bridges and roads flooded, and there was extensive damage to economic and productive sectors in many towns and cities, such as Genoa. Overall, the disaster caused 11 casualties and 3000 people had to be evacuated.
- **Romania:** In May 2014, Romania was affected by widespread flooding which damaged transport, water, energy, and communication infrastructure, homes and farms. Neighbouring country Serbia has already been awarded EU Solidarity aid after being afflicted by the same disaster. This flooding affected 30 of the 42 Romanian counties, triggering the evacuation of local residents and causing major losses in different economic sectors. Many farmers suffered crop loss on cultivated land and drowning of livestock, while forestry access roads were destroyed by breaking dams. Many schools, hospitals, public buildings and cultural assets were flooded. Later that year, during July and August, heavy precipitation, floods and landslides affected over 126,000 residents in five counties of the Romanian Sud-Vest Oltenia region. According to the aid application, over 2,300 homes, 20 schools, 9 kindergartens, and 11 churches suffered damage; with dykes and dams broken, and roads, bridges, water treatment plants and sewerage systems damaged. Many farmers also suffered huge losses in production.

- **Bulgaria:** The region of Severozapaden - one of the least developed regions in the EU - also suffered greatly from flooding in summer 2014. The application reported that most of the damage occurred in the town of Mizia and in the village of Krushovitsa. 700 homes and public buildings were flooded, as well as main roads and farms. On 2 August the mayor of Mizia declared a state of emergency and over 800 people had to be evacuated. Serious damage was caused to energy, water and transport infrastructure, as well as to public buildings, cultural heritage assets and protected natural areas.

The European Solidarity Fund

The total annual allocation available for the Solidarity Fund in 2015 is €541.2 million. Adding the remainder of the allocation from the preceding year, the total amount of the Solidarity Fund available during 2015 is more than €895 million. The financial contribution from the Fund is calculated based on the total direct damage resulting from a disaster. This aid may only be used for essential emergency and recovery operations (as defined in Article 3 of the European Union Solidarity Fund Regulation). The European Union Solidarity Fund was set up to support Member States and countries applying for EU accession by offering financial support after major natural disasters. The Fund was created in the wake of the severe floods in Central Europe in the summer of 2002. The revised EU Solidarity Fund Regulation entered into force on 28 June 2014 and simplifies the existing rules so that aid can be paid out more rapidly than before.

3. EU continues its strong support for the victims of Syria's crisis

The European Union significantly increased its funding in response to the Syria crisis at the Third International Pledging Conference for Syria in Kuwait. Together, the European Commission and Member States pledged close to € 1.1 billion - double the overall EU pledge at the 2014 Conference. Of this, €500 million in humanitarian aid, early recovery and longer-term stabilisation assistance come from the EU budget, which nearly triples the contribution from last year. EU Member States also increased their pledges compared to 2014. *"The magnitude of the Syria crisis is testing the capacities of the entire international aid system. The needs are overwhelming and an extraordinary effort is needed by the wider donor community to mobilise significant funding. With our substantial contribution, the European Union – Commission and the Member States - shoulders its responsibility*



to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people," said Christos **Stylianides**, EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, who is representing the EU at the Pledging Conference. *"It is only through global partnerships, including from the Arab world, and the shared solidarity that binds us, that we can make a difference in this biggest humanitarian tragedy since World War II. The commitment I have seen by the international community here in Kuwait is reassuring, but more needs to be done. I appeal to donors to step up their efforts. The Syrian people are counting on us,"* Commissioner **Stylianides** added.

Since the start of the conflict in Syria, more than 11.5 million people have been forced to flee their homes, including 3.9 million who fled to neighbouring countries, and more than 12 million people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance inside Syria alone, an increase of 30 percent compared to one year ago. The EU and its Member States have thus far mobilised €3.35 billion. In addition, the EU has recently set up the "Madad" Trust Fund for Syria in order to improve the delivery of assistance for resilience and recovery activities in Syria and its neighbouring countries affected by the conflict. Last year, the EU's combined pledge (Commission and Member States) was the biggest contribution at Kuwait II (€550 million), representing one third of the overall amount pledged.

4. EU approves disbursement in Macro-Financial Assistance to Tunisia

The European Commission, on behalf of the European Union (EU), approved the disbursement of EUR 100 million in the form of loans to Tunisia. This amount represents the first tranche of the EUR 300 million Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA) programme to Tunisia approved by the EU in May 2014. **Pierre Moscovici**, **European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxations and Customs**, said: *"Europe is living up to its commitment to Tunisia. The assistance*

should help ease the country's financial constraints at a time when it is undergoing a historical political transition and implementing an ambitious economic reform agenda. We support Tunisia's efforts to maintain macroeconomic stability while creating more sustainable growth and more jobs for its people." This assistance is part of the EU's and other international donors' efforts to help Tunisia overcome its economic challenges. Apart from a weak external economic environment, Tunisia is also confronted with regional instability and threats to its domestic security. The MFA supports the comprehensive economic adjustment and reform programme agreed between Tunisia and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the context of the Stand-by Arrangement approved by the IMF in June 2013. The disbursement of the MFA is linked to the implementation of a number of economic policy measures as set out in a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the EU and Tunisia. This assistance comes in addition to other forms of EU assistance and specifically to more than €800 million in grants already provided to Tunisia since the 2011 revolution, as well as substantial lending operations by the European Investment Bank.

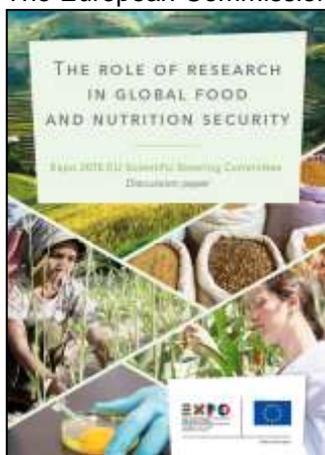


Background on Macro-Financial Assistance

Macro-Financial Assistance is an exceptional EU crisis response instrument available to the EU's neighbouring partner countries. This operation is complementary to assistance provided by the IMF. MFA loans are financed through EU borrowing on capital markets. The funds are then on-lent with similar financial terms to the beneficiary countries. The assistance package for Tunisia was proposed by the European Commission on 5 December 2013 and adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 15 May 2014 (Decision 534/2014/EU).

5. Expo Milano 2015: European Commission launches scientific debate

The European Commission has launched an online consultation on how science and innovation can help the EU ensuring safe, nutritious, sufficient and sustainable food globally. The discussion is linked to the theme of this year's Universal Exhibition (Expo Milano 2015) "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life", which aims to go beyond cultural activities and open a real political debate on global food security and sustainability. The paper was presented in Brussels by Tibor Navracsics, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, and responsible for the Joint Research Centre, together with Franz Fischler, Chairman of the Expo 2015 EU Scientific Steering Committee. Commissioner **Navracsics** said: *"The European Union has a vital role to play in tackling the challenges associated with food and nutrition security and sustainability. Expo 2015 offers us a great opportunity to showcase what the EU is already doing in this field. I hope it will also breathe new life into our efforts and further foster international collaboration. I commend the work of the Joint Research Centre and look forward to working on these issues closely with my colleagues, in particular my fellow Commissioners in charge of agriculture, health, research, environment and development."* Chairman **Franz Fischler** said: *"I believe that science and innovation are crucial if we are to guarantee access to safe and nutritious food for all, produced in a sustainable way. We have worked hard to ensure that Expo 2015 has a strong scientific dimension. I hope that the consultation and the discussion paper will steer a global debate."* The consultation will underpin the debate on a future research agenda to help tackle global food and nutrition security challenges. It will focus on the areas where the EU's research efforts can have the strongest impact, such as how to improve public health through nutrition, increase food safety and quality, reduce food loss and waste, make rural development more sustainable, increase agricultural yields through sustainable intensification, as well as how to better understand food markets and increase access to food for people around the world. The consultation is available online for input by all interested stakeholders until 1 September. The results of the consultation will be published on 15 October, ahead of World Food Day, and will contribute to shape the EU's legacy for Expo 2015. They will complement the scientific programme taking place at the EU's Expo Pavillion, which will bring together experts and decision makers from around the world.



Background

The 2015 World Expo will take place from 1 May to 31 October in Milan, Italy. More than 145 countries and international organisations will take part in this year's exposition and around 20 million visitors are expected. The EU's contribution to the event will draw on the expertise in many areas of the work of different EU institutions and services. Their participation is coordinated by the Commission's Joint Research Centre. The EU is a crucial player in different areas related to the Expo: It is the world's largest food exporter and second largest importer, but also the biggest development and humanitarian donor. The Expo also coincides with the move from the "Millennium" to the "Sustainable" Development Goals, the European Year for Development, and the International Year of Soils, and this provides an opportunity for the EU to take an important step forward. Agricultural research and development is one of the most effective tools for substantially increasing agricultural production in a sustainable manner. Horizon 2020, the EU's €80 bn research funding programme for 2014-2020, will invest more than €3.8 bn in research and innovation actions addressing some of our society's biggest challenges like food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy. In the area of health and food safety, the EU's policies set the highest food safety standards in the world and are underpinned by solid science and risk assessment. As nutrition is a major determinant of health, promoting a healthy diet is also a policy objective of the European Commission. The Joint Research Centre, which is in charge of organising the EU's participation at the Expo, is the European Commission's in-house science service. It has a long standing track record in food safety and security research, including its environmental aspects.

6. Employment and social situation

The economic situation in the EU has started gradually improving nearly two years ago, and most Member States have recently registered positive GDP growth. Employment has started picking up, with improvements now materialising in most sectors. The latest Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review highlights significant positive trends, such as the continuous fall in unemployment, the increase in permanent and full-time contracts, the decline in youth unemployment and also — for the first time since the onset of the crisis — the decline in long-term unemployment. However, considerable challenges remain, with levels of unemployment still high, and significant differences across Member States. Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility **Marianne Thyssen** commented: *"This review reflects many encouraging signs in the labour market. 2.7 million jobs were recovered over the past two years. Nevertheless, there are still more than 23.8 million unemployed, including 12 million people who have been in this situation for more than a year, and every fifth young person on the labour market is without a job today. Creating jobs and boosting growth is at the core of the Commission's priorities: efforts initiated by the Investment Plan for Europe and the Youth Employment Initiative will be pursued further this year by dedicated initiatives to address long-term unemployment and facilitate labour mobility"*. Employment saw an increase in the vast majority of Member States in 2014, including in some of those with very high unemployment rates such as Greece (26.0%) and Spain (23.2%). It increased by 1.0% between the fourth quarter of 2013 and the fourth quarter of 2014. It was up 0.2% in the fourth quarter of 2014, compared to the previous quarter. 2.7 million jobs were recovered since employment levels in 2013 reached their lowest point, in the first quarter. Over the year, employment increased in both industry and services sectors. More than half of the growth in employment was due to permanent and full-time contracts.



Challenges remain, especially for long-term and youth unemployment

Unemployment rates still vary a lot across the EU with the lowest unemployment recorded in Germany (4.8%) and Austria (5.3%), and the highest in Greece (26.0% in December 2014) and Spain (23.2%). Long-term unemployment fell slightly by 0.2 percentage points between the third quarter of 2013 and the same quarter of 2014, according to the latest figures available. However, it remains a challenge, standing at 4.9%. More than half of the unemployed people in the EU — up to 12.4 million people — have been out of work for more than a year. Of these, more than 6 million have been unemployed for more than two years. Rates remain very high in some Member States like Greece (19%), Spain (12.6%), Croatia (9.7%), Slovakia (9%), Portugal (8%), Italy (7.4%) and Cyprus (7.8%). The unemployment rate of young people has been falling since 2013 in the EU as a whole and in most Member States, but remains too high (21.1%). In order to speed up the implementation

of the Youth Guarantee, the European Commission proposed in February to make €1 billion euro available from the Youth Employment Initiative as early as this year. Under the Youth Guarantee, Member States have committed to ensure that all young people under 25 get a good-quality, concrete offer for a job, apprenticeship, traineeship, or continued education, within 4 months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed.

Financial distress despite rising household income

In line with economic and employment improvements, the growth in household income has continued at a faster pace, mainly driven by the growth in employment. However, the level of households reporting suffering from financial distress (needing to draw on savings or to run into debt to cover current expenditures) remained unchanged, and even intensified for those households with lower incomes.

7. Commission publishes new vine planting rules



New EU rules for a new scheme of authorisations for vine plantings, allowing for a yearly limited expansion in the EU's wine area, have been published by the European Commission. As agreed in the 2013 Common Agricultural Policy reform, the new scheme will apply from 1 January 2016, replacing the transitional planting rights regime. EU Commissioner for Agriculture & Rural Development Phil **Hogan** stated: "*The new system provides flexibility for the European wine sector to gradually expand production, in response to growing world demand. At the same stage, Member States have a range of*

safeguards to apply in order to address possible social and environmental risks in specific wine production areas." A recent external study concluded that, despite growth in the volume and value of EU exports to third countries since 2008 - and a marked improvement in the trade balance -, the EU continues to lose market share on world markets. Furthermore, the total consumption at world level is forecasted to increase up to 2025, while continuing to decrease overall in the EU. Therefore, this market trend shows that the EU wine sector will be increasingly depending on exports in the future. The publication sets out rules for which unanimous agreement was expressed both by the Member States and the European Parliament. They confirm how the Member States should manage (at national level) the system of free, non-transferable planting authorisations. The rules also outline the safeguard mechanism for new plantings – authorisations limited to 1% growth in a Member State's vine surface per year, with options for Member States to apply – where properly justified – growth limits at national or regional level, or for areas with/without geographical indication. The rules also clarify the transition from the current system to the new scheme and how valid planting rights can be converted into authorisations. Rights in the reserve that are not granted to producers by the end of 2015 will cease to exist after that date.

8. Commission Report on European Citizens' Initiatives

In the past three years, an estimated six million Europeans have supported European Citizens' Initiatives (ECI) and used their voice to bring important causes directly to the attention of European policy makers. The European Commission publishes a Report looking at the application of this new tool since its entry into force on 1 April 2012. The fact that two Citizens' Initiatives have gone through the full process shows that the Regulation establishing the ECI has been fully implemented. However, the report acknowledges that there is still room to improve the process and identifies a number of possible issues for further discussion with stakeholders and institutions. First Vice-President **Frans Timmermans** said: "*The ECI is one of the building blocks for strengthening trust in the European institutions and for promoting active participation of citizens in EU policy-making. We must look for innovative ways to encourage greater and more effective use of the tool. This is an important instrument, and we must make sure it lives up to its full potential.*" Under the rules set out in the Lisbon Treaty, if a Citizens' Initiative collects over one million statements of support (signatures), in an area where the European Commission has competence to propose law, then the



Commission must formally discuss the issue and publish a response in the form of a Commission Communication. The Report shows that, in the past three years, 51 requests to launch an initiative have been received. From these 51 requests, 31 were in fields of Commission competence and have been registered; 3 have so far reached the threshold of one million signatures; 12 reached the end of their collection period without reaching the threshold; 3 are still collecting statements of support; and 10 were withdrawn by the organisers. Statements of support have been received from citizens in all 28 EU Member States. However, there are situations where some citizens have not been able to support Initiatives due to diverging Member States' requirements. The Commission is involved in constructive discussions with the Member States concerned to address these issues and has adopted measures to facilitate a resolution. The creation of online collection systems for signatures has also proved difficult for organisers and in some cases impacted on the time available to collect statements of support. The Commission has offered temporary hosting solutions to organisers and recently commissioned a study on ECI Information and Communication Technology impacts to seek a sustainable solution.

Background

The European Citizens' Initiative was introduced by the Lisbon Treaty. The rules and procedures are set out in a Regulation adopted by the European Parliament and Council on 16 February 2011. The Regulation started to apply on 1 April 2012. The Regulation foresees that by 1 April 2015 and every three years thereafter the Commission shall present a report on its application.

9. EU successfully launches two Galileo satellites

Galileo, the EU's satellite navigation programme, has just placed two more satellites into orbit. The lift-off took place on 27 March at 22.46 CET from the European spaceport near Kourou in French



Guiana. We have received signals proving that they were positioned as expected. Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, European Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, commented: *"The successful launch of two Galileo satellites takes us one step closer to a global European satellite navigation system. We demonstrated again that Europe has state-of-the-art know-how, cutting edge technology, and the vision and determination to accomplish great things. Whether you're hoping to benefit from the next generation of in-car Satellite Navigation – or the reassurance of knowing the coastguard can deploy Search and Rescue – Galileo*

will soon provide you with great opportunities." The next launch of Galileo satellites is scheduled for September 2015. The Commission aims to ensure the provision of initial Galileo services by 2016 and full services by 2020. With more launches planned, the availability and coverage of the Galileo signals is set to improve and increasingly benefit citizens.

Background

Satellite navigation services have become indispensable in our daily lives. Galileo is the programme of the European Union to develop a global satellite navigation system under European civilian control. Galileo signals will allow users to know their exact position with outstanding accuracy. Galileo will be compatible with and, for some of its services, interoperable with existing similar systems, but will be autonomous. The improved positioning and timing information supplied by Galileo will have positive implications for many services and users in Europe. Products like in-car navigation devices and mobile phones will benefit from the extra accuracy provided by Galileo. Galileo's satellite navigation data will also benefit critical services, for example it will make road and rail transport systems safer and improve our responses to emergency situations. It will include features such as a global Search and Rescue function, which will be the first in the world to integrate almost real-time localisation of distress calls. This will help to save lives and reduce rescue crews' exposure to risk. Benefits are already being reaped from the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS), the European system to help improve the performance of global navigation satellite systems. By building and operating Galileo, the European Union is investing in a very important sector for Europe's economy. Galileo acts as a catalyst for research and development funding to high-tech companies, and fosters the creation of highly qualified jobs. Today more than 50 000 highly qualified jobs in Europe are linked to the satellite navigation industry and more than 300 European companies are involved in developing satellite navigation applications in transport, high-precision surveying, location-based services, agriculture or emergency services. The services offered by Galileo will increasingly benefit people as more satellites are

launched. The full Galileo network of 30 satellites and their supporting ground stations will be completed by 2020.

10. Proposal for e-commerce sector inquiry

The European Commissioner in charge of competition policy Margrethe Vestager announced at a conference in Berlin a forthcoming proposal to launch a competition inquiry in the e-commerce sector. More and more goods and services are traded over the internet in Europe. At the same time, cross-border online sales within the EU are only growing slowly. This is partly due to language barriers, consumer preferences and differences in legislation across Member States. However, there are also indications that some companies may be taking measures to restrict cross-border e-commerce. The sector inquiry would focus on better identifying and addressing these measures, in line with the Commission's priorities to create a connected Digital Single Market. Commissioner Vestager will table her proposal to the Commission in the coming weeks. Commissioner **Vestager** stressed: *"It is high time to remove remaining barriers to e-commerce, which is a vital part of a true Digital Single Market in Europe. The envisaged sector inquiry will help the Commission to understand and tackle barriers to e-commerce to the benefit of European citizens and business."* European citizens are enthusiastic users of online services. In 2014, around half of all EU consumers shopped online. Yet, only around 15% of them bought online from a seller based in another EU Member State. This indicates that significant cross-border barriers to e-commerce still exist within the EU. For example, technical barriers, such as geo-blocking, may prevent consumers from accessing certain websites on the basis of their residence or credit-card details. Commissioner Vestager has therefore decided to propose to the College of Commissioners to launch a competition inquiry in the e-commerce sector, to contribute to the Commission's objectives of achieving a Digital Single Market. The sector inquiry will focus on private – and in particular contractual - barriers to cross-border e-commerce in digital content and goods. In the course of the inquiry the Commission intends to gather information from a large number of stakeholders in all Member States. Knowledge gained through the sector inquiry will not only contribute to enforcing competition law in the e-commerce sector but also to various legislative initiatives which the Commission plans to launch to boost the Digital Single Market. If, after analysing the results, the Commission identified specific competition concerns, it could open case investigations to ensure compliance with EU rules on restrictive business practices and abuse of dominant market positions (Articles 101 and 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union - TFEU). This announcement comes one day after the college discussed the Digital Single Market Strategy to be unveiled in May 2015.



Background

Competition sector inquiries are investigations that the Commission may carry out when it has indications that a sector is not working as well as it should. The Commission uses the information obtained in the inquiry to better understand the market from the perspective of competition policy and to identify issues that could restrict competition. The Commission has conducted competition inquiries in various sectors, including energy, financial services and pharmaceuticals.

11. Europemobility video Contest 2015

The 2015 European Social Innovation Competition has launched, with €50 000 in prize money for the top three projects. Based around the theme 'New Ways to Grow' the competition aims to support individuals and organisations with entrepreneurial, game changing ideas for social innovation projects. So, if you have a great idea, don't keep it to yourself! Seize the opportunity to receive valuable support and maybe even win a € 50 000 prize!

Seeking 'New Ways to Grow'

The EU requires growth that sustains not only financial value, but also social progress for citizens, government and enterprises alike. However, current models of growth are no longer deemed fit for a society where scarcity is the new reality and where too many people are left behind. New collaborations and alternative ways to grow are needed for sustainable value and an inclusive society, in Europe today. The **2015 European Social Innovation Competition** will support the next

generation of European innovators – people who have the potential to change the landscape of growth across Europe. The Competition invites Europeans to come up with game changing ideas that can advance Europe's growth model, for example:

- **Challenge the assumptions upon which economic growth** is usually conceived (e.g. the trend for sharing and collaborative economy);
- **Question supply chain, production and delivery modes, or use of mainstream products or services** (e.g. circular economy);
- **Conceive new technologies or propose smarter use of existing technologies** for the benefit of society (e.g. internet of things or 3D-printing);
- **Generate new solutions and approaches for societal challenges** of today and the future.



Selected by a jury, the European Commission will award the three top ideas a prize of €50 000 each, to be presented at an awards'

ceremony, in Brussels in November 2015. However, the competition also includes a strong **mentoring component for semi-finalists** to progress their ideas.

Who can apply

The Competition is open to everyone (individuals or legal entities except public administrations) resident in EU Member States and countries participating in the Horizon 2020 programme. Ideas are sought from all sources and sectors, and all types of organisations including for-profit, non-for-profit, or private companies. At the same time, newcomers and self-starters who want to explore social innovation are also invited to apply! For more information visit the [web site](#).

12. Horizon Prizes

Horizon Prizes are 'challenge' prizes (also known as 'inducement' prizes) offering a cash reward to whoever can most effectively meet a defined challenge. The aim is to stimulate innovation and come up with solutions to problems that matter to European citizens. This is how the Horizon Prizes work:

- first a technological or societal challenge, for which no solution has been found, is defined;
- an award is promised for the delivered breakthrough solution;
- the award criteria give information about what the solution must be capable of proving;
- the means to reach the solution are not prescribed, leaving contestants total freedom to come up with the most promising and effective solution.



Horizon Prizes are different from prizes such as the Nobel Prize or the Sakharov Prize which celebrate outstanding achievements performed in the past. Challenge prizes are a tried and tested way to support and accelerate change in the world and have become an important driver for innovation in the public, private, and philanthropic sectors worldwide. They are recognised as:

- Providing a way to advance innovations that would not ordinarily develop through traditional routes such as grants or procurement.
- Attracting a wider range of innovators, not the 'usual suspects', because they have low entry barriers including not requiring a track record and because they are often exciting and inspiring.
- Providing an opportunity for innovators to take a risk and to forge new partnerships.
- Leading to sustainable new products and services.
- Spurring interest in a particular issue.

In the field of Horizon 2020 the prizes concern the following area of interest:

- **[Better use of Antibiotics](#)**
Prize: €1 million. The contest has been launched and will run until the end of 2016. [Rules & Guidance](#)
- **[Breaking the optical transmission barriers](#)**
Prize: €500 000. The contest has been launched and will run until 2016. [Rules & Guidance](#)
- **[Materials for clean air](#)**
Prize: €3 million
The contest will be launched in 2015 and will run until the end of 2018. [Rules & Guidance](#)
- **[Collaborative Spectrum Sharing](#)**

- **Prize:** €500 000. The contest has been launched and will run until 2016. [Rules & Guidance](#)
- **Food scanner**
Prize: €1 million. The contest will be launched early in 2015 and will run until 2016.
[Rules & Guidance](#)

13. Traineeships in the European Parliament for people with disabilities



The European Parliament promotes equality of opportunity and encourages applications from women and men with disabilities for its traineeship programmes. **The European Parliament** is offering paid **traineeships to persons with disabilities**, as a positive action measure aimed at facilitating the integration of people with disabilities in the workplace. These traineeships are open both to graduates of universities or equivalent institutions and to people whose qualifications are below university level. (Article 22 of the Internal Rules Governing Traineeships and Study Visits in the Secretariat of the European Parliament which concerns the academic qualifications needed for admission to a paid traineeship thus does not apply to this programme.) The main purpose of this programme is to offer a number of people with disabilities a meaningful and valuable work experience, and an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the activities of the European Parliament. These traineeships are awarded for a period of **five months** which cannot be extended. Please note that traineeships do not give trainees the right to future employment in the European Parliament: officials are recruited on the basis of competitions organised by EPSO; contract staff is employed on the basis of the calls for expression of interest published by EPSO. **Application period: 15 March - 15 May (midnight): Beginning of traineeship: 1 October** We advise you not to wait until the last day to apply, to prevent the system from becoming overloaded because there are a large number of applications. **Applicants for this programme must:**

- be nationals of a Member State of the EU or of an applicant country;
- be over 18 years of age on the traineeship starting date;
- have a thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the EU;
- not have been awarded any other traineeship, or have been in paid employment for more than four consecutive weeks at the expense of the European Union budget;
- be able to certify that they have a disability/ies (medical certificate or disability certificate/card issued by a national authority).

If you are among the preselected candidates chosen by the respective Directorate-General, you will be asked to provide the following documents:

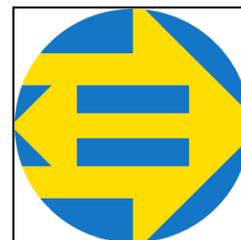
- a document certifying your disability/ies, recognised in a Member State of the European Union or in an applicant country
- a duly completed reasonable accommodation form
Please note that all efforts will be made to meet your needs, to the best of our ability and within reason (to be determined by the committee responsible for reasonable accommodation). Completing this form does not constitute a guarantee that all requested measures will be carried out.
- Your diagnosis and a summary of your medical history, both translated into English or French, in a sealed envelope marked "confidential"
- a copy of your passport or identity card;
- a copy of your most recent study certificate, or university diploma(s), if applicable;
- a duly signed application form

Please note that any information you provide about your disability will be treated in a strictly confidential manner and only by European Parliament staff responsible for analysing possible reasonable accommodation with the purpose of providing the specific adaptations in the workplace and of facilitating your search for accessible housing, transport and assistance. **If you are selected, the following documents will be requested:** the traineeship agreement; the confidentiality undertaking signed by you. If you are interested in a traineeship under this option, please read the description of the Traineeship programme for people with disabilities, Internal Rules Governing Traineeships and Study Visits in the Secretariat of the European Parliament, and the practical information concerning Brussels and Luxembourg. Please note that the traineeship placements are available primarily in Brussels and Luxembourg. If you fulfil the conditions for admission, please

complete the **online application form**. Please note that if you leave your online application form inactive for 90 minutes, the data you have entered will be lost. **The application is completed and submitted in a single operation and cannot be changed afterwards**. After filling in your application please make sure that it is complete before submitting. Once you have confirmed/sent your online application you will automatically receive a confirmation message at your email address. The message contains a confirmation number that you should quote in all future correspondence concerning the traineeship and the link to the summary of your application in pdf format, a paper version of which will be requested, if we offer you a traineeship. Should you not be able to fill in the online application form, please contact the Traineeships Office (stages@europarl.europa.eu) by e-mail to receive an application form in Word-format. For more information visit the [website](#)

14. The European Ombudsman offers traineeships

The **Ombudsman** offers **traineeships** in the handling of complaints and inquiries. Such traineeships are offered twice a year and are intended for university law graduates. Where the Ombudsman is, exceptionally, also able to offer traineeships in areas other than that of handling complaints and inquiries (e.g., in communication or IT), a specific call for expressions of interest will be published on the Ombudsman's website. Trainees shall be assigned to Strasbourg or Brussels depending on the possibilities of the Office. Traineeships normally start on 1 September and 1 January each year. With the aim of complementing the knowledge and skills which the trainees have acquired during their studies, traineeships are intended to provide recent graduates with practical experience of the work of the European Ombudsman. Trainees usually undertake the investigation of complaints, work on projects or carry out research relevant to the work of the Ombudsman. They work under the direct supervision of an official or agent of the European Ombudsman. Applicants should:



- be nationals from a Member State of the European Union;
- have a university degree in law and be at an advanced stage of professional training, or research, in EU law; and
- Have a thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the European Union and a good knowledge of a second. The main working language of the European Ombudsman's office as regards the handling of complaints and inquiries is English. A very good knowledge of English is therefore required. Knowledge of French would be an advantage.

If the interest of the service so requires, the Ombudsman may derogate from these conditions. Where the Ombudsman is able to offer traineeships in areas other than that of handling complaints and inquiries, the eligibility criteria to be fulfilled by candidates are set out in the specific call for expressions of interest that will be published on the Ombudsman's website. The traineeship usually has a minimum duration of four months. Candidates should apply either for the traineeship period starting on 1 September or the period starting on 1 January. Applications must be sent: **before 30 April for the traineeship period starting on 1 September; before 31 August for the traineeship period starting on 1 January of the following year**. For more information visit the [website](#)

15. Concluded “The Artist Within – Applied Emotion” in Hungary



From 28/02/2015 till 08/03/2015 has been realised in Hungary the workshop of the project “The Artist Within – Applied Emotion”, approved in the field of the programme KA2 Erasmus Plus- Adult education. During the course the students confronted with new prospects such as music, painting, sculpture, dance, theatre; through the rediscovery of their own body, sensations, feelings and everything related to an inner world very often hidden. During the course there was discussions and reflections, which supported the learning and personal growth. The aim of the project has been the development and integration of different modes of art education activities in the formal and non-formal. The intent was that to give greater support to organizations to empower staff and target groups with the intent to develop entrepreneurial skills by using different artistic tools through individual and group actions.

16. Join hands to learn cultural differences

in the period 24/03/2015-31/03/2015 was held the meeting of the project "Join hands to learn cultural differences" (KA1 Erasmus - Action n. 2014-3-TR01-KA105- 014 200). The visit took place in Serik, Turkey.

Partner countries:

- Italy,
- Germany,
- Romania
- Armenia.



17. Educational Paths for Study Visit in International Mobility

We are pleased to inform you that our association EURO-NET contracted with 16 schools of the Region of Basilicata in the context of Educational Paths in International Mobility. These Educational Paths in International Mobility approved under the Operative Programme Basilicata FSE 2007-2013, Ases IV - capitale umano - are addressed for students of classes IV and V of the secondary school of second degree of the Region Basilicata. Each Educational Path includes the participation of 10 young and one teacher from each school for a course or internship in a European country, of their choice. From 15 to March 29, 40 students (from 4 different Lucan schools) conducted the program English Academy at the International Academy of Wolverhampton, Priorslee Hal I, Telford Innovation Campus (United Kingdom). Another group of students, from 12 to 26 April, went at the



University of Wolverhampton, UK for a study tour. The group was composed by students of the following schools: ISIS "Pitagora" of Policoro; ITCG "Manilo Capitulo" of Tursi; ISIS "Pitagora" of Montalbano; L'ISIS "Enrico Fermi" of Muro Lucano; Liceo Scientifico "Galileo Galilei"; ISIS "Filippo Cassola" of Ferrandina; IPESOA "Antonio Turi" of Matera; ISIS "Pitagora" of Bernalda; ITCG "Vittorino d'Alessandro" of Lagonegro e Liceo Artistico "Carlo Levi" of Matera. Finally other 20 young from IPSIA "Giovanni Giorgi" and the Art School of Music of Potenza have gone to Barcelona to do an internship in the company.



18. Study visit and traineeship at our Association



In the days from March 31 to April 4, 2015 was held a study visit to the European Parliament in Brussels, the Council of Europe and the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg in the field of the Master in European Project Planning. The young who participated at the master gone there with the Head of our Association. The goal of the course is to acquire an effective planning method, through work groups, exercises, illustrations of concrete situations and a final Project-work. The Master enables participants to: acquire a good knowledge of management systems of the sources of European funding; refine the community planning techniques, the administrative and operational management of the projects; to develop a real culture of networking; to apply the know-how acquired in the field of European Project Planning, with the definition of real projects; to improve the knowledge of the English language. The title recognized by the Master gives the right to the direct registration to the European Register of the Euro-Projects Planner (EUPF Register of Euro-Projects Designers and Managers, Europe Project Forum) organization officially registered in the Register of Transparency of the European Union. At the end of this study visit the young will carry out an traineeship at our Association.

19. Second Meeting of the project at School of “OpenCoesione”

At School of “OpenCoesione” is an innovative experimental project in the schools about the themes of the open government which begin from the field of [OpenCoesione](#), the open and transparency strategy about development policies, thanks to an agreement between the **DCF - Development and Cohesion Fund** and the **MIUR – Instruction, University and Research Ministry**. The aim of OpenCoesione is to involve and sensitize students and teachers to use contents and tools to



understand and monitor the projects of cohesion policies, realise interdisciplinary teaching paths from the funded projects in their territories. The project started in the school year 2013-2014 and is addressed to students and high school teachers. It provides, in a first pilot phase, the involvement of some schools that will start the testing in the early months of the year and then extend participation, always during the school year 2013-2014, to about 60 schools followed in the project by the same schools. The project is guided by a dedicated team consisting of a project manager, experienced in innovation policies and public participation, a data journalist and a community manager / web editor, who works closely with OpenCoesione team of the DCF and has a strong multidisciplinary character. The second meeting of the Project at School of OpenCoesione was carried out the 19 February at the Agricultural Technical high school, in Potenza; and the 21 February at the Agricultural Technical high school, in Matera. The two schools are under the supervision of our Europe Direct centre. The young have the purpose to promote the effectiveness of interventions through the data publication on the projects financed. The aim of this project is to create a spread civic participation.

20. Realised the first meeting in Bursa (Clear Cyber Bullying project)

From 25/02/2015 till 28/02/2015 was held in Bursa, in Turkey, the meeting of the project "Clear Cyber Bullying" approved in the programme Erasmus KA2 - school education. The project's partners are organizations from the following countries: Turkey, Portugal, Spain, Poland, Czech Republic and Italy (our association EURO-NET). The project aims to find solutions to the problem of bullying now rapidly increasing among teenagers and children. Most of the students exposed to bullying had psychological problems, sometimes left school and some of them even committed suicide. The project includes a series of activities: actions against cyber bullying; websites and social networks; software / games for creating awareness on cyber-bullying; various contests. It will also create rules of school discipline on cyber bullying. At the



meeting attended two delegates from our organization who presented normal activities to the organisation. The next meeting will carry out in Poland in the period (31st May – 03rd June 2015).

21. European Cooperative Youth Network: training course



The training course **European Cooperative Youth Network**, approved in the field of KA1 Erasmus (action n. 2014-3-TR01-KA105-14208), will realize in Ankara, Turkey in the period 18- 26 April, 2015. At the project will participate 2 person from our organisation.

23. Completed the project “Our Life Our Future”

From 09/02/2015 till 11/02/2015 has been realised in Vienna the preliminary visit of the project "Our Life Our Future", approved in the programme Erasmus KA1 youth exchange. The aim of the project is to support the young's empowerment; making them aware of their abilities; identifying their resources and encouraging them to take their own initiatives trusting in themselves. Everything will be done in close contact with other young as comparative and personal growth, through new experiences. The exchange was held in the period 9-15 March 2015.



24. PEWG: First meeting in Stockholm



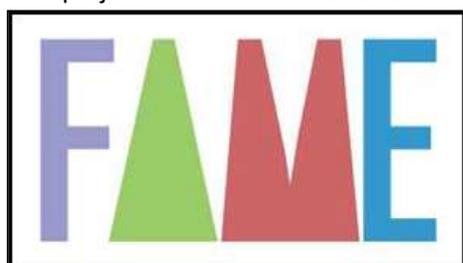
In the period 20/04/2015-22/04/2015 will be held in Stockholm, in Sweden, the first meeting of the year 2015 of PanEuropean Working Group to which participate "our" responsible Antonino Imbesi, as the delegate of the entire Italian network of the Europe Direct Centres. More details about the European meeting will certainly delivered on the next issues of our newsletter.

25. Concluded the project “Global Warning!”

The course Global Warning, approved in the programme Erasmus Plus KA1, was realised in Izmit (Kocaeli) in Turkey in the period 19-26 March 2015. From our organization participated 2 people (between 18 and 30 years). Partner countries of the project: Spain, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Romania, Greece, Holland, Estonia, Turkey.



26. Project “Fame”: the courses start



The project “FAME - ARTISTS 'SCHOOL AND CREATIVE CENTRES' NETWORK” approved in the field of the Programme "Urban Visions - Projects for the enhancement of the centres for youth creativity" whose objective is the realisation of free courses for aspiring young artists in 6 various fields of art. The training meeting have started in various fields: theatre and acting; drawing; animation in 2D; music and sound; screenplay and creative writing; dubbing and video creation. The purpose of the project is to create a cartoon which will become a tool of multimedia promotion, communication and narrative of the Lucan territories. For more information, visit the official website. www.fameproject.net