



EURO-NET

The Youth European Network



EUROPE DIRECT BASILICATA centre
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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. Renewable energy progress report



The European Commission has published the progress report on 2020 renewable energy targets, showing **that the EU is on track to meet its 20% renewable energy targets**. With a projected share of 15.3% of renewable energy in 2014 in the gross final energy consumption, the EU and the vast majority of **Member States are advancing well**: 25 Member States are expected to meet their 2013/2014 national targets. These results are published in the European Commission's 2015 report on progress made in achieving the EU's legally binding target for a 20% share of renewable energy, the 10% target for renewable energy use in transport, and the binding

national targets by 2020. *"The report shows once again that Europe is good at renewables, and that renewables are good for Europe. We have 3 times more renewable power per capita in Europe than anywhere else in the rest of the world. We have more than 1 million people working in the renewable energy sector worth over 130bn euros a year. We export 35 billion euros worth of renewables every year,"* said **Miguel Arias Cañete**, Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy. With a projected share of 5.7% renewable energy in transport in 2014, **achieving the 10% target is challenging but remains feasible**, with good progress in some Member States. **25 Member States are expected to meet their 2013/2014 renewable energy national targets**. 26 Member States met their 2011/2012 targets. Since the interim targets will become more ambitious over the coming years, some Member States may need to intensify their efforts to keep on track including the possible use of cooperation mechanisms with other Member States.

The renewable energy Directive is working

The report shows that the renewable energy Directive is working: the deployment of renewable energy resulted in

- around 326 Mt of gross avoided CO₂ emissions in 2012 and 388 Mt in 2013,
- and a reduction in the EU demand of fossil fuels of 116 Mtoe in 2013.

Furthermore, for the EU's security of energy supply:

- **the renewable energy substitution of natural gas made up 30% of all avoided fossil fuel use in 2013**
- **and almost half of Member States reduced their gross inland consumption of natural gas by at least 7%.**

Moreover, renewable energy is becoming a widely accepted, mainstream source of energy with the 2020 targets being a key driver for European-led global investment in renewables and supportive energy policies far beyond Europe's borders, the report finds.

Background

With 5 years to go to 2020, the Renewable Energy progress report is the mid-term assessment of the progress towards 2020 renewable energy targets. Every two years, it monitors the progress of the EU and Member States towards the legally binding renewable energy targets laid down in the Renewable Energy Directive, adopted as part of the EU Climate and Energy policy package in 2009. It also includes an assessment on the feasibility of the 10% renewable energy in transport target and the sustainability of the use of biofuels and bioliquids. The EU legislation promoting the use of renewable energy has been in place since 2001 when the first Directive on the promotion and use of electricity from renewable sources was adopted, followed by the 2003 Directive on the use of biofuels and other renewable energy in transport.

2. Erasmus+: Master students to benefit from new loan scheme

The first loans for graduates taking their Master's degree abroad are now available under the Erasmus+ Master Loan Guarantee Scheme. The agreement, which will provide up to € 30 million worth of loans guaranteed by the European Commission through its Erasmus+ Programme, will be signed by MicroBank and the European Investment Fund. This first agreement will provide financial support for students from Spain taking their Master degree in one of the 33 Erasmus+ Programme Countries, or students from these countries moving to Spain for a Master. Welcoming this signature, EU Commissioner **Tibor Navracsics** said: *"We are committed to support talented young Europeans*

who want to take their Master's degree abroad. These Erasmus+ Master loans allow students in Europe to invest in their education and future at favourable and affordable terms. We welcome MicroBank as the pioneer of the scheme and look forward to working with other financial institutions across Europe in the future." The Erasmus+ Master Loan Guarantee Scheme was launched earlier this year by the European Commission and the EIF through a call for banks to sign up. The scheme will receive over €500 million from the Erasmus+ budget, which will help to raise up to €3 billion in loans for Europe's young talent. Overall, the scheme aims to support 200,000 students who want to obtain a Master degree abroad. Under the scheme, students can receive up to €12,000 for a one-year Master's course and up to €18,000 for a two-year Master's course. The European Commission has made sure that these loans are offered at favourable terms. For example, they do not require collateral from students or parents and offer a favourable interest rate and delayed pay-back options. More details on the scheme can be found on the Erasmus+ Master Loan and MicroBank websites. All students benefitting from an Erasmus+ grant, scholarship or loan will now also be able to receive support and guidance from the new Erasmus+ Student and Alumni Association (ESAA). The new association, which will represent over 3 million Erasmus+ students in the period until 2020, will bring together four existing associations and their local networks (Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association, Erasmus Student Network, garagErasmus (gE) and OCEANS network).



Background

Erasmus+

Supporting the modernisation of Europe's education systems and improving students' skills and capacity to ensure meaningful employment is a key aspect of the Erasmus+ programme, which also supports the development of training, youth and sports actions. A study for the European Commission on the impact of the European Union's Erasmus student exchange programme confirms the benefits of student mobility: Graduates with international experience fare much better on the job market, and they tend to have stronger transversal skills which are highly valued by employers. The seven year programme (2014-2020) has a budget of €14.7 billion - a 40% increase compared to previous spending levels, reflecting the EU's commitment to invest in these areas. Erasmus+ will provide opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, train, gain work experience and volunteer abroad. The programme also supports transnational partnerships among education, training and youth institutions to foster cooperation and bridge the worlds of education and work.

European Investment Fund

The European Investment Fund's central mission is to support Europe's micro, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) by helping them to access finance. EIF designs and develops venture and growth capital, guarantees and microfinance instruments which specifically target this market segment. In this role, EIF supports EU initiatives in the fields of innovation, research and development, entrepreneurship, growth and employment.

3. Commission replies to "Stop Vivisection" European Citizens' Initiative

The European Commission set out the actions it intends to take in response to the 'Stop Vivisection' European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). Whilst, the Commission does share the conviction that animal testing should be phased out in Europe, its approach for achieving that objective differs from the one proposed in this Citizens' Initiative. Vice-President **Jyrki Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, said: "*The 'Stop Vivisection' Citizens' Initiative comes at a time of transition – thanks to major technological advances, Europe is reducing the use of animal testing. However, a complete ban on animal research in the EU would be premature and it would risk chasing out biomedical research from Europe.*" Commissioner **Karmenu Vella**, responsible for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said: "*The ultimate aim of EU legislation is to phase out all animal testing. In response to the Citizens' Initiative, the European Commission is taking a number of actions to enable faster progress in the uptake and use of alternatives approaches.*" In the Communication the Commission confirms that it shares the Citizens' Initiative's conviction that animal testing should be phased out. At the same time, it points out that this is the main aim of the

EU's rules on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes (Directive 2010/63/EU), which the Initiative seeks to repeal. The Commission considers that the Directive is the right legislation to achieve the underlying objectives of the Initiative, therefore no repeal of that legislation is proposed. The Directive is needed to ensure a high level of protection of the animals used in research. Once



the Directive has been in force long enough to assess its effectiveness, the Commission will review it. The Communication sets out a number of further actions that the Commission will take towards the goal of phasing out animal testing. The Commission will organise a conference engaging the scientific community and relevant stakeholders by 2016 and on that occasion present a progress report on the actions taken. Over the last decade, technological advances have revolutionised biomedical research. Major breakthroughs include the development of alternative tests based on cell and tissue cultures, and computational methods that reduce the need for testing animals. But many complex physiological and toxicological processes and effects cannot yet be

adequately modelled or assessed by alternatives, so some animal studies are still needed to advance research and to safeguard human, animal and environmental health. The Communication indicates a need to accelerate progress in the area of replacing, reducing and refining the use of animals testing through knowledge sharing, and the Commission will continue to support the development and validation of alternative approaches. Dialogue with all stakeholders will continue, especially with the scientific community, to advance towards the goal of phasing out animal testing.

Background

The EU is committed to animal welfare, to improving public health and protecting the environment. EU laws for medicines, chemicals and food safety require testing of products prior to marketing them to prove that they are safe for humans, animals or the environment. Directive 2010/63/EU aims to strengthen legislation and improve the welfare of animals needed for use in scientific research, while striving to replace, reduce and refine the use of such animals. Following "One of Us" and "Right2Water", "Stop Vivisection" is the third European Citizens' Initiative that reached the necessary thresholds. It was submitted to the European Commission on 3 March 2015, signed by 1.17 million citizens. European Citizens' Initiatives (ECI) were launched in April 2012 as an agenda-setting tool in the hands of citizens. An ECI allows 1 million citizens from at least one quarter of EU Member States to invite the European Commission to take action in areas where the Commission has the power to do so. As set out in the Lisbon Treaty and the ECI Regulation, the Commission must react within three months of submission of an ECI with 1,000,000 validated statements of support. The Commission therefore had until 3 June 2015 to decide whether it would act by adopting legislation, act in some other way to achieve the goals of the ECI, or not act at all. The Commission had to explain its reasoning through a Communication adopted by the whole College of Commissioners. A public hearing on the "Stop Vivisection" European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) was hosted by the European Parliament on 11 May 2015 in order to provide a platform for debate for Members, the general public, the ECI's supporters and experts in the field.

4. Action Plan for Fair and Efficient Corporate Taxation in the EU

The Commission presented an Action Plan to fundamentally reform corporate taxation in the EU. The Action Plan sets out a series of initiatives to tackle tax avoidance, secure sustainable revenues and strengthen the Single Market for businesses. Collectively, these measures will significantly improve the corporate tax environment in the EU, making it fairer, more efficient and more growth-friendly. Key actions include a strategy to re-launch the Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB) and a framework to ensure effective taxation where profits are generated. The Commission is also publishing a first pan-EU list of third-country non-cooperative tax jurisdictions and launching a public consultation to assess whether companies should have to publicly disclose certain tax information. Vice-President Valdis **Dombrovskis**, responsible for the Euro and Social Dialogue said: *"We have set out an ambitious yet realistic plan for fairer and more growth-friendly taxation in the EU. It rests on the core principle that all companies – big or small, local or global - must pay a fair share of tax where real economic activity is taking place and where their profits are actually made."* Pierre **Moscovici**, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and

Customs, said: "Corporate taxation in the EU needs radical reform. In the interests of growth, competitiveness and fairness, Member States need to pull together and everyone must pay their fair share. The Commission has laid the foundation for a new approach to corporate taxation in the EU. Member States must now build on it." The rules that govern corporate taxation in the EU are out-of-step with the modern economy. Uncoordinated national measures are being exploited by some companies to escape taxation in the EU. This leads to significant revenue losses for Member States, a heavier tax burden for citizens and competitive distortions for businesses that pay their share. To redress this situation, this Action Plan sets out a new EU approach for fair and efficient corporate taxation. This will be achieved through a series of initiatives to be taken in the short, medium and long-term. These build on the measures already set out in the Tax Transparency Package, which the Commission presented in March. The measures outlined in this Action Plan also echo ongoing work at the OECD to limit tax base erosion and profit shifting.

KEY ACTIONS

Re-launching the Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB)

The Commission will re-launch its proposal for a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB), as a holistic solution to corporate tax reform. The CCCTB can deliver on all fronts, significantly improving the Single Market for businesses, while also closing off opportunities for corporate tax avoidance. Negotiations are currently stalled on the Commission's 2011 proposal for a CCCTB. However, there is a general consensus that they need to be revived, given the major benefits that the CCCTB offers. Work will begin immediately on a new proposal to introduce a mandatory CCCTB through a step-by-step approach. This will allow Member States to progress more quickly on securing the common taxable base. Consolidation will be introduced as a second step, as this has been the most difficult element in negotiations so far. The Commission will present this new proposal as early as possible in 2016.

Ensuring Effective Taxation

The Action Plan sets out the path for effective taxation in the EU, which is the notion that companies should pay a fair share of tax in the country where they make their profits. There are a number of ways to achieve this, without harmonising corporate tax rates across the EU. For example, the Commission is proposing measures to close legislative loopholes, improve the transfer pricing system and implement stricter rules for preferential tax regimes, among other things. These initiatives should also help to advance the ongoing debate between Member States to define and agree on an EU approach to effective taxation.

Increasing Transparency

The Action Plan sets out the next steps for greater tax transparency – within the EU and vis-à-vis third countries. This builds on the measures already envisaged in the Tax Transparency Package, adopted in March. To launch a more open and uniform EU approach to non-cooperative tax jurisdictions, the Commission has published a pan-EU list of third countries and territories blacklisted by Member States. This can be used to screen non-cooperative tax jurisdictions and develop a common EU strategy to deal with them. As such, it will reinforce Member States' collective defence system against external threats to their revenues. The Commission is also launching a [public consultation](#) on to gather feedback on whether companies should have to publicly disclose certain tax information, including through Country-by-Country Reporting (CbCR). The consultation, together with the Commission's ongoing impact assessment work, will help to shape any future policy decisions on this issue.

BACKGROUND

The Action Plan for Fair and Efficient Corporate Taxation is part of the Commission's ambitious agenda to tackle corporate tax avoidance, ensuring a fairer Single Market and promoting jobs, growth and investment in Europe. In his July 2014 Political Guidelines, President Juncker stated: "We need more fairness in our internal market. While recognising the competence of Member States for their taxation systems, we should step up our efforts to combat tax evasion and tax fraud, so that all contribute their fair share." The Commission is rapidly delivering on the commitments made in its 2015 Work Programme to clamp down on tax evasion and tax avoidance, and ensure that companies pay tax where they generate profits. As a first step, the Commission proposed a Tax Transparency Package in March to create more openness and



cooperation between Member States on corporate tax issues. A key element in the Package was a proposal for the automatic exchange of information on tax rulings. This proposal received unanimous political support from Finance Ministers at the Informal ECOFIN in April. Member States are now discussing it at technical level with the aim of reaching agreement by the end of the year.

5. Support for sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean

The European Commission has announced around €230 million to support the efforts towards the sustainable development of Latin America and the Caribbean. The new projects unveiled will take into account the progress made in several parts of the region in recent years and will address the new challenges that have emerged. The announcement was made at the EU-CELAC (Community of Latin America and Caribbean States) Summit held in Brussels on 10 - 11 June. High Representative/Vice President **Federica Mogherini** said: *"With this newly adopted EU cooperation package, we want to further strengthen and deepen EU-Latin America relationship. Throughout these new initiatives, we will work together to enhance sustainable development and promote more inclusive prosperous societies for the next generations in both our continents".*



"The European Union seeks to develop a new type of cooperation that takes into account the fact that Latin America and the Caribbean have experienced very positive growth over the last decade and that development challenges are of a different nature today". In order to adapt to this new reality, the EU has set up a **Facility for International Cooperation and Partnership**.

The facility will support the consolidation of peer learning among countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region, and to promote joint cooperation with emerging donors in the region. It counts on a budget of €12 million to support the improvement of the design and implementation of public policies with a direct impact on poverty reduction. Part of the new projects address particular countries' challenges:

- **Bolivia** - with more than half a billion euro received in the last 20 years, Bolivia is the largest recipient of EU cooperation in Latin America, accompanied by a remarkable record of good results. Three new programmes have been signed: one to fight illegal drugs (€60 million), which will support the implementation of the Action Plan against drug trafficking and reduction of coca cultivation in respect for human rights and social dialogue; one to increase access to drinking water and sanitation facilities in suburban areas, while increasing resilience to the negative impacts of climate change (€12 million); and another one to improve water basin management and reduce water shortages, water pollution and the risks of flooding (€17 million). The objective is to give more than 200.000 people access to water and basic sanitation.
- **Colombia** - a programme worth almost €21 million will aim to overcoming the social and economic disadvantage of the marginalised and conflict affected regions. The programme will support local sustainable development in remote areas. It is expected to foster income generation opportunities for almost 2000 peasant families and improved livelihoods of around 3000 indigenous and Afro-Colombian families living in National Parks, where all kinds of social and environmental conflicts rule. This action will constitute the first building block of the EU's support to the Colombian peace process. Over the last decade, EU's cooperation has invested over €150 million in peace building in Colombia.
- **Honduras** - a programme on food security (€30 million) will be signed to improve the living conditions of 15,000 rural households in one of the most vulnerable areas of the country by building sustainable farming systems that will enable increasing food production while supporting education and nutrition. Another programme (worth €11,6 million) promoting decent work conditions and employment opportunities for young people in Honduras will also be signed. A third project (with an EU grant contribution of €10 million) will focus on the rehabilitation, upgrading and road safety improvements of one of the country's main roads, thus providing the poorest and most deprived regions in Honduras with ameliorated access to social services and increased commercial opportunities.

Other projects have a regional scope, notably the **Coffee Rust programme for Central America** (€15 million). The coffee rust is a leaf disease that has affected about 50% of coffee plantations in the region and is causing considerable hardship to small producers and their families in the region. It is anticipated that the programme will contribute to improving the livelihoods of 330,000 producer families and 6,000 family farms in the selected coffee producing areas throughout Central America and Dominican Republic. Also with a regional angle, but targeting this time Latin America region, the EU has also announced new support of €32 million to the **EUROSociAL+** project on social cohesion for the next four years, and €10 million to **COPOLAD**, to support the fight against drugs. This comes in addition to the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for the Caribbean. All these programmes (€230 million) come on top of those announced yesterday in the context of the EU-CELAC Business Summit on investment and business support (€118 million) and, together with the regional envelope for the Caribbean (€346 million) bringing the overall package of the European Union to almost €700 million in support of Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, the EU has signed two **Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) on International Cooperation with Chile and Uruguay**. The main objective of this is to promote and strengthen relations in the field of international cooperation with both countries and to work hand-in-hand on poverty alleviation.

6. Access City Award

European cities have a steadily ageing population, as well as a growing number of persons with disabilities. These **Europeans have difficulty getting around in the urban environment** and making full use of the **services and facilities which others take for granted**. The **Access City Award** recognises and celebrates a **city's willingness, capability and efforts to ensure accessibility** in order to:

- guarantee equal access to fundamental rights;
- improve the quality of life of its population and ensure that everybody - regardless of age, mobility or ability - has equal access to all the resources and pleasures cities have to offer.

Who can participate?

The Access City Award is open to **all EU cities of over 50 000 inhabitants**. In Member States with less than two of such cities, urban areas composed of two or more towns may also participate if their combined population exceeds 50,000 inhabitants. The award recognises and celebrates cities which proactively support accessibility for persons with disabilities and take exemplary steps to improve accessibility in the urban environment.

Why an Access City Award?

Europe is now an essentially urban society, with **four out of five EU Citizens living in towns and cities**. Retaining the pleasure of city living, as cities become ever more congested, is a challenge for all. This is especially the case for **persons with disabilities**, elderly people, and those with reduced mobility or other types of temporary impairments. These groups risk **becoming effectively excluded from significant parts of city life**, suffering marginalisation, exclusion and isolation. **Limiting a city's access** to just a part of the population while ignoring a significant other part, is **economically, socially and politically unsustainable**. What's more, it is simply not fair. For all persons to enjoy their human rights, allowing access to the conditions necessary to enjoy a full life is imperative. The Access City Award is an action through which the European Commission is trying to **ensure equal access** to a full city life for persons with disabilities. This Award rewards and promotes the progress that individual cities are making in this area.

Sharing best practices

Local authorities play an important role in improving the living conditions of people in urban areas. Through this competition, many ideas, initiatives and best practices have been put on show for evaluation and possible adoption by other cities across the EU. By sharing experiences and raising awareness of accessibility initiatives, we hope that the **success of some cities can be an inspiration to others across Europe**. The net result will be greater accessibility for persons with disabilities, enabling them to go about their daily business independently like the rest of the community. For more information and applications please consult the following [link](#).



7. OLAF in 2014: tangible results for EU taxpayers

In 2014, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) achieved excellent results in the fight against fraud across Europe. OLAF completed a high number of investigations while continuing to reduce their overall duration. It issued a record number of recommendations in over five years. The Office recommended the recovery of EUR 901 million, which should progressively return to the EU budget and help fund other projects. *"OLAF's mission is to detect, investigate and stop fraud involving EU funds. Our work delivers concrete results. It ensures that EU taxpayers' money is used for the purpose for which it was originally intended, creating jobs and growth in Europe"* said the OLAF Director-General, Mr **Giovanni Kessler**. *"The results of our investigative activity in 2014 confirm the strong performance reported by OLAF last year. We have concentrated on those cases where our intervention is most needed and can bring real added value*



– on complex investigations in areas such as structural funds, customs, smuggling, trade and external aid. These cases will contribute to substantial recoveries to the EU budget." The full text of the press release and of the OLAF Report 2014 is available in several languages here: [OLAF general headlines](#) and [OLAF Report](#) page.

8. Simplify access to European Structural and Investment Funds

The Commission has announced its intention to create a High Level Group on simplification. It aims to reduce the administrative burden for beneficiaries to access the five European Structural and Investment Funds – the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The group is to independently assess and monitor the uptake of simplification opportunities to access and use European Structural and Investment Funds by the Member States, thus contributing to the Commission's efforts for Better Regulation. Speaking from the Informal Meeting of Ministers responsible for Cohesion Policy, territorial cohesion and urban matters in Riga, Commissioner for Regional Policy **Corina Crețu** said: *"In the management of our funds, there is a pressing need for simplification, while preserving sound administrative and financial management. I do not want to hear again that an SME is no longer interested in receiving our support because it finds it too lengthy, bureaucratic and cumbersome. With this High Level Group I want to ensure that Member States make full use of the simplification measures included in the new regulations. On our side, we will explore what we can do to further improve the rules."* Former Commission Vice President **Síom Kallias** will chair this group which is planned to run for three years. The members of the group should include the best available experts in the field. Special focus is to be put on five priorities:



1. Facilitating access to funding for SMEs.
2. Tackling the "Goldplating" practice, where extra requirements or administrative hurdles are added at national or regional level, including in the process of selecting projects.
3. Using simpler ways to reimburse costs.
4. Increasing the use of online procedures, such as "e-cohesion" in Cohesion Policy funded projects.
5. Analysing how projects initiated and managed by local communities are implemented (community-led local development).

Furthermore, the group is to make recommendations to improve the implementation of simplification measures on the way forward for post-2020.

Background

The new regulations offer a broad range of opportunities for simplification and reduced administrative burden. These include a set of common rules for all European Structural and investment Funds. This High Level Group on simplification is part of a broader initiative to improve how Member States and

regions invest and manage EU Cohesion Policy funds, set by Commissioner Corina Crețu and the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy. This four-pronged initiative aims to help Member States effectively use the remaining investments from the 2007-2013 programming period through the Task Force on Better Implementation. It also focuses on helping building administrative capacity in Member States and regions, on reducing territorial disparities and helping slower growth regions to catch up and finally, on assessing the uptake of simplification measures and identifying further possibilities to simplify rules. It is in line with the Commission's initiative for an "EU budget focused on results", which aims to ensure that EU funds are spent in an effective manner and bring a real change for EU citizens. Moreover, as stated repeatedly by the European Court of Auditors in its annual reports, the use of simplified procedures reduces substantially the risk of errors and therefore generates savings for the control authorities and increases certainty for the beneficiaries.

9. New EU rules giving more protection to million holidaymakers

The Ministers in the Competitiveness Council have reached a political agreement on new rules that will bring protection for package holidays up to speed with the digital age. **Věra Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality said: *"If you plan your holidays you should not have to worry about insufficient legal protection. This is why new EU rules will soon*



cover over 120 million holidaymakers who book combined travel online: adapting the EU rules on package travel to the digital age. Travellers will clearly know what they are buying and what their rights are, especially if something goes wrong during their holidays. These new rules also support the travel industry that will benefit from less administrative burden and much-needed legal clarity." The rules will extend protection of the 1990 EU Package Travel Directive to cover not only traditional package holidays, but also give clear protection to 120 million consumers who book other forms of combined travel, e.g. a self-chosen combination

on a website of a flight plus hotel or car rental. There will always be protection where travel services are advertised as a package or where they are offered at a total or inclusive price. Less administrative burden, easier cross-border transactions and legal certainty will at the same time benefit businesses. In addition to existing rights being given to more consumers, travellers will also benefit from reinforced rights:

- **Clearer information:** traders have to provide travellers with understandable information on the package and the protection they benefit from under package holiday rules, including on prices and potential additional charges.
- **Fairer and more predictable prices:** if the package organiser wishes to increase the price by more than 8%, the traveller has the right to cancel their holiday free of charge. The trader is also required to pass on price reductions to the consumer.
- **Stronger cancellation rights:** free cancellation before departure in case of natural disasters, war, or other serious situations at the destination. Package travellers will also be able to cancel their holiday for any reason by paying a reasonable cancellation fee.
- **Clear identification of the liable party —** who has to deal with the problem if something goes wrong. This will be the organiser of the package in all EU Member States. Member States may in addition make the retailer liable.
- **Clear liability for booking errors:** traders will be made explicitly liable for booking errors in relation to packages and linked travel arrangements.
- **Clarification on essential consumer rights:** the organiser is required to assist travellers in difficulty, for example with information on health services and consular assistance, and helping to arrange alternative travel plans. For example, travellers will be entitled to additional accommodation for three nights if the return journey cannot be carried out on time in case of a natural disaster, unless the relevant passenger rights regulation provides for a longer period.
- **Guarantees of money-back and repatriation:** if the package organiser goes bankrupt, these guarantees will be extended to linked travel arrangements. Facilitators of such arrangements,

such as airlines, will be obliged to take out insolvency protection, guaranteeing refunds and repatriation in case they go bankrupt.

Businesses will also benefit from **modernised rules and less administrative burden**, bringing down compliance costs from €11 to €8 per package sold:

- **A level playing field:** the same rules will apply for businesses across the EU selling competing travel products.
- **Easier cross-border transactions:** thanks to common rules on information requirements, liability and other obligations.
- **Mutual recognition of insolvency protection:** companies will no longer have to subscribe to 28 insolvency protection schemes, since insolvency schemes would be recognised across the EU.
- **Business trips arranged by business travel management companies will no longer be included under the rules:** this avoids overregulation, while ensuring that small and micro-businesses making travel arrangements in the same way as consumers will be protected.
- **Modernised information requirements no longer based exclusively on travel brochures:** the fact that traders will not have to reprint brochures is expected to save traders €390 million per year.

Next steps

The European Parliament will vote in Plenary in June to endorse the agreement between the EU institutions. The Council of the European Union will then also give its formal approval of the agreed text in September or October. Following publication in the EU's Official Journal in the autumn, Member States will have two years to implement the new rules and traders a further period of 6 months to adapt to the new rules.

Background

The Commission made the proposal in July 2013, which received the support of the European Parliament in March 2014. Ministers in the Council reached a General Approach in December 2014. The proposed legislation will apply to 3 different sorts of travel combinations:

1. **pre-arranged packages** - ready-made holidays from a tour operator made up of at least 2 elements: transport, accommodation or other services, e.g. car rental;
2. **customised packages** - selection of components by the traveller and bought from a single business online or offline;
3. **linked travel arrangements** - If the consumer, after having booked one travel service on one website, is invited to book another service through a targeted link or similar, the new rules offer some protection— provided that the second booking is made within 24 hours.

How will it work in practice? [See here](#)

10. EU meets with religious leaders

The European Commission hosted the annual high-level meeting with religious leaders. First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** hosted European Parliament Vice-President Antonio **Tajani** and fifteen religious leaders from Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Mormon communities.

This year's meeting discussed the topic "Living together and disagreeing well".

Frans Timmermans said: *"This dialogue has never been more important. Our societies face fundamental challenges, and churches and religions are among the actors that can play an important role in promoting social cohesion and bridging divides. The leaders are partners for the European Commission as they can share their experience in fighting against fundamentalism, discrimination and in building mutual trust and understanding."*

Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Parliament responsible for the implementation of the dialogue, added: *"We will*

only defeat radicalism and fundamentalism if we stay together. Dialogue between religions is crucial to defend the values of our societies. European institutions should foster this dialogue not only at the level of religious leaders and theological experts. Young people should be involved. We need to



invest more not only in our economy but in the future of our youth. We need policies which foster key values such as peace, solidarity and respect of human dignity among future generations and societies". The conclusions of the high-level meeting will feed into the first Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights in the EU to be held on 1 and 2 October 2015. The central theme of the Colloquium will be *"Tolerance and respect: preventing and combating anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hatred in Europe"*.

Background

High-level meetings and working level discussions are held regularly between the European Commission and churches and religious associations and communities as well as philosophical and non-confessional organisations. This meeting is the eleventh in the series of meetings launched by the Commission in 2005. Since 2009 the dialogue with churches, religions, philosophical and non-confessional organisations is enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty. The Commission supports dialogue through meetings such as this one and through financial support for projects creating better intercultural, inter-religious and inter-convictional understanding. Under the Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020, the Commission co-finances, with a total budget of EUR 185,5 million, projects raising awareness of European values, notably tolerance, mutual respect, and promoting civil society engagement. In 2015 The Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020 will support projects focusing on preventing and combating anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hatred and intolerance, as well as projects promoting the development of tools and practices to prevent, monitor and combat online hate speech, including through the development of counter-narratives.

11. European Youth Award (EYA) 2015

The European Youth Award (EYA) is a pan-European contest to motivate young people, social entrepreneurs and start-ups to produce socially-valuable digital projects that address the goals defined by the Council of Europe and Europe 2020. It demonstrates their potential to create innovative solutions with Internet and Mobile technology. The winners event (EYA Festival) is an established platform for international knowledge-exchange and a widely recognized networking-event for future cooperation. EYA is organized by the International Center for New Media, a Non-Profit Organization based in Salzburg, Austria.



Digital Changemakers working on a better Future

Over 7.3 billion mobile connections are registered worldwide. In 2014, the number of mobile phones exceeds the global population for the first time. The growth rate of Internet usage since 2000 has been more than 500 percent. Internet and Mobile technologies have become indispensable companions in the lives of most people, but they are not only tools of communication and information. The UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) has already recognized the potential of ICT & new media to contribute to development and create a liveable future. High-tech innovation connects people around the globe and enables the rapid spread of new ideas and innovative solutions. EYA supports young social entrepreneurs who use digital tools to tackle the most pressing issues of today.

Goals to make a Change

1. Showcasing and promoting the most innovative digital projects by young developers, start-ups and entrepreneurs from all over Europe.
2. Demonstrating young people's creative potential and entrepreneurial spirit.
3. Taking action on Europe's most pressing issues such as employment, resource management, health, education, urban development, cultural diversity and social inclusion.
4. Contributing to the progress towards the goals defined for Europe 2020 and by the Council of Europe.
5. Connecting next generation IT pioneers with experienced experts from business, technology, education and science.
6. Encouraging inspiration and international exchange of knowledge, ideas and visions.

Who can participate and maybe become EYA Young Digital Champion 2015?

People who fulfil the following criteria are eligible to participate in the competition:

- Creative minds under the age of 30 (born after January 1, 1985)
- Living in one of the member states of the European Union or Council of Europe
- Who have produced an outstanding, innovative digital project with social value.

Submission deadline: July 15, 2015. For more information visit the [website](#).

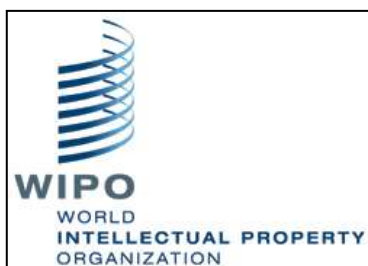
12. The Lorenzo Natali Media Prize

This year's Lorenzo Natali Media Prize is launched under the motto 'Today's stories can change our tomorrow' and coincides with the 2015 [European Year for Development](#). In December, the European Commission will once again award journalists for their outstanding reporting on development and poverty eradication.

The competition is open to professional journalists working for all different media types. New to the 2015 competition, amateur journalists, including bloggers, can also apply for the Prize. A grand jury will reward one professional and one amateur journalist from each of the following regions: Africa, the Arab world and the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe. The selected winners will receive trophies and cash prizes of €5000. Furthermore, the winners are qualified to win additional €5000 Grand Prize during an award ceremony in December 2015. If you are a professional or amateur journalist and you have written or reported on development and poverty eradication, you can apply [here](#) before **31 August 2015**. Any article or report published (print or online) or broadcast (radio or television) between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015 can be submitted. If you want to learn more about the **eligibility criteria**, please click [here](#). Should you have more questions, please consult the frequently asked question (FAQ) section or [contact our secretariat](#). **If you want to support journalists in changing our tomorrow with their stories, help us spread the word!** Free downloadable promotional material can be found [here](#); additional press material is available in the [press corner](#).



13. WIPO Internship Program



The WIPO Internship Program is open to students and graduates from all regions of the world, with a background in law, particularly in intellectual property, or in other fields relevant to WIPO such as science and technology, finance, human resources, economics, communications, information technology, translation and international relations. The WIPO Internship Program supports WIPO's mission to promote innovation and creativity for the economic, social and cultural development of all countries through a balanced and effective international intellectual property system, enabling interns to learn about the core values and initiatives of WIPO. The WIPO Internship Program provides an opportunity for interns to complement their educational experience and to develop their professional skills and experience through participation in work in an international context. WIPO also benefits from the contributions of interns, who bring fresh perspectives and knowledge of the latest research in their specialist fields.

Categories, Duration and Stipend

Category I:

- a) individuals who have completed their first-level university degree; and
- b) individuals enrolled in postgraduate-level studies who have not completed their coursework and the final thesis.

The length of Category I internships shall normally be three months. Category I internships may be extended if justified by the specific needs of the employing program, subject to the approval of the Human Resources Management Department (HRMD), provided that the total maximum length of the internship shall not exceed six months. Interns in Category I shall receive a monthly stipend of 500 Swiss francs.

Category II:

- a) individuals enrolled in postgraduate-level studies who have completed their coursework but not the final thesis; and
- b) individuals who have completed their postgraduate-level studies.

The length of category II internships shall normally be between three and six months. Category II internships may be extended if justified by the specific needs of the employing program, subject to the approval of HRMD, ad provided that the total maximum length of the internship shall not exceed 12 months. This category of interns shall receive a monthly stipend of 2,000 Swiss francs. This

Roster notice applies also to all WIPO external offices (i.e., offices outside Geneva) which are responsible for engaging interns locally. The stipend rates shall be paid in the local currency and shall be aligned and adjusted with the local context following consultation with HRMD. **The WIPO Internship Roster is open for application until July 31, 2015 for internships in the course of 2015..** For more information visit the website [website](#).

14. OECD Internship Programme

The OECD Internship Programme has been designed to bring highly qualified and motivated students with diverse backgrounds into the Organisation to work on projects linked to the Strategic Orientations of the Secretary-General. Its main goal is to give to successful candidates an opportunity to improve their analytical and technical skills as well as the experience to work in a truly international environment. Retained candidates will carry out research and provide statistical and technical support for analytical work, under the direction of an OECD official. **Possible areas involved – non-exhaustive list:** Economics (Macroeconomics and Microeconomics); Tax Policy and Administration; Development Co-operation; Environment; Science, Technology and Industry; Financial and Enterprise Affairs; Employment, Labour and Social Affairs; Education; Statistics; Trade and Agriculture; Public Governance and Territorial Development; Corporate operative services, such as Budget and Finance, Information Technology, Human Resources among others



Main Responsibilities

Research, data analysis and drafting

- Participate in the preparation of studies and documents in areas of work of the Directorate or Service concerned.
- Carry out documental research and review of existing material.
- Collect, organise and evaluate data.
- Contribute to the production of documents, working papers and publications resulting from the above activities, including drafting notes and preparing technical annexes.

Liaison and outreach

- Participate in the organisation of meetings and seminars.
- Establish and maintain professional contacts and build networks with officials in national administrations, researchers, other international organisations and member country Delegations.
- Undertake other tasks as required.

Candidate's profile

Academic Background: Full time student in the field of economics or in another discipline related to the [work of the OECD](#) (social affairs, trade, agriculture, development, education, employment, environment, finance, fiscal affairs and statistics, among others).

Professional Background: International experience in research and analytical activities through studies, internships or professional activities would be an asset.

Tools: Solid quantitative and computer skills. Knowledge of Microsoft Office.

Languages: An excellent command of one of the two official languages of the OECD (English and French) and working knowledge of, or willingness to learn the other. Knowledge of other languages would be an asset.

Key Competencies

- Strong analytical skills demonstrated by academic success and professional achievements.
- Strong interest in the work of OECD in promoting international co-operation.
- Ability to plan and implement independent research.
- Proven ability to organise and summarise complex material.
- Good organisational skills, ability to work effectively on the basis of general instructions with the capacity to prioritise tasks, often according to tight deadlines.
- Proven ability to work in a multicultural and team oriented environment and to adapt to changing working methods and technologies.
- Very good drafting and communication skills.

Contract Duration

The duration of the traineeship is for a period of one to six months during July to December 2015 on a full-time basis (40h per week). Please indicate clearly your availability in your cover letter. **NB** Due

to the large number of applications, please note that only pre-selected candidates will receive a reply. As part of the selection process, a phone interview may be organised initially by interested Directorates or Services of the OECD. **Submission deadline: September 20, 2015.** For more information visit the [website](#).

15. Meeting “The Artist Within – Applied Emotion” in Potenza



From 28/06/2015 till 06/07/2015 will be realised in Potenza the workshop of the project “The Artist Within – Applied Emotion”, approved in the field of the programme KA2 Erasmus Plus- Adult education. Project partners are the following organisms: Association on Refugees and Migrants, ARM-BG (Bulgaria); Spoleczna Akademia Nauk (Poland); Comparative Research Network e.V., CRN (Germany); Theater Vision e.V., (Germany); EURO-NET (Italy); Hungarian Association for Expressive Arts and Dance Therapy, IKTE (Hungary). The aim of the project is the development and integration of different models of art activities in the formal and non-formal education. The Italian workshop will be dedicated to the area of animation and storytelling..

16. Training course in Spain

From 13/06/2015 till 21/05/2015 (including travel days) 4 our delegates are in Oviedo Spain) for the training course of the project titled "For an inclusive Europe" (Erasmus KA1). The theme of the training course deals with the disability, the goal is to increase the knowledge of this sector. Participants are working on how to raise awareness on how to integrate people with special needs and which may be the techniques to work situations with people with disabilities. The course aims to acquire new for a better understanding of disability. The final aim is to create an international network of educators that promotes the integration of people with special educational needs.



17. NEFELE project: start activities

In the Creative Europe program, that supports cultural and creative sector, was approved our project



“Nefe - Networking European Festivals For Mental Life Enhancement” - No action. 559274-CREATE-1-2015-1-EL-CULT-COOP1. The general objectives of the Creative Europe are to promote and safeguard linguistic diversity and European cultural; strengthen the competitiveness of the

cultural and creative sector to promote economic growth for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, while specific ones are to support the capacity of the European cultural and creative sector to operate transnationally; promote the transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and cultural operators; strengthen the financial capacity of the cultural and creative sectors, in particular of SMEs; support transnational policy cooperation in order to promote innovation, policy development, audience building and new business models. The Nefe project is going to start the activities so we will give you more details in the next our newsletters.

18. Interacting language course in Spain

In the project “Obiettivo Europa!” (Erasmus Plus - KA1 Adult Education Staff Trainig Abroad - action-IT02-KA104-000038 2014-1), was held in Spain from 05/04/2015 till 11/04/2015 a language course (realised by our course provider INTERACTING), which was



attended by two staff members of our association. The goal of the project is to meet the needs of the staff of EURO-NET in the following areas:

- learning new teaching methodologies;
- improving language skills;
- communication skills;
- Knowledge of skills CLIL;
- improvement in confidence in the use of a foreign language.

The project involves the construction of the training courses from 30 December 2014 until 29 December 2015 in the following countries: Germany, Ireland, UK, Spain. So soon there will be new trainings activities for our staff!

19. Concluded the training course "European Cooperative Youth Network"



The training course **European Cooperative Youth Network**, approved in the field of KA1 Erasmus (action n. 2014-3-TR01-KA105-14208), has been realised in Ankara (Turkey) in the period 18- 26 April 2015. At the meeting participated from our organization two delegates that presented the activities that our association normally run..

20. Meeting in Poland project "Clear Cyber Bullying"

From 31/05/2015 till 03/06/2015 was held in Lodz, in Poland, the second meeting of the project



"Clear Cyber Bullying" approved in the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic partnership for 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. Our association in the first phase of the project has administered to 112 boys aged between 11 and 13 a targeted and anonymous questionnaire. Of these children, 16 were chosen for a drama course, with the aim of creating new awareness about the bullying. The theatrical activity has been developed for the sixteen children with higher propensities to bullying and the results were presented in the Polish project meeting. Also as part of the project, our association has created a logo contest on cyberbullying. The competition involved children aged 6 to 10 years; boys aged 11 to 13 years and young people aged 14 to 20 years. In the photos you can see some of the activity realised during the drama training course.



21. Final seminar My Way in Madrid

My Way is a project, approved under the Lifelong Learning Programme Leonardo da Vinci - Transfer of Innovation. For many young people, especially for young people with special educational needs



with difficult socio-economic situation, entering the labor market is a sensitive phase of development. From this perspective, the project partnership (composed of six organizations from Austria, Germany, Italy, Malta, Poland and Spain and an associated partner from Austria) aims to offer good prospects in the job market.

MY WAY wants to combine the model of "Coaching Youth" with peer working groups, used as a tool

to reach and motivate young people, in order to optimize the Austrian model, through the influence of European best practices acquired in the partnership, and transfer in the partner countries. MY WAY seeks to develop a participatory intervention to reduce the school dropout rate among young people. Till today three project meetings have already been made in Austria, Poland and Germany during which the partners have defined the steps of the project and exchanged good working practices, comparing and discussing together. The final meeting of the project will be held from September 8 to 11 (travel days included) in Madrid in Spain and will also include a large seminar with the participation of Ministers and experts of labor policies.

23. Workshop in Italy "Young Innovation for social economy cooperation"

From 03/06/2015 till 07/06/2015 has been realised in Italy the third workshop of the project "Young Innovation for social economy cooperation" approved under Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnership. During the workshop the 2 groups of students (Italians and Poles) were involved in various activities around the models of partnerships and of cooperations. The meeting was also the occasion to develop the project steps and to plan the new encounter to be realised in next September when it is planned a study visit for Polish youth-workers.



24. "Vet4Start-Up" meeting in Malta

The project "Vet4Start-Up", approved under Erasmus KA2 - Vet (2014-1 action-IT01-KA202-002487), aims to educate and train anyone interested in a start-up thanks to an e-learning platform called MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) and other materials and specific resources. VET4Start-UP will seek to improve the level of key competencies and skills necessary for new entrepreneurs through vocational and educational training. The project VET4Start-up is in a crucial phase: in fact, after the collection of good practices realised by all partners, now the international partnership is involved in the management of their qualitative evaluation. The partners have already produced a promotional project leaflet in all languages and at the moment are gathering the necessary material for the MOOC. From 04/06/2015 till 07/06/2015 was held the second project meeting in Malta, to which from our organisation participated 2 delegates. The meeting was very fruitful of results: the partners showed reciprocally the work done till now and decided the new steps of the project activities.



25. Project "Fame": training courses are going to end

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" is going to enter into the stage n.2 of the initiative that is the creation of the cartoon. In these days the 6 training courses in realisation are going to end and the young artistic trained will be shortly involved in the creation of a flash animation, that will be developed using "flash" techniques and digital design tools 2D typical of graphic-motion. When ready the cartoon will be presented, distributed and promoted in Basilicata, in Italy and in the Partners' countries (Austria, Romania, Greece and Poland). For more information, visit the official website. www.fameproject.net.

