



EURO-NET

The Youth European Network



EUROPE DIRECT BASILICATA centre
promoted by the association EURO-NET
and realised with the grant of E.U. in
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.*

**YEAR 11 - NUMBER 3
OF 20TH JUNE 2016
ENGLISH NEWSLETTER**

Contents

1. Ten actions to help equip people in Europe with better skills	2
2. Final adoption of new rules to cut red tape on citizens' public documents	3
3. Investment Plan for Europe	4
4. Commission injects €6.7 billion into transport infrastructure	6
5. Commission wants better enforcement of rules ahead of summer holidays	7
6. A new strategy to put culture at the heart of EU international relations	8
7. Commission proposes new e-commerce rules	9
8. Forty years of investments have improved Europe's bathing water	11
9. More transparent and balanced interest representation	12
10. Code of Conduct on illegal online hate speech	13
11. Contest with prizes for the best political cartoons dedicated to the EU	16
12. Access City Award 2017	17
13. Call for: young photographers for fellowship	17
14. Residences of program for artists Pact Zollverein 2017	18
15. Realized the Flash Mob of CCB project	18
16. Concluded the Multiplier event of CCB project	19
17. Meeting of May 10 to Picerno	19
18. Concluded the Meeting "The suitcase" in Potenza	19
19. Realized the course in Finland DEAL WITH IT!	20
20. Concluded the first meeting of the project "New Born Memory"	20
21. Creatuse: realized the brochure	20
22. Concluded the third meeting of the project "The artist within"	20
23. NEFELE cinefestival in Italy	21
24. Concluded the second meeting ENT-NET	21
25. Concluded the second meeting of NEFELE project in Valladolid in Spain	21

1. Ten actions to help equip people in Europe with better skills

The Commission has adopted a new and comprehensive **Skills Agenda for Europe**. The aim is to ensure that people develop a broad set of skills from early on in life and to make the most of Europe's human capital, which will ultimately boost employability, competitiveness and growth in Europe.

The New Skills Agenda for Europe calls on Member States and stakeholders to improve the quality of skills and their relevance for the labour market. According to studies, 70 million Europeans lack adequate reading and writing skills, and even more have poor numeracy and digital skills. This puts them at risk of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion. On the other hand, a large number of Europeans, particularly high-qualified young people, work in jobs that do not match their talents and aspirations. At the same time, 40% of European employers report that they cannot find people with the right skills to grow and innovate. Finally, too few people have the entrepreneurial mindset and competences to start their own business and keep adapting to evolving requirements of the labour market. Increasing skills levels, promoting transversal skills and finding ways to better anticipate the labour market's needs, including based on dialogue with the industry, are therefore essential to improve people's chances in life, and support fair, inclusive and sustainable growth as well as cohesive societies. To help tackle skills challenges, the Commission will launch 10 actions which will address these issues and make skills more visible and improve their recognition at local, national and EU levels, from schools and universities to the labour market. Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, **Valdis Dombrovskis**, said: "With millions of people in the EU currently



out of work, we need to do all we can to help equip them with the right skills for the evolving labour market. The 10-point action plan sets out areas where the EU can help make a difference, from ensuring better recognition of qualifications across EU borders, to a Skills Guarantee that helps low-skilled adults learn essential literacy, numeracy and digital skills." Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, **Jyrki Katainen**, commented: "In this fast-changing world we need to invest in Europe's greatest asset: our people. People need a broad set of skills to fulfil their potential both as active citizens and at work. Skills are vital for prosperity, jobs, growth and sustainable well-being. Our new Skills Agenda aims

both to make sure that no-one is left behind, and that Europe nurtures the high-end skills that drive competitiveness and innovation." Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, **Marianne Thyssen**, said: "We need to invest more in skills in Europe. The most competitive countries in the EU, and in the world, are those that invest most in skills and 70 million Europeans are at the risk of falling behind. Stronger investment in skills is vital for strengthening competitiveness and boosting growth. And most of all, it is crucial to help people to realise their professional dreams and goals and reach their potential. I invite Member States, social partners and businesses to work together with us and make this New Skills Agenda for Europe a success." Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, **Tibor Navracsics**, said: "Taking a long-term approach will be crucial to make the Skills Agenda a success. Beyond fixing current mismatches, we must prevent new gaps from opening up in the future. I am therefore glad to see that the Skills Agenda defines skills broadly and seeks to promote the full range of transversal skills that help people succeed in our fast-changing economies and become engaged citizens leading independent, fulfilling lives." Concretely, the Commission proposes 10 actions to be taken forward over the next two years, some of which will be launched:

- A **Skills Guarantee** to help low-skilled adults acquire a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital skills and progress towards an upper secondary qualification.
- A review of the **European Qualifications Framework** for a better understanding of qualifications and to make better use of all available skills in the European labour market.
- The "**Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition**" bringing together Member States and education, employment and industry stakeholders to develop a large digital talent pool and ensure that individuals and the labour force in Europe are equipped with adequate digital skills.

- The **'Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills'** to improve skills intelligence and address skills shortages in specific economic sectors.

Other actions will be launched later this year and in 2017:

- A **"Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals"** to support early identification and profiling of skills and qualifications of asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants.
- A revision of the **Europass Framework**, offering people better and easier-to-use tools to present their skills and get useful real-time information on skills needs and trends which can help with career and learning choices.
- **Making Vocational Education and Training (VET) a first choice** by enhancing opportunities for VET learners to undertake a work based learning experience and promoting greater visibility of good labour market outcomes of VET.
- A review of the **Recommendation on Key Competences** to help more people acquire the core set of skills necessary to work and live in the 21st century with a special focus on promoting entrepreneurial and innovation-oriented mind-sets and skills.
- An initiative **on graduate tracking** to improve information on how graduates progress in the labour market.
- A proposal to further analyse and exchange best practices on effective ways to address **brain drain**.

Background

The European Skills Agenda was announced in the 2016 Commission Work Programme. It will support upward social convergence and contribute to the European Commission's first political priority, ["A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment"](#) by addressing three pressing challenges of economies: the lack of relevant skills to match labour market needs, the insufficient transparency of skills and qualifications, and the difficulty to anticipate and forecast skills.

2. Final adoption of new rules to cut red tape on citizens' public documents

The European Parliament has adopted the regulation, proposed by the Commission, to cut costs and formalities for citizens who need to present a public document in another EU country.

Currently, citizens moving to or living in another EU country must obtain a stamp to prove that their public documents (such as a birth, marriage or death certificate) are authentic. Under the new regulation, this stamp and the bureaucratic procedures linked to it will no longer be required when presenting public documents issued in one EU country to the authorities of another EU country. The regulation deals only with the authenticity of public documents, so Member States will continue to apply their national rules concerning the recognition of the content and effects of a public document issued in another Union country.

"We have good news for people who move to another EU country for example to study or work," said Věra Jourová, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality.

"These citizens often need to go through costly and time-consuming bureaucratic procedures to present a public document to get married or obtain a job in the country they live in. We put an end to this red tape and help people move easily across the European Union." The new regulation will put an end to a number of bureaucratic procedures:

- public documents (for example, birth, marriage or the absence of a criminal record) issued in a Union country must be accepted as authentic in another Member State without the need to carry an authenticity stamp (i.e. the apostille);
- The regulation also abolishes the obligation for citizens to provide in all cases a certified copy and a certified translation of their public documents. Citizens can also use a multilingual standard form, available in all EU languages, to present as translation aid attached to their public document to avoid translation requirements;
- The regulation sets safeguards against fraud: if a receiving authority has reasonable doubts about the authenticity of a public document, it will be able to check its authenticity with the issuing authority in the other country through the existing IT platform, the Internal Market Information System or IMI.



Next steps: Member States have two years and a half from the date of entry into force of the regulation to adopt all necessary measures to allow for the smooth application of the regulation at the end of this period.

Background:

Around 13 million EU citizens live in another EU country than their own. According to a [Eurobarometer survey](#), 73% of EU citizens believe that measures should be taken to improve the circulation of public documents between EU countries. Citizens often complain about the red tape and costs that they need to bear in order to have a public document issued in one Union country considered as authentic in another Union country. These time-consuming formalities are excessive and unnecessary and impair the enjoyment by citizens of their rights under the Treaties. The Regulation covers public documents in the following areas: birth; a person being alive; death; name; marriage, including capacity to marry and marital status; divorce, legal separation or marriage annulment; registered partnership, including capacity to enter into a registered partnership and registered partnership status; dissolution of a registered partnership, legal separation or annulment of a registered partnership; parenthood; adoption; domicile and/or residence; nationality; absence of a criminal record and the right to vote and stand as a candidate in municipal elections and elections to the European Parliament. The Regulation introduces multilingual standard forms as translation aids of public documents concerning: birth; a person being alive; death; marriage (including capacity to marry and marital status); registered partnership (including capacity to enter into a registered partnership and registered partnership status); domicile and/or residence and absence of a criminal record.

3. Investment Plan for Europe

One year after the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) came into force, the Commission looks at what has worked well in the Investment Plan, what can be improved, and how to advance.

Eighteen months after President **Jean-Claude Juncker** launched the Investment Plan for Europe, and a year after the start of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the Commission takes stock of achievements to date. The Commission shares the lessons learned and makes clear proposals for an ambitious future of the EFSI. European Commission President **Juncker** said: "*The*



Investment Plan is working and defying the pessimists. The European Fund for Strategic Investments is creating jobs and triggering investments in the real economy every day. That is why we propose to extend it beyond 2018. Let's be ambitious in getting Europe investing again." Vice-President **Jyrki Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, added: "*Together with the EIB we have achieved a lot in the past 12 months. We have supported innovative energy projects, healthcare centres, urban development and high-speed broadband. Close to 150,000 SMEs have access to new financing. We have created a hub which provides advisory services and technical support to project*

promoters. We have launched a new portal for promoters to showcase their projects worldwide to investors. But there is more to do: we must continue to deepen the single market – the EU's unique selling point – and Member States must work on removing barriers to investment."

Achievements to date

The **European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI)** is at the heart of this Commission's Investment Plan. Managed by the EIB Group, it is firmly on track to deliver on mobilising at least EUR 315 billion in additional investments in the real economy by mid-2018. The EFSI provides a first loss guarantee, so that the EIB has been able to invest in more projects, sometimes riskier projects, and to invest sooner than without the EFSI. Overall, the EFSI is already active in 26 Member States and is expected to trigger EUR 100 billion in investment with the approvals given so far. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have benefited particularly from the EFSI so far. To encourage more EFSI activity in the Member States lagging behind so far, the EIB and the Commission will increase their local outreach. **We officially launched** another element of the Investment Plan, the **European Investment Project Portal (EIPP)**, an online platform bringing together European project promoters and investors from the EU and beyond. The Portal will

increase the visibility of projects to invest in across Europe. This is something that investors asked for, and the Commission delivered. (For a video on the new Portal, click [here](#).) The **European Investment Advisory Hub** (EIAH) provides technical assistance and tailored advice to private and public project promoters. The Hub has already dealt with more than 160 requests. Whilst this is a promising start, the Commission and EIB are working on making the advisory services more local and closer to those companies that should benefit. In February, the Commission issued [guidance](#) on how **European Structural and Investment Funds** (ESI Funds) can be combined with the EFSI to enable as much investment as possible. A first set of projects is already benefiting from this combination in practice which will be further simplified. Finally, the Commission has already taken a number of steps to **improve the business environment and financing conditions** as part of the Investment Plan's third pillar. Initiatives include lowering capital charges for insurance and reinsurance companies. Insurers told the Commission that some of the Solvency II rules were keeping them from investing in infrastructure, and now this obstacle has been removed. The Commission will evaluate whether it is appropriate to lower bank capital charges for infrastructure exposures in a similar way, taking into account discussions on capital treatment of bank exposures. To facilitate venture capital investment in Europe, the Commission will also propose some changes to the venture capital regulatory framework. Together with Eurostat, the Commission will provide further clarity and review, where appropriate, relevant guidance as regards accounting aspects of public-private partnerships. To offer further legal certainty to investors as regards the financing of infrastructure, the Commission has provided practical guidance on what constitutes State aid, in the form of a Communication on the Notion of State aid. The Communication on Delivering the Single Market Agenda, also published, outlines the many strands of work that have been or will be carried out at EU level to create a business-friendly environment to encourage innovation and invest in people. This work ranges from creating a Digital Single Market, making the market without borders for services a reality, simplifying VAT rules, to improving access to venture capital for start-ups and investing in skills. The Commission is also working with the European Investment Fund (EIF) to establish a Pan-European Venture Capital Fund-of-Funds that would combine public finance and private capital for additional stimulus and scale for new companies. Member States also need to continue their structural reforms to remove bottlenecks and red-tape which act as a barrier to investment.



The future of the EFSI

Building on these positive results, the Commission proposes the following way forward.

- **Reflecting on its success so far, a reinforced EFSI will continue beyond the initial three-year period** to address remaining market gaps and failures and continue to mobilise private sector financing in investments crucial for Europe's future job creation, growth and competitiveness, with strengthened "additionality". The Commission will present legislative proposals in the autumn to extend the duration of the EFSI, bearing in mind the scarcity of budgetary resources.
- One of the biggest success stories of the EFSI has been the strong interest and participation by intermediary banks across the EU to provide finance to SMEs, the so-called **EFIS SME-window**. **This will be scaled up** quickly, under the current framework, for the benefit of SMEs and mid-cap companies in all Member States. The Commission will work with the EFSI Steering Board to use all the existing possibilities under the EFSI Regulation to reinforce the SME window.
- The Commission will explore the possibility of using an EFSI-type model for investments in **developing third countries**.
- The **combination of EFSI support and ESI Funds** will be further simplified and legislative and other obstacles to such combinations removed.
- **The Advisory Hub will be enhanced to be able to work more locally** and to enhance its work with National Promotional Banks.
- Establishing **Investment Platforms** will be further encouraged, with strong engagement from the Commission, the EIB Group, National Promotional Banks and other relevant actors. This is particularly important for small projects to reach scale.
- Energy efficiency is undoubtedly one of the most successful sectors under the EFSI. The EFSI will continue to contribute to the development of the market for **sustainable/green projects**, by

encouraging the development of a green bond market in Europe and improved coordination of existing efforts.

- The Commission will continue to deliver on its **Single Market priorities**. Together with Eurostat, the Commission will provide further clarity and review, where appropriate, relevant guidance as regards accounting aspects of public-private partnerships.
- Member States should also establish clear priorities, prepare concrete investment projects with the help of the Advisory Hub – in particular on cross-border projects – and structure their projects in an optimal way to ensure a greater use of financial instruments. In the context of **the European Semester process**, Member States should implement the country-specific recommendations to address national barriers to investment.

Background

The economic crisis brought about a sharp reduction of investment across Europe. That is why collective and coordinated efforts at European level are needed to reverse this downward trend and put Europe on the path of economic recovery. Adequate levels of resources are available and need to be mobilised across the EU in support of investment. There is no single, simple answer, no growth button that can be pushed, and no one-size-fits-all solution. The Commission's economic approach is based on three pillars: **structural reforms** to put Europe on a new growth path; **fiscal responsibility** to restore the soundness of public finances and cement financial stability; and **investment** to kick-start growth and sustain it over time. The Investment Plan for Europe is at the heart of this strategy. It focuses on removing obstacles to investment, providing visibility and technical assistance to investment projects and making smarter use of new and existing financial resources. After one year in force, the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) is already showing results.

4. Commission injects €6.7 billion into transport infrastructure

Along with the Investment Plan for Europe, the Connecting Europe Facility plays a major role in bridging the investment gap in Europe, one of the Commission's top priorities.

The European Commission is firmly delivering on **President Juncker's** top priority of creating jobs and boosting growth in the European Union, by unveiling [a list of 195 transport projects](#) that will receive **€6.7 billion of funding** under the [Connecting Europe Facility](#) (CEF). This investment is expected to unlock additional public and private co-financing for a combined amount of **€9.6 billion**. The selected projects will notably contribute to the digitalisation and decarbonisation of transport, in



line with the broader political agenda of this Commission. The Member States eligible for the Cohesion Fund received almost 85% of the funding, which will help bridging the infrastructure disparities across the EU. Vice-President **Jyrki Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, said: *"I am happy that the Commission is making yet another major contribution to investment in the transport sector which will lead to more jobs and generate economic growth in Europe. I would also like to use this opportunity to encourage all potential project promoters to explore investment possibilities under the Investment Plan for Europe, and in particular the newly launched European Investment Project Portal (EIPP), which gives worldwide visibility to*

transport project." EU Commissioner for Transport **Violeta Bulc** said, *"The total investment of €9.6 billion could create up to 100,000 jobs in the European economy by 2030. The projects will make European infrastructure safer, more sustainable and more efficient for passengers and business alike. I am pleased to see that the Western Balkan Region will also receive some funding, bringing its transport infrastructure closer to the EU's."* Selected projects are primarily located on the core trans-European transport network (TEN-T). Among the beneficiaries are flagship initiatives such as the rehabilitation of the Brasov Sighisoara rail section in Romania, the railway connection Aveiro Vilar Formoso in Portugal, the development of standard gauge railway line in the Rail Baltic corridor, the implementation of the SESAR Deployment Programme and the modernisation of railway line E30 (Zabrze – Katowice – Krakow section) in Poland. Launched in November 2015, the second CEF calls for proposals generated 406 eligible project proposals. With **€12.49 billion** of requested EU funding, the calls were widely oversubscribed. This allowed the Commission to select the

projects with the highest European added value, while guaranteeing a balanced distribution geographically and between the transport modes. **€5.6 billion** has been earmarked for Member States eligible for the Cohesion Fund. The contribution to other Commission priority actions, such as the Energy Union or the Digital Single Market, was also evaluated during the selection process. The EU's financial contribution is made in the form of grants, the co-financing rate of which is between 20% and 50% of the eligible costs of a given project, depending on its type. As regards projects submitted under the Cohesion call, the maximum co-funding rates can go up to 85% of the eligible costs.

Next steps

The proposed funding decision must now be formally approved by the Connecting Europe Facility Coordination Committee, which will meet on 8 July 2016. Adoption of the decision by the Commission is expected for end July 2016. The individual grant agreements will then be prepared by the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA) and signed with the project beneficiaries in the second half of 2016.

Background

Under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), **€24.05 billion** will be made available from the EU's 2014-2020 budget to co-fund TEN-T projects in the EU Member States. Of this amount, **€11.305 billion** will be available for projects in Member States eligible for the Cohesion Fund. Annual and multi-annual work programmes specify the set of priorities and the total amount of financial support to be committed for each of these priorities in a given year. 2014 was the first programming year under the CEF. Along with the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), the CEF plays a major role in bridging the investment gap in Europe, which is one of the Commission's top priorities.

5. Commission wants better enforcement of rules ahead of summer holidays

As millions of European citizens will be travelling during the summer period, the Commission is taking action for the better enforcement of air passenger rights in the European Union.

New guidelines adopted will clarify the existing rules and facilitate their application, for the benefit of travellers and businesses. This is yet another deliverable of the Aviation Strategy for Europe adopted by the Commission in December 2015 to strengthen the competitiveness of European aviation and maintain the highest standards. EU Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc** said: *"Transport is first and foremost about people, and I am proud that the EU protects its passengers across all forms of transport. The guidelines published will bring further clarity and legal certainty to ensure that the rules are applied properly. All EU citizens travelling by plane should receive the level of protection they are entitled to."* The EU's Air Passenger Rights legislation is among the most advanced in the world, offering a high degree of protection against unforeseen circumstances to people travelling by plane to and from the EU. A number of judgements of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) have, however, affected the content and scope of the legislation since it entered into force in 2005. A clarification was therefore needed for travellers, airlines, and the national authorities, which are in charge of making sure the rules are properly applied at national level. The guidelines summarise the existing case law and consolidate all ongoing practices. Of particular relevance are:



- **Compensation for a delay:** the right to compensation after a delay of three hours at the final destination.
- **Compensation for a missed connecting flight:** the right to compensation in case of a long delay on arrival due to missed connecting flights.
- **Extraordinary circumstances:** various situations such as technical defects linked to the premature malfunction of certain components of an aircraft or aircraft collisions with other aircraft/devices whereby airlines cannot be exempted from the payment of compensation in case of a cancellation and delay.
- **Measures to be taken in extraordinary circumstances:** the right to assistance and care during exceptional events such as the ash cloud in 2010.

The guidelines will apply pending the adoption and entry into force of the new Air passenger legislation proposed by the Commission in 2013. The objective of this proposal was to clarify certain aspects of the current Regulation and to introduce new passenger rights where necessary. The legislative procedure in the European Parliament and Council is ongoing.

Background:

The guidelines will help facilitate air travel for passengers and thus assist air carriers and their agents to improve the application of the Regulation. They will also assist national authorities with the enforcement of the Regulation and ensure an equal level playing field for all air carriers. They will provide a real added value at a time of increased travel activity at the outset of the holiday period and until a new legal framework enters into force. Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights entered into force in February 2005. The Aviation Strategy for Europe is one of the initiatives listed in the Commission Work Programme for 2015. The goal of the Aviation Strategy is to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of the entire EU air transport value network.

6. A new strategy to put culture at the heart of EU international relations

The strategy adopted is in line with the Commission's priority to make the EU a stronger global actor. Culture can play a crucial role in strengthening international partnerships.

The 'Strategy for international cultural relations' presented by the European Commission and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy aims at encouraging cultural cooperation between the EU and its partner countries and promoting a global order based on peace, the rule of law, freedom of expression, mutual understanding and respect for fundamental values. EU High Representative and Vice-President **Federica Mogherini** said: *"Culture has to be part and parcel of our foreign policy. Culture is a powerful tool to build bridges between people, notably the young, and reinforce mutual understanding. It can also be an engine for economic and social development. As we face common challenges, culture can help all of us, in Europe, Africa, Middle East, Asia, stand together to fight radicalisation and build an alliance of civilisations against*



those trying to divide us. This is why cultural diplomacy must be at the core of our relationship with world." European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor **Navracsics**, said: *"Culture is the hidden gem of our foreign policy. It helps to promote dialogue and mutual understanding. Culture is therefore crucial in building long-term relationships with countries across the whole world: it has a great role to play in making the EU a stronger global actor."* European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica**, and Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, **Johannes Hahn**, welcomed the

Strategy, in line with the recently adopted 2030 Agenda acknowledging global citizenship, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue as overarching principles of sustainable development and for the EU's neighbourhood and enlargement policies. Culture can play an important role in the EU's foreign policy. Cultural cooperation counters stereotypes and prejudice by nurturing dialogue, open-mindedness, dignity and mutual respect. Inter-cultural dialogue can help prevent conflicts and foster reconciliation within and between countries. Culture can help respond to global challenges such as the integration of refugees, countering violent radicalisation and the protection of the world's cultural heritage. Culture can also be a tool to deliver important social and economic benefits both within and outside the EU. The Communication proposes a strategic framework for deeper and more effective international cultural relations as well as a new model for cooperation with Member States, national cultural institutes, private and public operators from the EU and its partner countries, increasing opportunities, creating synergies and maximising socio-economic benefits. Culture is becoming more and more a vector for economic growth, not only in its traditional forms, but particularly through cultural and creative industries, SMEs and tourism. This strengthens the opinion that synergies with other fields are crucial and that public and private sector and civil society should be more and more involved. Culture plays an important role also at municipal level. Engaging citizens, state actors and cultural operators alike, is a major resource for strengthening municipalities and communities and for developing market opportunities. As such, this

Communication is in line with the ninth priority outlined by European Commission President Juncker in his 2014 Political Guidelines and reflecting the ambition of the EU's forthcoming Global Strategy being prepared by the High Representative. The Commission has also announced that it will propose to the European Parliament and the Council of the EU to organise a European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018.

Background

Culture in EU external relations is one of the three pillars of the European Agenda for Culture (2007). Developing a strategic approach in this field has been a priority of the Council's Work Plans for Culture since 2011. A major step forward was made with the European Parliament's Preparatory Action "Culture in EU external relations" (2013-14), which highlighted the considerable potential for culture in Europe's external relations and underlined that the European Union and its Member States stand to gain a great deal by better streamlining their cultural diplomacy. In the cultural and creative sectors, the EU has already funded many projects such as creative hubs' networks or the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Cultures+ programme and the programmes to support cultural governance and promote intercultural dialogue. The Creative Europe programme is also open to neighbourhood and enlargement countries. EU delegations regularly organise cultural diplomacy activities and EU development cooperation has long included culture and heritage in its actions (for example, to restore the Timbuktu manuscripts in Mali). The EU's support to the Anna Lindh Foundation in the South Mediterranean serves as another good example of how culture will influence the EU's foreign policy. The Young Arab Voices programme (now enlarged to the



(now enlarged to the EuroMediterranean region), for instance, deepens the dialogue between young leaders and civil society representatives and develop counter-narratives to extremism and violent radicalisation. Another example is EU assistance to protect cultural heritage in Syria, implemented by UNESCO, supporting local stakeholders in monitoring the state of the heritage and in preserving the heritage and countering illicit trafficking. In the Eastern Partnership (EaP), the EaP Culture Programme is supporting the cultural and creative sectors' contribution to sustainable humanitarian, social and economic development. At the same time, the "Community-Led Urban Strategies in Historic Towns" project seeks to stimulate social and economic development by enhancing cultural heritage in nine historic towns in Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine Horizon 2020 also supports research on cultural diplomacy and activities on cultural heritage through multinational, interdisciplinary projects. Future programmes are under preparation to support partner countries in different regions; namely fostering cultural and creative industries and promoting intercultural dialogue. To help the EU implement the strategy and create synergies among all EU stakeholders (EU delegations, national cultural institutes and foundations, private and public enterprises, civil society), a Cultural Diplomacy Platform was set up in February 2016, focusing on strategic countries. Operated by a consortium of Member States' Cultural Institutes and other partners, the Platform will deliver policy advice, facilitate networking, carry out activities with cultural stakeholders and develop training programmes for cultural leadership.

7. Commission proposes new e-commerce rules

The European Commission tabled a package of measures to allow consumers and companies to buy and sell products and services online more easily and confidently across the EU.

Delivering on its Digital Single Market and Single Market strategies, the European Commission has presented a three-pronged plan to boost e-commerce by tackling geoblocking, making cross-border parcel delivery more affordable and efficient and promoting customer trust through better protection and enforcement. **Andrus Ansip**, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, said: *"All too often people are blocked from accessing the best offers when shopping online or decide not to buy cross-border because the delivery prices are too high or they are worried about how to claim their rights if something goes wrong. We want to solve the problems that are preventing consumers and businesses from fully enjoying the opportunities of buying and selling products and services online."*

Günther H. Oettinger, Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society said: *"The geoblocking initiative strikes the right balance between consumers' interest to be able to shop online without borders and providing businesses with sufficient legal certainty. I am confident that our approach, taking due account of specificities of certain sectors, will give the right boost to cross-border e-commerce in the EU."* **Elżbieta Bieńkowska**, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, added: *"Discrimination between EU consumers based on the objective to segment markets along national borders has no place in the Single Market. With clearer rules, better enforcement and more affordable cross-border parcel delivery, it will be easier for consumers and companies, especially SMEs, to make the most of the EU Single Market and the cross-border e-commerce."* **Vera Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, said: *"Too many people in Europe are hesitant to purchase online because they don't know their rights or think they are hard to enforce. I want consumers to buy online as confidently as they would offline. We will give teeth to consumer protection authorities to better enforce consumer rights online and crack down on fraudulent practices. The package is an important step to bring consumer protection up to speed with the online world and to give legal certainty to traders."* The e-commerce package is composed of:

- A legislative proposal to address unjustified geoblocking and other forms of discrimination on the grounds of nationality, residence or establishment;
- A legislative proposal on cross-border parcel delivery services to increase the transparency of prices and improve regulatory oversight;
- A legislative proposal to strengthen enforcement of consumers' rights and guidance to clarify, among others, what qualifies as an unfair commercial practice in the digital world.

Preventing geoblocking and other forms of discrimination based on nationality or place of residence

The Commission is proposing legislation to ensure that consumers seeking to buy products and services in another EU country, be it online or in person, are not discriminated against in terms of access to prices, sales or payment conditions, unless this is objectively justified for reasons such as VAT or certain public interest legal provisions. When a consumer enters a shop in another EU country, the owner does not ask for the consumer's ID in order to accept a purchase or to adjust the price or conditions. But in the online world, all too often consumers are blocked from accessing offers



in other countries for example by re-routing the consumer back to a country-specific website, or asking to pay with a debit or credit card from a certain country. Such discrimination has no place in the Single Market. While the principle of non-discrimination is already established under the Services Directive and the Commission has applied it in services sectors such as car rental companies or amusement parks, companies and consumers alike will benefit from more legal certainty about which practices are allowed and which ones are not. The Regulation will provide this legal certainty and enforceability for products and services online or offline. To avoid introducing disproportionate burden on companies, the Regulation does not impose an

obligation to deliver across the EU and exempts small businesses that fall under a national VAT threshold from certain provisions.

Making cross-border parcel delivery more affordable and efficient

The Regulation proposed will increase price transparency and regulatory oversight of cross-border parcel delivery services so that consumers and retailers can benefit from affordable deliveries and convenient return options even to and from peripheral regions. Consumers and small businesses complain that problems with parcel delivery, in particular high delivery charges in cross-border shippings, prevent them from selling or buying more across the EU. Prices charged by postal operators to deliver a small parcel to another Member State are often up to 5 times higher than domestic prices, without a clear correlation to the actual costs. The Regulation will foster competition by introducing greater price transparency. The Commission is not proposing a cap on delivery prices. Price regulation is only a means of last resort, where competition does not bring satisfactory results. The Commission will take stock of progress made in 2019 and assess if further measures are necessary. The Regulation will give national postal regulators the data they need to monitor cross-border markets and check the affordability and cost-orientation of prices. It will also encourage

competition by requiring transparent and non-discriminatory third-party access to cross-border parcel delivery services and infrastructure. The Commission will publish public listed prices of universal service providers to increase peer competition and tariff transparency. The proposal complements self-regulatory initiatives taken by postal operators to improve the quality and convenience of cross-border parcel delivery services.

Increasing consumer trust in e-commerce

The proposed revision of the Consumer Protection Cooperation Regulation will give more powers to national authorities to better enforce consumer rights. They will be able to:

- check if websites geo-block consumers or offer after-sales conditions not respecting EU rules (e.g. withdrawal rights);
- order the immediate take-down of websites hosting scams;
- request information from domain registrars and banks to detect the identity of the responsible trader.

In case of EU-wide breaches of consumer rights, the Commission will be able to coordinate common actions with national enforcement authorities to stop these practices. It will ensure a swifter protection of consumers, while saving time and resources for Member States and businesses. The Commission is also publishing updated guidance on unfair commercial practices to respond among others to the challenges presented by the digital world. It clarifies the application of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive. For instance, any online platform that qualifies as a "trader" and promotes or sells goods, services or digital content to consumers must make sure that its own commercial practices fully comply with EU consumer law. Platforms must state clearly that rules on unfair commercial practices do not apply to private persons selling goods, and search engines would be required to clearly distinguish paid placements from natural search results. The revised Guidance also incorporates two sets of self-regulatory principles agreed among stakeholders: one will support comparison tools to better comply with the Directive and the other will help the enforcement of unfair commercial practices rules against misleading and unfounded environmental claims.

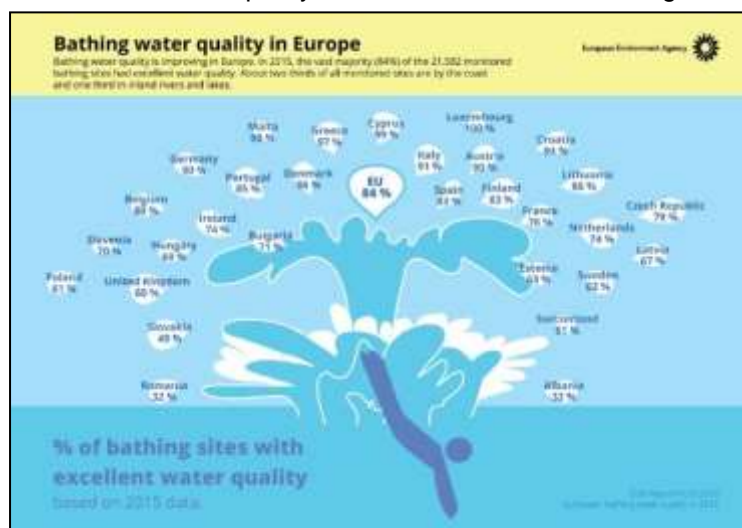
Background

The e-commerce package complements two legislative proposals on the supply of digital content and on online and other distance sales of goods which the Commission proposed in December 2015, and the upcoming VAT simplification proposal planned for autumn 2016. In parallel to the adoption of the e-commerce package, the Commission presented updated EU audiovisual rules and its approach to online platforms.

8. Forty years of investments have improved Europe's bathing water

The European Union's efforts to ensure clean and healthy bathing water began forty years ago when the first Bathing Water Directive was issued.

The annual bathing water report published proves the value of the legislation and the years of investment in waste water infrastructure and other pollution reduction measures. It shows that bathing water quality has improved continuously over time leading to 96 % of monitored bathing sites in the EU meeting the minimum standards for water quality in 2015. The annual bathing water report from the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the European Commission assesses bathing water quality in 2015, indicating where it is expected to be good in 2016. The report compiles analyses of water sampled at more than 21 000 coastal and inland bathing sites across the EU, Switzerland and Albania indicating whether or not it has been contaminated by faecal pollution from sewage or livestock. While 96 % of bathing sites met the minimum requirements, more than 84 % met the more stringent 'excellent' level. Several large tourist areas and cities like



Blackpool, Copenhagen and Munich are also starting to benefit from investments in improved sewage systems, which are leading to cleaner bathing sites at harbour areas, urban river locations and nearby beaches. **Karmenu Vella**, European Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said: *“European bathing water is at 96 % acceptable and 84 % excellent standards. That is the result of 40 years investing in water and waste water infrastructure. It is a sign of EU legislation working well. And it is a perfect testimony to the fact that a highly evolved economic area such as ours can produce equally high environmental standards.”* **Hans Bruyninckx**, EEA Executive Director, said: *“Our assessment shows that bathing water quality has improved remarkably over the years. More and more bathing waters have not only reached the minimum requirements, but have improved to excellent standards. In some cities, people can even enjoy swimming in public harbour baths.”* Overall bathing water has improved over time. In 1991, 56 % of bathing water sites reached the highest standards. This percentage rose to 87 % in 2015, based on nearly 9 600 bathing water sites that have been monitored every year during this period.

Other key findings

- More than 90 % of bathing sites in eight Member States had excellent water quality in 2015: Luxembourg (all 11 reported bathing water sites), Cyprus (99.1 % of bathing water sites), Malta (97.7 %), Greece (97.2 %), Croatia (94.2 %), Italy (90.6 %), Germany (90.3 %) and Austria (90.2 %).
- Across Europe, only 385 bathing sites were assessed as having poor bathing water quality in 2015. The share of bathing water sites rated ‘poor’ dropped to 1.6 % in 2015 from 1.9 % in 2014.
- The highest numbers of bathing sites with poor water quality were found in Italy (95 bathing sites, 1.7 %), France (95 bathing sites, 2.8 %) and Spain (58 bathing sites, 2.6 %).
- The share of bathing water with excellent quality increased from 78 % in 2011 to 84 % in 2015.

Background

For recreational activities such as swimming, faecal contamination is a cause of concern for public health. Swimming at contaminated beaches or bathing lakes can result in illness. The major sources of pollution are sewage and water draining from farms and farmland. Such pollution increases during heavy rains and floods due to sewage overflow and polluted drainage water being washed into rivers and seas. Forty years ago, large quantities of uncontrolled, untreated or partially treated wastewater were discharged into many of Europe’s waters. The 2015 bathing season was the first time that all EU Member States monitored their bathing sites according to the provisions of the EU’s revised Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC). The directive specifies if the bathing water quality can be classified as ‘excellent’, ‘good’, ‘sufficient’ or ‘poor’ depending on the levels of faecal bacteria detected. The outcome of the report will also be in focus during #EUGreenWeek, 30 May - 3 June 2016, as part of the event's broader theme this year, 'Investing for a greener future'.

9. More transparent and balanced interest representation

The Commission has adopted new rules on how it selects the advisory expert groups which provide external expertise to help inform the policy-making process.

The Commission has adopted new rules on the creation and functioning of the advisory expert groups which provide external expertise to help inform the policy-making process. The Decision provides a single set of rules and principles aimed at increasing transparency, avoiding conflicts of interest and ensuring a balanced representation of interests. The new rules are binding on all Commission departments.



First Vice-President **Frans Timmermans** said: *“When we design rules and policies we need the help of outside expertise to help us get it right. Citizens rightly expect this to be done in a transparent and balanced way. Thanks to the measures we are taking, the Commission will benefit from high quality expertise while avoiding possible conflicts of interest, and the public will be able to hold us to account. The decision follows fruitful consultations with Members of the European Parliament, the European Ombudsman and*

representatives of civil society organisations, who are key partners in delivering a transparent approach to EU policy-making. This is another step forward in changing the way 'Brussels' works.”

Under the new rules, it becomes mandatory for Commission departments to select all expert group members through **public calls for applications** - except those representing Member States, third countries, and EU and international bodies. These calls must be published on the Register of Expert Groups and must clearly outline the selection criteria, including the required expertise and interest groups targeted. All possible efforts will be made to **ensure balanced representation**, taking into account areas of expertise and interest, gender and geographical origin, and the mandate of the expert group concerned. The enhanced transparency in the selection process is an important factor in achieving balanced composition. The revised rules further **increase transparency of the groups' work** by explicitly requiring Commission departments to make available relevant documents including agendas, complete and meaningful minutes and expert submissions. In case of adoption of an expert group position through a vote, minority opinions expressed by experts can also be made public if they so wish. The revised rules significantly improve **conflict of interest management in relation to individuals** appointed in a personal capacity, who are expected to act independently and in the public interest. Commission departments will have to carry out specific conflict of interest assessments for these experts, on the basis of a Standard Declaration of Interest that they will submit. These Declarations will subsequently be published on the Register of Expert Groups for public scrutiny. A **revised Register of Expert Groups** will go online, reflecting the new transparency requirements and ensuring **synergies with the Transparency Register**. Experts who apply to represent specific interests or organisations will only be selected as expert group members if they are registered in the Transparency Register. This condition will be applied retroactively to all current expert group members by the end of 2016. The Expert Group Register will also be organised better, with a **new classification** of expert group members to bring more clarity and transparency. The new categorisation will separate organisations such as companies, NGOs and trade unions from public entities which previously fell under the same heading. Further subcategories will also be created to allow increased public scrutiny of the balance of interests.

Background

Around 800 expert groups currently advise the Commission across all policy areas. Expert group members can be appointed in an individual capacity or can represent Member States, third countries, EU and international bodies, business, trade unions, civil society, academia or other interests. Expert groups are used in the preparation of new legislation or delegated and implementing acts, in the implementation of existing laws, or in developing strategic policy orientations more generally. These groups do not take any decisions - their role is purely advisory - but they may formulate opinions or recommendations and submit reports to the Commission. The Commission and its officials remain fully independent regarding the way they take into account the expertise and views gathered from these expert groups. The Commission's decisions are always taken in the general interest of the European Union. The Juncker Commission is committed to enhanced transparency in all areas of its work. Working with expert groups is one of many ways in which the Commission gathers outside opinions and expertise to support its work. Public consultations, targeted stakeholder consultations, public hearings, conferences and studies are among the other valuable tools which complement the institutional dialogue with the European Parliament and Council. A horizontal institutional framework for expert groups was first introduced in 2005, and last revised in 2010. The Decision represents a positive response to many of the recommendations put forward by the European Ombudsman as a result of her own-initiative inquiry, and to the suggestions of Members of the European Parliament and representatives of civil society organisations.



10. Code of Conduct on illegal online hate speech

The Commission together with Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Microsoft (“the IT companies”) unveil a code of conduct that includes a series of commitments to combat the spread of illegal hate speech online in Europe.

The IT Companies support the European Commission and EU Member States in the effort to respond to the challenge of ensuring that online platforms do not offer opportunities for illegal online

hate speech to spread virally. They share, together with other platforms and social media companies, a collective responsibility and pride in promoting and facilitating freedom of expression throughout the online world. However, the Commission and the IT Companies recognise that the spread of illegal hate speech online not only negatively affects the groups or individuals that it targets, it also negatively impacts those who speak out for freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination in our open societies and has a chilling effect on the democratic discourse on online platforms. In order to prevent the spread of illegal hate speech, it is essential to ensure that relevant national laws transposing the Council Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia are fully enforced by Member States in the online as well as the in the offline environment. While the effective application of provisions criminalising hate speech is dependent on a robust system of enforcement of criminal law sanctions against the individual perpetrators of hate speech, this work must be complemented with actions geared at ensuring that illegal hate speech online is expeditiously reviewed by online intermediaries and social media platforms, upon receipt of a valid notification, in an appropriate time-frame. To be considered valid in this respect, a notification should not be insufficiently precise or inadequately substantiated. **Věra Jourová**, EU Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, said, *"The recent terror attacks have reminded us of the urgent need to address illegal online hate speech. Social media is unfortunately one of the tools that terrorist groups use to radicalise young people and racist use to spread violence and hatred. This agreement is an important step forward to ensure that the internet remains a place of free and democratic expression, where European values and laws are respected. I welcome the commitment of worldwide IT companies to review the majority of valid notifications for removal of illegal hate speech in less than 24 hours and remove or disable access to such content, if necessary."* Twitter's Head of Public Policy for Europe, **Karen White**, commented: *"Hateful conduct has no place on Twitter and we will continue to tackle this issue head on alongside our partners in industry and civil society. We remain committed to letting the Tweets flow. However, there is a clear distinction between freedom of expression and conduct that incites violence and hate. In tandem with auctioning hateful conduct that breaches Twitter's Rules, we also leverage the platform's incredible capabilities to empower positive voices, to challenge prejudice and to tackle the deeper root causes*



of intolerance. We look forward to further constructive dialogue between the European Commission, member states, our partners in civil society and our peers in the technology sector on this issue." Google's Public Policy and Government Relations Director, **Lie Junius**, said: *"We're committed to giving people access to information through our services, but we have always prohibited illegal hate speech on our platforms. We have efficient systems*

to review valid notifications in less than 24 hours and to remove illegal content. We are pleased to work with the Commission to develop co- and self-regulatory approaches to fighting hate speech online." **Monika Bickert**, Head of Global Policy Management at Facebook said: *"We welcome announcement and the chance to continue our work with the Commission and wider tech industry to fight hate speech. With a global community of 1.6 billion people we work hard to balance giving people the power to express themselves whilst ensuring we provide a respectful environment. As we make clear in our Community Standards, there's no place for hate speech on Facebook. We urge people to use our reporting tools if they find content that they believe violates our standards so we can investigate. Our teams around the world review these reports around the clock and take swift action."* **John Frank**, Vice President EU Government Affairs at Microsoft, added: *"We value civility and free expression, and so our terms of use prohibit advocating violence and hate speech on Microsoft-hosted consumer services. We recently announced additional steps to specifically prohibit the posting of terrorist content. We will continue to offer our users a way to notify us when they think that our policy is being breached. Joining the Code of Conduct reconfirms our commitment to this important issue."* By signing this code of conduct, the IT companies commit to continuing their efforts to tackle illegal hate speech online. This will include the continued development of internal procedures and staff training to guarantee that they review the majority of valid notifications for removal of illegal hate speech in less than 24 hours and remove or disable access to such content, if necessary. The IT companies will also endeavour to strengthen their ongoing partnerships with civil society organisations who will help flag content that promotes incitement to violence and hateful conduct. The IT companies and the European Commission also aim to continue their work in identifying and promoting independent counter-narratives, new ideas and initiatives, and supporting

educational programs that encourage critical thinking. The IT Companies also underline that the present code of conduct is aimed at guiding their own activities as well as sharing best practices with other internet companies, platforms and social media operators. The code of conduct includes the following public commitments:

- The IT Companies, taking the lead on countering the spread of illegal hate speech online, have agreed with the European Commission on a code of conduct setting the following public commitments.
- The IT Companies to have in place clear and effective processes to review notifications regarding illegal hate speech on their services so they can remove or disable access to such content. The IT companies to have in place Rules or Community Guidelines clarifying that they prohibit the promotion of incitement to violence and hateful conduct.
- Upon receipt of a valid removal notification, the IT Companies to review such requests against their rules and community guidelines and where necessary national laws transposing the Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, with dedicated teams reviewing requests.
- The IT Companies to review the majority of valid notifications for removal of illegal hate speech in less than 24 hours and remove or disable access to such content, if necessary.
- In addition to the above, the IT Companies to educate and raise awareness with their users about the types of content not permitted under their rules and community guidelines. The use of the notification system could be used as a tool to do this.
- The IT companies to provide information on the procedures for submitting notices, with a view to improving the speed and effectiveness of communication between the Member State authorities and the IT Companies, in particular on notifications and on disabling access to or removal of illegal hate speech online. The information is to be channelled through the national contact points designated by the IT companies and the Member States respectively. This would also enable Member States, and in particular their law enforcement agencies, to further familiarise themselves with the methods to recognise and notify the companies of illegal hate speech online.
- The IT Companies to encourage the provision of notices and flagging of content that promotes incitement to violence and hateful conduct at scale by experts, particularly via partnerships with CSOs, by providing clear information on individual company Rules and Community Guidelines and rules on the reporting and notification processes. The IT Companies to endeavour to strengthen partnerships with CSOs by widening the geographical spread of such partnerships and, where appropriate, to provide support and training to enable CSO partners to fulfil the role of a "trusted reporter" or equivalent, with due respect to the need of maintaining their independence and credibility.
- The IT Companies rely on support from Member States and the European Commission to ensure access to a representative network of CSO partners and "trusted reporters" in all Member States helping to help provide high quality notices. IT Companies to make information about "trusted reporters" available on their websites.
- The IT Companies to provide regular training to their staff on current societal developments and to exchange views on the potential for further improvement.
- The IT Companies to intensify cooperation between themselves and other platforms and social media companies to enhance best practice sharing.
- The IT Companies and the European Commission, recognising the value of independent counter speech against hateful rhetoric and prejudice, aim to continue their work in identifying and promoting independent counter-narratives, new ideas and initiatives and supporting educational programs that encourage critical thinking.
- The IT Companies to intensify their work with CSOs to deliver best practice training on countering hateful rhetoric and prejudice and increase the scale of their proactive outreach to CSOs to help them deliver effective counter speech campaigns. The European Commission, in cooperation with Member States, to contribute to this endeavour by taking steps to map CSOs' specific needs and demands in this respect.



- The European Commission in coordination with Member States to promote the adherence to the commitments set out in this code of conduct also to other relevant platforms and social media companies.

The IT Companies and the European Commission agree to assess the public commitments in this code of conduct on a regular basis, including their impact. They also agree to further discuss how to promote transparency and encourage counter and alternative narratives. To this end, regular meetings will take place and a preliminary assessment will be reported to the High Level Group on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and all forms of intolerance by the end of 2016.

Background

The Commission has been working with social media companies to ensure that hate speech is tackled online similarly to other media channels. The e-Commerce Directive (article 14) has led to the development of take-down procedures, but does not regulate them in detail. A "notice-and-action" procedure begins when someone notifies a hosting service provider – for instance a social network, an e-commerce platform or a company that hosts websites – about illegal content on the internet (for example, racist content, child abuse content or spam) and is concluded when a hosting service provider acts against the illegal content. Following the EU Colloquium on Fundamental Rights in October 2015 on *'Tolerance and respect: preventing and combating Antisemitic and anti-Muslim hatred in Europe'*, the Commission initiated a dialogue with IT companies, in cooperation with Member States and civil society, to see how best to tackle illegal online hate speech which spreads violence and hate. The recent terror attacks and the use of social media by terrorist groups to radicalise young people have given more urgency to tackling this issue. The Commission already launched in December 2015 the EU



Internet Forum to protect the public from the spread of terrorist material and terrorist exploitation of communication channels to facilitate and direct their activities. The Joint Statement of the extraordinary Justice and Home Affairs Council following the Brussels terrorist attacks underlined the need to step up work in this field and also to agree on a Code of Conduct on hate speech online. The Framework Decision on Combating Racism and Xenophobia criminalises the public incitement to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin. This is the legal basis for defining illegal online content. Freedom of expression is a core European value which must be preserved. The European Court of Human Rights set out the important distinction between content that *"offends, shocks or disturbs the State or any sector of the population"* and content that contains genuine and serious incitement to violence and hatred. The Court has made clear that States may sanction or prevent the latter.

Internet Forum to protect the public from the spread of terrorist material and terrorist exploitation of communication channels to facilitate and direct their activities. The Joint Statement of the extraordinary Justice and Home Affairs Council following the Brussels terrorist attacks underlined the need to step up work in this field and also to agree on a Code of Conduct on hate speech online. The Framework Decision on Combating Racism and Xenophobia criminalises the public incitement to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin. This is the legal basis for defining illegal online content. Freedom of expression is a core European value which must be preserved. The European Court of Human Rights set out the important distinction between content that *"offends, shocks or disturbs the State or any sector of the population"* and content that contains genuine and serious incitement to violence and hatred. The Court has made clear that States may sanction or prevent the latter.

11. Contest with prizes for the best political cartoons dedicated to the EU

Will the European union sink in the Mediterranean sea? Is the Greece's debt crisis really over? *Will the populist parties continue to grow?* Immigration, economic crisis, xenophobic parties, civil rights movements, unemployment: these issues have received extensive media coverage in the last year, but words are not the only way to reflect on the news. To dispel the uncertainty enveloping the European Union, a cartoon may be more effective than a thousand words. For this reason the European Commission, in partnership with Internazionale and Voxeurop.eu, has launched a contest to pick the best political cartoon featured in the Italian press in 2015. **The deadline for submitting the application is the 4th July.**

The vote will open on the 15th July on facebook.com/internazionale. The best cartoon will receive a prize during the 2016 Internazionale festival in Ferrara. [Download the contest rules and participation form.](#)



12. Access City Award 2017



EU cities are invited to participate in the seventh edition of the Access City Award - The European Prize for making cities more accessible to people with disabilities and older people. European cities over 50 000 inhabitants will have the opportunity to present their activities and strategies designed to make cities **barrier-free**, better places for everyone to live and work. At a ceremony during the annual **European Day of People with Disabilities** Conference in Brussels on **29 November 2016**, the European Commission will hand over awards to **five EU cities**. There will be a **first, second and third prize** plus **two special mentions**:

1. access to work;
2. accessible smart cities.

Deadline for applications: 8 September 2016, midnight Brussels time.

The selection process has **two stages**

- first at national level;
- followed by the European selection.

You will find **information** on [how to apply](#) and **rules** in the documents: [guidance note](#) and participation rules.

Best practices in 2016

Your initiatives can inspire other cities to improve their policy and activities in the field of accessibility. As in previous years, a [brochure with the outcome of the Access City Award 2016](#) and the **winning cities** was published by the European Commission. You will find in the brochure detailed information on the **innovative projects, funding and contact information** of each **winning city**. Reading the brochure (PDF file) can give you an idea of which of your existing projects could be highlighted in your application. At the same time, the brochure's content could inspire you to start new projects to improve accessibility in your cities.

13. Call for: young photographers for fellowship

Ian Parry was a photojournalist who died while on assignment for The Sunday Times during the Romanian revolution in 1989. He was just 24 years of age. Aidan Sullivan, then picture editor, and Ian's friends and family created the Ian Parry Scholarship in order to build something positive from such a tragic death. Each year we hold an international photographic competition for young photographers who are either attending a full-time photographic course or are under 24. This year, there will now be two awards: The Award for Achievement and the Award for Potential. There is also a year long Mentorship Programme for the winner of the Award for Potential. Entrants must submit a portfolio and a brief and clear proposal of a project they would undertake if they won the scholarship. **There is no fee for entry.** Benefits include:



- **The Incite Project**, will add work from the winners to their prestigious collection and invite them to visit the collection for a private tour.
- **Each winner will receive \$3,500** towards their chosen project
- **Mentorship Programme**- the winner of the Award for Potential will receive one year's personal mentorship. This year's mentor is the highly respected photojournalist and Ian Parry Board Member, Tom Stoddart
- **Canon** provides equipment to the winners.
- **World Press Photo** automatically accepts the winner of the Achievement Award into its final list of nominees for the **Joop Swart Masterclass** in Amsterdam.
- **Reportage by Getty Images** adds the winner of the Achievement Award to its on line Emerging Talent group.

"The scholarship exists to find and support the very best young people striving to produce powerful, meaningful photojournalism in a 'selfie' obsessed world. Ian would be immensely proud of the long list of internationally known photographers who were helped at the start of their careers by the scholarship that bears his name." *Tom Stoddart*. For further information about the scholarship, visit the [official website](#). **Deadline: 7 July 2016.**

14. Residences of program for artists Pact Zollverein 2017

Running all year round since 2002, the residency programme is at the heart of PACT Zollverein's day to day work. Open to professional artists from home and abroad who work in the areas of dance,



performance, media arts or music and closely linked to PACT's two other core strands of activity in presenting work and facilitating research and development, the programme is a key element in PACT Zollverein's profile as an Artists' House supporting lively exchange between practice and theory. While occupying their own designated space and essentially working independently, residents may choose to take advantage of various kinds of production support such as dramaturgy, technical assistance, project management as well as press and publicity. Thanks to the support of the Ministry for

Families, Children, Youth, Culture and Sports of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, residency recipients receive a grant to cover their living expenses and travel costs. Residences are awarded twice a year by an international jury. A residency project will not have a public showing! The application deadline for residencies **from January to mid July 2017 will be Monday, 11th of July 2016 at 10am**. Please note that we only accept applications submitted via our [online application system](#). If you have any questions or would like to be included on our newsletter emailing list please send an email to: residenz@pact-zollverein.de.

A residency can incorporate the following:

- Studio space (from 63 to 173 sq.m.);
- Local accommodation (maximum 6 people);
- Weekly grant allowance for all of the residency project participants (maximum group of 6 people);
- Travel costs covering one journey only per participant to and from PACT Zollverein (subject to prior agreement);
- Technical equipment (by arrangement and subject to availability);
- Stage rehearsals with professional technical supervision and support (by arrangement and subject to availability).

2017 will see our residency programme expanded:

In 2017, residential bursaries lasting several weeks will be awarded in addition to the general residency programme. These, within the context of a specific topic, will make it possible for the applicant to incorporate or even take part in symposia, discussions, presentations, workshops and other public events taking place at the same time. Artists, academics, experts and journalists are invited to apply with their own project proposals that should be geared towards the central theme. The call for submissions and thematic guidelines for these special residencies will be published on our website in **September 2016**.

15. Realized the Flash Mob of CCB project



On 5th May 2016, the Risorgimento district came alive thanks to the presence of numerous young people who have said NO TO CYBERBULLYING through collective action in the open air, called Flash Mob. The boys involved in the project CLEAR CYBER BULLYING therefore have:

- Worn t-shirts on which were printed the anti-bullying slogans from them conceived of the project in the previous action;

- Distributed passersby and businesses in the neighborhood of their school the brochure of CCB;
- Explained the activities developed during the project;
- Promoted action to combat the phenomenon.

The Flash Mob has seen as protagonists the children of the Comprehensive School "Giacomo Leopardi" of Potenza involved in actions dedicated to the fight to a phenomenon which, unfortunately, see many young as protagonists: cyberbullying is in fact defined as the "harassment of third millennium". For this reason there are many projects and initiatives that give information and seek to develop the possible prevention of the serious risks associated with this phenomenon.

16. Concluded the Multiplier event of CCB project

On 6th May 2016, the Comprehensive School "Giacomo Leopardi" of Potenza hosted an information seminar: "The Cyberbullying What is the situation in our region and what are the methods to handle the problem." The seminar involved several institutions and stakeholders. The Multiplier Event was also opened to all students of the Institute and all teachers. In the afternoon it was tested the online game created during the project to fight in a different way the cyberbullying phenomenon. The game produced by the partnership with the supervision and coordination of spanis partners of the project.



17. Meeting of May 10 to Picerno



On May 10, our center Europe Direct organized and developed in collaboration with the Municipality of Picerno and the Regional Council of Basilicata a meeting at the ITIS "Enrico Fermi".

The objective of Picerno meeting was to promote the sense of European citizenship, giving importance to the common values but maintaining the own cultural identity (unity in diversity).

The purpose of the event was, therefore, to meet the citizens and it was an opportunity to raise awareness especially to the opportunities offered by the Erasmus Plus program in the field of mobility, study and training.

18. Concluded the Meeting "The suitcase" in Potenza



The project "The suitcase, the map and the voyage of a youth worker" (developed in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme by a partnership composed by Predict CSD Consulting - Romania, Millennium Center youth organization - Romania, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad - Romania, SC Schultz development SRL - Romania, Dacorum Council for Voluntary Service - UK; Asociacion Cultural Integra - Spain; Organization for Promotion of European Issues - Cyprus; Fundacja Centrum Aktywnosci Tworczej - Poland and Euro-Net - Italy) is working on the development of the first draft of the platform to be used to support young people. For this

purpose, the partners met in Potenza in the second project meeting to define the steps of this important intellectual output. The meeting in the capital of the region Basilicata took place in the period of 3-6 May 2016.

19. Realized the course in Finland DEAL WITH IT!

From 9th to 14th May 2016, it was held in Kokkola, Finland, the training course entitled "DEAL WITH IT!" with the participation of two teachers from our association. The activity was developed in Villa Elba Youth Centre and has been dedicated to the management of conflicts in the European Voluntary Service activities and projects dedicated to young people with fewer opportunities. During this training course working methods were presented and shared good practice in these areas. The purpose of the course was to: deepen the skills of participants and skills for better management of conflicts; offer ideas on how to help young people to manage different emotions such as disagreements, frustration and confusion; provide a space for the exchange of ideas, expertise and best practices in the field of conflict resolution; develop a common management strategy.



20. Concluded the first meeting of the project "New Born Memory"



From 23rd to 30th May 2016 it was held in Albania the first meeting of the project "New Born Memory". The project was approved under the Erasmus Plus Capacity Building programme. The meeting was attended by four youth leaders over 22 of our organization. The experience was unforgettable for them! The subsequent activities of the project will be described on the next issues of our newsletter.

21. Creatuse: realized the brochure

The "CREATUSE" project, funded under the Erasmus + KA2 programme – Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education, is at a core point of the activities. After the first meeting held in Potenza (Italy) in the late November 2015, the partners have carried out an extensive research at European level of the Best Practice examples about the main project topics. Now they are also finalizing the first Intellectual Output: an introductory guide to the sharing and the collaborative consumption. The products were presented during the second meeting in Lisbon in the period 14th – 17th April 2016. Also in these days it was made and published the advertising brochure of the project which you can see at the top. More information on the official website of the project: www.creatuse.eu



22. Concluded the third meeting of the project "The artist within"



From 30th May to 3rd June 2016 took place in Plovdiv in Bulgaria the third meeting of the project "THE ARTIST WITHIN - APPLIED EMOTION" approved under the Erasmus+ Programme KA2 - Adult Education. The project aims to foster the development and integration of various models of art in formal and non-formal education activities. It intends to give better support to organizations in order to train staff and target groups with the aim to develop entrepreneurial skills by using different artistic tools through individual and group actions. The aim of the project is to transfer and/or to implement some innovative practices within partners by the improvement of understanding and empowerment of social diversity and by the promotion of psychological and

cultural development of target groups. During the third meeting were discussed the project activities already developed and to be completed in the coming months initiatives, including the last scheduled meeting in Hungary that next meeting is scheduled for early July in Tihany in Hungary.

23. NEFELE cinefestival in Italy

From 24th June 2016, starts the "NEFELE Mental Life CineFestival" that will be held in two locations Potenza and Marconia Pisticci (MT). To permit the initiative to be carried out in the best way (bringing the right luster to the whole Basilicata) and hoping it could become an annual event, it was decided to allow public participation in all events provided free of charge in 5 day event. The "NEFELE Cinefestival Mental Life" will be a way to reflect on the problems of depression, psychosis and mental well-being in general with special attention to the problems related to the loss of employment which unfortunately are very contemporary to the present day because of the difficult economic situation economic. The scheduled films are "The Measure of a man" by Stéphane Brizé, "Ready for anything" by Lorenzo Vignolo, "The fifth wheel " by Giovanni Veronesi, "Cover Boy" by Carmine Amoroso and "The Medicine Seller" by Antonio Morabito. Beside the presentation of the films mentioned there will be debates with the participation of experts and various stakeholders, workshops (theater-therapy, music-therapy, game-therapy), videoportrait and artistic installations of contemporary art. More information on the festival can be read on the official web site of the project: www.nefelevproject.eu.



24. Concluded the second meeting ENT-NET

From 7th to 10th June 2016 took place in Volos in Greece the second meeting of the European project titled "ENT-NET: Promoting self-employment and entrepreneurship through a training network" (action n. 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015882) which was attended by two representatives from our organization. The project, approved under the program Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for the education of adults, has a partnership of organizations from Italy, Greece, Romania and Spain (coordinating country). The partnership has already developed the first newsletter and has been made the website that will serve as a platform for the courses provided in the initiative. For more details about the project visit the website: <http://www.ent-net.eu/>.



25. Concluded the second meeting of NEFELE project in Valladolid in Spain



From 14th to 17th June 2016 (Including travel days) took place in Valladolid in Spain the second meeting of the project "NEFELE - Networking European Festivals For Mental Life Enhancement" - action n. 559274-CREATE-1-2015-1-ELCULT-COOP1 - approved and funded under "Creative Europe" programme) with the aim to disseminate all the activities and products developed by the project partners. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together European partners to define the development of the activities under the initiative which has as its primary objective to develop creative festival in the mental health sector in all countries of the partnership.