



## Top News from the European Commission 11 May – 5 June 2015

Brussels, 08 May 2015

### Background notes from the Spokesperson's service for journalists

### The European Commission reserves the right to make changes

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## Wednesday 13 May: Commission to adopt European Agenda on Migration

### The news:

On 13 May, the European Commission is set to adopt the European Agenda on Migration, putting forward the key principles and actions in this area for 2015-2020. Announced from the outset as one of the ten political priorities of President Jean-Claude Juncker, this Agenda will offer an ambitious and comprehensive plan to manage migration better, both in the immediate term as well as in the long run. The four pillars of this common approach will be a strong common asylum policy, the fight against trafficking and the prevention of irregular migration, managing external borders, and a new policy on legal migration.

### The background:

The European Agenda on Migration will offer a new approach to more than twenty years of asylum and migration policy at the EU level, following the Extraordinary European Council Conclusions of April 2015, the Resolution of the European Parliament of April 2015, the [Political Guidelines](#) of President Jean-Claude Juncker of July 2014, and the Strategic Guidelines of the European Council of June 2014.

### The event:

The European on Migration will be adopted by the College on 13 May, and subsequently presented to the press (specific arrangements tbc). The press conference can be followed on [EbS](#).

### The sources:

Joint Foreign and Home Affairs Council: Ten point action plan on migration:

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-4813\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-4813_en.htm)

Commission makes progress on a European Agenda on Migration: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-4545\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-4545_en.htm)

Towards a Comprehensive European Migration Policy: 20 years of EU Action:

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-15-4544\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-4544_en.htm)

### The contacts:

Natasha Bertaud, +32 229 67456, [Natasha.Bertaud@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Natasha.Bertaud@ec.europa.eu)

Milica Petrovic, +32 229 63020, [Milica.Petrovic@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Milica.Petrovic@ec.europa.eu)

## **Tuesday 19 May: Commission to adopt Better Regulation Package**

### **The news:**

On 19 May, the Commission plans to presents its Better Regulation Package, which will outline measures to deliver better results for citizens and businesses through better EU rules. To this end, the package will include a proposal for the revision of the 2003 Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law Making. It will also explain how the Commission intends to further open up policy making and interact better with stakeholders. The measures proposed will focus on greater transparency around decision-making, wider public consultation, improved impact assessments and a new approach to reviewing the existing stock of EU legislation.

### **The background:**

The [Political Guidelines](#) of President Jean-Claude Juncker of July 2014 stated that "Not every problem that exists in Europe is a problem for the European Union. We must take care of the big issues." Doing this well in a manner that delivers tangible economic, social and environmental benefits for citizens, business and wider society is the basic goal of the Commission's better regulation agenda, which is led by First Vice-President Frans Timmermans.

### **The event:**

The Better Regulation Package will be adopted by the College on 19 May at its meeting in Strasbourg, and subsequently presented to the press (specific arrangements tbc). The press conference can be followed on [EbS](#).

### **The sources:**

Political Guidelines of President Juncker [http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/docs/pg\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/docs/pg_en.pdf)

### **The contacts:**

Natasha Bertaud, +32 229 67456, [Natasha.Bertaud@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Natasha.Bertaud@ec.europa.eu)

Tim McPhie, +32 229 58602, [Tim.McPhie@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Tim.McPhie@ec.europa.eu)

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## **Thursday 21 - Friday 22 May: Eastern Partnership Summit in Riga**

### **The news:**

The fourth Eastern Partnership summit will be held in Riga, Latvia on 21-22 May 2015. It will bring together the leaders of the European Union and the Member States with those of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and President of the European Council Donald Tusk will travel to Riga to represent the European Union, alongside High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schultz, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn and Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström. The summit will be chaired by President Tusk and hosted by the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU.

### **The background:**

The Eastern Partnership (EaP), launched in May 2009 at the Prague Summit, frames the relationship between the European Union and its Eastern neighbours. It is part of the European Neighbourhood Policy, tailoring it to the unique kind of relationship the EU has with its six Eastern European partner countries: Armenia; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Georgia; the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The Eastern Partnership is based on commitments to the principles of international law and to fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to market economy, sustainable development and good governance. It is founded on common interests and commitments, as well as shared ownership and mutual accountability. While increasingly taking a differentiated approach to each of its partners, the Partnership is inclusive in nature, supporting the commitment of the EaP partners to shared values and necessary reforms. The Eastern Partnership strives to be equally relevant to all partners, regardless of the level of ambition they pursue in their relations with the European Union.

### **The event:**

The Riga summit will be an opportunity to reconfirm the importance the EU attaches to its Eastern Partnership and to demonstrate EU's determination to pursue closer, differentiated relations with its independent and sovereign EaP partners whilst working constructively with all to avoid dividing lines on the European continent. Discussions at the summit will also inform the ongoing review of the ENP.

A number of side events will demonstrate that the Eastern Partnership goes beyond intergovernmental relations to involve civil society, media, business and other stakeholders:

- On 20 May, Riga will host the First Eastern Partnership Media Conference, which will focus on current challenges to the media and pluralism in the EaP countries, and improvement of the media environment in the Eastern Neighbourhood region.
- On 21 May, the Third Eastern Partnership Business Forum will continue an established tradition and focus on intensification of business contacts between companies in the European Union and in EaP countries.
- On 20-21 May, at the Second Eastern Partnership Civil Society Conference, representatives of non-governmental organisations, experts, politicians and government officials from EU Member States and the EaP region will speak about strengthening the role of civil society in the partner countries.

A number of press materials will be available in the run-up to the summit, including a memo and a number of leaflets.

Live coverage will be provided by Audio-visual services of the institutions in cooperation with the host broadcaster of the Presidency. The summit and side events will be covered also on social media platforms.

#### **The sources (including accreditation information):**

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-summit/2015/05/21-22/>

#### **The contacts:**

Margaritis Schinas, +32 229 60524, [Margaritis.Schinas@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Margaritis.Schinas@ec.europa.eu)

Mina Andreeva, +32 229 91382, [Mina.Andreeva@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Mina.Andreeva@ec.europa.eu)

Maja Kocijancic, +32 2 298 65 70, [Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Maja.Kocijancic@ec.europa.eu)

Anca Paduraru, +32 229 66430, [anca.paduraru@ec.europa.eu](mailto:anca.paduraru@ec.europa.eu)

Eamonn Prendergast, +32 229 98851, [eamonn.prendergast@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eamonn.prendergast@ec.europa.eu)

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## **Tuesday 26 May: International Conference on the Central African Republic: from relief to resilience**

#### **News:**

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, European International Cooperation and Development Commissioner Neven Mimica and European Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Commissioner Christos Stylianides will be attending the International Conference on the Central African Republic in Brussels on 26 May 2015.

This conference will focus on the actions taken in response to the humanitarian challenges in the country and those posed by resilience in the medium-term. The first results from the Békou European Union Trust Fund will be presented at the conference along with the prospects for the future.

The conference is also intended to provide a forum for exploring the scope for donors to contribute more towards the Central African Republic's short-term humanitarian needs and sustainable recovery.

#### **Background:**

The Central African Republic has been in the grips of an unprecedented crisis since 2013, with the state, economic and social structures needing to be completely rebuilt. Although the general situation remains alarming, the Central African Republic is nevertheless engaged in a reconciliation process aimed at restoring the authority of the state.

The European Union has a long-standing partnership with the Central African Republic and has mobilised the instruments at its disposal to help the country.

In July 2014 the EU, working with France, Germany and the Netherlands, launched the first European Trust Fund: the Békou Trust Fund for the Central African Republic.

### **The event:**

The conference will take place on 26 May 2015 at the Borschette Centre in Brussels and is being organised jointly by High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, European International Cooperation and Development Commissioner Neven Mimica and European Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Commissioner Christos Stylianides.

The event will be attended by many prominent figures, including Interim President of the Central African Republic Catherine Samba-Panza, French Secretary of State for Development and the French-speaking World Annick Girardin, German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Gerd Müller and representatives of international organisations such as the United Nations and the partner NGOs.

A press release will be available on the day.

### **Sources:**

A press pack will be available at the conference.

Website of High Representative Federica Mogherini: [http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/mogherini\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/mogherini_en)

Website of Commissioner Mimica: [http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/mimica\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/mimica_en)

Website of Commissioner Stylianides: [http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/stylianides\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/stylianides_en)

### **Contacts:**

Catherine Ray, +32 229 69921, [Catherine.Ray@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Catherine.Ray@ec.europa.eu)

Sharon Zarb, +32 229 92256, [Sharon.Zarb@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Sharon.Zarb@ec.europa.eu)

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## **Wednesday 27 May: Commission proposes 2016 EU Budget**

### **The news:**

The European Commission will present its proposal for the 2016 EU budget on 27 May 2015, following a College decision on the same day. It will aim to further boost growth and investments in Europe, help create more jobs and strengthen the role of the EU as a global player, fully in line with the political priorities of the Juncker Commission. The EU budget for a given year is determined based on the expected needs to cover EU programmes and policies, fully respecting the limits set by the European Parliament and EU Member States for the seven-year budget cycle (the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020).

Following adoption by the College, the draft budget will be presented to the European Parliament and to the Council.

### **The background:**

The EU budget equals about 1% of Europe's GDP or approximately 2% of the public spending of the 28 EU Member States. Though relatively small in size, it has a big impact: for example, for the period 2007-2013 EU Cohesion funds are estimated to have boosted the GDP of Latvia by an average of 2.1% a year. EU budget also helps create jobs through programmes like the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), supports research and innovation thanks to Horizon 2020 or makes sure people get high-quality agricultural products on their table thanks to the Common Agricultural Policy.

What happens next? The European Parliament and the Council now have to put forward their opinions on the budget. Usually, this happens by autumn. If the positions of the two sides differ, the three institutions sit together and seek to find a solution. If they do not find a compromise, the Commission must present a new draft budget.

### **The event:**

Wednesday 27 May: the Commission will present its proposal for the 2016 EU Budget. Details on media arrangements to follow. Press material available on the day.

### **The sources:**

[Website of Directorate-General for Budget](#)

[Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020](#)

[European Commission Vice-President in charge of Budget on Twitter](#)

## **The contacts:**

Alexander Winterstein, +32 229 93265, [alexander.winterstein@ec.europa.eu](mailto:alexander.winterstein@ec.europa.eu)

Andreana Stankova, +32 229 57857, [andreana.stankova@ec.europa.eu](mailto:andreana.stankova@ec.europa.eu)

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## **Thursday, 28 May: The Commission adopts its monthly infringements package**

### **The news:**

On Thursday, 28 May 2015 the European Commission will adopt its monthly infringements package. These decisions cover all Member States and most of EU policies and seek to enforce EU law across Europe in the interest of both citizens and businesses.

### **The background:**

Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) gives the Commission the power to take legal action against a Member State that is not respecting its obligations under EU law.

There are three successive stages: Letter of formal notice, reasoned opinion and referral to the Court of Justice.

If, despite the ruling, a Member State still fails to act, the Commission may open a further infringement case under Article 260 of the TFEU. After only one written warning, Commission may refer a Member State back to the Court and it can propose that the Court imposes financial penalties based on the duration and severity on the infringement and the size of the Member State.

### **The event:**

A comprehensive Memo on all referrals and reasoned opinions, specific press release on each referral and a Memo on the procedure will be available on the day on [Press Release Database](#).

### **The sources:**

- on [monitoring the application of Union law](#);
- on all decisions please consult the [infringement decisions register](#);
- on the [general infringement procedure](#).

## **The contacts:**

Overall coordination:

Alexander Winterstein, +32 229 93265, [alexander.winterstein@ec.europa.eu](mailto:alexander.winterstein@ec.europa.eu)

Justyna Milanowska, +32 229 94246, [justyna.milanowska@ec.europa.eu](mailto:justyna.milanowska@ec.europa.eu)

On specific infringements, please contact the Spokesperson in charge.

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## **Tuesday 2 June: Commission to unveil the results of the public consultation on the EU Urban Agenda**

### **The news:**

On 2 June, on the occasion of the [CITIES Forum](#) 2015 - "An Urban Agenda for Europe" organised in Brussels, the Commission will disclose and discuss the results of this public consultation as well as the next steps to make this agenda a reality on the ground.

### **The background:**

In the summer 2014, the Commission launched [a public consultation on the EU Urban Agenda](#), during which stakeholders called for better coordination of EU policies in tune with urban realities and more direct involvement of cities in the EU policy cycle.

### **The event:**

The second European CITIES Forum, organised in the Square – Brussels Meeting Centre, will be opened

and closed by Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina Crețu. Vice-President in charge of the Energy Union Maroš Šefčovič will give the keynote speech.

More information on the [CITIES Forum 2015 is available online](#)

[Programme](#) (subject to changes)

[Online registration](#)

A press release will be available on the day.

**The sources:**

[Q&A on an Urban Agenda and the urban dimension of EU policies](#)

[Urban Policy portal](#)

**The contacts:**

Jakub Adamowicz – Tel.: +32 229 50595 – [jakub.adamowicz@ec.europa.eu](mailto:jakub.adamowicz@ec.europa.eu)

Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169 - [sophie.dupin-de-saint-cyr@ec.europa.eu](mailto:sophie.dupin-de-saint-cyr@ec.europa.eu)

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## **Wednesday 3 – Thursday 4 June: European Development Days take off in Brussels**

**The news:**

The 9th edition of the European Development Days (EDD15), Europe's leading forum on International Cooperation and Development, will take place on 3-4 June in Brussels at Tour & Taxis. High level speakers at the event will include Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament, Sam Kutesa, President of the 69th United Nations General Assembly and Melinda Gates, co-founder of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and

EDD15 will be a very timely occasion for the international community to discuss and exchange opinions on the future of global development before key decisions are taken in Addis Abeba, New York and Paris at the end of this year.

**The background:**

EDD15 will take place in a very strategic international context, prior to the agreement on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be reached at UN level in September. The SDGs are set to replace the Millennium Development Goals, which have mobilised the efforts of the international community over the past 15 years. In the meantime, the EU is also preparing for the Third Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa in July 2015, which is set to be an important step on the road to the Post-2015 UN Summit.

**The event:**

This year, European Development Days will serve as the flagship event of the European Year for Development 2015 (#EYD2015).

Participants will address issues such as the conditions for creating sustainable growth, the promotion of universal and fundamental rights, or how greater cooperation among all players can help to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality.

In its Project Village, composed of up to 50 stands, development organisations will demonstrate the benefits of the EU's international cooperation, showcasing innovative projects and research initiatives. Youth leaders from all over the world will be invited to participate and give their vision of the future they want to build.

Each year, EDD attracts about 5,000 participants from over 140 countries, representing 1,200 organisations from the fields of development cooperation, human rights and humanitarian aid.

**The sources:**

Information on the programme and the speakers: <http://eudevdays.eu/>

A media guide is available here: [http://eudevdays.eu/doc/EDD15\\_Media\\_Guide.pdf](http://eudevdays.eu/doc/EDD15_Media_Guide.pdf)

Registration is compulsory, and it will close on May 21.

**The contacts:**

Alexandre Polack, + 32 229 90677, [alexandre.polack@ec.europa.eu](mailto:alexandre.polack@ec.europa.eu)

Sharon Zarb, +32 229 92256, [sharon.zarb@ec.europa.eu](mailto:sharon.zarb@ec.europa.eu)

AGENDA/15/4945

General public inquiries:

[Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](tel:0080067891011) or by [email](#)