



Commission *en* direct

#35 Novembre 2016

■ EUROPE & BEYOND
**10 Priorities
update**

■ OUR STORIES
**Juvenes
Translatores**

■ AU QUOTIDIEN
**New
Departure Desk**



DOSSIER
EUROPE'S NEIGHBOURHOOD
A tailored approach to stabilisation

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IF A CLOD BE WASHED AWAY BY THE SEA...

by Antony Gravili, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, CEND

In this month's dossier, we meet the neighbours – candidates and potential candidates for EU membership, and further afield, partners to the south and in Europe's very own 'Far East'.

Some of these areas suffer from political instability, conflict and profound economic challenges. But can the EU simply isolate itself from its own neighbourhood? *"No man is an island, intire of it selfe;"* wrote the English poet John Donne in 1624, *"every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine."* Commissioner Hahn has a similar message, as he sets out why it is in Europe's own interest to engage with these countries and invest in economic and political stabilisation.

The dossier also takes a look at the many success stories in the region, as the EU builds strong partnerships based on shared strategic interests. This reflects a shift in policy towards a more individual, tailored approach to relations with our neighbours. Enlargement, the South-

ern Neighbourhood and the Eastern Partnership all get individual attention, as well as the financial and assistance tools that turn policy into results.

Also in this issue, two years after President Juncker presented the Commission's 10 priorities, we offer a handy guide to the progress already achieved in each one. We look at the state of Europe's cities, and learn how a network of laboratories helps customs officials to keep all Europeans safe.

Thanks to the Welcome Office, the Commission has been able to say a warm hello to newcomers. But a warm goodbye was somewhat lacking - until now. You'll find news about the launch of the brand new Departure Desk, designed to give a proper send-off to those who have given a lifetime of service.

We round off this edition with a famous young Belgian with a distinctive yellow quiff... ■

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IN A FLAP OVER FLAGS

It is always with great pleasure that I page through *Commission en direct*!

The photo on page 15 of the September edition (Cend#33) is splendid, especially the gesture of Elisa Di Francesca, presenting the European flag on the occasion of the Olympic Games in Rio.

However, the not so small flaw of the design of our flag becomes evident once again! She is holding the flag upside down. Maybe you could spare some space to explain the right orientation to your readers. Already during my active times I suggested a redesign of our flag in order to avoid such problems. Circling the stars around the centre like in the picture enclosed (right) would be perfect!

The European Peace Cross on Grosse Kinigat (Monte Cavallino) in the Carnic Alps, where Italians and Austrians fiercely fought against each other during WWI, is a strong and very symbolic example!

Kind regards

Karl G. Doutlik
formerly Head of Representation in Austria



EDITOR'S REPLY

Many thanks for your kind words, and for your eagle-eyed observation! Our European flag suffers the same fate as the flag of the country I know best (the UK) - always in danger of being flown the wrong way round. Readers who would like to know more about the dos and don'ts of flying the European flag, as well as its official Heraldic and Geometrical descriptions (the more poetic-minded will certainly gravitate towards the former), should head towards the website below. Previous coverage of the flag by *Commission en direct* can also be found in Cend#23. ■

Graphics Guide to the European Emblem

► <http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-5000100.htm>

REGARDS

“

I am proud to see that EU support has enabled them to push the frontiers of human knowledge and ultimately benefit the society and economy.

Carlos Moedas, congratulating Jean-Pierre Sauvage, Sir J. Fraser Stoddart and Bernard L. Feringa, winners of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2016

► <http://europa.eu/!ut37cb>



“

This is also a tribute to all Colombians who seek peace and justice, and to the victims of the conflict who have endured so much suffering over 52 years of violence.

Federica Mogherini, congratulating President Juan Manuel Santos of Colombia, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize 2016

► <http://europa.eu/!FM88gj>



“

We cannot allow that a whole generation of young people is being left behind. We need to do everything it takes to give them opportunities and a fair chance in life.

Marianne Thyssen, highlighting progress made by the Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative

► <http://europa.eu/!Hh67kw>



“

I am Commissioner for Economic, Financial, Taxation and Customs Affairs today, I would like my successor to be the Minister of Finances of the Eurozone.

Pierre Moscovici, arguing for stronger Eurozone governance at the Atlantic Council

► <http://bit.ly/2dLb17E>

Aid for Hurricane Matthew victims in Haiti

In October, the European Commission provided €1.75 million to fund aid for the victims of Hurricane Matthew in Haiti. The country was hit hard by the most powerful Atlantic cyclone of 2016, which left more than 1,000 dead, millions of people affected and damage estimated to reach several billions of euros.

EU Member States offered assistance via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. A team of eleven EU civil protection experts from Denmark, Finland, France, Romania and Sweden travelled to the affected areas, to lead the efforts of the humanitarian workers. France, Spain and the United Kingdom supplied shelters, water purification modules and other flooding management items. In addition, the EU's Copernicus emergency management service supported efforts by offering satellite maps to help assess the damage. Since 1994, the European Commission has granted €514.3 million in humanitarian aid to the Caribbean, of which €53 million has been allocated to help communities prepare and strengthen their resilience through Disaster Risk Reduction programmes. ■

► <http://europa.eu/!KY69vf>



Economic Partnership Agreement with southern African countries

A new Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and five southern African countries entered into force last month. The agreement applies to trade with Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. Mozambique, currently in the process of ratifying the agreement, is expected to join as soon as the procedure is complete.

Under the EPA, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, and Swaziland are granted duty and quota-free access to the Single Market. South Africa will also benefit from enhanced market access, going beyond the previous bilateral arrangement with the EU.

The southern African markets will open partially to EU exports, gradually over time, providing their industries with intermediary goods needed to support growth.

The agreement provides a number of protective measures in these countries, for instance for nascent, fragile industries or for food security reasons. Furthermore, southern African producers will have more flexibility to use components from various other countries, without risking their free access to the EU market. ■

► <http://europa.eu/!UU69RT>

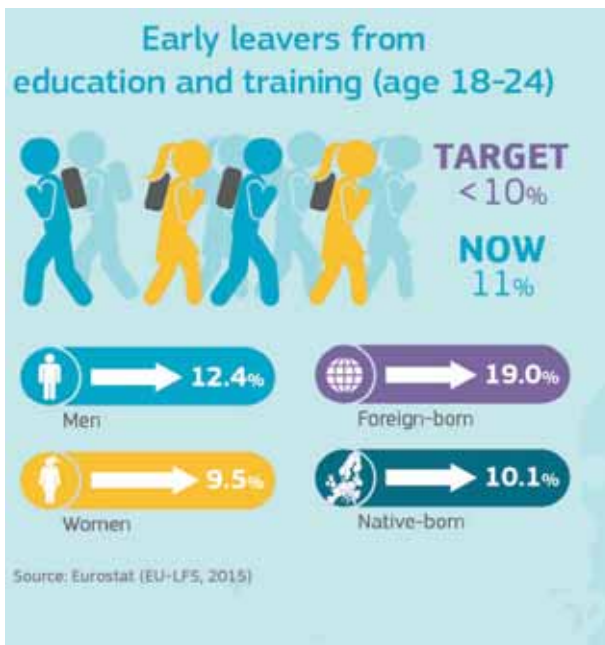
New edition of the Education and Training Monitor

The Education and Training Monitor 2016 (ETM), due to be published on 7 November, gives the latest analysis on how the EU's educational systems are faring with regard to the Europe 2020 targets. It also discusses the current challenges they face. For example: tackling educational poverty, integrating and upskilling immigrants, assuring equal opportunities for EU citizens with migrant background and modernising education, as well as innovative teaching practices and investment in education.

This is the fifth edition of this annual publication that captures the evolution of Europe's education and training systems by delivering a rich source of evidence. The ETM consists of EU-level analysis with cross-country comparisons, the 28 country reports and a dedicated webpage with additional data and interactive infographics.

The ETM shows that the objectives for growth and jobs can only be met if education is put at the heart of economic and social policy. Further, it identifies tangible policy levers and best practices to improve the inclusiveness, quality and labour market relevance of Europe's education and training systems. ■

► <http://europa.eu/!dY78UG>



Mixed success for ExoMars mission

After a voyage of seven months and 500 million kilometres, the Trace Gas Orbiter (TGO) of the European Space Agency's ExoMars 2016 mission successfully entered an elliptical orbit around the red planet on 19 October. On the other side of the coin, at the time of going to press, the fate of the Schiaparelli lander remained uncertain, although it is thought to have crashed. The agency is analysing the data received.

The TGO's crucial manoeuvre to enter into Mars' orbit lasted for more than two hours and included a planned burn of the main engine to slow the spacecraft sufficiently to be captured by Mars' gravity. The success of this operation marks the second time that the agency has placed a satellite into orbit around the red planet. The TGO, equipped with a suite of scientific instruments, will make a detailed inventory of Mars' atmospheric gases, paying particular attention to rare gases like methane. ExoMars 2016 was the first part of a two-fold international endeavour conducted by the European Space Agency in cooperation with the Russian agency Roscosmos. The second part of the mission will be launched in 2020. ■

► <http://bit.ly/1SM9pYy>



► President Juncker delivering the State of the Union address 2016 in the European Parliament

THE COMMISSION'S 10 PRIORITIES TWO YEARS ON

by Nathalie Paulger, CEND

Two years ago on 1 November 2014, President Juncker took office and presented ten priority areas to serve as the Commission's guiding lines for the next five years. What progress has been made over the last two years? *Commission en direct* investigates.



Jobs, Growth and Investment

As early as July 2014, Juncker had already made clear in his *Political Guidelines* that job creation would be number one on his 'to do' list: "...my first priority as Commission President will be to strengthen Europe's competitiveness and to stimulate investment for the purpose of job creation." To deliver this, a strategy focused on investment, structural reforms and responsible public spending was put in place. Numbers show that much progress has been made: unemployment has fallen to its lowest level in seven years and there are now eight million more jobs than in 2013. The Investment Plan for Europe, the flagship initiative of the priority which came into force in June 2015, has already raised €116 billion in its first year through the European Fund for Strategic Investments.



Digital Single Market

The internet and digital technologies have revolutionised the way we live. But to ensure that citizens, governments and businesses can fully reap the benefits, realising the 'Digital Single Market' is key. Since the strategy was adopted in May 2015, roaming charges

have been cut and should be abolished by June 2017, new EU data protection rules were agreed, proposals to boost e-commerce have been made and the Commission has also worked alongside industries and national authorities to support initiatives to digitise industry. Finally, a public-private partnership on cybersecurity was launched, expected to trigger €1.8 billion of investment.



Energy Union and Climate

At the heart of the European project since its foundation, energy remains a crucial priority. Although there is more to do, headway has been made in making our energy more secure, sustainable and affordable: the Commission has supported vital European infrastructure projects, promoted interconnectivity with Member States, agreed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030 and, in April 2016, signed the Paris Agreement on climate change.



Internal Market

The internal market is one of the EU's greatest achievements, but further integration is needed to maximise its potential - a fully functional market could add more



My first priority as Commission President will be to strengthen Europe's competitiveness and to stimulate investment for the purpose of job creation

than €1 trillion to our economy. A lot has already been done including the Capital Markets Union Action Plan, composed of 33 actions and already helping businesses diversify their sources of finance.



A Deeper and Fairer Economic and Monetary Union

The Commission's work on completing the Economic and Monetary Union is moving ahead. Greece is on track to reform its economy and build recovery since the summer of last year; a reform of the European Semester of economic policy coordination has made it more democratic and has made social priorities more of a focus; and a European Fiscal Board to advise the Commission on fiscal priorities for the euro area as a whole has been launched.



A Balanced EU-US Free Trade Agreement

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership talks are ongoing and work remains to be done to achieve a reasonable and balanced agreement. However, 15 rounds of negotiations have taken place, the talks have been the most transparent ever, and the Commission has paid full attention to citizens' concerns, proposing to replace the existing system for settling disputes with a new, reformed Investment Court System.



Justice and Fundamental Rights

More than a common market, the EU is also a union of values. The Commission has been working with Member States on achieving a Security Union through various channels including Europol's new European Counter-Terrorism Centre, the Radicalisation Awareness Network's Centre of Excellence and the new Passenger-Name Record System for airlines.



Migration

The tragedy unfolding in the Mediterranean means that migration, in all its aspects, has to be better managed.

Considerable efforts have been made in that direction. More than €15 billion from the budget in 2015 and 2016 has been allocated to migration; a position of Commissioner for Migration (Dimitris Avramopoulos) was created to lead the work; and Frontex joint operations have rescued 400,000 people in the Mediterranean and the Aegean in 2015-2016. The new European Border and Coastguard Agency has also just begun its operations to strengthen the EU's external borders.



A Stronger Global Actor

A strong common foreign policy is vital if the EU is to project its values, contribute to world peace and address global challenges effectively. The Commission has been working hard to achieve this by launching a new Global Strategy. It has signed the first-ever EU-NATO Joint Declaration, supported Ukraine's territorial sovereignty, worked on relations with China and Cuba and supported UN-led efforts to restore peace in Syria, amongst many other actions. The EU also remains the world's largest donor of assistance.

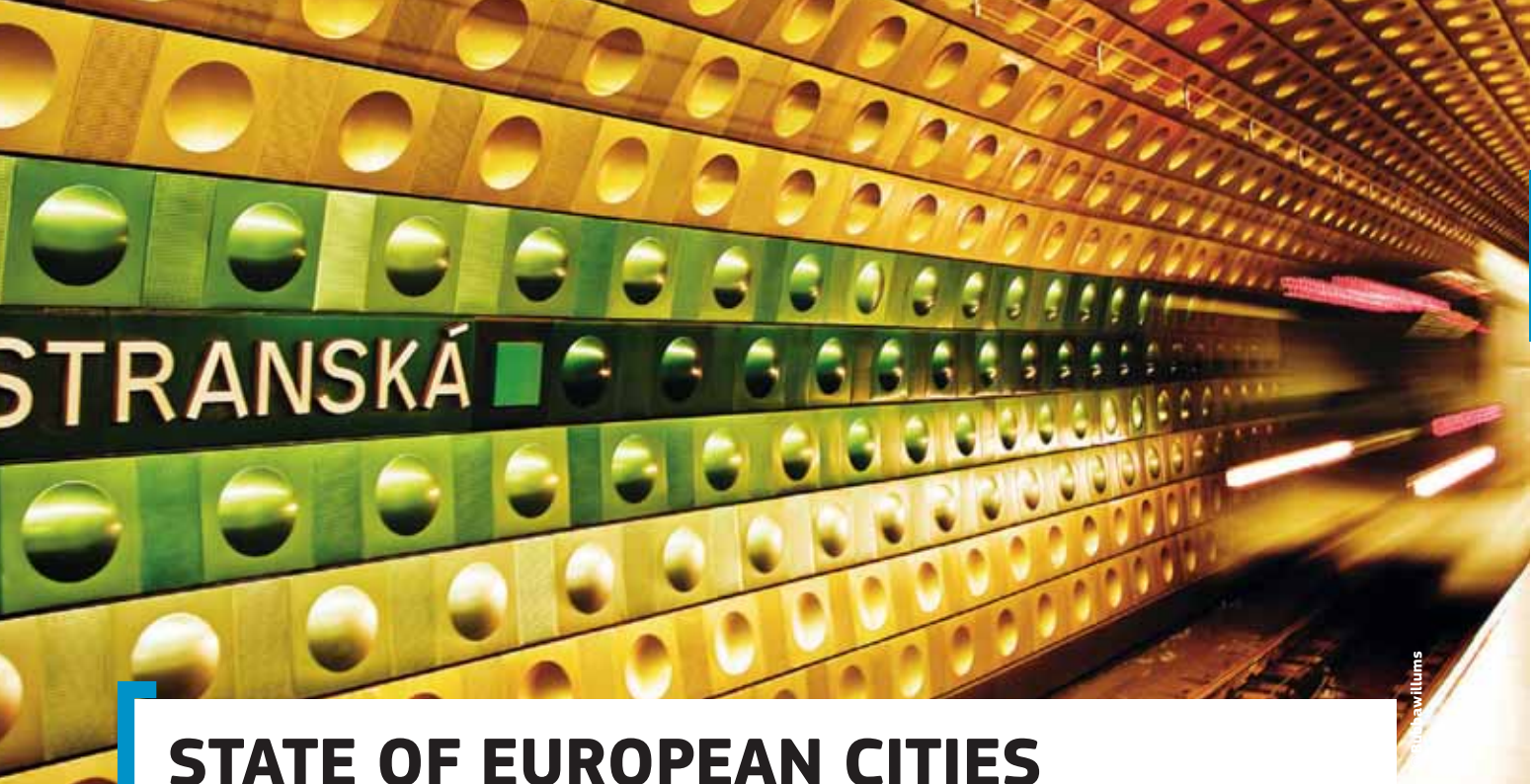


Democratic Change

Against a background of increasing public dissatisfaction with the EU, the Commission has strived to reconnect with citizens and focus on what really matters for people: new major legislative initiatives were cut from 130 in 2014 to 23 each in 2015 and 2016; a new inter-institutional agreement to smooth the law-making process has been negotiated with the Parliament and the Council; several citizens' dialogues have taken place; and, following public consultation, a proposal has been made to widen the scope of the Joint Transparency Register. ■

Commission's 10 Priorities

► http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/index_en



© iStockphoto.com

STATE OF EUROPEAN CITIES URBAN AREAS LEAD THE WAY

by Lewis Dijkstra, DG REGIO

The new State of European Cities Report gives an overview of the EU's urban landscape. It stresses the distinctive features of cities, their important contribution to the economy and their social and environmental challenges. The document, presented last month, serves as a basis for both the EU and the UN Urban Agendas.

How do European cities compare to those in the rest of the world? New data produced by the Joint Research Centre shows that European cities are twice as dense as their North American counterparts. African, Asian and Latin American cities are even denser than that, but are likely to spread out as they become more affluent and transport infrastructure improves. Critical to their future energy needs is whether they maintain densities high enough to support efficient public transport, walking and cycling. And here, many European cities can provide good examples of how to achieve this.

European cities have several distinct demographic characteristics. Cities, and especially capital cities, tend to grow faster than their country as a whole. They attract a larger working age population, looking for a higher education or a better job. People born outside, but living in, the EU tend to concentrate in cities, especially the larger ones in Western Europe.

Economically, European cities make a big contribution. They generate more GDP and employment growth than their country as a whole. They have higher

employment rates. They are more productive and innovative and their residents are more educated.

In almost all countries, the capital city performs best. In some countries, it can seem like the capital performs too well while the other cities underperform.

Socially, European cities offer a mixed picture. In eastern EU Member States, they tend to have lower unemployment, poverty and exclusion rates. In some western EU Member States, cities have higher unemployment rates, despite the concentration of jobs in cities.

The housing and transport challenge

Housing is an area for concern. Urban housing tends to be smaller and more expensive, which leads to more households living in crowded conditions. Many residents in high-income cities say it is difficult to find good housing at a reasonable price.

Transport is also a constant concern for cities. Congestion and pollution are often high on the political agenda. Cities, however, offer many mobility benefits. Due to the short distances to many different destina-

◀ Prague has yielded rising passenger volumes by greatly improving public transport including modernising the metro

Cycling's modal share is over 50% in just three EU cities: ▶ Amsterdam (right), Copenhagen and Groningen

tions, walking and cycling offer realistic alternatives to driving. The concentration of population and the clustering of destinations make it efficient to offer public transport. But cities do not automatically have a high share of low-carbon mobility. They need to make it convenient, efficient and safe to encourage more people to use these modes of transport. In addition, urban areas may want policies like congestion pricing or higher parking charges in the city centre to reduce traffic. This would also have the benefit of improving air quality, which in many cities does not comply with EU air quality Directives and remains a health threat.

Cities are more resource efficient than towns, suburbs or rural areas. On a per capita basis, they use less land and require fewer local roads. This implies substantial cost savings in terms of investment and maintenance. Land use per capita has increased in most cities, but more than half the cities with a growing population reduced the amount of land used per resident.

Climate change solutions

Cities are increasingly focused on climate change. Many EU cities have signed the Covenant of Mayors, committing to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Increasingly, cities are using nature-based solutions because they can efficiently contribute to multiple goals. For example, green roofs can help reduce the impact of heat waves, catch run-off water and reduce the need for cooling.

In most countries, local governments, including cities, play a greater policy role than regions do. Due to population growth and better transport connections and communication, however, the impact of a city today extends far beyond its municipal border. This means that urban governance needs to shift to a metropolitan scale to match these bigger labour and housing markets. That is why many countries are experimenting with different metropolitan governance systems.



© Tonyv3112

Cities need sufficient autonomy and resources, a clearly identified decision-making process, the support of residents and, possibly, a directly-elected mayor. Although the autonomy of cities has grown over the past two decades, the economic crisis has led to a reduction of public investment and of the share of public investment managed by local governments.

The indicators used in the report can be visualised and accessed on the new urban data platform produced by the JRC. This platform (see link below) makes it easier to find comparable indicators for European cities and helps cities to learn from each other. ■

The State of European Cities Report

▶ <http://ec.europa.eu/cities-report>

Urban data platform

▶ <http://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu>

EUROPOL INTERNET REFERRAL UNIT CUTTING TERROR OFF LINE

by María Fernández García, CEND

Terrorist groups increasingly use online media to recruit and to spread propaganda. This is particularly true after tragic events like the attacks in Paris, almost a year ago. Europol's Internet Referral Unit monitors the web to identify and remove such messages, so hatred doesn't go viral.

The internet can be a powerful tool for groups such as Al Qaeda and Islamic State (IS), in order to magnify terrorist actions. To counteract this threat, in July 2015 Europol set up the Internet Referral Unit (EU IRU).

The unit is composed of staff with diverse skills and backgrounds, including linguists, ICT developers and experts in law enforcement and terrorist ideologies. According to Vincent Semestre, Head of EU IRU, such a combination of expertise *"is an asset in fast-moving crisis situations,"* such as the aftermath of high profile attacks.

"Big attacks are usually followed by a wave of statements and multimedia productions claiming responsibility for the attack and glorifying terrorism," he says. *"Removing this content quickly is part of limiting the impact that terrorist groups can achieve with regard to intimidating populations and recruiting supporters."*

"Terrorist online propaganda has shifted away from the 'broadcast model' of communication (one to many) towards a dispersed network of accounts, which constantly reconfigures in a fast and resilient form," Semestre says. To maximise their outreach, IS and other groups seek to maintain an active presence on the most popular social media.

EU IRU has encountered different material like video footage, audio files and images officially released by terrorist groups. *"Social media companies are making great efforts to limit the misuse of their platforms for terrorism propaganda purposes. Nevertheless, IS and its supporters are constantly adapting their communication strategies to counter these efforts,"* he says.

New technical opportunities are quickly grasped by these groups. For example, automated botnets are used to boost their number of followers. Online



One year of action

11,050 messages assessed...

...across 70 platforms...

...in 8 languages

9,787 referral decisions...

...of which 91.4% lead to removal of content

Internet investigative support to 44 operations

archiving capacity is also exploited to make content available for a longer time.

National counterparts

Semestre says that the unit has also built up a network of relations with national authorities during its first year, setting communication and coordination procedures. *"The cooperation has been tested and improved in Action Days, during which Member States and Europol team up to make a joint effort to target online terrorist propaganda."* National counterparts can also request support in case of major incidents. *"All attacks nowadays have an online dimension,"* he concludes. ■

Europol Internet Referral Unit

► <http://europa.eu/BF34TF>

PHOTOS



First *Nuit Blanche* in the European Quarter

For the first time ever, the European Quarter was the setting for the annual *Nuit Blanche*, an initiative organised by the cultural service of the City of Brussels. For one night, Parc Léopold and the streets around the European institutions were unusually lively, with installations, performances, screenings and other artistic projects. The Solvay Library, Concert Noble, Residence Palace and other well-known buildings hosted some of the activities, while others were in empty premises or outdoors.

The topic, though, was highly political: borders. Most of the artists touched upon the current refugee crisis and migration flows, reflecting on ideas like exile, identity or belonging. For example, the visitor was confronted with shoes and messages left by migrants in the Calais jungle, with a march of people wearing life vests or with testimonials of undocumented migrants. Other installations questioned the freedom of choice or the technological achievements in the latest century, among other issues. In short, a night to stay awake and raise awareness. ■

Nuit Blanche Brussels

► <http://nuitblanche.brussels/>



EKIDEN 2016 – Sweating to fight poverty

fit@work

On Saturday 15 October, a mild and sunny autumn day, a record turnout of 1,690 teams and 10,140 runners arrived at King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels to take part in the 2016 Ekiden Relay Marathon, making the race the world's biggest marathon relay. The teams, consisting of six members, had to cover 5, 10, 5, 10, 5 and 7.195 kilometres in and around the stadium. 63 teams from the EU institutions took part, all running under the aegis of the corporate fit@work programme. The teams had more in mind than just a fun day out and getting fit – they also raised funds to finance two projects (one in Romania and one in Brussels) selected by the non-profit organisation Give Eur-Hope fighting poverty and social exclusion. ■

- ▶ <http://www.giveeurhope.eu/>
- ▶ www.sport.be/brusselsekiden/2016/



► One of the many projects on display

© EU



► The event brought in lots of young people keen to learn about science

© EU

Science is Wonder-ful!

The atmosphere was buzzing on 28 September in the Parliamentarium as the Science is Wonder-ful! event 'European Researchers' Night' started, bringing in over 3,000 visitors. Jointly organised by the European Commission and the Parliamentarium, the event was open to all to enjoy science while learning about the EU institutions and the journey of European integration. Projects from Marie Skłodowska-Curie researchers were on show to get the public, especially young people, curious about science and research and to inspire them to get involved. Live experiments, face-to-face chats with current researchers, a trip through EU integration and a debate, were just some of the activities on offer at the event. ■

Science is Wonder-ful!

► <http://europa.eu/cb89XG>



EU VOCATIONAL SKILLS WEEK DISCOVERING TALENT!

by Dana Bachmann, DG EMPL

The Commission is organising its first-ever European Vocational Skills Week next month. The aim is to raise the attractiveness and improve the image of vocational education and training.

The week of events, from 5-9 December, was announced in the New Skills Agenda for Europe earlier this year. It will focus on the critical role of vocational education and training (VET) in supporting innovation and competitiveness in Europe, and how it can contribute to improving employability.

Why are we doing this?

Despite its positive outcomes on skills and employability, perceptions exist in many Member States that VET is a second option after general education and training.

We want to promote VET to learners and their parents as a smart choice. Choosing and pursuing a qualification through initial VET, and then engaging in continuing VET throughout one's life, can lead to quality employment, an entrepreneurial mind-set, attractive and challenging careers, and opportunities for upskilling and re-skilling. VET can be an excellent option.

What is the objective?

Showcasing the excellence and quality of VET during this first European Vocational Skills Week, while rais-

ing awareness of the wide range of opportunities that it provides, will contribute to changing its image and attractiveness.

Our aim is to reach as wide a public – parents, learners, companies, society at large – as possible by organising a variety of activities across several days, at EU level and within participating countries, to highlight the positive experiences and opportunities of VET. We aim to inspire learners and entrepreneurs of all ages to actively consider VET through new eyes.

How will the week unfold?

We are encouraging companies, VET providers and other organisations to open their doors to potential learners in participating countries leading up to and during the week. The Commission has a mobilising and supporting role through a large-scale communication campaign using traditional and social media, to support a stakeholder-led approach reaching out to the grassroots. So far, a large number of events have already been registered across the EU and participating countries, with activities ranging from open days to photo contests for VET learners, skills competitions, etc.

In parallel, a number of meetings will be organised in Brussels. A Conference on Adult Skills will focus on the need to continuously invest in skills development throughout our working lives, and a Business Forum on Vocational Training will include separate gatherings on issues such as excellence in VET provision, mobility in VET, the European Alliance for Apprenticeships (see box), VET research, and VET for sector-specific skills. There will also be a Conference on Quality Assurance in VET (EQAVET). At the closing event, an award ceremony will highlight excellence and quality in various VET categories (learners, teachers, researchers, VET providers, apprentices).

We will also hold an exhibition of excellent projects that have received either EU or national funding.

Who will be involved?

The European Vocational Skills Week is coordinated by the European Commission, with the strong support of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training and the European Training Foundation.

All stakeholders are invited to join: learners, parents, companies, business organisations, education and training providers, adult learning organisations, researchers, career counsellors, Member States and other participating countries, social partners, and society at large.

We are combining forces with a range of stakeholders and organisations we interact with daily: the European Alliance for Apprenticeships and the business-led European Pact for Youth, European social partners, the Platform of European Associations of VET providers, members of the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training a national government-led Directors-General for Vocational Training group, and members of the European Qualifications framework advisory group. National representatives for the Erasmus+ programme, the European Social Fund managing authorities, and those implementing the European Agenda for Adult Learning are also closely involved.

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA)

Did you know that apprentices find a job quicker, keep it longer and get better paid than their peers? By combining learning in school with on-the-job training, apprenticeships deliver skills for jobs and life.

The EAfA aims to boost the supply, quality and image of apprenticeships. So far, 32 European countries have joined, and over 150 pledges have been made by companies and other stakeholders. Some 250,000 training and job opportunities have been mobilised.

Apprenticeships will stay high on the EU agenda in the coming years. In June 2015, ministers, social partners, VET providers and the Commission agreed that work-based learning and apprenticeships would be one of five key priorities until 2020. This year, the New Skills Agenda for Europe confirmed this priority.

The European Vocational Skills Week will be a great opportunity to showcase the benefits of apprenticeships!

► <http://europa.eu/!TK33uk>

Why is it important?

Where would the European economy be without vocationally and technically-trained people to guide robots making cars, to design textiles with embedded information technologies, to support modern business administration, or to provide quality social service support to address real needs? Europe needs skilled people and it needs to attract more learners to vocational programmes delivering these skills. Learners across Europe and beyond are encouraged to discover their talent by exploring the opportunities in VET. The motto of the week is: *Discover your talent!* ■

European Vocational Skills Week

► <http://europa.eu/!vV64dP>



CUSTOMS LABORATORIES EXPERIENCE YOU CAN RELY ON

by **Hervé Schepers**, DG TAXUD

The food on our plate, the drink in our glass, the fuel in our car, the shoes on our feet: welcome to the world of the customs laboratories!

European customs laboratories are the scientific arm of customs and an important tool for customs and tax authorities. Their work is crucial in traditional areas of customs, excise and agriculture policy, such as analyses to determine tariff classification, payable duties and taxes.

But their role has also evolved over time with changes in the trade environment and globalisation: customs laboratories now play an important part in anti-fraud operations, determining the authenticity and origin of products, detecting illegal imports like narcotics and drug precursors, protecting consumers against dangerous goods or contaminated food, safeguarding the environment and endangered species and fighting against terrorism.

Nowadays, customs have to organise their work by taking into account elements relevant to the whole planet. And with the acceleration of technological advances, customs laboratories' experts are no longer limited to a specific geographical area. Their cooperation with other customs and forensic laboratories is essential. We live, unfortunately, in a world with rapidly emerging threats to the fiscal integrity and the safety and security of our society. And customs laboratories need to be able to respond swiftly to these threats. Therefore besides verifying the composition of a prod-

uct necessary to determine the customs tariff, nowadays increasing effort also needs to be put into non-tariff controls.

Acting as one

All EU Member States' customs laboratories are facing similar problems. So DG TAXUD has set up the Customs Laboratories European Network (CLEN). This network coordinates the activities of customs laboratories and harmonises their working methods. It does this through six actions:

- **Action 1:** maintenance and enrichment of the inter-laboratory inventory of analytical methods;
- **Action 2:** inter-laboratory tests to ensure the uniform application of the control of goods;
- **Action 3:** networking to develop a common quality policy and sampling manual for customs and tax authorities - SAMANCTA (see link below);
- **Action 4:** scientific and technical communication and strategy, using seminars and strategic discussions on highly sophisticated techniques and specialised areas;
- **Action 5:** scientific expertise sharing via the organisation of workshops, project groups of experts, and training sessions;



New psychoactive substances -

Claude Guillou, JRC

The rapid emergence of new psychoactive substances (NPS) driven by rapid changes in technology and globalisation is causing a significant shift in the way that drugs are manufactured, marketed and sold. Most of these substances are produced in non-EU countries and are imported into Europe under false chemical declarations. The increase in number and diversity of these substances makes it difficult for customs controls to detect and identify them. Analytical data are generally not available for these new chemicals, which are now appearing on the European market at a rate of about two new substances every week. The scientific expertise and high-level laboratories of the JRC help CLEN chemists to rapidly identify these substances (see link below). In the past two years, the JRC examined about 200 products seized by customs, among which more than twenty were identified as new NPS detected for the first time in Europe. NPS constitute a serious public health threat with several cases of serious intoxications and even fatalities reported across Europe. The role of customs, as a first defence for early detection of such dangerous products, is very important for the protection of European citizens.

► <http://europa.eu/!jk98hQ>

- **Action 6:** maintenance and enrichment of the European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances (ECICS database), which allows for the clear identification and classification of chemicals in all EU languages (see link below and box, right).

CLEN allows for benchmarking, assessing performance, and cooperating with other stakeholders such as scientific institutes, academia and industry.

Contributing to EU policies

CLEN also plays a key role in keeping experts up to speed on customs excise, consumer protection and other policy developments. This close collaboration allows for a more rapid and comprehensive response to fraud,

DA	2-(2,4-dichlorophenoxy)ethyl	benzoat
DE	2-(2,4-Dichlorphenoxy)ethyl	benzoat
EN	2-(2,4-dichlorophenoxy)ethyl	benzoate
ES	benzoato de 2-(2,4-diclorofenoxi)etilo	
FI	2-(2,4-dikloorifenoksi)etyyli	benzosaatti
FR	benzoate de 2-(2,4-dichlorophénoxy)éthyle	
IT	benzoato di 2-(2,4-diclorofenossi)etile	
NL	2-(2,4-dichloorfenoxy)ethyl	benzooaat
PT	benzoato de 2-(2,4-diclorofenoxi)etilo	
SV	2-(2,4-diklorfenoxi)etyl	benzosaat

(How to not get) lost in translation -

Ninetta Kapetanaki, DGT

The EU requires the 'acquis' to be translated into all EU languages. This represents a tremendous challenge for chemical names, as one letter can change the meaning of a chemical name and subsequently its customs treatment. European Commission translators (who, in principle, are not chemists) often have to translate chemical names.

Having software that automatically translates chemical names from English into the other EU languages may seem a pipe dream, but that is exactly what DG TAXUD is doing in collaboration with DGT, by including a translation tool in the European Customs Inventory of Chemical Substances database.

This is a big challenge as rules for chemical nomenclature are not available in all languages. In Maltese, for example, there are no published books dealing in depth with International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry nomenclature. Thanks to collaboration between DG TAXUD and DGT, most Maltese names are now covered.

the maintenance of equipment and expertise even for rare and unusual analyses, the wide and correct implementation of EU policies and support for development of new EU policies while, at the same time, permitting economies of scale. In a nutshell, whatever a customs laboratory may need - an expert opinion, an analysis, a training session, information to buy new equipment, or help with an unforeseen crisis - CLEN can help. ■

SAMANCTA

► <http://europa.eu/!dc68PW>

ECICS database

► <http://europa.eu/!CP96Kg>

THREE YEARS OF THE YOUTH GUARANTEE PREVENTING A LOST GENERATION

by María Fernández García, CEND

In April 2013, following a proposal from the Commission, all Member States committed to a Youth Guarantee as a flagship initiative to tackle youth unemployment. Three years later, there are 1.4 million fewer unemployed youngsters in the EU. The scheme has proved its value to drive structural reforms and to provide young people with a bridge to the labour market.

The Youth Guarantee was born against the background of the economic crisis, when young people were among those having the greatest difficulties in finding a job. It was a strong political commitment by all Member States to avoid a lost generation. A Communication adopted last month highlights the progress made since the initiative was launched. Building on this success, the Commission calls for acceleration and broadening of its implementation, as well as the extension of its funding complement, the Youth Employment Initiative.

The original idea was ambitious: to ensure that all young people under 25 receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of leaving school or becoming unemployed. Thirteen Member States decided to extend the upper age limit to 30.

A strong focus was put on the so-called NEETs - young people Not in Employment, Education or Training. In order to speed up implementation of the Youth Guarantee, a specific funding instrument was created, ensuring dedicated support for measures targeting this group: the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI). It mobilised €3.2 billion from a dedicated budget line, matched by another €3.2 billion from the European Social Fund (ESF), to finance actions in those regions with youth unemployment rates over 25%. A total of 20 EU countries could benefit from the initiative.

The YEI complemented the support already provided by the ESF, which remains the main EU source of funding for youth employment policies and programmes in Member States. In addition to the support for youth employment, for the current 2014-2020

period €27 billion from the ESF has been allocated to education measures, such as tackling early school-leaving, and encouraging lifelong learning, and vocational education and training.

Making the Youth Guarantee a reality was a major priority for DG EMPL and the results shown by the recent progress report are encouraging. *“Although a number of challenges remain, the Youth Guarantee is working. Over the last three years, the youth team in DG EMPL has worked intensively to help Member States design their implementation plans, to establish a framework for monitoring implementation within the Employment Committee, and to set off a number of Youth Guarantee pilot projects in regions and municipalities, to name but a few. It is a great pleasure to see that our efforts are starting to bear fruit, to the benefit of young Europeans,”* says Max Uebe, Head of the Employment Strategy Unit in DG EMPL.

Positive outcomes

Remarkably, 14 million young people registered for the scheme across the EU. A strong effort was made to reach out to unregistered NEETs, and the Commission provided Member States with a toolkit designed to raise awareness among this group, and piloted a campaign with this goal in four countries.

After entering the scheme, up to 9 million young people took up an offer. In most cases, it was a job offer (70.2%), followed by education (13.6%), traineeships (12.1%) and apprenticeships (4.1%). YEI actions, on their side, supported 1.4 million NEETs.

Looking at the unemployment trends in the EU, the analysis suggests that the Youth Guarantee was a contributing factor to reducing youth unemployment.



© EU

► Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, at a Youth Guarantee press conference

Indeed, unemployment rates dropped more for young people than for the adult population both in the EU as a whole, and also within most Member States.

The way forward

Despite these positive developments, more efforts are needed to reduce youth unemployment further, which is still above pre-crisis levels and unevenly spread across the EU. In particular, better support is needed for those who are furthest away from the labour market, like those facing social exclusion, disability or discrimination.

Therefore, as youth unemployment still remains too high in many Member States and NEETs have traditionally been the hardest to reach, the Commission has proposed to increase the YEI budget by an additional €1 billion for the period 2017-2020, to be matched by the same amount from the ESF.

Since its inception, the Youth Guarantee was conceived as a long-distance race. Keeping up the political commitment and the financial support for this long-term reform will be crucial to fully reap the benefits of the progress made so far. ■

Youth Guarantee

► <http://ec.europa.eu/social/youthguarantee>

Some good practice in the Member States

Belgium: the Brussels Region launched the 'Transition Traineeship' in May 2013. It focused on coaching and follow-up for young job seekers and students with low educational attainment. Twelve months after the end of the traineeships, 73% of the participants recorded positive outputs (including employment and return to education).

Bulgaria: a network of youth mediators was put in place in 2015 to reach out to non-registered NEETs. These mediators act as intermediaries with public institutions that provide social, health, educational and other services. During the May-December 2015 period, they consulted 5,078 young people.

Spain: Thanks to significant structural reforms, the number of apprentices in the country increased from 4,000 to 15,000 in just three years (between 2013 and 2016), while the number of enterprises offering this training grew from barely 500 to 5,660.

Italy: the Youth Guarantee prompted changes reflected in the broader reforms launched by the Jobs Act. The number of young people registered with the scheme has been increasing steadily, reaching more than one million by 2016.

Novembre 2016



Welcome to the Commission's Connected Country Knowledge page!

Welcome! This is where you can share your country-specific knowledge; Anything that could be useful for the Commission's work, whether on the European Semester or relevant to any EU policy. It could be political, socio-economic or scientific knowledge relevant to the Commission's work but probably not the latest football scores or restaurant tips. Here, you can share interesting reports, articles, meetings, events and links, comment on them and collaborate on documents. Also, if you need information about a country-specific topic and don't know where to begin, post your question here and let's crowd-source it inside the Commission! This is an internal collaborative space only accessible to all staff of the Commission and executive agencies. If you want to share sensitive documents with a more limited distribution, please use a different group on Connected.

Want to stay updated, click on Follow > inbox

Search & Ask

Type your question

IN THE KNOW SHARING KNOWLEDGE FOR BETTER OUTPUTS

by Giovanni La Placa, JRC

Since 2011 the European Semester, the yearly cycle of economic policy coordination, has become a core activity in the EU policy agenda. The most visible and important outcomes of the European Semester process are the Commission's country reports and country-specific recommendations; the latter being endorsed by the European Council and formally adopted by the Council. Clearly, the strategic importance of this exercise in terms of visibility and the credibility of the Commission requires the highest possible analytical quality in all the Commission's outputs.

Because knowledge depends in the first place on people, achieving this quality means the focus must be on the involvement and connection of all Commission staff, to allow the country teams who prepare the outputs to harvest the best country-specific data, information, knowledge and analysis. It is also vital that Commission staff in the various services discuss and exchange their country-specific knowledge so as to build common messages and story lines.

This also applies to the country-specific analysis produced by the Commission on other topics, like the Investment Plan, the Innovation Union or the Energy Union.

In addition to explicit and formal knowledge, tacit and social knowledge (for example: who is the best expert on issue X in Member State Y?) is also crucial to the Commission. So while some DGs have set up internal country-specific teams, their knowledge should be made accessible to other DGs and services in the Commission. Many colleagues in the Commission often have country-specific knowledge, even if they do not have country-specific responsibilities.

Being able to tap into country-specific knowledge inside the Commission and share it more easily could also improve our understanding of the national dimension of EU policies.

The CONNECTED platform is one way of achieving this. It combines social networking and collaborative working features in one single tool (see CEND #34).

Earlier this year, the JRC was invited to co-ordinate a pilot project for country-specific knowledge management using the CONNECTED platform. The first step, in May, was to set up two CONNECTED pilot collaborative spaces for the European Semester country teams of Belgium and Italy, called CONNECTED European Semester.

European Semester country teams are formed by representatives of around 20 DGs, and chaired by the Secretariat-General. They meet on a regular basis and contribute to the drafting of the yearly country reports and the Commission proposals for country-specific recommendations.

The development of CONNECTED collaborative spaces for the Belgian and Italian European Semester



The new approach is helping to bring down silos and improve cooperation between DGs, which is crucial to deliver the ten priorities of the Juncker Commission

teams helped to transfer a large part of the country teams' working processes to CONNECTED (e.g. emails, conversations and meetings) and increased knowledge sharing by stimulating thematic discussions, and ensuring a more collaborative preparation of missions and meetings, agendas and minutes.

Following the successful implementation of CONNECTED European Semester for Belgium and Italy, the SG decided to extend the initiative to all country teams: since the end of September, knowledge sharing spaces have been activated and all country teams have moved their activities to the platform. The collaborative spaces are moderated by a Community Manager from the SG for each of the country teams.

To protect the preparation of the European Semester deliverables, which often involves handling sensitive information, access to these collaborative spaces had to be restricted to the members of the country teams, and all their interactions on the platform are tracked.

But country-specific knowledge is used and produced on a daily basis by Commission staff in many places and ways. The need to restrict access to CONNECTED European Semester should not be an obstacle to sharing other country-specific knowledge. So a pilot collaborative space specifically designed for country-specific knowledge sharing by *all* staff in the Commission has just been launched.

This is designed as an open space, accessible to all Commission staff, where all the country-specific knowledge and insights inside the Commission on a particular Member State – Commission, national and international reports, briefings, analyses, data sets, etc. – will potentially be accessible.

Called CONNECTED Country Knowledge, it once again uses Belgium and Italy as test countries, with the objective of extending the initiative to all other Member States, after a short pilot period.

CONNECTED Country Knowledge is an attempt to crowdsource country-specific knowledge produc-

tion and sharing: all staff are encouraged to use the platform to share and discuss their country-specific knowledge.

A move towards more collaborative forms of working will be one of the themes of the forthcoming Communication on Data, Information and Knowledge Management in the Commission. This will feature in a future edition of *Commission en Direct*. ■

CONNECTED Country Knowledge

► <http://europa.eu/!TH77NU>



SG colleagues Albane Demblans and Tom Snels (pictured), the respective leaders of the European Semester country teams for Italy and Belgium, welcomed the move to CONNECTED: *“The two country teams swiftly put the new collaborative working methods into practice and shifted a significant part of the Semester work to the CONNECTED European Semester space. This resulted in a more intensive, more inclusive, broader and therefore richer discussion and analysis of the challenges which these Member States are facing. In addition, the new approach is helping to bring down silos and improve cooperation between DGs, which is crucial to deliver the ten priorities of the Juncker Commission.”*

“Thanks to the efforts, flexibility and enthusiasm of the country team members, the pilots were a success, so we are happy to see the new working methods and CONNECTED European Semester platform extended to all 28 country teams.”



► Happy winners of the 7th Juvenes Translatores

10TH JUVENES TRANSLATORES CONTEST FOUND IN TRANSLATION

by María Fernández García, CEND

Juvenes Translatores is celebrating its 10th anniversary. Launched to promote languages and translation among young people, it has allowed colleagues in DGT to meet some brilliant students, discover some true linguistic gems, and even a future co-worker.

On 24 November, 17-year old students from schools all over the EU will compete once more in Juvenes Translatores. The contest coordinator, Anna Holmen (DGT), has been involved since its inception and is convinced that she has the best job in the Commission. It all began with an idea proposed by a colleague during a brainstorming about how to promote multilingualism. That was the starting point for an initiative which quickly engaged the enthusiasm of DGT staff.

Anna remembers that, back in those days, DGT didn't have experience organising conferences or events. *"It was moving in the blind, but we could build it the way we wanted it to be, really from our passion for languages and translation."*

The contest allows translations from any of the 24 EU languages into any other of them. In case you are wondering, that gives 552 possible combinations! *"You couldn't do this anywhere else in the world, it is mind-blowing,"* she says.

All language departments in DGT are therefore mobilised in the initiative, first drafting the 24 original texts that participants have to translate, and later marking the exams. Each year, over 3,000 students take part. That means many texts to look at. But Anna said: *"markers love it, they find it really motivating and find the time even if they stay late or have to mark during holidays."*

Reflecting Europe's diversity

Behind the translations, the participants' personal stories are a reflection of Europe's diversity. For instance, two years ago, the Italian, Greek and Swedish winners translated from Polish, as they all had family ties with Poland.

In these ten years, the contest has gained popularity and there is high interest, notably in Eastern and Southern countries. Around 1,700 schools registered last year, though DGT needs to cap its number to 751 due to the available resources. A random draw is held and

Marine rhymes with clean

Strand rijmt met... alles aan de kant!

Am Strand sich bräunen reimt sich auf Müll wegräumen

Strand verschmutzt... es wird geputzt

Mare fa rima con salvaguardare

Plage rime avec... nettoyage!

paplūdimys: jį išvalyti - mūsų uždavinys!

Strand rijmt met... enn kuisende hand!

Een helpende hand voor hetschoonmaken van het strand

Playa y limpieza van mano a mano.

Strandkant rimmar pá...städtant!

Let's get 'tidey'!

Lido fa rima con Lindo

Mare fa rima con sistemare

► A previous contest required students to get creative in translating the French original...

the selected schools can then enter between two and five students.

Anna affirms that the level of the students' translations is really impressive, and it is often difficult to select only 28 winners, one per language. For this reason, special mentions are given to around 10% of the participants, *"to show those who did something really good, even if they didn't win."*

From contest to career path

For some winners, Juvenes Translatores has been a life-changing experience. One was so impressed by the interpreters at the award ceremony that she decided not to study physics but interpretation instead. Another former winner now works in a translation bureau in Switzerland. And there is even a contest laureate who has ended up in DGT's Maltese department.

The recognition can be particularly important for students with special needs. Anna remembers an email from the father of a student who got a special mention, explaining how important this would be for his son's CV, as his Asperger's Syndrome made it very difficult for him to find a job. For a Luxembourg winner with very limited eyesight, the contest offered her the possibility to meet a DGT colleague who had been blind from birth, and to learn about the tools she uses for her daily job.

"It is extremely gratifying," says Anna, who has plenty of other stories from this last decade. Many more will surely come up in the 10th edition, with the winners announced in February. ■

Juvenes translatores

► <http://ec.europa.eu/translatores/>



© Maura Szőnyi

fit@work

KRAV MAGA CLUB SPORT AND SELF-DEFENCE ALL IN ONE

by **María Fernández García**, CEND

Krav Maga is considered to be one of the most efficient self-defence systems. Used by the Israeli army, you can learn and practise it in one of the European Commission's sports clubs. Club president Amira Szőnyi presents the sport to *Commission en direct*.

The Association Krav Maga European Commission was created in 2014 to promote the practice of this sport among the staff. Two years later, it has over 50 members and offers classes of different levels in the VM2 building and, on Thursdays, also in Beaulieu. In last September's European Week of Sport, the club organised an exhibition that attracted around 25 colleagues, curious to know more about it.

Amira Szőnyi, who currently works in OLAF, is behind the foundation of the club. Five years ago, she started practising Krav Maga after trying other fighting sports like judo and kung fu. *"I became passionate very fast,"* she says, to the extent that she decided to start a club in the Commission. Now, she is one of the three available instructors.

Krav Maga is quite well known in Hungary, Amira's home country, since it was invented by a Hungarian Jew, Emrich 'Imi' Lichtenfeld, who grew up in Bratislava. During the 30s, when the Jewish population in the city began to suffer from racist attacks, he started developing this system of practical self-defence. Later, he would become an instructor in the Israeli army, which has continued to use and develop his techniques to this day.

Therefore, Krav Maga is a way of doing physical activity while learning some valuable lessons for self-protection. *"It is very logical, that is what I like,"* Amira

says about this sport, pointing out that it is based on natural reflexes and includes three strands: self-defence, fighting and third-party protection.

Techniques and role-playing

The classes usually start with a technical part introducing different types of attack and defence, and then continue with role-playing exercises which try to simulate real-life situations. *"This is what people enjoy most,"* Amira says, as the drills confront the participants with tactical choices.

The techniques and physical exercises of this sport are accessible to anyone. According to the club's president, people of all ages can practise it. Between 10 and 20% of the members are over 50. Most classes are mixed but there is one specific group for women, currently accounting for between 20-30% of the members, as *"sometimes at the beginning it is easier for women to practise among themselves, though later we encourage them to move to the mixed classes."*

For next year, the club is planning a visit to Budapest, combining training with some sightseeing. If you are interested, you can check the conditions to become a member, at any time of the year, on the club's website (see below). ■

Krav Maga European Commission
► <http://kravmaga-ec-eu.vpweb.be/>

ASSOCIATION FEMMES D'EUROPE VOLUNTEERING BY AND FOR WOMEN

by María Fernández García, CEND

For the last eight years, Gabriella Kovacs (DG HOME) has volunteered for l'Association Femmes d'Europe. The organisation, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary, currently has over 800 members, and supported nearly 100 projects last year. Gabriella talked to Commission en direct about her activities.

How did you become involved in the association?

I moved to Belgium in 2007. At that time my husband worked but I didn't, and I wanted to do something useful. In 2008, I found *Femmes d'Europe*. The leader of the national group for Hungary invited me to the monthly meeting where we looked at projects and upcoming events, and it was so impressive for me that I stayed.

Currently you work in DG HOME. How do you combine your job with volunteering?

Both can be harmonized. It is not true that members of *Femmes d'Europe* typically do not work. There is a mixture of people. There are some meetings and events organised during working time, but most take place in the evening, and some tasks can be done after work, like drafting and managing projects.

In which activities are you active?

On the one hand, we have horizontal activities, like the Christmas Bazaar, and on the other, those organised by the national groups, like lectures, concerts, dinners, etc. On the spending side, we identify small-scale projects all over the world, mainly supporting women and children in hardship. The vast majority of our projects are sustainable. We revisit them and make sure after several years, even decades, that our money was used for good objectives. And we transmit our know-how on project management to the beneficiaries, who sometimes learn how to apply for higher funding from other sources.

You must now be very busy preparing the traditional Christmas Bazaar in Beaulieu.

Yes, it is our main horizontal activity. Thanks to our fundraising activities, our annual budget is more or less €350,000 and about €150,000 comes from the



Christmas Bazaar. The Bazaar reflects our philosophy. It is multicultural, with different national products, from food to jewellery. On Friday 25 November it is for Commission staff only. On Saturday 26 November, the day it is open to the general public, the restaurant in Espace Beaulieu will be open for us and meals will be prepared by the national groups. And during the day, we are usually preparing some surprises, shows, dance demonstrations or choirs.

What do you enjoy the most?

Working for solidarity and helping people. We have to admit that we are in a privileged position. It is somehow our duty to help those less fortunate than us. There is hard work behind the association but, on the other hand, it is fun. It is a very good opportunity to meet people. For example, I found not only good friends but also stable bridge partners.

Is there any group for husbands?

Not yet [she smiles]. But we are thinking of creating a group for men, as they often help us. ■

Association Femmes d'Europe asbl
► <http://www.assocfemmesdeurope.eu/>



© Mireille Delprat

VOYAGE DANS UN DESERT DE GLACE UN RECIT PHOTOGRAPHIQUE

par **Nathalie Paulger**, CEND

Mireille Delprat, qui travaille à la DG RTD en tant que conseillère pour la recherche, l'innovation et l'environnement, est passionnée d'aventure et de voyages au cœur des extrêmes de notre planète. Récemment revenue d'un voyage en Antarctique, elle nous raconte son aventure et partage ses photos stupéfiantes, qui ont fait le sujet de sa première exposition.

Le désert, l'antarctique, ce sont des vacances originales! Qu'est-ce qui vous inspire à faire ces voyages?

Partir en vacances, c'est littéralement se rendre vacant, pour mieux recharger les batteries. Or quoi de mieux qu'un immense espace pour se vider l'esprit? Pause. Le temps ralentit, enfin. Le temps se met au diapason des pas, le cœur s'apaise. Dans le désert, qu'il soit de sable ou de glace, je me retrouve face à moi-même. C'est dur et salutaire. Ce chemin-là, hors du tourbillon habituel, m'amène à me poser de vraies questions, sans écran, sans faux-fuyant. Confrontée à ces lieux purs, à l'état brut, où la beauté explose et où le danger rôde, palpable, mon existence se charge d'intensité, ainsi que mes relations aux autres: s'il me prenait l'envie d'aller bouder, je risquerais vite de me perdre et cela pourrait s'avérer fatal. C'est ainsi que se nouent des liens forts entre humains. Dans ces contrées, toute vie est un miracle: telle simple fleur jaune, qui passerait inaperçue

ici, devient précieuse quand elle surgit d'une plaine de cailloux secs. Arctique, Sahara, Antarctique... flore et faune, exubérantes parfois, vulnérables souvent, y sont un émerveillement permanent.

Parlez-nous un peu de votre dernier voyage...

Je suis partie d'Ushuaia, à la pointe sud de l'Argentine, début février dernier, en voilier. Nous avons passé le Cap Horn, traversé le mythique passage du Drake, jusqu'à la péninsule antarctique, où la mer est beaucoup plus calme. Nous avons alors navigué paisiblement entre îles et icebergs. Ensuite j'ai eu l'occasion unique de passer une semaine sur une base scientifique ukrainienne au sud de la péninsule: une mine d'informations sur la recherche en Antarctique - de la biodiversité au changement climatique - à travers notamment une série d'interviews que j'ai enregistrées sur place et que j'aimerais d'ailleurs partager. Puis, à bord d'un paquebot, j'ai effectué une croisière jusqu'en Géorgie du sud, cette



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île subantarctique qui est une fantastique réserve de biodiversité. Enfin, cap sur Buenos Aires et retour en Europe, chamboulée par toutes ces aventures. Le tout en un mois bien rempli.

Quel est votre plus beau souvenir de ce voyage?

Question difficile, tant j'ai été comblée. D'où mon envie de montrer mes photos à un large public, en me faisant l'ambassadrice de ces contrées éloignées. Mon ahurissement et ma joie sur les plages noires de Géorgie du sud, grouillant de manchots royaux et d'otaries à fourrure parmi lesquels trônent les éléphants de mer en monstres indifférents, voilà un souvenir gravé en moi. Aux franges du continent blanc, la nature foisonne, comme si elle prenait sa revanche sur les étendues glacées. Un vrai paradoxe, magnifique. A préserver, absolument.

Mais certaines rencontres avec de majestueux icebergs aux formes étranges sont aussi inoubliables. On se croirait alors sur une autre planète.

Un voyage dans un environnement extrême – avez-vous eu des moments difficiles?

La traversée du Drake, la mer la plus dangereuse au monde, à bord de ce petit voilier (14 mètres) s'est avérée périlleuse et très éprouvante, bien différente de ce qui était prévu. Une très mauvaise surprise. Je déconseille formellement cette expérience. Heureusement, le reste du voyage s'est déroulé dans d'excellentes conditions.

Et après ça, quels projets? De voyages, de photographie, ou autre?

Dans l'immédiat, je pars me ressourcer dans un bain de dunes poudrées, de silence scintillant sous une myriade d'étoiles: le désert marocain. A plus long terme, j'ai conçu un projet exaltant qui vise à créer un dialogue inédit au cœur de l'Antarctique, entre les scientifiques sur place, des collègues de la Commission et certains citoyens. L'aventure continue... ■



Karta uređenih
markiranih staza

SUTJESKA
Nacionalni park

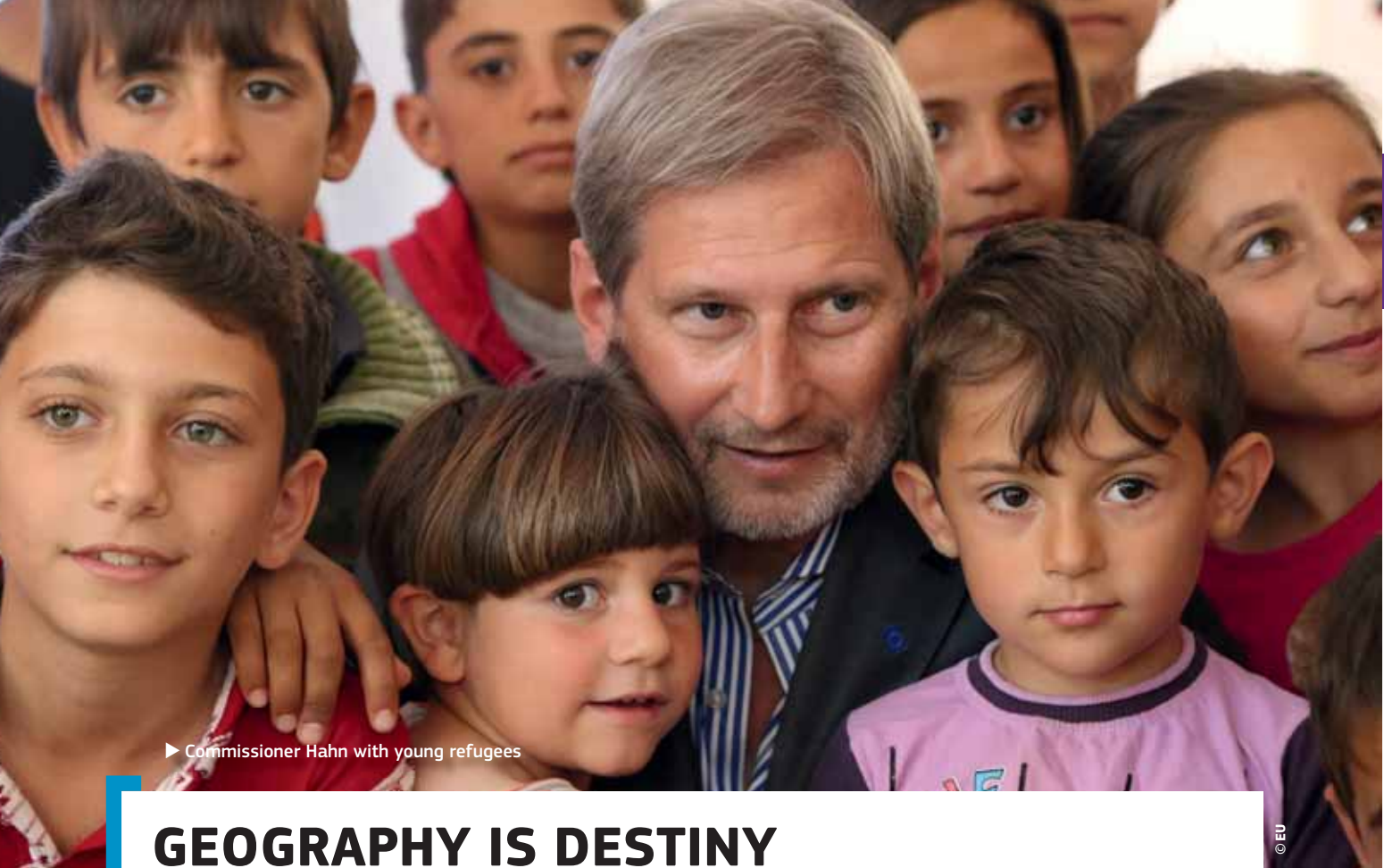
A hand is pointing at a map displayed on a tablet screen. The map shows geographical features like roads and terrain. The background is a blurred, warm-toned surface.

DOSSIER

EUROPE'S NEIGHBOURHOOD

A tailored approach to stabilisation

As the news headlines have amply illustrated over recent years, what happens in Europe's neighbourhood inevitably has an impact on the European Union itself. This has led to a refocusing of both the European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Policy. For the former, out goes the one-size-fits-all approach, in comes a more tailored approach for each partner country that places the accent on political and economic stability. For the latter, accession negotiations have been redefined as a total transformation process. *Commission en direct* finds out what this means for our neighbours – and for us.



► Commissioner Hahn with young refugees

GEOGRAPHY IS DESTINY REACHING OUT TO EUROPE'S NEIGHBOURS

by Antony Gravili, CEND

Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, tells *Commission en direct* about the challenges he faces encouraging stability, prosperity and cooperation among the EU's neighbours.

Your portfolio brings together countries which seem to have little in common: from Morocco to former Soviet republics. Why is the EU seeking special relations with these countries and what are your priorities?

Indeed, these countries do differ, but they have one thing in common: they are all in our more or less immediate neighbourhood. Geography is destiny: What happens in these countries has a direct impact on the security and prosperity of our Union and our citizens. Therefore, we have a vital self-interest to reach out to them: to support stability and prosperity by promoting political and socio-economic reforms based on the rule of law, and by tackling common challenges together, from crisis management to migration or energy security. The key priority now and for the coming years is to invest more smartly and actively in the political and economic stabilization of these regions.

What would you list as your main achievements since you took up your current office?

As regards our eastern and southern neighbourhood, I have pushed a comprehensive review of the European Neighbourhood Policy to move it from a slightly bureaucratic process to a more realistic policy of stabilization and investment (see pg 39). The result is a more robust and flexible framework, allowing us to find a sharper focus on shared strategic interests the EU wishes to pursue with each of its partners, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. This new differentiated, tailor-made approach is a major shift in EU foreign policy-making. Intensive work is currently ongoing with partner countries to establish strategic partnership priorities. In this context, we will continue to uphold and promote key EU values and interests, with a particular focus on reaching out to civil society, businesses and social partners.

On the enlargement side, I have changed the strategic approach by defining accession negotiations as a comprehensive transformation process (see pgs 42-43). Developments such as the ongoing migration challenge have proven that this policy is as relevant as ever. And I can say that there has been good progress in all parts of the region on the EU path: we opened the first negotiation chapters with Serbia and adopted the EU-Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Agreement. Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted its membership application following months of hard work which put the country back on the reform path. Albania and Montenegro are making headway, and we also helped to defuse a major political crisis in Skopje.

At the regional level, the EU connectivity agenda which I spearhead promotes reconciliation and cross-border cooperation: by connecting markets, infrastructure and people, we bring peace and opportunities, inspired by our own European success story. Thus it is justified to say that the overall trend is encouraging. Again, it has to be stressed that this is in the EU's interest: a firm, fair and clearly conditioned accession perspective for the future gives us major leverage to achieve our goal: a stable and prosperous environment, new markets and finally integration for the sake of a peaceful Europe.

... and as the main challenges ahead?

I am afraid that the political instability in parts of our neighbourhood will not go away easily, with ongoing or frozen conflicts, and deep economic challenges, especially high unemployment among young people. That's why it is more important than ever for the EU to engage and support reforms that will help address the root causes of these problems, including migration. The recently announced External Investment Plan will be a further tool to boost our partners' economies.

On the other side of the coin, we also need to work harder to regain our citizens' confidence and show that a carefully managed enlargement process and a robust stabilization policy in our neighbourhood are in our

own interest. In this context, it is paramount to ensure greater visibility for the EU's assistance. Citizens need to know that EU support makes a difference!

What impact is the migration crisis having on the neighbourhood and enlargement policies, and how can these policies contribute to a solution?

The migration crisis brought to the fore how crucial good relations with our neighbours are. Cooperation with the countries in the Western Balkans over the management of refugee flows is a good example of how these countries are already part of the solution to the challenges we face together. We found a common agreement with Turkey, which delivers results and helps save lives. Our Facility for Refugees in Turkey and the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis are delivering assistance to refugees quickly and efficiently (see pgs 44-45). Together with the Trust Fund for Africa, they will also help address the root causes of migration more broadly. With Jordan and Lebanon, the countries hosting the most refugees in proportion to their population, we are currently finalizing 'Compacts', a holistic reply to the challenges posed by the Syrian crisis.

Last but not least: Turkey. What perspective do you see for the EU's relations with this country?

Turkey is a very important partner for the EU. A stable, democratic and prosperous Turkey is a key element of security and stability in Europe and beyond, and hence very much in our interest. Turkey is a candidate country. This is why the EU – while continuing to engage closely with Turkey on issues ranging from migration, energy, counter-terrorism, economy and trade – does not shy away from expressing our serious concerns about the deterioration in the area of the rule of law and fundamental freedoms. ■

DG NEAR

► http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/index_en.htm

FACTS & FIGURES

Over the next two pages, *Commission en direct* highlights the 23 countries that are part of the EU Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policies. We provide information on the global sums foreseen in each of the financial instruments for these countries, the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) respectively. A short reference to the cooperation priorities of our policies with candidate countries and potential candidate countries as well as partners to the South and East is also included. More information on these priorities, and on each policy and region, can be found in the articles that follow in this dossier.

MULTIANNUAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK 2014 - 2020

ENLARGEMENT INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA)




€11.7

 billion

Priorities:




- ▶ Rule of law
- ▶ Fundamental rights
- ▶ Economic development and competitiveness
- ▶ Functioning of democratic institutions and public administration reform

NEIGHBOURHOOD EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTRUMENT (ENI)


€15.4

 billion

Priorities:

- ▶ Good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights
- ▶ Economic development for stabilisation
- ▶ Security
- ▶ Migration and mobility

-  European Union Member States
-  Candidates and potential candidates for EU membership
-  European Neighbourhood Policy Partners



THE KEY TO SUCCESS WORKING WITH PARTNERS

by Carmen Falkenberg Ambrosio, DG NEAR

Christian Danielsson, Director-General of DG NEAR, explains what is being done – and how – to bring stability, security and prosperity to countries on the eastern and southern flanks of the European Union.

DG NEAR works on transforming countries in the EU's neighbourhood to integrate them further with the EU. How do you see the role of your DG in this challenging task?

In the enlargement region, we support countries' efforts in meeting the criteria and strict conditions that they have to comply with to be able to become EU Member States. Democracy, human rights, minority rights and a functioning market economy all need to be in place. The Commission's regular assessment of how far the countries have come in their reforms and what they still need to do is made public in the 'enlargement package'; the next one will be published very soon. Reforms take time and cost money – we support the countries' transformation financially through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance.

In other, 'neighbourhood policy' countries, our objective is to foster stability, security and prosperity. Stabilisation is the main political priority in the years to come. Recognising that partners aspire to different types of relations with the EU and mutual ownership are key elements of the policy, as is the promotion of universal values, democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. These policy objectives are supported financially through the European Neighbourhood Instrument.

I guess much of your work is done through, and in close cooperation with, EU Delegations?

Indeed. Delegations are our eyes and ears in a country: they report on developments and their knowledge contributes to shaping our relations and policies in a country or region. Delegations are also responsible for the implementation of EU financial support, or making sure that this implementation, when national authorities are responsible, takes place as agreed between



the EU and the country concerned. Delegations also represent the EU when they talk to the authorities, stakeholders, donors, etc., and work with our partners on the ground.

What do you mean by 'working with partners'?

This means pooling together the capacity and resources of those interested in a particular challenge in a country or region, to jointly contribute to solving it. Our main partners are usually Member States, financial institutions (e.g. the European Investment Bank or the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), regional or international bodies like the Council of Europe or the World Bank, and UN agencies. Challenges in our neighbouring regions are big, and only by working together towards a common objective and exploiting synergies can we make a substantial impact. ■

DG NEAR

► http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/index_en.htm



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REVISED EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY RESPONDING TO COMMON INTERESTS

by Carmen Falkenberg Ambrosio, DG NEAR

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) originally set out to build an area of security, stability and prosperity following on from the 2004 enlargement. The idea was that those in the EU's neighbourhood making the greatest advances towards democracy, human rights and the rule of law would receive more from the EU: more funding, more options for mobility including visa facilitation and visa liberalisation, and more trade liberalisation. This was the basis of an incentive-based ('more for more') approach.

For some partners, ENP actions bore fruit. Other countries found the approach too prescriptive and not reflective of their aspirations. Throughout the last ten years, protracted conflicts, political violence in the post-Arab Spring transitions, transnational terrorism, an assertive Russian foreign policy and the migration crisis all increased instability in our partner countries and reinforced the importance of the neighbourhood for the EU.

A review of the policy was launched in spring 2015 with a public consultation – the first time that an EU foreign policy initiative was opened up for such a debate. The consultation led to a Joint Communication on the revised European Neighbourhood Policy in November 2015. The overarching theme of the review was stabilisation, with the following four priorities:

- **Good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights:** renewed support for civil society and a commitment to working on human rights with all our partners in mutually-agreed formats.
- **Economic development for stabilisation:** an emphasis on employability; support for the private sector and SMEs; connectivity; energy efficiency and climate change.
- **Security:** using all the instruments at the EU's disposal to work with Member States on improving security, tackling terrorism and disrupting organised crime.

European Neighbourhood Instrument

The European Neighbourhood Instrument (€15.4 billion in 2014-2020) is the main financial instrument for the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Most of the funds go to bilateral programmes with each country, tailor-made to their reform and development needs. Regional, Neighbourhood-wide and Cross-Border Cooperation programmes complement bilateral cooperation.

- **Migration and mobility:** working within the framework of the European Agenda on Migration to support countries assisting refugees and internally displaced people; tackling the causes of irregular migration; cooperating on returns and readmission and looking at increased opportunities for circular migration.

Since the adoption of the Communication, work has been done on refocusing our priorities through updated Association Agendas and newly-created Partnership Priorities, and we are rolling out these new priorities through political dialogues and our upcoming programming. ■

European Neighbourhood Policy

► <http://europa.eu/Yf63fU>

Novembre 2016



► Moldovan honey conquering the EU market

© AFP - EU/NEIGHBOURHOOD INFO CENTRE

THE EU'S EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH RESULTS

by Paloma Hall Caballero, DG NEAR

The framework for EU cooperation with its neighbours to the East is the Eastern Partnership. Launched in 2009, it is a joint initiative based on shared values of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

This eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) aims to deepen and strengthen relations between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. It involves EU institutions, Member States, partner countries and stakeholders, and engagement with civil society is key.

The Eastern Partnership Summit in Riga last year and the ENP Review called for efforts to focus on stabilisation and resilience, particularly by boosting economic development. We are moving forward in each priority area (economic development and market opportunities; strengthening institutions and good governance; connectivity and energy efficiency; mobility and people-to-people links), with a focus on tangible benefits for citizens.

A strong emphasis is put on economic development and diversification, with actions supporting the private sector, the creation of a business-friendly environment, developing e-commerce, and the implementation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine (assisted by the Support Group for Ukraine in DG NEAR).

A particular effort is being made to maximise the impact of investments under the Neighbourhood Investment Plan. Investments in human capital and skills development, with a focus on youth leadership and entrepreneurship, will favour the creation of new job opportunities.

The EU continues to help countries in building a resource and energy-efficient economy. The connectivity agenda is being pursued by supporting implementation of the extended core Trans-European Transport Network, and by helping our partners to abide by the commitments in the Paris Climate Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. We support public administration reforms and work with civil society for a more differentiated approach, further outreach and inclusiveness. We help to secure better security at borders through our Integrated Border Management pilot projects, Cross-Border Cooperation programmes and the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine. ■

Supporting economic development – honey exports from Moldova

East Invest, part of the EU4Business Initiative, helped Roxinform Grup export to the EU. This family business, based in Orhei in Moldova, produces a range of honey under the Kenvetov brand. East Invest helped it find partners in France, and learn about product requirements, export conditions and opportunities to promote its products abroad. Today, Roxinform Grup exports to France and the UK, and is looking at possibly expanding to Italy, Germany and Scandinavia.

► <http://www.kenvetov.com/en/>

Eastern Partnership

► <http://europa.eu/!uC36WM>

THE EU'S SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD STABILISATION AND REFORMS

by **Christina Moldt**, DG NEAR

The situation in the EU's Southern Neighbourhood is volatile, with ongoing conflicts resulting in unprecedented refugee and migration flows, severe security challenges and uneven progress in economic development and democratic reforms. Limited space for opposition views, pressure on civil society and weak economic performance create vulnerabilities to violent extremist views. The region is also one of the least integrated in the world, with countries now drifting even further apart.

The EU revised its European Neighbourhood Policy in 2015 to be able to cater better for the stabilisation needs to its South and East. Support for the EU's Southern neighbours (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, West Bank and Gaza) is provided by tailor-made cooperation at bilateral, regional, neighbourhood-wide and cross-border level. Programmes cover areas like: inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development, democracy promotion, rule of law, human rights and good governance, migration and mobility as well as security.

For instance, new Partnership Priorities and EU Compacts have been developed with Jordan and Lebanon (to support economic and political reforms, with mutual commitments to sustain Jordan and Lebanon's resilience in light of the refugee crisis), and a Joint Communication on Tunisia was recently developed to strengthen our cooperation.

Two new EU Trust Funds are designed to increase the flexibility and scale up the EU's response: the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, or the 'Madad Fund' (in Arabic, 'madad' roughly means 'providing aid and help jointly with others'), and the North African part of the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, which is aimed at stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa. Both Trust Funds combine resources from EU financial instruments, EU Member States and also non-EU partners like Turkey.

Regional cooperation builds bridges between the EU and its neighbours, and between the neighbours themselves. Countries work together on areas of common interest like energy security, improved access to

Early recovery through education in Syria



Children are at the centre of our response to the Syrian refugee crisis. The EU-funded project 'Creating a Path to Early Recovery through Education in Syria' has already successfully delivered:

- improved access to education for two million children in the academic years 2013/14 and 2014/15;
- medical education and psychosocial support in 180 schools;
- refurbishment of 100 schools;
- training of 1,500 teachers, focusing on special needs children.

investment, mobility or security, which impact on citizens' lives. The main framework is set by the Union for the Mediterranean, to support projects and policies contributing to better integration, long-term stability and economic growth. ■

Southern neighbourhood

► <http://europa.eu/!dR96kg>



► Building bridges between the EU, the Western Balkans and Turkey. Above: Montenegro

EU ENLARGEMENT TRANSFORMATIVE POWER

by Claus Giering, DG NEAR

The EU's enlargement policy aims at preparing those European countries which aspire to join the EU - and have been given the perspective to do so - for membership. It serves our interests by making Europe a safer place and promoting democracy and fundamental freedoms, while consolidating the rule of law in the aspiring countries. By extending the single market it brings benefits to all: as a result of successive enlargements, with more than 500 million citizens, the EU is now the largest economy in the world.

The current enlargement agenda covers the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey. They are at different stages in the process:

- Accession negotiations are open with Turkey, Montenegro and Serbia.
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania have been granted candidate status but have not yet opened accession negotiations.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are potential candidates. In September 2016, the Council invited the Commission to submit its Opinion on the application of Bosnia and Herzegovina for membership of the European Union. A Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo entered into force in April this year.

Fundamentals first

Entry to the EU is based on strict conditions – as long as countries do not meet the criteria, they cannot join the EU. How do we ensure that the countries will be

well prepared once they join the European Union? For this to happen, enlargement policy focuses on the 'fundamentals first' principle, including:

a) Rule of Law – a fundamental value on which the EU is founded. Countries aspiring to join need to establish from an early stage the proper functioning of the core institutions necessary for securing the rule of law, for example a functioning judiciary. This is also crucial for a stable business environment, providing legal certainty for economic operators, supporting consumers and stimulating investment, jobs and growth;

b) Fundamental Rights – including freedom of media and expression and protection of minorities and in particular their full implementation not just in theory but also in practice;

c) Economic development and competitiveness – as becoming a member of the EU is not just about complying with EU rules and standards; it is also about making a

country economically fit for the rigours of the Single Market and to make sure that it can reap all the benefits of EU accession, while at the same time contributing to the growth and prosperity of the EU economy;

d) Functioning of democratic institutions and public administration reform – core democratic institutions remain fragile in a number of countries and a well-functioning public administration is necessary for democratic governance and accountability. The quality of administration also directly impacts governments' ability to provide public services, to prevent and fight against corruption and to foster competitiveness and growth.

In practice, we expect the countries not only to adopt relevant legislation and set up the necessary institutions; what really matters is implementation. For the credibility of the enlargement process it is indispensable that we see real results on the ground.

Regional cooperation

In addition to the reform agenda of each partner country, good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation are also essential elements which continue to drive transformation and anchor stability in the region. Neighbourly relations continue to be reinforced through various regional cooperation initiatives. Important progress has been achieved here, notably through the Berlin Process and the Western Balkans Six format, which brings together heads of state and government from the region and is strengthening the countries' ownership of regional co-operation. As part of these processes, the Commission's connectivity agenda aims to improve links within the Western Balkans as well as between the region and the EU. The European Union has set aside up to €1 billion for connectivity investment projects and technical assistance for the 2014-2020 period. ■

Enlargement policy highlights
► <http://europa.eu/!Yu89Vf>

IPA – the EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance

The EU helps the countries that wish to become members with financial and technical support. This makes it easier for them to apply the new Regulations, or to be able to implement the new requirements in order to bring their own systems in line with the European one.

The European Commission gives the countries financial support through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). For the period 2014–2020, the EU has foreseen €11.7 billion for this instrument. IPA II targets reforms within the framework of pre-defined sectors, which cover areas closely linked to the enlargement strategy, such as democracy and governance, rule of law or growth and competitiveness. This sector approach promotes structural reform that will help transform a given sector and bring it up to EU standards. It allows a move towards a more targeted assistance, ensuring efficiency, sustainability and a focus on results.

Consolidating law enforcement in Albania (PAMECA IV)

With an EU contribution of €4 million, this IPA-financed project helps the Albanian State Police in their reform efforts to become a more modern police force. At the end of the project, it is expected that the police service will see its functioning improve and its capacity to investigate organised crime and corruption increase. Improved protection of the rights of detainees and prevention of ill-treatment of people in police custody, better community policing, enforcement of traffic laws and management of the borders are also expected to be among the benefits of this ongoing project.



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DELIVERING ON OUR POLICIES THE FINANCIAL RESPONSE

by Carmen Falkenberg Ambrosio, DG NEAR

DG NEAR has several financial and assistance instruments at its disposal to translate policy into results. One of the best known is the Commission's Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument (TAIEX), which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year (see CEND #33). Below are some of the other major ones.

The EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis

Set up in December 2014, the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis - the 'Madad Fund' - provides a faster and more integrated European response to the massive needs resulting from the Syrian refugee crisis. It primarily addresses longer-term resilience and recovery needs of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq) and also assists their overstretched host communities and administrations.

The fund focuses on key priority needs in line with the international commitments agreed at the 'Supporting Syria & the Region Conference' in London, back in February: first, promote education, protection and engagement opportunities for children and young people in line with the No Lost Generation Initiative; and second, reduce the pressure on host countries and strengthen resilience by providing access to education and employment for both refugee and host communities. Water, sanitation and hygiene needs, as well as health and livelihood projects are also directly supported.

The fund is the main channel for delivering non-humanitarian aid to Syria's neighbouring countries and is one of the key tools for implementing the new EU Compacts with Jordan and Lebanon. To date it has mobilised over €736 million from the EU and 22 Member States and will reach €1 billion by the end of 2016. So far, €628 million has been committed to projects, and contracts worth €207 million are already delivering on the ground.

Blending: public and private funds working together

Blending is the use of a limited amount of (public) grants to mobilise financing from partner financial institutions and the private sector to increase the development impact of grant funding. Projects supported through blending are frequently in sectors of strategic importance for partner countries, e.g. energy, transport, environment. The type of blending may vary. The EU contribution can take the form of technical assistance, investments grants, interest rate subsidies, guarantees, risk capital or any mix of these. These funds are combined with the contribution by the beneficiary, loans,



equity and guarantees from development financial institutions as well as commercial loans and investments. Targeted at achieving key development policy objectives, it often has secondary benefits, such as better donor coordination and increased sustainability of projects.

The EU conducts blending operations with a regional focus, such as the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF), which is a powerful tool to leverage private sector funds across the whole neighbourhood. Making the EU's neighbourhood region more interconnected is a key strategic objective of the NIF. Since 2008, it has contributed over €700 million to transport and energy projects. Overall, we estimate that the NIF has helped to ensure investments of almost €20 billion in these sectors.

The Facility for Refugees in Turkey

Turkey currently hosts more than 2.7 million registered Syrian refugees and is making commendable efforts to provide them with humanitarian aid and support. The European Commission is helping by providing humanitarian assistance to support refugees who have fled violence in their country, in particular those living outside camps and in need of immediate aid, and those with health and education needs. The Facility for Refugees in Turkey was set up in early 2016, and answers Member States' call for significant additional funding to support refugees in Turkey. It is designed to ensure that the needs of refugees and host communities are addressed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. The facility focuses on six priority areas: humanitarian assistance, education, migration management, health, municipal infrastructure, and socioeconomic support.

The Facility for Refugees in Turkey in action

Education and health - €600 million for:

- Access to education for almost half a million Syrian children.
- Access to primary healthcare services for around two million people through the creation of over 500 healthcare facilities, and rehabilitative mental health services for up to one million people.

The EU's biggest humanitarian aid programme - €348 million for:

- Emergency Social Safety Net to improve the lives of one million refugees in Turkey, using monthly cash transfers to debit cards that refugees can use to meet their everyday needs.

Humanitarian aid - €74 million for:

- child protection and against gender-based violence
- specialised health care
- non-formal education and school transport
- special assistance for the cold winter months

It has a budget of €3 billion for 2016-2017, from the EU budget and EU Member States funding. The total amount allocated for implementation already stands at over €2.2 billion. ■

Neighbourhood Investment Facility

► <http://europa.eu/luB79FJ>

Response to the Syrian Crisis

► <http://europa.eu/Cv88PQ>

Facility for Refugees in Turkey

► <http://europa.eu/fm96CW>

VOLUNTEERING WHERE TO START?

by Janette Sinclair, DG HR

Volunteering is an excellent way to get involved in your local community, especially for expats, and many colleagues have told us they would volunteer if they had more information on how to get into it. Here are a few tips and pointers on how to go about it.

Whether you are volunteering in your own time or organising a volunteering team event with work colleagues, your first step is to decide what you want to do - humanitarian and development aid; social projects with children, the elderly and people with a disability; educational projects; cultural and sports activities; or environmental projects. If you are in a group, try to get a consensus and accept that colleagues may have different interests to you. Larger groups are not suited to projects involving vulnerable people, so be flexible and look for creative alternatives. How much time are you and your colleagues willing and able to dedicate to the volunteering activity? 'Low-skill' activities such as an environmental clean-up campaign, or sorting clothes and making food for homeless groups are more suited to one-off events; while helping at a homework club or mentoring a young person requires a regular commitment.

Be aware of the voluntary organisation's capacity to welcome volunteers. Under Belgian law, volunteers should receive information on the organisation's set-up and activities and details of the tasks, hours and other arrangements for the volunteer activity. The Luxembourg Agence du Bénévolat publishes a simple checklist which you can use to discuss what you will do before you start (see link below).

In both Belgium and Luxembourg, accredited voluntary organisations must have civil liability insurance for their volunteers. It's a good idea to check this out beforehand (see My IntraComm link below).

In common with all outside activities, volunteering activities must be compatible with our institutional values. You should know who you are volunteering with, and check there is no conflict of interest or anything controversial which could bring the Commission into

disrepute. The Fondation Roi Baudouin has established a database of nearly 5,000 voluntary organisations in Belgium (see link below) while the Agence du Bénévolat keeps a similar inventory for Luxembourg.

Setting limits

Volunteering experiences can be highly rewarding, especially when we are challenged to go outside our comfort zone. There are two areas where we need to set some limits. The first relates to health and safety issues. Of course we don't expect luxury but at the same time, don't put yourself at physical risk in unsafe premises or vehicles. Do not hesitate to walk away if you are unhappy with the environment you are volunteering in.

The second area is more sensitive. Some projects can involve working with people suffering from alcohol or drug addiction or with mental health problems. Most of the time, the exchanges are positive but it is sensible in these circumstances to seek the advice of your project leader on what to do and how to behave. DG HR will organise short training sessions on appropriate non-confrontational behaviours on demand.

These basic tips should help you avoid the main pitfalls and ensure both you and the people you are helping have a positive experience. ■

Agence du Bénévolat checklist

► <http://bit.ly/2dFdsHQ>

My IntraComm volunteering

► <http://europa.eu/!MC86Mu>

Fondation Roi Baudouin

► <http://www.bonnescauses.be>



► Foyer in rue Heine before renovation, 2013.



► Foyer after renovation, 2016.

FOYER EUROPEEN IN LUXEMBOURG FACELIFT FOR A CENTENARIAN

fit@work

by Félix Bernard, OIL

Since 1995, the Foyer européen located in a protected, 100-year-old building a few minutes' walk from Luxembourg's city centre, has served staff from all EU institutions in Luxembourg as a place to enjoy a meal and to get involved in cultural activities.

Over the years, the inter-institutional Foyer established a good reputation as a place where you could eat well and practise a multitude of hobbies hosted by the cultural and sports clubs of the *Cercle culturel* and *Cercle sportif*. But time inevitably left its mark on the premises. After two decades, the Commission decided that the moment to renovate the outdated and somewhat rundown facilities had arrived, and work began in October 2013.

After an extensive makeover lasting two years, the refurbished Foyer opened earlier this year. From under the tarpaulins emerged an elegant and light interior, up to modern standards both technically and safety-wise, while the façade of the centenarian building was left intact. Windows were replaced with triple glazing whilst complying with the requirement to respect the look of the old. The roof was repaired, and a new heating system installed and piping redistributed. A ventilation system was put in place and cabling for audiovisual and IT systems was installed. The kitchen was completely renovated with more storage and cold space made available. Access for people with reduced mobility was improved throughout the building.

The bar, previously located on the first floor, was brought down to ground level and now serves clients next

to the restaurant, with access to the terrace. And as a final touch, all walls were painted and floors redone.

Together with its facelift, the Foyer has expanded its service offer. Clubs of the *Cercle culturel* and the *Cercle sportif* have re-found a home for their activities there.

In addition, the Foyer now hosts five meeting rooms with a capacity of 12-49 people that can be reserved for training sessions, seminars, team buildings, cocktails and other events. All events, whether work-related or private, such as anniversaries or leaving drinks, are accompanied by catering.

All rooms are equipped with technical facilities including PC, screen, CD/DVD player, microphones, wifi and flipcharts.

Completing the range of services, the restaurant of the Foyer has also extended its opening hours. During the summer, the *Jean Monnet à la carte* restaurant, previously located in the JMO building, moved to the Foyer and opened its doors in the new location in September.

With this change, the restaurant, the chef and his team are able to propose both lunch and dinner services to their clients.

The Foyer's new lease of life has inspired new ideas for customer service: during the Euro 2016, the Foyer

The Foyer since the fifties

The Foyer's story started in 1952, the year of the establishment of the High Authority of the ECSC in Luxembourg. It was set up as a place of social interaction and integration for the personnel. The Foyer was located first on rue Notre Dame in Luxembourg's city centre (right), then in the Jean Monnet building.

In November 1994, ARBED (today ArcelorMittal), the owner of the building located on rue Heine, rented it to the State of Luxembourg, who then proposed to sub-rent it to the EU institutions. Since 1995, the Foyer has thus been located at its current address.

Since 2009, the Commission has owned the building and manages it on behalf of all EU Institutions in Luxembourg.



► View from the window of the first Foyer, 1963

© EU



► The Foyer hosts five meeting rooms for 12-49 people

© EU



► The Jean Monnet restaurant team

© EU

hosted football evenings with big screens and drinks in assorted team colours...

"The Foyer has always been renowned for its good food, but we have to admit the ambiance was a bit lacking in the old place. The renovation has really brought the venue up to date," said Daniel Necşa, the Head of the OIL catering unit managing the Foyer.

"We want the Foyer to be a place where staff from all EU institutions in Luxembourg feel comfortable, whether they are coming to work, or to relax after work – whether they want to organise a teambuilding, have a bite to eat or even watch sports with friends, we will provide a service that matches their expectations!" ■

The Foyer européen

► <http://europa.eu/!nP96Gj>

Cercle culturel et sportif

► www.cercleculturel.lu

Useful information

The Foyer européen welcomes all EU staff, their families and retired personnel.

Address: 10 rue Heinrich Heine, L-1720 Luxembourg.

Tel. +352-4301 35206;

► OIL-foyer-europeen@ec.europa.eu

Getting there: Buses n° 16 and 18, bus stops "Martyrs" or "Paris Zitha"; parking "Martyrs-Rousengartchen" on rue du Plébiscite.

Book a table: Tel. 352-4301 35206

► OIL-restaurant-jean-monnet@ec.europa.eu

Information about meeting rooms: Tel. 352-4301 32025

► OIL-foyer-europeen-evenements-et-reunions@ec.europa.eu



© EU

THE DEPARTURE DESK A ONE-STOP SHOP FOR RETIRING OFFICIALS

by Paul Gormley, DG HR

Traditionally, those about to retire from the Commission faced a long trek from building to building and queue to queue, tying up loose administrative ends before they go. The whole process could be a dispiriting end to a long career of public service. So this autumn saw the launch of the Departure Desk, a one-stop shop designed to give retiring officials a proper send-off. Irene Souka, DG HR's Director-General, explains more.

Can you tell us what led to this new service?

I have been conscious for some time that we have a very highly appreciated welcome and integration service which cover also activities for the families of newly-arrived colleagues. However, until the launch of the Departure Desk we had nothing similar, for those colleagues leaving after 25, 30 or 35 years' service. Certainly we had the pre-retirement course, but when the time came to finally retire colleagues had to make a 'tour' of five or six different services to return the badge, the special identity card, the official phone or credit card for those who had them, the library books and so on. It seemed to me to be unreasonable to expect officials with many years of service to spend their last days in the Commission queueing up in different buildings to hand things back.

So what happens now?

Now we have a one-stop shop where the staff of the DG HR Departure Desk (who in fact are the same colleagues

who welcome newcomers) contact each departing official to fix an appointment to return all the various material – badges, cards – in one fixed location. The Departure Desk colleagues distribute the material received to the various appropriate services. The new service now being offered is not however only concerned with gathering items to be returned. It also allows each colleague who is retiring to ask any general questions about the services available on retirement or simply have a reflective chat on the experiences of life in the Commission over a long active service.

I should point out that colleagues who are retiring will still need to have contact with PMO 4 to discuss their pension situation, as this is an individual discussion which cannot be carried out at the Departure Desk but has to be handled directly by PMO.

How has the new service been received?

We have had very positive reactions during the three months of the pilot project in the summer months.



We have had very positive reactions during the three months of the pilot project in the summer months

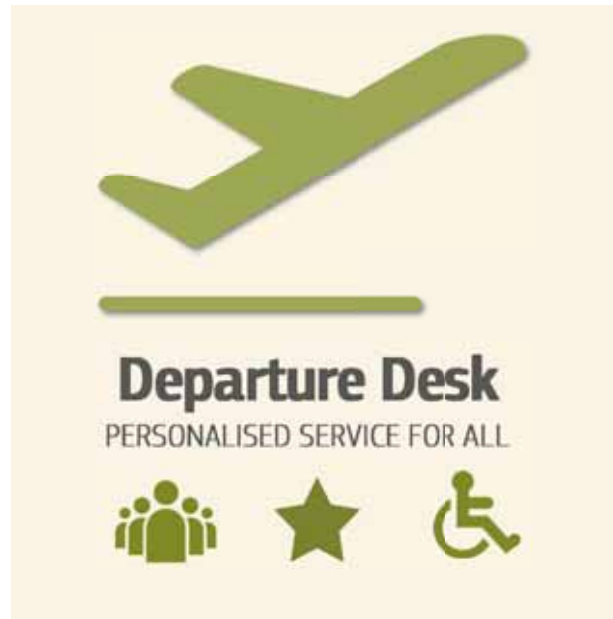
Colleagues who are retiring have been very responsive to the idea of the one-stop shop. They also seem to understand that DG HR is constantly striving to improve the overall well-being of staff members in these difficult times we are going through. At the very least, colleagues who are retiring now get a service which is equivalent to the service we provide for newcomers. Not the same service of course, but a service which responds to the different needs at the end of service compared to those at the beginning.

Does this service require extra resources?

No. In the DG HR reorganisation at the start of this year I put in place a new Well-being and Working Conditions unit where the Departure Desk fits perfectly. No new posts were created and I would like to thank the Welcome Office colleagues for their flexibility in taking on the tasks associated with the Departure Desk. We took the opportunity however to improve the signage at the entrance to Montoyer 34. We found that with the number of services gathered it was not enough to simply add another sign ‘Departure Desk’. So I am grateful to the OIB for re-thinking the signage at the front of the building. I hope the result will be clearer for colleagues visiting not only the Departure Desk and the Welcome Office, but also the Expat Administrative Support Service, the Security Service and PMO 1, who also have offices in the mezzanine of Montoyer 34. I should mention that a similar service will exist in Luxembourg from December 2016.

Is this service only for officials who are retiring?

The service is currently set up to facilitate officials who are leaving on retirement or under the invalidity procedure. Commission officials generally spend many years in the institution and when they leave there is a certain amount of personal reflection on a long career spent as a Commission official. We now try to ease the



procedural and administrative aspects of the departure. By giving the opportunity to reflect in a friendly setting we also want to show that we care about our colleagues who will remain linked to the Commission through their pension and possible other links such as the ‘active senior’ initiative, as they move from active service to retirement.

For the moment it is only officials who have had such long careers and who have now come to the end of their active Commission career. Other categories of staff are generally not at the end of their careers when they leave the Commission and therefore an end of career discussion would not be appropriate. In future however, as certain contract agents or temporary agents come to the end of their working career while in the Commission, we can expect that they would be contacted by the Departure Desk. ■

Departure Desk information
 ▶ <http://europa.eu/lpK79KX>



THE EUROPEAN LEGISLATION IDENTIFIER A NEW STANDARD FOR LEGAL TEXTS

by **Valeria Sciarrino**, OP

Every country has its own legal system, instruments, processes and traditions. In a union of countries that aim at working together, these differences might seem like obstacles to efficient cooperation. Today there is a new solution to overcome these differences and facilitate access to information on legislation, as well as its exchange.

The European Legislation Identifier (ELI) is a way to uniquely identify EU and national legislation in a standardised way, based on existing citation practices. ELI has a simple structure that makes it possible to directly access information about legislation (also called 'metadata') and to harvest and reuse it. ELI also makes it easier to connect legislation from different legal systems.

At the Publications Office we believe that by leveraging the strengths of technology, we can contribute to more transparency and help increase trust in governments and institutions.

ELI brings benefits for anyone who wants to access or share European or national legislation online, be they citizens, businesses, public authorities, legal professionals or academics:

- By giving easier access to legislation, ELI fosters transparency and openness, thus reinforcing legitimacy and accountability;
- As an instrument enabling interoperability between legal systems, ELI is a driver for cooperation on legal matters and so contributes to the development of the EU's area of freedom, security and justice;
- ELI makes it easier to reuse legal data in a smart way, and creates opportunities for new services by the private sector, thereby contributing to the development of the Digital Single Market.

History and governance

Initiated in the framework of the European Forum of Official Gazettes, the ELI project was endorsed in 2012 by the Council in its conclusions inviting the introduction of the European Legislation Identifier. Since 2014, ELI is supported through DIGIT's programme 'Interoperability Solutions for Public Administrations' (see link below). The Publications Office, which drove this project from its early beginnings with key Member States, coordinates these activities for the EU institutions.

The ELI initiative is now driven forward by a task force, made up of a group of countries that have already implemented it. At the time of writing, this task force includes Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg (chair), Norway, the United Kingdom and the Publications Office. Since more countries have committed to deploying ELI in their systems, this group is certain to grow.

If you are interested in the latest ELI deployment status or the list of national ELI coordinators, please visit our dedicated website on EUR-Lex (see link below). ■

Interoperability Solutions for Public Administrations

► <http://ec.europa.eu/isa/>

ELI

► <http://europa.eu/Fd38YN>

NOMINATIONS

La Commission a décidé de nommer



Maja Bakran Marcich
DG MOVE
directeur général adjoint



Johannes Luchner
DG ECHO
directeur
direction «Gestion des
situations d'urgence»



Kris Dekeyser
DG COMP
directeur
direction «Politique et
stratégie»



Silvano Presa
DG BUDG
directeur général adjoint
chargé des directions A,
B et D



Paulo José Santos
DG TAXUD
conseiller principal



Maria Velentza
DG COMP
directeur
direction «Marchés et cas
III: services financiers»

La Commission a décidé de muter



Jonathan Faull
SG
directeur général
Corps européen de
solidarité



Veronica Gaffey
PMO
directeur
office de gestion et de
liquidation des droits
individuels

SÉMINAIRE DE PRÉPARATION À LA RETRAITE UN MUST!

par Jeannine Franchomme et Michel Foucault, AIACE

La préparation à la retraite est une partie importante du panorama administratif offert au fonctionnaire, mais bon nombre d'actifs, trop occupés, mal informés, peu conscients de l'importance de cette préparation - parfois les trois à la fois - passent à côté de cette possibilité qu'offre l'institution de participer à un séminaire qui aborde tous les aspects du passage à la retraite.

On a parfois l'impression qu'une retraite heureuse se fonde sur une bonne planification financière. Erreur! La clef de la réussite, c'est de donner un nouveau sens à son existence. On ne tourne pas le dos à trente ans - ou plus - de vie active en criant simplement: *Stop!* Même s'il nous exaspère parfois, le travail comble, chez l'être humain, des besoins essentiels, comme le sentiment d'accomplissement, d'appartenance, d'estime de soi, sans oublier naturellement la sécurité financière. Après la vie active, il faut trouver de nouveaux moyens de répondre à ces besoins, faute de quoi on risque de connaître un très grand sentiment de vide. L'erreur, c'est que les préretraités passent énormément de temps à planifier financièrement leur retraite mais ne consacrent qu'une fraction de ce temps à la préparer.

Selon une statistique, 20% des personnes de 65 ans et plus souffrent de dépression à divers degrés.

Quelques pièges à éviter

Les anciens collègues expérimentés vous diront que ces pièges sont nombreux et peuvent nuire à une bonne planification de la retraite. En voici quelques-uns:

Prendre des décisions trop radicales:

- un déménagement rapide à la campagne alors que l'on n'y connaît personne;
- une installation dans un autre pays, si beau, si lumineux, mais si malcommode ou si compliqué à l'usage;
- un retour sans précaution dans son pays d'origine: combien de collègues, sûrs de retrouver l'Eldorado, n'a-t-on pas vu revenir, la valise à la main, après des retrouvailles médiocres.

Avoir une vision à court terme de la retraite:

- rénover sa maison de fond en comble par exemple, bravo, et après...
- tout miser sur une seule activité: jouer au golf le plus souvent possible, mais en plus des risques de lassitude, que faire en cas de blessure...
- se remettre en forme, mais faire de l'exercice trois fois par semaine ne constitue pas un plan de retraite;
- se consacrer à ses petits-enfants: si vous êtes trop accaparant, vos enfants commenceront à trouver votre aide un peu... lourde;
- ne pas associer suffisamment son conjoint aux décisions du couple, que de drames en perspective!

L'intérêt des séminaires de préparation à la retraite

Lorsqu'on envisage de prendre sa retraite, ou lorsqu'on approche du terme fixé par le statut du personnel, on doit s'interroger sur la nouvelle vie qui nous attend et se donner un moment de réflexion. Quoi de mieux que de participer aux séminaires offerts par l'administration (au plus tôt 10 mois avant le départ à la retraite. Les institutions dont les effectifs sont les plus nombreux (Commission, Conseil, Parlement) organisent elles-mêmes des séminaires de préparation à la retraite. Rien que pour Bruxelles, il y a, en 2016, vingt séminaires (en anglais ou en français) à la Commission, au Conseil et au Parlement, outre deux séminaires à Luxembourg et deux à Ispra. Les préretraités du Conseil économique et social et du Comité des régions à Bruxelles, ceux de la Cour de justice et de la Cour des comptes à Luxembourg y sont également accueillis. Les thèmes abordés



dans ces séminaires sont multiples: assurance maladie et assurances complémentaires, pensions, droits pécuniaires, services sociaux, activité professionnelle après la cessation de fonctions, fiscalité, droits de succession, mais aussi la diététique et une rencontre avec un psychothérapeute. Sur tous ces thèmes, l'information des «pensionnables» est souvent lacunaire. Un seul exemple: sait-on que le pensionné n'est plus couvert contre les accidents de la même manière que lorsqu'il était en activité et qu'il peut donc y avoir des dispositions personnelles à prendre?

Le rôle de l'AIACE

Outre les services administratifs qui prodiguent les informations sur les thèmes dont il vient d'être question, les associations d'anciens fonctionnaires participent également, activement, aux séminaires. L'Association Internationale des Anciens de l'Union Européenne (AIACE) existe depuis 1969. Forte actuellement de plus de 11.000 adhérents, répartis dans 15 sections nationales (Allemagne, Autriche, Belgique, Danemark, Espagne, Finlande, France, Grèce, Irlande, Italie, Luxembourg, Pays-Bas, Portugal, Royaume-Uni, Suède), l'AIACE est, en vertu d'un accord de partenariat conclu avec toutes les institutions européennes, l'organisation représentative des pensionnés. Elle assure la défense des intérêts légitimes des anciens, la promotion d'actions de solidarité et maintient la pérennité des contacts entre les membres de l'association.

Les participants ont dit...

- “ Merci pour toute l'information donnée durant ces trois jours. Les intervenants sont très bien choisis.
- “ À mon sens, ce séminaire devrait être obligatoire pour tout futur retraité.
- “ Une mine de renseignements, la documentation est très utile et intéressante.
- “ La convivialité était au rendez-vous, on sent que notre grande maison prend soin de ses pensionnés.

Ses représentants dans les séminaires à Bruxelles sont Dominique Deshayes, Roy Edwards, Michel Foucault, Jeannine Franchomme, Evelyne Gratier-Soetewey et Nadine Wraith. Tous bénévoles, ceux-ci sont porteurs d'une expérience très riche qu'ils mettent à la disposition des futurs pensionnés. Inutile de souligner l'importance pour les participants aux séminaires de pouvoir dialoguer avec des anciens collègues sur leur expérience, leurs conseils et l'aide qu'ils peuvent leur apporter dans la perspective de cette étape essentielle que représente le départ à la retraite. ■

Pour s'inscrire au séminaire:

SYSLOG Formation (dès le 16 novembre 2016: EU Learn)

AIACE

► www.aiace-europa.eu

N° 1 -

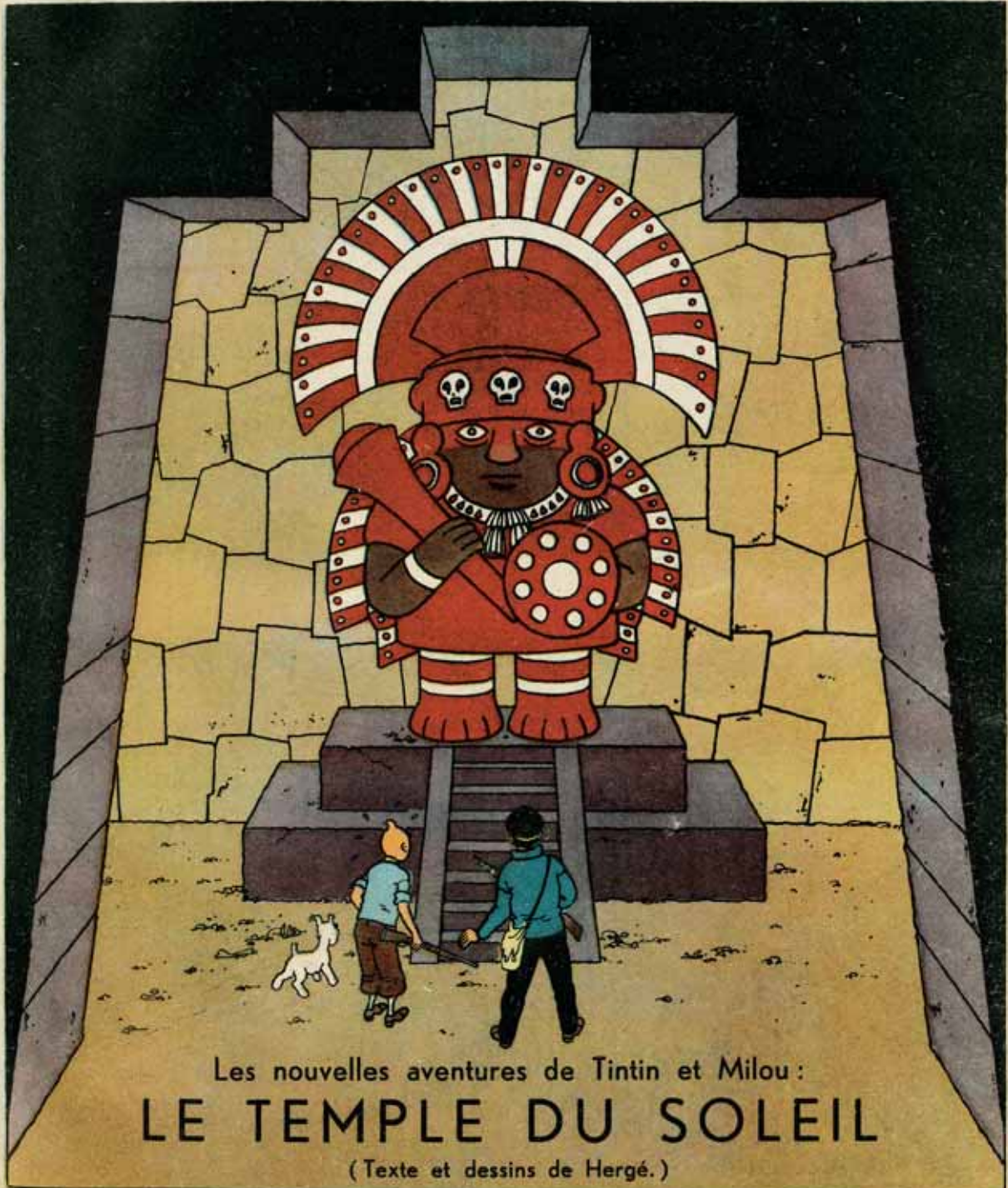
26 SEPTEMBRE 1946



TINTIN

CHAQUE JEUDI

3,50
FRS



Les nouvelles aventures de Tintin et Milou :

LE TEMPLE DU SOLEIL

(Texte et dessins de Hergé.)

HERGÉ À PARIS

HOMMAGE AU PÈRE DU NEUVIÈME ART

by María Fernández García, CEND

Georges Remi, dit Hergé, est souvent considéré comme le père de la bande dessinée européenne. Jusqu'au 15 janvier, le Grand Palais consacre au créateur de Tintin la plus importante rétrospective jamais vue de son travail à Paris. *Commission en direct* passe en revue la carrière de l'auteur bruxellois, ses influences artistiques et ses célèbres personnages.

Dans une interview en 1969, Hergé affirmait son espoir que la bande dessinée aurait acquis «droit de cité» au XXI^{ème} siècle. Son rêve s'est fait réalité. Cette saison au programme du Grand Palais, il côtoie Frida Kahlo et Diego Rivera, parmi d'autres artistes.

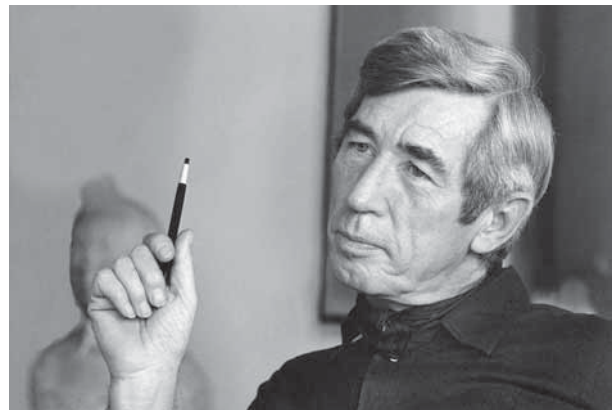
Cette monographie, réalisée en collaboration avec le Musée Hergé, rassemble «le plus grand corpus de documents originaux jamais présenté sur Hergé», affirme son commissaire, Jérôme Neutres. Des centaines d'œuvres et de pièces permettent au visiteur de découvrir l'artiste derrière les aventures de Tintin dans une atmosphère ludique.

Ce personnage, né en 1929 dans les pages du *Petit Vingtième*, est très présent tout au long du parcours. Mais il est accompagné par d'autres comme Quick et Flupke, Jo, Zette et Jocko ou Totor. Des premières esquisses et planches jusqu'aux couvertures, on constate toute la production derrière les albums d'Hergé, qui a vendu presque 250 millions d'albums.

L'amateur d'art

L'exposition emmène le visiteur jusqu'aux sources de l'inspiration d'Hergé pour montrer «les différents ressorts de son processus créatif», d'après Neutres. On présente le dessinateur en tant qu'amateur d'art, tout aussi bien des grands maîtres du passé, comme Bosch ou Holbein, que des arts premiers ou des mouvements d'avant-garde.

Durant les années 60, Hergé se met à collectionner des œuvres contemporaines et fait même une brève incursion dans la peinture. Les toiles exposées témoignent de sa passion pour des peintres comme Joan Miró. On trouve aussi le portrait d'Hergé fait par Andy Warhol, qui a reconnu l'empreinte laissée sur son œuvre par le dessinateur belge.



▲ Hergé, Studios Hergé, Bruxelles, 1969
© Vagn Hansen - collection Studios Hergé

Dans l'œuvre d'Hergé il y a aussi un dialogue avec le cinéma. Si le montage et le cadrage de ses dessins et les gestes de ses personnages ont une dette envers les films muets, ses albums auront également une influence sur de futurs réalisateurs. Même Spielberg s'est inspiré de Tintin pour Indiana Jones.

Une partie méconnue de la carrière d'Hergé, son activité comme graphiste publicitaire, est aussi présente. Une salle montre plusieurs affiches conçues par l'artiste, où l'on retrouve la ligne claire des albums de Tintin.

Tintin lui-même, *via* son compte Twitter, a qualifié l'expo de superbe. Et le capitaine Haddock, le personnage préféré d'Hergé, s'est mis à renouveler son répertoire de plus de 200 jurons pour l'occasion. Il suffit de le suivre et le mentionner avec le hashtag #capitaine-Haddock pour recevoir un tout nouveau juron. Comme il dirait: *Tommerre de Brest!*, qu'est-ce que vous attendez pour y aller? ■

Hergé au Grand Palais

► <http://www.grandpalais.fr/fr/evenement/herge>

GUGGENHEIM. FULL ABSTRACTION

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM IN BRUSSELS

by Nathalie Paulger, CEND

The Solomon R. Guggenheim and Peggy Guggenheim Collections of New York and Venice are famous the world over and, until 12 February 2017, visitors can discover parts of these collections at the Brussels ING Art Centre. *Commission en direct* spoke to Patricia De Peuter, the centre's Head of Art Management.

"This year we are celebrating the 30th anniversary of the ING Art Centre and we wanted something special," explains Patricia. After two successful exhibitions in 2016 already (*Pop Art in Belgium* and *Next-Peter Kogler*), the *Guggenheim. Full Abstraction* exhibition features works from artists never shown before in Brussels. Patricia stresses that, with so many post-war abstract artworks on show at the same time, this is a unique opportunity to get a good overview of the period and to enjoy a display of a high artistic level. Speaking of the attacks in March leading to a decline in tourism and of the great security concerns surrounding the art pieces, she concludes *"this means a lot for a city like Brussels."*

The exhibition is set up as a narrative that reconstructs relationships across the Atlantic through the museums of two American collectors – Peggy Guggenheim and her uncle Solomon R. Guggenheim. A testament to the importance of the two collections, it confirms the crucial role they played in the history of 20th Century art.

Solomon Guggenheim, an American businessman and art collector, first opened a Museum of Non-Objective Painting in 1939. Four years later, he commissioned the design of the famous museum on Fifth Avenue, which opened in 1959 and was to carry



© Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, SABAM Belgium 2016

his name following his death. Peggy Guggenheim, who opted for more wide-ranging collecting and was open to a variety of movements of her time, first operated a gallery in New York, before opening her museum in the Palazzo Venier dei Leoni in Venice in 1951.

Opening with masterpieces by well-known artists like Duchamp and Max Ernst, the exhibition goes on to explore post-war developments on both sides of the Atlantic with the Informalism of European masters such as Alberto Burri, Emilio Vedova, Lucio Fontana and Jean Dubuffet, and with work by leading figures on the American art scene from the 1940s to the 1960s: Jackson Pollock – with no

fewer than fifteen works – Mark Rothko and Alexander Calder with the so-called 'mobiles and stabiles', alongside work by Willem de Kooning, Sam Francis, Robert Motherwell, Cy Twombly and others.

Paintings, sculptures, engravings and photographs from the Guggenheim collections of New York and Venice, as well as from a small number of other museums and collections are exhibited, offering the public the chance to admire and compare some of the great masterpieces which played a crucial role in defining the very concept of post-war 20th Century art. ■

Guggenheim. Full Abstraction

► <http://bit.ly/2e9q3Bn>

THE COMMISSION SKI CLUB SNOW HOLIDAYS IN THE ALPS

by María Fernández García, CEND

fit@work

The European Commission's sport clubs offer the perfect opportunity to practise your favourite sport while getting to know colleagues. Now that the winter season is approaching, the ski club is a good choice for fans of this sport. Every year, a skiing week is planned in January.

If you practise or would like to learn skiing, Euroski is the club for you. It is one of 26 sport clubs which currently exist in the Commission. It was founded in 1976, first in Luxembourg and later also in Brussels, explains Anita De Backer, the contact person for the club.

The club is open to people of all ski levels, from beginners to experts. At the beginning of this year, it had 26 members of 14 different nationalities.

A ski week in January is a permanent feature in the programme. For 2017, it will take place from 21-28 January, and registration will be open until mid-December. This season, the chosen location is Bormio, in the heart of the Italian Alps.

The Bormio skiing area is located at an altitude of between 1,200 and 3,000 metres. There are 14 ski lifts, an artificial snow plant and 50km of slopes which are sunny from late morning until closing time.

The journey can be made by car or by plane to Milan. Airplane tickets have to be bought by participants. The club organises a transfer to the hotel for those arriving on the proposed flight from Brussels, or who manage to be at the same airport at the same time by other means of transport. There is also a possibility to take a 'Valtellina' bus from all Milan airports to Bormio.

Participants will receive a ski pass for six days and will receive lessons for all levels. A ski school for two and a half hours a day from Monday to Friday is included in the price.

As regards the accommodation, the club has chosen a hotel at 1,700m, directly on the ski slopes. The price will include full board and wine and water at meals. The rental of ski equipment is not included but is available at the hotel, as well as the use of a sauna.



© Fotolia

Novembre 2016

Spa and sightseeing

Apart from its ski slopes, Bormio offers other attractions, such as a mediaeval quarter and its thermal waters, well-known since Roman times. The chosen hotel has an agreement with a nearby Spa, for those who want to relax in between skiing sessions.

Interested in joining the trip?

A form with all practical information and prices (in French) will be available in November. For more information, you can contact Anita (e-mail below) and ask to be added to the club's mailing list. ■

► anita.debacker@hotmail.com

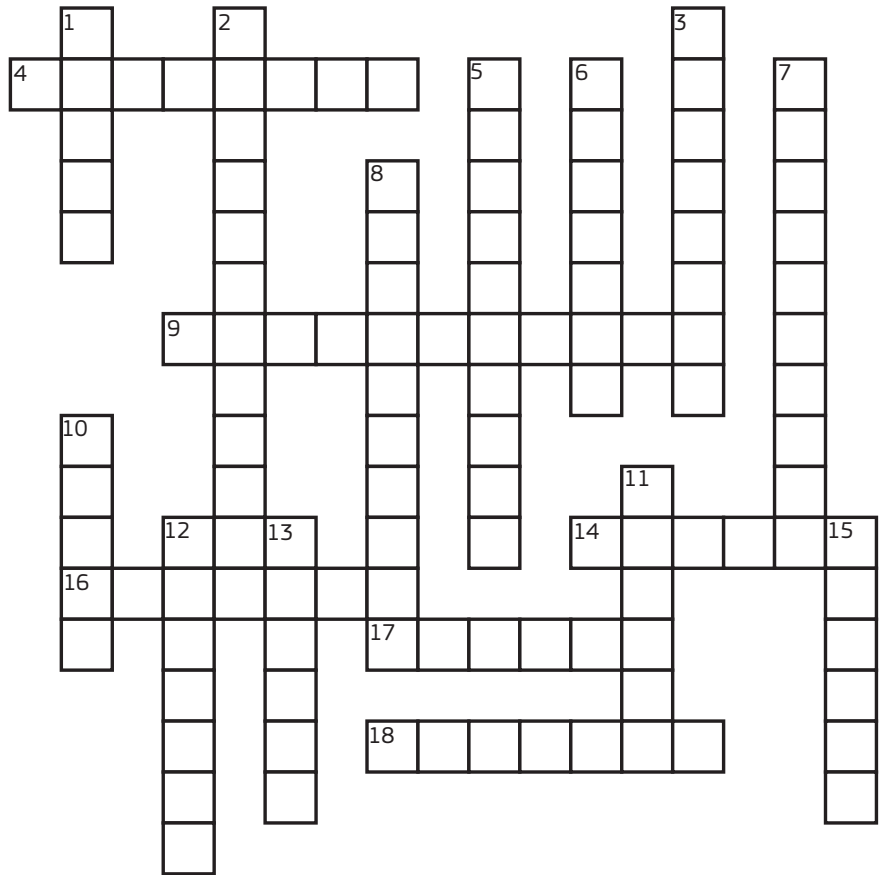
Commission sport clubs in Brussels and Luxembourg

► <http://europa.eu/!KP73pF>

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 04** Mountain range between the Black and Caspian Seas
- 09** Imi, creator of the Krav Maga self-defence system
- 14** Juan Manuel, Colombian President and 2016 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize
- 16** Founder of the Republic of Turkey
- 17** Mountain in Armenia's coat of arms, considered the resting place of Noah's Ark
- 18** Flower that gave its name to the Tunisian Revolution



DOWN

- 01** Bird considered, in two-headed form, the national symbol of Albania
- 02** Jordan's royal family
- 03** Capital of Serbia
- 05** Solomon, American art collector
- 06** Hurricane which struck the Caribbean in October
- 07** Petro, current President of Ukraine
- 08** Abdelaziz, President of Algeria
- 10** Tree depicted on the flag of Lebanon
- 11** Peace agreement reached in 1995 ending the war in Bosnia
- 12** Captain featured in Tintin's albums, remembered for his creative curses
- 13** Traditional Middle-Eastern dip made of chickpeas
- 15** Israeli currency

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS: 03 BEACTIVE - 06 PNEUMONIA - 08 MECHELEN - 09 DAHL - 12 FICO - 13 LUXPRIZE - 15 SCHULZ - 16 SVALBARD - 17 THIELEMANS
DOWN: 01 QUINOA - 02 BEER - 03 BRAZIL - 04 EURESULTS - 05 APPLE - 07 CONNECTED - 10 GALILEO - 11 CYPRUS - 14 EKIDEN

Answers in next month's edition. Send your suggestions for clues and keys to Maria.FERNANDEZ-GARCIA@ec.europa.eu, with 'crosswords' in the subject line.

QUIZ

EUROPE'S NEIGHBOURHOOD

- 01** What's the nationality of Commissioner Hahn?
- German
 - Austrian
 - Swedish
- 02** Which of the following countries is a potential candidate country for EU membership?
- Turkey
 - Albania
 - Kosovo
- 03** How much money is foreseen for the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance for the period 2014-2020?
- Nearly €12 billion
 - €42.7 billion
 - Around €1.5 billion
- 04** For which of the following countries have accession negotiations started?
- Albania
 - Bosnia and Herzegovina
 - Serbia
- 05** For the current MFF, how much money is foreseen for the European Neighbourhood Instrument?
- €1.32 billion
 - €41.2 billion
 - €15.4 billion
- 06** In which of these countries is a free trade area currently being implemented?
- Armenia
 - Belarus
 - Moldova
- 07** What is the budget of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey for 2016-17?
- €3 billion
 - €14 billion
 - €1.5 billion
- 08** Which of these countries is not part of the EU's Southern Neighbourhood?
- Syria
 - Iraq
 - Morocco
- 09** What is the new EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis called in Arabic?
- The Madad Fund
 - The Medid Fund
 - The Menad Facility
- 10** How many teachers have been trained thanks to an EU-funded education project for Syria?
- 140
 - 1,500
 - 700

HISTOIRE EN IMAGES

40 YEARS OF EUROPEAN UNION YOUTH ORCHESTRA

The European Union Youth Orchestra (EUYO) is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. In March 1976, the European Parliament passed a unanimous resolution to found the European Community (now Union) Youth Orchestra, and a month later the European Commission assumed its official patronage. Since then, the orchestra has performed in more than 40 countries, 177 cities and 224 venues, including cities in all 28 EU Member States.

1978



When the European Parliament approved the creation of the EUYO, Lionel Bryer and Joy Bryer, respectively the Chairman and Secretary General of the International Youth Foundation of Great Britain, founded it. Two years later it launched its inaugural tour, conducted by Founding Music Director Claudio Abbado, with concerts in Amsterdam, Bonn, Paris, Luxembourg, Brussels, Milan and Rome. During its first years, it performed under the baton of important conductors such as Herbert von Karajan and Daniel Barenboim.

► **Claudio Abbado, Founding Music Director of the EUYO, conducts the orchestra.**

1995



During its history, the EUYO has performed in many of the world's major concert halls, like the Royal Albert Hall, the Boston Symphony Hall, the Musikverein and Carnegie Hall. It is an ambassador of the European ideals of cultural unity and cooperation and, at the same time, it provides invaluable professional experience for young orchestral musicians aged 16-26, from the 28 EU Member States.

► **The EUYO performs at the Davos World Economic Forum under the baton of Ivan Fischer.**

2016

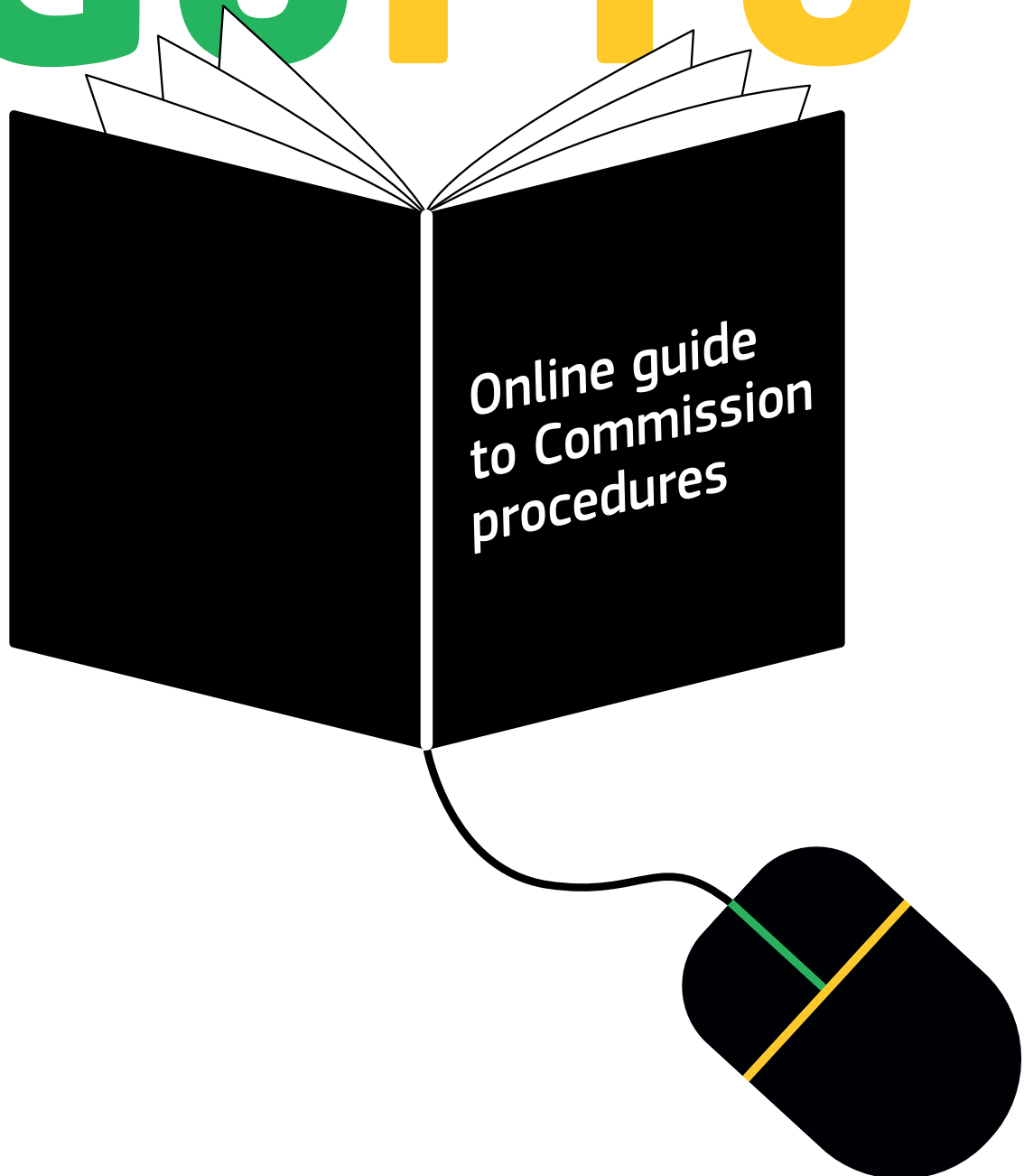


The EUYO celebrates its 40th anniversary with performances in every capital city of the EU's 28 Member States. The tour, *Capital Sounds*, began this summer in Bratislava and runs until summer 2020. Each event includes a concert by the EUYO, a performance by a group of young players from the host country and a speech by an important national cultural or political figure.

► **Performance of the EUYO in Grafenegg, its Summer Home and Principal Venue Partner.**

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