



TODAYS
News

Thursday, 24 September, 2015

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Commissioner Thyssen convenes extraordinary meeting with ESF and FEAD managing authorities in response to the refugee crisis

The European Commission has been consistently and continuously working for a coordinated European response on the refugees and migration front. The Commission has taken rapid action and proposed concrete measures in response to the escalating refugee crisis, presenting a [comprehensive approach](#) to migration management - in line with the principles of solidarity and responsibility. Migration management can be successful only if underpinned by effective policies at national, regional and local level to promote social inclusion and to facilitate integration of asylum seekers and refugees. In this context, the European Social Fund ([ESF](#)) and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived ([FEAD](#)) play an important role in supporting the implementation of social inclusion and labour market integration measures in the Member States. Commissioner **Thyssen** has called the Managing Authorities of the two funds for an extraordinary meeting tomorrow in Brussels. They will discuss how to better use the available FEAD and ESF resources to respond to the refugee crisis by optimising the impact of the social inclusion and labour market integration measures. The meeting will also provide the opportunity to share best practices and expertise on providing assistance and fostering the integration of refugees into our societies and economies. Ahead of the meeting, Commissioner Marianne **Thyssen** said: *"We need to optimise the use of EU funds and measures to support Member States to respond to the refugee crisis. Financial support from the European Social Fund can play a crucial role in supporting the integration of asylum seekers and refugees, providing them with the possibility to participate in their host societies – both socially and economically."* The speech of Commissioner **Thyssen** will be broadcast by [Ebs](#), a factsheet on EU support for integration of refugees and asylum seekers will be available on the day of the event.

September infringement package: Commission acts for full, proper and timely implementation of EU law for the benefit of citizens and businesses

To help citizens and businesses benefit fully from the internal market, the European Commission continuously engages with and, if necessary, initiates infringement procedures against Member States who do not respect European law. This month, as part of its monthly package of infringement decisions, the Commission decided to refer a number of Member States to the Court of Justice of the European Union: Malta - in the area of Environment, Germany and Lithuania - in the area of Mobility and Transport. In addition, the Commission is sending 13 reasoned opinions to a total of 11 Member States: Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain. As a reminder, on 23 September 2015, the European Commission launched 40 infringements procedures against several Member States to make the European Asylum System work better. A press release on this is available [online](#). A

summary of the key decisions as well as the contact details of the relevant Spokespeople can be found in the [fact](#) sheet and in the corresponding press releases for [Malta](#), [Germany](#) and [Lithuania](#). On the general infringement procedure, a memo is also available [here](#).

Have your say on geo-blocking and the role of platforms in the online economy

Today the European Commission is launching a public debate with two consultations: one on geo-blocking and the other one on platforms, online intermediaries, data, cloud computing and the collaborative economy. The consultation on geo-blocking and other forms of geographically-based restrictions will gather opinions on unjustified commercial barriers which prevent from buying and selling products and services within the EU. It covers, for example, customers who are charged different prices or offered a different range of goods depending on where they live, but it does not cover copyright-protected content and content licensing practices. The second consultation launched today will look at the economic role of online platforms, which include, for example, search engines, social media, video sharing website, app stores, etc. It will also explore the liability of intermediaries as regards illegal content hosted online and how to improve the free flow of data in the EU and to build a European Cloud. It will look as well into the possibilities and potential issues raised by the rise of the collaborative economy. Both consultations will run until late December 2015. Views expressed and information gathered from these consultations will help the Commission assess the need for, and prepare legislative and policy initiatives where necessary, as part of the [Digital Single Market Strategy](#) and the upcoming [Internal Market Strategy for Goods and Services](#). A press release can be found online in [here](#) will be available soon.

Commission welcomes agreement on €131 million support for the modernisation of public administrations

EU Member States approved yesterday - via their Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) - a new €131 million programme that will help modernise European public administrations and provide interoperable digital services. This adoption follows an agreement at technical level with the European Parliament. The new programme, ISA², which will be run by the Commission, will build on the success of its predecessor, [ISA](#) (Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations). The current programme, which ends this year, has supported the development of more than [20 eGovernment solutions](#) that are today operational in Public administrations across the EU. ISA² will ensure seamless electronic cross-border or cross-sector interaction between European public administrations. It will support the development of interoperable digital solutions which will be available to all interested public administrations on European, national and regional level, free of charge. By using ISA² solutions, administrations will be able to ensure interoperability between different IT-systems responsible for the delivery of electronic services. This will lead to a harmonised interoperability landscape in Europe, saving time and costs, and contribute to the creation of a [Digital Single Market](#). The programme will run from 2016-2020. Formal adoption by Member States in the European Council and the Parliament is expected before December. More information can be found [here](#).

EUROSTAT: More than 80% of primary school pupils in the EU were studying a foreign language in 2013

In 2013, 17.7 million primary school pupils (or 81.7% of all the pupils at this level) in the European Union were studying at least one foreign language, including 1 million (4.6%) studying two foreign languages or more. At primary level, English was by far the most popular language, studied by 16.7 million pupils. A press release is available [here](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-President Dombrovskis in Paris

Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, is in Paris today. He will meet with Prime Minister Manuel **Valls** and Finance Minister Michel **Sapin**. They will discuss France's public finances, economic challenges and reform efforts as well as deepening the Economic and Monetary Union.

Commissioner Hahn visits Serbia

Johannes **Hahn**, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations is visiting Belgrade on Friday, 25 September to discuss the current refugee crisis and to express EU's solidarity with Serbia. Ahead of the visit, Commissioner **Hahn** said: *"I am grateful for Serbia's competent and resilient management of the refugee crisis. Serbia is ensuring decent living conditions for refugees, in line with international standards. The EU stands by Serbia in this pan-European crisis which can be solved only with a common approach. Just this week an additional € 17 million were **announced** to support the efforts of Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in coping with the refugee crisis."* Commissioner **Hahn** will meet Prime Minister Aleksandar **Vučić**, Minister of Interior Nebojša **Stefanović**, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veterans' and Social Affairs Aleksandar **Vulin**, and Minister in charge of EU integration Jadranka **Joksimović**, meet NGOs, and visit the Refugee Aid Centre in Šid.

Commissioner Crețu visits the Netherlands

Today, Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina **Crețu** is in the Netherlands. This morning she met the national Minister in charge of Cohesion Policy, Mrs. Sharon **Dijkma** and Mr Ahmed **Aboutaleb**, Mayor of Rotterdam. She will visit EU-funded projects in the field of research and innovation this afternoon. For 2014-2020, the Netherlands has been allocated around €1.4 billion in total Cohesion Policy funding; resources will be mainly targeted at the support to the low carbon economy and at the promotion of an innovation-friendly business environment. More information on [Cohesion Policy in the Netherlands](#) and on [Regional Policy](#) is available online.

MEX/15/5707



Find out [here](#) what will be discussed next week in the European Commission, European Council and the European Parliament.

