



Monday, 30 May, 2016

### **More transparent and balanced interest representation: Commission adopts new expert group rules**

Today, the Commission has adopted new rules on how it selects the advisory expert groups which provide external expertise to help inform the policy-making process. The Decision provides a single set of rules and principles aimed at increasing transparency, avoiding conflicts of interest and ensuring a balanced representation of interests. The new rules are binding on all Commission departments. First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: *"When we design rules and policies we need the help of outside expertise to help us get it right. Citizens rightly expect this to be done in a transparent and balanced way. Thanks to the measures we are taking today, the Commission will benefit from high quality expertise while avoiding possible conflicts of interests, and the public will be able to hold us to account. Today's decision follows fruitful consultations with Members of the European Parliament, the European Ombudsman and representatives of civil society organisations, who are key partners in delivering a transparent approach to EU policy-making. This is another step forward in changing the way 'Brussels' works."* More information is available in this [Press Release](#), and the Commission [Decision](#) and its [Annexes](#) and [Communication](#) are also available online.

### **The Urban Agenda for the EU: European cities get their say in EU policy making**

Today, the Commission is taking part in the informal meeting in Amsterdam of the 28 Ministers in charge of urban matters, along with representatives from other EU Institutions and representatives of European cities, on the Urban Agenda for the EU. The aim of today's meeting is to endorse the '[Pact of Amsterdam](#)' which establishes the Urban Agenda for the EU and lays out its key principles. At the heart of the Urban Agenda for the EU will be the development of 12 [partnerships](#) on identified urban challenges such as the social inclusion of migrants, air quality, urban poverty or affordable housing. The partnerships will allow cities, Member States, EU Institutions and stakeholders, such as NGOs and business partners, to work together on an equal basis to find common ways to improve urban areas in the European Union. A [press release](#) and an [infographic](#) on the main features of the Urban Agenda are available online. A press conference is organised in Amsterdam at 15:50 with Dutch Interior Minister Ronald Plasterk, Committee of the Regions President Marku Markkula and Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina **Crețu**, which you can follow live [here](#).

## **EUROSTAT: 7 out of 10 city dwellers aged 20 to 64 are employed Almost a quarter of all city dwellers at risk of poverty or social exclusion**

Home to a large share of the population aged 20 to 64 in the European Union (EU), cities can be viewed as both the source of and solution to many of today's economic, social and environmental challenges. Among EU city dwellers aged 20-64, 70% were in employment. The risk of poverty or social exclusion affected around 24% of all city dwellers.

Today the EU ministers for urban affairs meet to endorse the Pact of Amsterdam, which will establish an Urban Agenda for the EU. On this occasion, Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, issues data on population, employment and risk of poverty in cities. Further data can be found on the Eurostat website. A flagship publication with a detailed picture of urban development and urban life in Europe will be released in September. View EUROSTAT statement [here](#)

## **European Commission appoints new Heads of European Commission Regional Offices in Bonn, Germany, and in Marseille, France**

The European Commission has appointed Mr Jochen Pöttgen and Mr Alain Dumort as the new Heads of the European Commission's Regional Offices in Bonn, Germany, and in Marseille, France respectively. They will take up their duties on 1 June 2016. Mr Pöttgen, a German national, brings 20 years of experience notably in the fields of Trade and Human Resources management as well as in communication. Since September 2014, he has been International Relations Officer responsible for Diplomatic Trade Relations with third countries, at the Commission's Directorate-General (DG) for Trade. He was awarded a degree in political sciences, with specialisation in Economics at the University of Florence, Italy. He speaks fluently German, English, French, Italian and Spanish. Mr Dumort, a French national, has 16 years of Commission experience, particularly in the area of media and communications. Since January 2015, Alain Dumort has been the Head of Unit responsible for Corporate Communication Contracts and Services at the DG for Communication. After five years as Chief Executive Officer of the Bureau d'Etudes Techniques, Economiques et Prospectives, specialised in energy market modelling (Grand-Duchy of Luxemburg), in 1990, Mr Dumort started at the European Commission as an economist and Principal Administrator at the DG for Telecommunications, Information Market and Research. In 2005, Mr Dumort was also the Acting Director for Communication, Media and Services. The Commission has its Representations in all 28 EU Member States as well as Regional Offices in Barcelona, Belfast, Bonn, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Marseille, Milan, Munich and Wrocław. The Representations report to the Commission's headquarters on significant developments in the Member States. A complete press release for Mr Jochen Pöttgen is available [online](#); and for Mr Alain Dumort – in [EN](#)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **High Representative / Vice-President Mogherini visits Saudi Arabia on 30-31 May**

High Representative / Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** will visit the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 30-31 May. During her visit in Jeddah, she will meet with the Minister of Foreign Affairs Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir, with whom she will discuss a broad spectrum of issues including the development of bilateral relations, regional security challenges, the fight against terrorism and radicalization, and human rights. The HR/VP will also meet with the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani as well as with representatives of Saudi women and the Saudi business community. While in Jeddah, she will also meet with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab States, Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

## Commissioner Avramopoulos in Lisbon to launch the 21<sup>st</sup> European Drugs Report

Tomorrow, Commissioner Avramopoulos will be in Lisbon to launch the 2016 European Drugs Report produced by the [European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction](#) (EMCDDA). Ahead of the launch of the Report, Commissioner **Avramopoulos** said: *"Europe faces a growing problem with drugs. The 2016 European Drug Report will provide important evidence on current trends and is a helpful tool for European policymakers to shape policies and actions to reduce drug-related harm."* The report will offer a top-level analysis of the latest trends in drug supply, drug use prevalence, prevention, treatment, and policy across the 28 EU Member States, Turkey and Norway. A joint press conference with Commissioner **Avramopoulos** and EMCDDA's Director, Alexis Goosdeel will take place tomorrow at 10am and will be broadcast by [EBS](#). A press release by the EMCDDA will be available [here](#) at 10h tomorrow. In Lisbon, Commissioner **Avramopoulos** will also meet with the President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, and Portugal's Minister of Internal Administration, Constanca Urbano de Sousa.

## Commissioners Navracsics and Oettinger represent the Commission at Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council

Commissioner **Navracsics** will represent the Commission at the meetings of Youth and Education Ministers taking place today and at the meeting of Sport Ministers tomorrow afternoon to discuss the role of good governance in sport at the EU and national level. The Council is also expected to adopt conclusions on enhancing the integrity, transparency and good governance of major sport events. The debate corresponds to the Commission's policy priorities in the area of sport, and the second [European Week of Sport](#) in September will include a major conference on good governance. The importance of youth and education policies in the fight against the threat of violent radicalisation will be the main focus of Education and Youth Ministers who will hold a joint debate on the subject over lunch. Modernising higher education will also be discussed. Finally, Commissioner Navracsics will indicate the main goals of the New Skills Agenda which the Commission will present shortly. Commissioner **Oettinger** will represent the Commission at the meetings of Culture Ministers tomorrow morning. He will notably present the revision of EU audiovisual media rules that has just been adopted by the Commission ([press release](#)) as part of the [Digital Single Market strategy](#).

## Upcoming Events.

[30 May–3 June: Green Week 2016 - Investing for a greener future](#) The Commission will host Green Week, the biggest annual occasion to discuss European environment policy, taking place from Monday, 30 May to Friday, 3 June 2016.

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