



# EUROBULLETIN

September 2016

## EU integration process in CEE countries

### New EU support to boost private sector development and strengthen institutions in the Eastern Partnership

Implementing the renewed European Neighbourhood Policy: €79.8 million to support reform efforts, economic diversification and private sector development, an active civil society and regional cooperation in the Eastern Partnership. The EU announces a new assistance to boost socio-economic development and SMEs, youth employability and connectivity in the Eastern Partnership countries. This includes bilateral cooperation with Azerbaijan and Belarus. ([Read more](#))

### Facility for Refugees in Turkey: EU signs grants worth €600 million to help refugees on education and health

The European Commission signed two direct grants worth €600 million to support Syrian refugees and host communities in Turkey in the areas of education and health. Since March this year, the EU has mobilised more than €2 billion out of its total budget of €3 billion under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey. ([Read more](#))

### Commissioner Bulc in Montenegro and Serbia to promote regional transport cooperation

Transport is one of the main areas of cooperation between the EU and the Western Balkans who agreed on a "Connectivity Agenda" covering both infrastructure development and policy reforms in this sector. During her visit, Commissioner **Bulc** will recall the importance to implement this Agenda, in order to bridge the development gap and support regional stability and prosperity. ([Read more](#))

## Pros, advantages and obligations resulting from EU membership

### September infringements' package: key decisions

In its monthly package of infringement decisions, the key decisions taken by the Commission (including 9 letters of formal notice, 54 reasoned opinions, and 5 referrals to the Court of Justice of the European Union) are presented below and grouped by policy area. The Commission is also closing 122 cases in which the issues with the Member States concerned have been solved without the Commission needing to pursue the procedure further. ([Read more](#))

### Introduction to EU institutions and their functioning

### European Commission and EIB present guidance paper on the Eurostat treatment of PPPs

EU-Commissioner Marianne Thyssen and Vice-President Jan Vapaavuori of the European Investment Bank (EIB) have presented a new Guide to the Statistical Treatment of Public Private Partnerships in Brussels today. The guide is a joint effort of Eurostat (the Statistical Office of the European Commission) and the European PPP Expertise Centre (EPEC) of the EIB. ([Read more](#))

## Multi-level governance

### Restoring trust in Europe must start in regions and cities

As cities and regions are the powerhouses for progress and societal innovation, the EU's cities and regions, commit to work in partnership with the EU institutions and Member States to effectively bridge the innovation, skills and investment gap. ([Read more](#))

### Decentralized management of EU funds

### High Level Group presents key recommendations to make access easier to the European Structural and Investment Funds

In line with the initiative "EU budget focused on results" and with the efforts for Better Regulation, today the Commission is taking stock of the work conducted by the High Level Group on Simplification for the beneficiaries of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds). ([Read more](#))

### EUR 65 million for innovative businesses in Bulgaria and Slovakia

The European Investment Fund (EIF) and CIBANK JSC (CIBANK) have signed a guarantee agreement to enhance access to finance to innovative small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and mid-caps in Bulgaria and Slovakia. ([Read more](#))



## Introduction to different negotiation chapters

### International Day of Older Persons

In 2015, almost 27 million people aged 80 or over ("elderly people") were living in the EU, 7 million more than in 2005. An increase in both their absolute number and their share in total population is observed in nearly every EU Member State. The rising share of elderly people in the EU (from 4.0% in 2005 to 5.3% in 2015) means that in 2015 one in every 20 persons living in the EU was aged 80 or over. The ageing of the population structure is, at least partly, the result of an increasing life expectancy, which grew at the age of 80 from 8.4 years in 2004 to 9.5 years in 2014 ([Read more](#))

### European Day of Languages - More than 80% of primary school pupils in the EU were studying a foreign language in 2014 - English clearly dominant

In 2014, more than 18 million primary school pupils (or 84% of all the pupils at this level) in the EU were studying at least one foreign language, including nearly 1 million (around 5%) studying two foreign languages or more. At primary level, English was by far the most popular language, studied by over 17 million pupils. ([Read more](#))

### Euro area unemployment at 10.1% / EU28 at 8.6%

The euro area (EA19) seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 10.1% in August 2016, stable compared to July 2016 and down from 10.7% in August 2015. This remains the lowest rate recorded in the euro area since July 2011. The EU28 unemployment rate was 8.6% in August 2016, stable compared to July 2016 and down from 9.3% in August 2015. This remains the lowest rate recorded in the EU28 since March 2009. These figures are published by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. ([Read more](#))

### Antitrust: Commission publishes initial findings of e-commerce sector inquiry

The European Commission's preliminary report on its e-commerce sector inquiry confirms the fast growth of e-commerce in the EU and identifies business practices that might restrict competition and limit consumer choice. Commissioner Vestager said: "E-commerce has become important for consumers and it has significant impact on the business and strategies of companies". ([Read more](#))

## The 3<sup>rd</sup> pillar devoted to police and judicial cooperation

### State of the Union 2016: EU External Investment Plan

The European Commission has proposed on 14 September an ambitious External Investment Plan in order to support investment in our partner countries, in Africa and the European Neighbourhood, to strengthen our partnerships, promote a new model of participation of the private sector and contribute to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. This is part of the broader efforts the EU is pursuing on the basis of the new Partnership Framework that was adopted in June. ([Read more](#))

## Introduction to different sector policies

### The EU at work to bridge the investment gap in transport and stimulate the European economy

Bridging the investment gap in Europe to stimulate the European economy is one of President Juncker's top priorities. The transport sector can make an important contribution to this agenda. The European Commission's Investment Plan can help address these issues, paving the way for the competitive and sustainable EU transport system of tomorrow. ([Read more](#))

### Total Percentage of Available Fund

Funding for regional and cohesion policy in 2014-2020 amounts to €351.8 bn. Detailed data and charts are available in the Cohesion Policy Data portal. ([Read more](#))

### Study: the Use of New Provisions During the Programming Phase of the Esi Funds

The analysis of all the 28 Partnership Agreements and of 292 operational and co-operation programmes for the 2014-2020 period financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Social Fund, completed with a survey of managing authorities and interviews at European, national and regional levels, revealed that the new regulatory framework has significantly altered the Member States' approach to programming. The new provisions required programmers to link strategic thinking and result-based management, and relate strategic thinking with the objectives and the means of the Europe 2020 strategy. ([Read more](#))

## Promotion of EU upcoming events and news

### Human capital for territorial growth

#### 11 October 2016

##### Brussels, Belgium

The Joint Research Centre Annual Conference 2016 will focus on the importance of human capital for the prosperity of regions and cities. The conference will take place on 11 October, at the Bozar in Brussels, within the framework of the European Week of Regions and Cities. ([Read more](#))

#### 7th Strategy Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

#### 08/11/2016 -09/11/2016

##### Stockholm, Sweden

The event, entitled "One Region, One Future - Vision 2030 for the Baltic Sea Region", is hosted by Sweden together with the Nordic Council of Ministers, in close cooperation with the European Commission, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy. ([Read more](#))

#### 5th Annual Forum of the EU macro regional Strategy for the Danube Region

#### 03/11/2016 - 04/11/2016

##### Bratislava, Slovakia

Innovative Flows - Water, Knowledge and Innovation in the Danube Region. The Forum will put a strong emphasis on the challenges and perspectives of water management and research and innovation. The key question to answer will be how to best transform political commitment into operational policies and measures. ([Read more](#))

#### New Pressures on Cities and Regions

#### 24/11/2016 - 25/11/2016

##### London, United Kingdom

This conference provides an intellectual and policy-relevant platform for scholars around the world to address the new and emerging challenges facing cities and regions. The global economic slowdown poses major concerns to many territories – through shortfalls in employment, household incomes, corporate profitability and tax revenues. ([Read more](#))

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