

In touch with EU



News from the Association

CONFERENCE

There are still plenty of places available at our 14 March conference. If you're planning to attend, please book now - it helps enormously with catering and other arrangements!

Digital heaven?

Is 2011 really digital heaven? Have we reached the point where all the EU information we need is available online?

What resources are now available to track current documents and to find older materials?

Can you really afford to throw away all those old Official Journals, the back run of Social Europe and those ageing copies of Eurobarometer?

At the EIA conference on Monday 14 March, you can listen to expert analysis and informed commentary on these and other issues - then make up your own mind.

The price is £30 for EIA members, £45 for others (lunch included).

Those delegates not suffering from information overload might like to go on a brief tour of the British Library.

EIA Awards

Our Conference on 14 March will see the presentation of the 2011 EIA Awards. It's not too late to nominate for the **EIA Award for European Information Sources** (printed or

electronic) or for one of our 'people' prizes: the **EIA Award for Outstanding Contribution to EU Information** and the **Helen Greer Prize** (for a particularly outstanding contribution to EDC librarianship).

Committee nominations

Also to be decided on 14 March is the composition of our Committee. Three of the six posts are up for election: Treasurer (currently Ian Mayfield) and Committee Representatives 2 and 3 (currently Kathy Pitt and Helen Young).

Case law training course, 10 June

£150 to EIA Members, £175 to others.

Sessions include:

Europe's supreme court

The fundamental principles of EU law

The General Court and the Civil Service Tribunal

Tracking case law

Links to national courts

Programme details and a booking form are on our website.

Feedback

Please send comments etc on this newsletter to eric@eia.org.uk.

Eric Davies

EIA Coordinator

This newsletter can be printed, but the embedded URLs will be lost ...

Issue 6 - February 2011

It's official:

EU documents , publications and sources

Women, peace, security ...

The Council has published 'Women, Peace and Security – The European Union in action'. Available in print and pdf versions, the 26-page booklet 'presents the European Union's policy on women, peace and security, which covers humanitarian, development, security and political aspects of its external relations and aims particularly to protect and empower women and girls.'

See: [Publication text](#)

Transparency Register

Proposals for a joint Transparency Register of people and organisations wishing to contribute to the EU policy-making process has received the blessing of the European Parliament's Constitutional Affairs Committee. MEPs want the Council to join the Register and also want registration to be mandatory. The new Register should be available online in June, enabling citizens to see the full range of stakeholders who contribute to EU decision-making discussions and policy implementation.

See: Press Release [20110131IPR12828](#)

Green Paper on research funding

COM (2011) 48 is the Green Paper 'From Challenges to Opportunities: Towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation funding'. With it, the European Commission launches a consultation on changes to EU research and innovation funding, with the aims of making participation easier, increasing scientific and economic impact and improving value for money. The Common Strategic Framework would cover the current Framework Programme for Research (FP7), the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). The deadline for contributions is 20 May. By the end of

2011, the Commission will adopt a legislative proposal for research and innovation spending under the post-2013 EU budget.

See: [Green Paper text](#)

Collective redress

The European Commission has launched a public consultation aimed at achieving a coherent approach towards collective redress in the EU. Current EU law provides for the possibility of pursuing collective actions for injunctions in the field of consumer law, but national legal systems vary considerably concerning financial markets, competition, environmental protection, and other areas. The consultation aims to identify common legal principles that should underpin collective actions across the EU. The deadline for contributions is 30 April.

See: [Press Release IP/11/132](#)

Live football

In two cases before the Court of Justice regarding live transmission of football matches in pubs by means of foreign decoder cards, an Advocate General (AG) has advised that the current system of exclusivity agreements breaks EU law. Under such agreements, subscribers can decrypt a satellite television signal using a decoder, which requires a decoder card. Restrictions are placed on the circulation of authorised decoder cards. The AG Opinion refers to joined cases C-403/08 and C-429/08. The Court is expected to deliver its judgment in the next few months.

See: [Press Release 3/11](#)

Focus on ...

EU News

For those of us wishing to keep abreast of recent developments in the EU, the advice we're often given is to check the Rapid database of press releases.

However, although undeniably useful, Rapid isn't very pretty. For those wanting either to use something more attractive or to persuade users/clients to do some of the legwork themselves, it's worth checking out the Commission's [EU News](#) website.

News items are presented in two main sections: 'Highlights' and 'Latest developments'. Each item comprises a headline and brief summary. Clicking the headline leads to more information - (press release or web page). The source of each item is usually indicated (in a very small font) above the title (e.g. 'Council of the European Union', 'European Commission').

Items in the 'Latest developments' section also bear a heading (e.g. 'Transport and travel', 'Science and technology'), making it easier to find similar items in the archive.

News can be browsed by topic and/or year/month, using the pull-down menus on the right of the page, where a search option is also available.

Elsewhere on the page there are options to check video news from the Commission, Parliament and Council, and the 'EU Calendar' highlights forthcoming events.

The site can also be accessed via the main page of [Europa](#) - look for the 'News' section on the right of the screen and click 'More from EU news'.

The screenshot shows the Europa EU News website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: Legal notice, About this site, New on EUROPA, Sitemap, A-Z Index, FAQ, Search, and Contact. Below this is a header with the Europa logo and a language selector set to English (en). The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features a 'Highlights' section with three news items, each with a small image and a brief summary. The right column has a 'Browse latest news' section with a dropdown menu for selecting a topic, a list of topics, and buttons for Commission, Parliament, and Council. At the bottom right, there's a video player showing a group of people.

Legal notice | About this site | New on EUROPA | Sitemap | A-Z Index | FAQ | Search | Contact

Europa
EU News

English (en)

EUROPA > EU News

Highlights

Council of the European Union
Ministers clear European citizens' initiative
14/02/2011
Council adopts regulation allowing citizens to call for legal proposals in areas of EU competence, provided they can gather one million supporters from at least a quarter of member countries.

Council of the European Union
Education and training for sustainable growth
14/02/2011
Education Ministers adopt conclusions indicating how education and training can contribute to making Europe's economy competitive and innovative.

Council of the European Union
EU ready to help democratic transition in Egypt
11/02/2011
The Union's top officials, Herman Van Rompuy, Jose Manuel Barroso and Catherine Ashton, call for the establishment of a representative government that respects the aspirations of the Egyptian people.

Latest developments

Council of the European Union
Council amends Eurovignette draft law in first reading

Council of the European Union
Commission oversight rules adopted

Browse latest news

Select a topic

Select a topic

Agriculture, fisheries and food
Business
Culture, education and youth
Economy, finance and tax
Employment and social rights
Energy and natural resources
Environment, consumers and health
EU explained
External relations and foreign affairs
Justice and citizens' rights
Regions and local development
Science and technology
Transport and travel

Commission Parliament Council

Credit Crunch

Q&A

Our AskEric service gives EIA members the chance to pose their questions to our EU information experts. Whether it's simple or complex - if you're having trouble finding the answer, try AskEric ...

Eric was recently asked why some Directives are called 'Commission Directives'.

He answered:

When discussing EU legislation, we tend to think of the 'institutional triangle' of decision-making, in which the Commission, Council and Parliament each plays its role. In broad terms, the Commission makes a proposal, the Council and Parliament each discusses it, and the draft act is either adopted or rejected.

Directive 2010/84/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council is an example of an act adopted under that process, as is confirmed from the introduction, which mentions 'Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission' etc. The process leading to the adoption of the Directive can be followed via [Pre-Lex](#).

However, there are some areas in which the Commission is authorised to adopt legislation outside the normal decision-making process. Commission Directive 2011/3/EU is an example. It amends Commission Directive 2008/128/EC on purity criteria of colours for use in foodstuffs. Food safety and plant health are areas where the Council has given the Commission responsibility for supplementing or amending what are referred to as 'non-essential elements' of a legislative act (e.g. the maximum levels of contaminants in food or details of active substances permitted for use in pesticides which are annexed to the main piece of legislation).

Directives adopted by the Commission ('Commission Directives') therefore often include the word 'adapting' or 'implementing' in the title (to see some examples, look at the pdf version of Chapter 15 of the [Directory of European Union legislation in force](#); use CTRL F and 'commission directive'). Note that these acts do not appear on PreLex, but they are published in the Official Journal.

Presumably the Commission is authorised to adopt these acts without consulting Council and Parliament, on the grounds that the large number of minor, technical amendments to legislation would make the usual decision-making process grind to a halt.

Snippets:

News and views from non-EU sources

Statewatch

From: [Deepening the democratic deficit: the failure to "enshrine" the public's right of access to documents](#)

The Council (the EU governments) will get access to the content (called euphemistically "information") of all of these documents. But the public will only get access to the "references" of these documents, not the content, on the "register of committee proceedings" (the "Comitology register"). The only document that will be made public is the statistical data on the work of the committees.

EUbusiness

From: [UK backs scrapping 'ridiculous' two-seat EU parliament](#)

Austerity-driven Britain on Thursday leapt in to back a new campaign to end the 'ridiculous' dual sittings of the European Parliament in Brussels and the French city of Strasbourg.

Leading European MPs in a wide-ranging report slammed the cost and carbon impact of the two-seat parliament as an 'anachronism' for the thousands forced into monthly shuttles from Brussels to Strasbourg.

euobserver

From: [Commission memo highlights anxiety over 'bureaucratic culture'](#)

The European Commission is keen to change its culture of "entitlement" and "bureaucratic focus" as it prepares to propose new ways to extract money directly from EU taxpayers in an upcoming €1 trillion budget plan.

The internal mood is evident in a six-page-long memo dated January and signed by commission secretary-general Catherine Day, which says: "We must be able to demonstrate that the activities we propose to fund out of the EU budget can be delivered with greater added value by the EU than by member states alone."

EurActiv

From: [Brussels wants extra help for 'in-between' regions](#)

The European Commission faces an uphill struggle to convince member states that extra funding should be made available to regions that are neither poor nor prosperous - but somewhere in between.

Two types of region – or three? That is one of the most controversial questions at the heart of ongoing discussions on the future of the EU's regional policy and the priorities for the next wave of structural funds – due to start in 2014.

European Policy Centre

From: [The EU's External Action Service: new actor on the scene](#)

The European External Action Service (EEAS) was born on 1st January. Conceived nine years ago in the Convention on the Future of Europe, its setting up has been delayed by problems of ratification of the Lisbon Treaty and then by difficult negotiations on the new service. Its birth has been long and complicated, but EEAS is finally here. What are the prospects for this new arrival on the international scene?

EIA Conference

14 March 2011, British Library, London

£30.00 EIA members, £45.00 others.

**Places limited;
book online at
www.eia.org.uk**

Listen to:

Professor Alex Warleigh-Lack, giving an overview of EU policy and institutional developments;

EIA President Ian Thomson, presenting his annual review of recent developments in EU information provision and resources;

Michael Duero, highlighting recent developments on the EUR-Lex website;

Julian Oliver, giving insights into the website EurActiv.com;

Dominic Brett, speaking about the Commission's current information priorities.

The event will also include presentation of the EIA's annual EU Information Awards.

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Celebrating 25 years of full-text online European information provision

For their sponsorship of our conference and annual Awards, we're grateful to UK and European legal information specialist [Justis Publishing](http://www.justis.com), which celebrates its first quarter of a century this year.

In addition to [EU Bulletins](#), Justis provides full-text law reports and legislation from a wide range of jurisdictions, including the unrivalled, easy-to-search [Justis Celex](#), [OJC](#) and [OJ Daily](#); while the company's provider-neutral citator, [JustCite](#), cross-references and deep-links into an even wider selection of material from numerous third-party resources, including many European information platforms.

EU bulletin

Your daily feed of EU cases, regulations and
as they happen.

Adopted Legislation

Regulation concerning the arms embargo
on the Islamic Republic of Iran