

In touch with EU



News from the Association

Case law training course, 10 June, London

If you work with EU case law, then this new course is for you.

It will:

- put the Court of Justice in context and explain how it works
- look at the fundamental principles of EU law
- show how to track case law
- explain the relationship between the EU Court and national courts

Practical sessions, under the guidance of expert trainers, will give plenty of opportunity to use the sources demonstrated.

The price for EIA members is £150; non-members pay £175.

The venue is PTD Ltd, Southwark.

Book via our [Training](#) page - the deadline for booking is Friday 13 May.

Free publications

Just a reminder that EIA Members can access our pdf publications free of charge via our website. They include the 102-page 'European information: a guide to official sources' (updated to reflect changes under the Treaty of Lisbon) and a compendium of our 'How To' guides.

Compiled in December 2010, the compendium brings together the following guides:

- 1 - use the Official Journal
- 2 - find a Directive
- 3 - trace COM documents
- 4 - trace EC case law
- 5 - trace national implementing measures
- 6 - access and use the institutions registers
- 7 - find out about EU funding
- 8 - find out about the ERDF and ESF in the UK
- 9 - find out about EU contracts & tenders
- 10 - trace EU statistics
- 11 - research the EU (a guide for students)
- 12 - keep up-to-date with the EU

Translation

Following a recent request for permission to translate the 'How To' guides, the Compendium is being translated into Albanian as part of a project co-financed by the EU and Germany to support Albania's Ministry for European Integration.

Feedback

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

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Issue 8 - April 2011

It's official:

EU documents , publications and sources

Single Market Act

The Commission has adopted the Communication 'Single Market Act: Twelve levers to boost growth and strengthen confidence: Working together to create new growth' (COM (2011) 206). Intended to re-launch the Single Market for 2012, the Act aims to make life easier for businesses, citizens, consumers and workers. It sets out 12 'levers' for boosting growth and enhancing citizens' confidence in the Single Market, each comprising a key action requiring immediate legislation, and other actions to be delivered over a slightly longer period.

See: [Communication text](#)

European Arrest Warrant

COM (2011) 175 is a Commission report on the implementation of the European arrest warrant (EAW), created under Council Framework Decision 2002/584/JHA. The report considers the state of implementation and functioning of the EAW and identifies the need for action in a number of areas, notably with regard to respecting fundamental rights.

See: [Press Release IP/11/454](#)

Fundamental rights

The first Annual Report on the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights shows that the Charter is frequently misunderstood.

See: [Report text](#)

Passengers' rights

The Commission has announced a series of measures to clarify and strengthen the enforcement of passenger rights. The announcement coincided with the publication of two Communications, one on the application of Regulation 261/2004 establishing common rules on compensa-

tion and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and cancellation of long delay of flights (COM (2011) 174), the other on the operation and results of Regulation 1107/2006 concerning the rights of people with reduced mobility when they travel by air.

See: [Press Release MEMO/11/232](#)

Construction products

Regulation (EU) 305/2011 (the 'Construction Products Regulation') lays down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products and repeals Council Directive 89/106/EEC (the 'Construction Products Directive').

See: [Regulation text](#)

Official Journal

COM (2011) 162 is a proposal for a Council Regulation on electronic publication of the Official Journal. Despite increasing use of the electronic version of the OJ and declining sales of the print version, the electronic version is not considered to be valid and legally binding and the Commission is seeking to ensure that the electronic edition is accepted as being official and authentic.

See: [Proposal text](#)

Access to documents

A member of Parliament's Constitutional Affairs Committee has said that the European Commission's proposed changes to Regulation 1049/2001 on access to documents alienates citizens from the EU. MEPs have called for the Regulation to be thoroughly revised and for a change of mentality on citizens' access to documents.

See: [Press Release 20110411IPR17421](#)

Focus on ...

EP 'Backgrounds'

The screenshot shows a single page titled 'Background' with the sub-header 'Q&A on the novel foods regulation'. The main heading is 'What is the European Parliament position on food from clones?'. The text below explains that in Parliament's second reading vote, an overwhelming majority of MEPs said they did not want food products from cloned animals (or their descendants) to be regulated under novel foods rules. They wanted the Commission to propose separate legislation to prohibit such foods, and a moratorium to be introduced pending such a ban. These amendments were not supported by Council, which represents EU Member State governments. At the bottom, there is a navigation bar with 'Start' and 'Previous' links on the left, a numbered list of pages (1-10) in the center, and a 'Next' link on the right. A 'Backgrounds - all' link is visible at the bottom right.

Many of us are familiar with the Commission's MEMO press releases available via Rapid. Often proclaiming themselves as Q&As, they give background to and/or explanations of, policy or legislative developments. Less well known is the European Parliament's [Backgrounds](#) collection.

With just 27 articles published since September 2009, it is clearly a very select collection. However, if one of the topics covered coincides with your interests, then it is probably worth taking a look (for a full list see the [Archive](#) page).

Current topics include: novel foods, child pornography on the internet, economic governance, citizens' initiative, budget negotiations, and alternative investment funds.

In some cases, Backgrounds (some of which are labelled 'Q&A') comprise a single page, but most are multi-page, with a brief overview followed by a number of separate pages offering additional information, explanations etc.

For example, the Citizens' initiative Q&A has 11 pages, including: 'Can I propose anything in a citizens' initiative?' and 'How can the signatures be collected?'

The 'Background note' on the Alternative Investment Fund Managers (AIFM) Directive comprises seven pages, covering - amongst other things - 'What will the directive regulate?' and 'What is the marketing "passport" and how will it be made available?'

Users can navigate multi-page Backgrounds via links at the foot of each page.

The screenshot shows the EP website's 'Backgrounds - all' page. The header includes the European Parliament logo and navigation links for News, Parliament, Your MEPs, Activities, and EP Live. A search bar is present. The main content area lists several background articles. The first article is 'Q&A on the novel foods regulation' dated 29-03-2011, with a 'Read more' link. The second article is 'Questions & Answers on removal vs. blocking of child pornography on the Internet' dated 14-02-2011, also with a 'Read more' link. The left sidebar contains a menu with categories like Press releases, Plenary sessions, Committees, General, Press releases - all, Other products, Agenda, Background, Plenary sessions, National angles, About, and FAQ. The 'Background' category is currently selected.

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 ...

This question was received recently:

I am trying to trace The African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) - EU Sugar Protocol (now defunct), annexed to the Cotonou Agreement of 23 June 2000.

The response was:

The full text of the original Cotonou Agreement, including the Protocols and Declarations associated with it, can be found via the Treaties Office Database, at [this page](#). Click the 'full text' option at the foot of the page – then see page 265 ff for the text of 'Protocol 3 on ACP sugar' (i.e. page 267 ff of the OJ L in which the Agreement was published).

According to the website, the Database 'contains all the bilateral and multilateral treaties or agreements concluded by the European Union, the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC), and the former European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), and those concluded under the Treaty on European Union.' It does not, however, include the Union's founding treaties or other agreements concluded between EU Member States.

For each international treaty or agreement, the database provides both a summary and full text, plus additional information such as signatory states, entry into force, legal basis and available language versions.

Users can choose a simple (title) search or an advanced search facility, with numerous options including date of signature, country, and nature of the agreement.

The Treaties Office was part of the Commission's DG External Relations, but has now been subsumed into the European External Action Service (EEAS).

Snippets:

News and views from non-EU sources

Notre Europe

From: [Decision-making in the Union](#)

The first few months since the Lisbon Treaty's implementation show that a substantive change in the Union's working methods is taking place, raising questions and prompting reservations. To grasp its full importance, we need to take a look at the past and to trace the origin of these changes.

euobserver

From: [Brussels revamps code of conduct](#)

The European Commission has tightened up its code of conduct banning spouses from commissioners' offices and extending the period EU executive members must request approval from Brussels before taking up new jobs once out of office to a year and a half.

The new rules were agreed by the college of commissioners on Wednesday in the wake of a string of 'revolving door' scandals in 2009 in which six former commissioners went on to well-paid executive positions with lobbying outfits, banks and airlines

EurActiv

From: [France, Italy call for Schengen Treaty re-write](#)

French President Nicolas Sarkozy and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi yesterday (26 April) asked Brussels to make changes to the treaty establishing the Schengen border-free area. The proposed changes strengthen the hand of member countries and undermine the role of the European Commission.

European Voice

From: [The clock ticks for treaty change](#)

For the European Union, the experience of drawing up the Lisbon treaty and having it ratified in 27 member states was so traumatic that at the end of 2009 the prevailing sentiment was that there was no further appetite for treaty change.

Yet a little more than a year after the Lisbon treaty came into effect it is already plain that Lisbon is not the final word.

Presseurop

From: [What action, Lady Ashton?](#)

"The European External Action Service [EEAS] is in place? Oh really, what action?" laughingly asks a senior diplomat, who is otherwise a Europhile. In Brussels, the tone is becoming more and more cutting, mocking or saddened whenever the subject of European diplomacy or of the "service" is raised. Placing the EEAS under the tutelage of a High-Representative rather than under the responsibility of a "European Minister of Foreign Affairs, as called for in the Constitutional draft prior to the Treaty of Lisbon is a highly symbolic gesture. Or rather it is a symbolic step backwards obtained by the United Kingdom, whose former Labour Prime Minister, Gordon Brown used to say that between the world and states there is nothing.