

EU Intelligence Report
September 2014



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Institutional change

New distribution of EU Commission portfolios announced

European Commission

On 10 September, the line-up for the new European Commission was announced. The new line-up includes some important changes in the structure and [portfolios](#) of the Commission departments

For the next five-year term, the Commission will be made up of a President, Jean-Claude Juncker, 7 Vice Presidents, each with responsibility for co-ordinating an overarching policy priority, and 20 other Commissioners who will report into the respective Vice Presidents or the President himself.

Significant changes will also need to be made within the DGs (Commission departments) to accommodate the shifts in portfolios compared to the last Commission. For example, Consumer policy will now sit with Justice and Gender Equality under Czech Commissioner Vera Jourová

Tourism policy will be dealt with within Industry, Competitiveness and SMEs, which now includes also the Internal Market. The responsible commissioner is Polish Commissioner Elzbieta Bienkowska.

The full Commission college is as follows:

- First Vice-President in charge of Better Regulation, Inter-institutional Relations, Rule of Law and Charter of Fundamental Rights: Frans Timmermans (NL)
- Vice-President and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Policy & Security Policy: Federica Mogherini (IT)
- Vice-President in charge of Budget & Human Resources: Kristalina Georgieva (BG)
- Vice-President in charge of the Energy Union: Alenka Bratušek (SI)
- Vice-President in charge of Growth, Jobs, Investments and Competitiveness: Jyrki Katainen (FI)
- Vice-President in charge of the Euro & Social dialogue: Valdis Dombrovskis (LV)
- Vice-President in charge of the Digital Single Market: Andrus Ansip (EE)
- Justice, Consumers & Gender Equality: Věra Jourová (CZ)
- Digital Economy & Society: Günther Oettinger (DE)
- Economic & financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs: Pierre Moscovici (FR)
- Employment, Social Affairs, Skills & Labour Mobility: Marianne Thyssen (BE)

- Regional Policy: Corina Crețu (RO)
- European Neighbourhood Policy & Enlargement Negotiations: Johannes Hahn (AT)
- Migration & Home Affairs: Dimitris Avramopoulos (GR)
- Financial Stability, Financial Services & Capital Market Union : Jonathan Hill (UK)
- Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs: Elzbieta Bienkowska (PL)
- Climate Action & Energy: Miguel Arias Cañete (ES)
- International Cooperation & Development: Neven Mimica (HR)
- Competition: Margrethe Vestager (DK)
- Trade: Cecilia Malmström (SE)
- Research, Science & Innovation: Carlos Moedas (PT)
- Education, Culture, Youth & Citizenship: Tibor Navracsics (HU)
- Agriculture & Rural Development: Phil Hogan (IE)
- Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries: Karmenu Vella (MT)
- Vytenis Andriukaitis: Health and Food Safety Portfolio

Tourism Policy

Italian Minister for Tourism address Italian priorities before TRAN Committee

Council/ European Parliament

On 3 September the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) welcomed the Italian Minister for Tourism, Mr Franceschini, to discuss the Italian Presidency priorities in the tourism sector. During the presentation, Mr Franceschini highlighted the role of tourism as a major opportunity for growth and Europe's economic development and advocated Europe's ability to enter the global market

According to Mr. Franceschini, other key priorities should be the regeneration of the culture of hospitality and the investment in highly trained human resources because high calibre services are in demand with tourists. Furthermore advocated for the exchange of good practice and the implementation of communications campaigns to give visibility to Europe as one destination.

The Italian Ministry reiterated that the Presidency also intends to propose to Council the adoption of draft conclusions on Tourism, to strengthen the position of the industry and the idea of using natural and cultural heritage as a lever that can make a contribution to economic growth and employment.

Discussions on Visa Code reform move forward

European Parliament/EESC

The European Parliament has appointed MEP Juan Fernando Lopez Aguilar (S&D, ES) from the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) as the rapporteur on the new Union [Code](#) on Visa. The Legal Affairs (JURI) Committee and the Transport and Tourism Committee (TRAN) are not expected to draft any opinion on the file.

On the same matter, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) adopted last week its [opinion](#) on visas, putting forward a number of recommendations to the EP/Council. As already anticipated, the EESC opinion "whole heartedly" supports the reform of Schengen Visa rules and stresses "the economic benefits in terms of boosting growth and generating jobs that arise from facilitating legitimate travel".

European Commission features at IAAPA EAS 2014

IAAPA

On 25 September senior representatives of Europe's amusement parks and attractions

gathered at the Euro Attractions Show in Amsterdam for a meeting with Francesca Tudini, the Head of Tourism Policy at the European Commission, to urge policymakers to use the next five years to improve Europe's business environment for amusement parks and attractions.

The event was organized by IAAPA to present the association's manifesto 'Amusement parks: Driving leisure and Tourism in Europe', in front of tourism and attractions industry leaders, press and policy makers.

NET paves the way towards an EP tourism intergroup

NET/ European Parliament

In September the members of the Network of European Private entrepreneurs in the Tourism Sector, which includes IAAPA signed a joint letter to build support for the idea of a Tourism Intergroup in the EP. MEPs generally replied in favour of the initiative, currently within the EP by MEP Tapardel (S&D, RO) and MEP Ujhelyi (S&D, HU). Although counting on the support of 80 MEPs the initiative need still three groups to be official. In order to gather further consensus, NET is organizing a short seminar to be held on 8

October in the EP.

MEP Tapardel and Ujhelyi will make a brief presentation (with maybe a third MEP) together with HOTREC's CEO Christian de Barrin. This will be followed by an open discussion and a sandwich lunch served outside the meeting room.

Taxation

Council adopts a directive for the disclosure of non-financial and diversity information by certain large companies

COUNCIL

On 29 September, the Council of the EU adopted a [directive](#) for the disclosure of non-financial and diversity information by certain large companies. New measures will require certain big EU companies to draw up, on a yearly basis, a statement relating to environmental, social and employee-related matters, respect for human rights, anti-corruption and bribery matters. The statement will have to include a description of the policies, outcomes and the risks related to those matters. Where a company does not pursue policies in relation to these matters, it will have to explain why this is the case. The new measures are aimed at strengthening the company's transparency and

accountability, while limiting any undue administrative burden, and ensuring a level playing field across the EU. They will be incorporated into the [directive](#) on the annual financial statements and reports of certain types of undertakings, which was adopted on 26 June 2013.

The new provisions will be applicable to public interest entities over 500 employees. Public interest entities are companies, such as listed undertakings, banks, insurance companies or undertakings which are of significant public relevance because of the nature of their business, their size or their corporate status. Member states will have two years to incorporate the new provisions into domestic law, which will be applicable in 2017.

Consumer Issues

Report from member states on safety of services made available

European Commission

With the aim to compile the existing regulatory framework on the safety of certain services to consumers at national level across the EU, national authorities of 28 EU Member States plus the EFTA countries Norway, Iceland and

Liechtenstein were invited to provide relevant information on their respective national rules. The Commission has now released the report capturing the information received by member states

The survey asked Member states to assess the type and the content of legislation in place in their respective countries in relation to service safety and about the system established for data collection. Relevant to IAAPA is that Amusement parks were among the services subject of the consultation.

For this particular sector, provisions on competencies for public authorities to monitor service providers and take action are included in a large proportion of countries than in other service sectors. This obligation is coupled with the duty for service providers to inform consumers on risks and accidents. The use of standards, legislation on products are also present together with the obligation for service providers to inform consumers on risks and accidents is also present in a higher number of countries (7 of 17 countries).

On the contrary the need for service providers to perform risk assessment and to notify authorities on risks and accidents

is poorly integrated in the national legislation (less than one third of the countries).

Council continues discussions on the Travel package Directive Council

Further to the conclusion of the first reading in March, institutional discussions on the Travel Package Directive ([PTD](#)) are progressing at the Council level.

In September the Council met twice to address the dossier. Core of the delegations' discussions regard the scope covered by the text in terms of what a 'package' mean. The issue of insolvency is also currently still under consideration. During his presentation before the Committee on Transport and Tourism, the Italian Tourism Minister Franceschini announced that it hopes to quickly conclude a second reading on the Package Travel Directive thus reaching a prompt agreement with the parliament by the end of Q3

Employment

Report shows key to tackle EU demographic and skills challenges

European Commission/OECD

On 18 September the European Commission released the [report: Matching Economic Migration with Labour Market Needs](#). The report highlights three policy responses to the current mismatch between skills and labour market:

- Fostering intra-EU labour mobility to ensure a better allocation of skills. The report highlights that intra-EU mobility makes a more efficient use of human resources and that people moving across EU countries have a higher employment rate (68%) than nationals (64.5%)
- Better integrating non-EU migrants to ensure a smarter use of their skills: the report calls for more recognition of foreign qualifications, making sure that immigrants have access to the most efficient active labour market programmes
- Attracting the skilled migrants needed on the EU's labour market: as there is currently a low level of skilled labour migration from non-EU countries to most EU Member States

MEP Questions

Spanish MEP enquires about seasonal tourism

European Parliament

MEP Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (EPP, ES) tabled a [question](#) on seasonal tourism highlighting it as a tricky issue demanding a global policy response. The MEP asks the Commission whether the [Calypso programme](#) is the only tool foreseen by the Commission to tackle this issue.

The Commission also answered a [question](#) on accessibility highlighting that people with disabilities are reluctant to travel due to barriers in many destinations. In the question MEP Ferragut asked about its plans to include policies supporting social or solidarity tourism programmes.

The Commission [replied](#) saying that Studies conducted as part of the 2012-2014 Preparatory Action 'Tourism for All', launched at the request of the European Parliament, concluded that the 'Accessible Tourism' market is likely to increase significantly by 2020, given the steep growth of, in particular, the elderly population. However, many operators still

perceive 'accessibility' as costly and request more guidance on how to deal with the issue.

The Commission will continue to focus on accessibility. Supporting the development of accessible tourism will therefore continue after 2014, notably through the Access City Award and through actions funded by COSME, the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs

Funding

Two new calls for proposals under COSME

European Commission

Two new tourism related calls for proposals have been on 6 August.

The [first call](#) is entitled: *Diversifying the EU Tourism Offer and Products - Sustainable Transnational Tourism Products 2014*

The call aims at strengthening the competitiveness of the European tourism sector as well as its sustainability by encouraging diversification of the supply of tourist services and products.

The deadline for electronic submission is 7 October 2014.

The [second](#) call published is called *Transnational cultural tourism products and Tourism and accessibility for all*. The call is focused on two themes: 1) Cooperation projects to support transnational tourism based on European cultural and industrial heritage and 2) Fostering accessible tourism entrepreneurship and management. This theme is particularly relevant as it aims at developing the "Capacity Building Schemes" for tourism managers and entrepreneurs and uptake of business practices and strategic planning which mainstream accessibility and "Universal Design in the tourism sector.

Erasmus+

Council/ European Commission

The Council adopted on 3rd December a regulation establishing "[ERASMUS+](#)" the Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport for the period 2014-2020. It brings together in a single programme activities previously covered by a number of separate programmes (including the Lifelong Learning Programme, Erasmus Mundus and Youth in Action) and it also covers activities in the new area of European competence, sport.

The new programme has a total budget of about €14.7 billion which represents an

increase of 40% compared to the precedent budget - and can also benefit for Any additional funding from external action instruments (such as the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, the Development Cooperation Instrument, the European Neighbourhood Instrument, as well as the European Development Fund). Its main operational priorities are simplification of procedures and a performance-based allocation of funds, as well as closer links between the formal, informal and non-formal education and learning sectors.

COSME - Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs

European Commission

For the period 2014-2020, the European Commission has published a proposal for a [Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs](#) (COSME) with a planned budget of € 2.5 billion.

The Programme has the following general objectives: 1) improve access to finance for SMEs in the form of equity and debt: 2) improve access to markets inside the Union and globally through Enterprise Europe Network that will facilitate expansion of businesses beyond the

borders; 3) promote entrepreneurship by developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes, especially among new entrepreneurs, young people and women. The Commission proposal includes a reference to specific objectives to improve the competitiveness of enterprises in the tourism sector. The Commission intends to ensure coherence and consistency implementation, as well as informed policy-making at Union level. Benchmarking, the exchange of best practices and sectorial initiatives in particular will be encouraged. The main beneficiaries will include existing entrepreneurs (small businesses in particular), future entrepreneurs (including young people) as well as national, regional and local authorities. On this basis, eligible tourism partners could include: Accommodation providers, Transport providers, Restaurants/ Cafés, **Attractions**, Public Authorities

Consumer Programme 2014-2020

European Commission

The new consumer programme was adopted last 23 October and [proposed](#) by the Commission in November 2011. Although ensuring continuity with the previous one, the new initiative aims to better serve consumers' interests by enhancing product safety through effective

market surveillance, improving consumers' information, education and awareness of their rights, consolidating consumer rights and strengthening effective redress, especially through alternative dispute resolution.

This programme sets financial framework for many actions that aim to improve consumer protection throughout the EU. These actions include financing of joint cooperation actions between Member States market surveillance authorities and supporting Union level consumer organizations.

European Regional Development Fund 2014 - 2020

European Commission

[The European Regional Development Fund](#) (ERDF) aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union by correcting imbalances between its regions. For the next period (2014 – 2020), the ERDF focuses its investments on several key priority areas namely Innovation and research, the digital agenda, support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the low-carbon economy.

The ERDF resources allocated to these priorities will depend on the category of region.

Upcoming Events

- 8 October: NET Seminar in the European parliament
- 30-31 October 2014: European Tourism Forum, Naples, Italy.
- November 2014: [UNWTO event on Accessible Tourism](#) in San Marino.
- 1 December: EU Tourism Day
- 5 December 2014: [Accessible Tourism](#): Innovative approaches between accessibility and heritage protection, Economic and Social committee, Brussels