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THE HERALD

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The Commission yesterday launched a package of measures that will help European industry, SMEs, researchers and public authorities to take full advantage of new digital technologies.



JUNCKER ADMITS EUROPEANS HAVE LOST FAITH IN THE EU

EURACTIV.COM

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker yesterday admitted that citizens had lost faith in the EU, during a speech at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

Juncker also said that the Commission had regulated too much and interfered too much in people's lives in the past.

"The European project has lost parts of its attractiveness," Juncker said at the Council's Parliamentary Assembly.

"One of the reasons why EU citizens are stepping away from the European project is due to the fact that we are interfering in too many domains of their private lives and in too many domains where member states are better placed to take action."

"We were wrong to overregulate and interfere too much in the lives of our citizens," he added, before pointing to the executive's drive to cut red tape as evidence of efforts to improve the perception of the EU.

The 'better regulation' strategy saw the withdrawal of 83 pending bills left over from the Barroso Commission. His administration had also launched far less legislation than its predecessor.

Juncker told national MPs sitting in the 47-member state Council of Europe, which is not an EU institution, "It's true that we are not very popular when we advocate for Europe.

"We are no longer respected in our countries when we emphasise the need to give priority to the EU."



EU TO PROVIDE HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR REFUGEES IN GREECE

EKATHIMERINI.COM



The European Commission says it will be providing 700 million euros in emergency humanitarian funding for Greece until 2018 to help it deal with the massive refugee crisis that has seen tens of thousands of people stranded in the country - the first time such funding has been used to help a European Union member.

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MICHAEL GOVE SETS OUT POST-EXIT UK-EU TRADE VISION

BBC.COM



The UK would still be able to trade freely within Europe even if it left the EU, Michael Gove has said. The justice secretary said the UK could be part of Europe's free trade area to avoid trade tariffs, even if it was not a member of the EU single market.

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SURPRISE: VIKTOR ORBÁN PRAISES ANGELA MERKEL

POLITICO.COM

A meeting between two prominent critics of Angela Merkel's migration policy ended with a surprising endorsement of the German chancellor on Tuesday from Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and former Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

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FRANCE PLEDGES 20-MINUTE ARMED RESPONSE TO MILITANT ATTACKS

REUTERS.COM

France will guarantee a 20-minute response of police and military anti-terrorism units to any future militant attacks, drawing on lessons learned from November's Islamic State shootings in Paris, its interior minister said on Tuesday.

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EU PARLIAMENT RECOMMENDS MAKING TURKISH 25TH OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

FRANCE24.COM

The European Parliament has advised making Turkish an official language of the European Union, building on the initiative by Greek Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades, according to the EP's 2015 progress report on Turkey.

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PRODUCTION IN CONSTRUCTION DOWN BY 1.1% IN EURO AREA

EUROPA.EU

In February 2016 compared with January 2016, seasonally adjusted production in the construction sector fell by 1.1% in the euro area (EA19) and by 0.4% in the EU28, according to first estimates from Eurostat.

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COMMISSION SETS OUT PATH TO DIGITISE EUROPEAN INDUSTRY

EUROPA.EU

The Commission yesterday presented its blueprint for cloud-based services and world-class data infrastructure to ensure science, business and public services reap benefits of big data revolution.

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20 APRIL, 2016

THE AGENDA

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- 9:00 **Subcommittee on Human Rights**. The agenda includes: Discussion with **Taslma Nasreen** and **Salih Osman**, Sakharov Laurates. 15.00 Public hearing on Human rights defenders and land-grabbing issues in the context of European investments in third countries (ASP - 1G-3).
- 9:00 **Committee on Development**. The agenda includes: The New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (adoption of draft report by **Maria Heubuch**, Greens/ALE), Structured dialogue on the Commission work programme - exchange of views with **Christos Stylianides**, European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management (ASP - 3G-3).
- 9:00 **Subcommittee on Security and Defence**. The agenda includes: Jointly with the Council and Commission and EEA: Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: impact on the stability in the South Caucasus and EU position. Discussion with **Amanda Paul**, Senior Policy Analyst, European Policy Centre and a representative from the EEAS (PSH - 5B001).
- 9:00 **Committee on International Trade**. The agenda includes: Jointly with **IMCO**: **Public hearing on TTIP**: Public Procurement - challenges and opportunities for the EU and the US (PSH - 3C050), 15:00 Discussion with **Christia Feeland**, Minister of International Trade of Canada, Exchange of views with **Diego Aulestia Valencia**, Minister of Foreign Trade of Ecuador (PSH -1A002).
- 9:00 **Committee on Budgetary Control**. The agenda includes: Hearing on the Control of projects and implementation of EU funds in the area of infrastructure and transport - effectiveness and problems (co-rapporteurs **Claudia Schmidt**, PPE and **Ryszard Czarnecki**, ECR) (JAN - 6Q-2).
- 9:00 **Committee on Industry, Research and Energy**. The agenda includes: Establishing an information exchange mechanism with regard to intergovernmental agreements and non-binding instruments between Member States and third countries in the field of energy and repealing Decision No 994/2012/EU (exchange of views, rapporteur **Zdzisław Krasnodebski**, ECR) (JAN - 2Q2).
- 9:00 **Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection**. The agenda includes: Virtual currencies (consideration of amendments, rapporteur **Ulrike Trebesius**, ECR), Control of the acquisition and possession of weapons (consideration of draft report by **Vicky Ford**, ECR), Prospectus to be published when securities are offered to the public or admitted to trading (consideration of draft opinion of **Vicky Ford**, ECR) (PSH - 3C050).
- 9:00 **Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs**. The agenda includes: Joint hearing with the SEDE on securing the external borders of the EU - a challenge for external and internal security - ongoing action to combat criminal smuggling at the borders of the EU (JAN - 4Q2).
- 9:00 **Committee on Constitutional Affairs**. The agenda includes: Hearing on accession to the European Convention on Human Rights: stocktaking after the ECJ's opinion and way forward, Annual report 2014 on subsidiarity and proportionality (adoption of draft opinion by **Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski**, ECR) (JAN - 4Q1).
- 10:00 **Committee on Legal Affairs**. The agenda includes: Hearing on modernisation of EU copyright rules, Joint meeting with the ECON with the participation of TAXE: Exchange of views with Commissioner **Jonathan Hill** on country-by-country reporting, Request for the defence of the immunity of **Mario Borghesio** (exchange of views, rapporteur **Angel Dzhambazki**, ECR) (ASP - 3E-2).
- 16:00 President of the European Parliament **Martin Schultz** will meet **Christia Freeland**, Canadian federal Minister of International Trade (PSH - President's office).

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

- Yesterday, the Commission launched a **public consultation to collect views on the objectives of the EU future space strategy**, the main challenges and opportunities for the European space sector, as well as the future of EU space programmes.
- **The EU28 seasonally adjusted current account of the balance of payments** recorded a surplus of €9.1 billion in February 2016, compared with surpluses of €15.5 bn in January 2016 and €15.7 bn in February 2015, according to estimates from **Eurostat**.
- Yesterday, the European Commission was delivering on its commitment to **accelerate the implementation of the Facility for Refugees in Turkey** by announcing a new set of projects under the Facility.

WHO WHEN WHERE

- 9:15 **'European Citizens' Initiative Day: Forging Change'** takes place in Brussels. **Michael Smyth**, vice-president of the European Economic and Social Committee gives an opening speech (EESC building Rue Belliard).
- 13:30 a two-day **'Net Futures 2016: Driving growth in the #DigitalSingleMarket'** starts in Brussels (The Egg, Bara Street 175).

TODAY CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS



Urmas PAET
ALDE
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