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THE PARLIAMENT

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MEPs are losing patience with single European sky delays

The economic and environmental benefits of the single European sky are crystal clear. Unfortunately, after 10 years of delays, it still hasn't been implemented. Parliament has always had a willing yet pragmatic approach to the issue.

MEPs are fully aware of the stakes that such a reform entails, given the wide variety of actors and the complexity of the procedures. There are also important security and economic questions to tend to, as well as divergent national and sectorial interests. Yet, air traffic is predicted to triple by 2030, amid deep tensions given that a number of airports are at full capacity.

There were plans for nine functional airspace blocks to be set up by the end of 2012, intended to streamline 68 air traffic control centres. However, to this day, only two such blocks meet all the requirements – one block between Denmark and Sweden, and another bringing together Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Norway. Streamlining European air traffic control is extremely important, since it is a matter of safeguarding European hubs against competition from international hubs and companies, particularly from the Gulf.

MEPs are losing patience and as a result are starting to consider a 'top-down' approach. Meanwhile, last July the commission launched infringement procedures against 18 governments. This is not a communication issue, given that English has long been the default language in air traffic control. The real reason why things have been so slow to progress is a conservative attitude linked to national sovereignty and the status of a specific field of work, which has once again made itself heard in France, to the detriment of thousands of passengers. Lastly, the dossier is completely blocked in council, due to a disagreement between Spain and the UK regarding Gibraltar, which is likely to taint the discussions until at least the end of the year. At the same time, on the technological front things are progressing in a positive way. Single European sky air traffic management research (SESAR), which is set to receive funding as part of the connecting Europe facility, has just entered its roll-out phase.

It is high time to turn words into concrete actions. Now more than ever, we must ensure safe flights for passengers – something recent events have cruelly reminded us – that are also shorter and cheaper. We must also defend European airlines against international competition, and support the European aviation industry by improving our aerial interoperability. ★

Dominique Riquet (ALDE, FR) is a vice-chair of parliament's transport and tourism committee

ON THE COVER | Single European sky

EU transport commissioner Violeta Bulc gets our single European sky (SES) cover feature off to a flying start as she outlines the commission's plans to "transform the way the entire aviation sector, from providers to passengers, does and understands business". In this issue, Bulc reveals that the college is "developing an aviation strategy that will tackle all the major policy issues in this sector, including the future of the SES". And Europe must act urgently, because otherwise, "by 2035, 12 per cent of demand will not be met, meaning 120 million passengers will not be able to make their journeys", warns the Slovenian official.

SES: see pages 35-48



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

IS NOW AWARE OF

THE UKRAINIAN OPPOSITION

by Tom Phillips



March 16-17, 2015, Brussels – Leaders of “Opposition Bloc,” one of the major parliamentary groups in the Ukrainian Parliament representing the opposition to the current Ukrainian government, met with representatives of the European Parliament Committees and leaders of influential European NGOs. This meeting was, in a way, an introduction to the Ukrainian opposition because prior, as it turned out, Brussels had a rather biased image of those criticizing the performance of the current government of Ukraine, most of all within the sphere of economy and human rights.



In Brussels, Ukraine was represented by Yuriy Boyko, leader of the “Opposition Bloc” party in Verkhovna

Rada, accompanied by Parliament deputies and members of the parliamentary group – Vadim Rabinovich (Vice-Chair of Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights), Oleksandr Vilkul, Yulia Levochkina, Vladinir Gusak.

First of all, members of the Ukrainian delegation stated that: “Opposition Bloc” is a pro-Ukrainian opposition party, acting

in the name of our country’s interests and protecting the views on the development of Ukraine, its economy and human rights that differ from the views of the current government by means of parliamentary methods.

Every meeting started with a round of explanations from the Ukrainian Parliament members saying that the Ukrainian opposition is not pro-Russian and is not against European orientation. Instead, the party stands to oppose the actions of the Ukrainian government in economic and human rights policy.

On the other hand, meetings with the Ukrainian opposition became an interest

of both left and right-wing parties of the European Parliament. Major topics for these meetings and conversations were the following: the view of the Ukrainian opposition on the development of the situation in Ukraine and what actions the opposition considers the priority, not just for the government, but for the Ukrainian people in the first place. The Ukrainian delegation had to emphasize that aid to the Ukrainian government and to the Ukrainian people are not synonymous.

European Parliament members were amazed to learn that the opposition is not represented in the executive boards of the Ukrainian Parliament, it has no controlling functions in the Committees and

Commissions and, in fact, it is deprived of its constitutional responsibilities.

Soon this reaction of European politicians will be delivered to the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada because, as European Parliament members said, this conceals absolute non-democratic actions by democratic mottos.

As Chairman of the Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights, the member of the Ukrainian Parliament Vadim Rabinovich raised the issue of the arrest of Ukrainian journalist Ruslan

A meeting with Sabine Lösing, Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on Security and Defense, European United Left-Nordic Green Left also took place.

The next day, the discussion continued with European Parliament members Charles Tonnoq (UK), Foreign Affairs Committee; Rebecca Harms (Germany), President of the Greens/EFA; Mark Demesmaeker (Belgium), Committee on Foreign Affairs; Petras Austrevicius (Lithuania), Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Human Rights.

In a month from now, representatives of “Opposition Bloc” will present in Brussels their program of political and economic changes in Ukraine. European Parliament members have agreed to closely monitor the situation of the rights of the opposition in Ukraine along with the freedom of speech and rights of journalists and pressure in the media in Ukraine.

European Parliament members have stated that they will follow the response of the Ukrainian government on the issues of the opposition’s rights on control functions in Parliament, as well as monitor the situation of depriving the rights of TV channels and particular journalists in Ukraine.



Kotsaba. Consequently, «Human Rights without Frontiers» undertook to start their own investigation of the arrest of this journalist. Many European Parliament members expressed their desire to join this investigation.

A discussion on Human Rights and Freedom of Speech in Ukraine was held with Willy Fauré, Chairman of the «Human Rights without Frontiers». The next meeting on the agenda was with Brooks Newmark, MP, and a former Minister for Civil Society.

After multiple discussions and speeches by Ukrainian delegation members, next on the agenda was a media briefing from the Head of the Ukrainian delegation Yuriy Boyko. This event was highly anticipated by the media and attended by more than 40 journalists from leading European and American mass media.

The brief conclusion of this visit is that the first meeting of European Parliament members and NGO leaders with the real Ukrainian opposition has taken place.



Adapting to new global trends crucial for EU tourism industry

Europe's tourism sector has a lot to offer its many international and domestic visitors, but more must be done to support it, argues Ana-Claudia Tapardel

Ana-Claudia Tapardel (S&D, RO) is a co-chair of parliament's European tourism development, cultural heritage, way of St. James and other European cultural routes intergroup

What would you do on your holiday? Would you relax on the beach of a Greek island? Perhaps you would go skiing in the French Alps, or hiking in the Carpathians? How about a cruise along the Danube delta? Or maybe a wine tour in the Douro valley?

These activities are only a small portion of what Europe has to offer its domestic and international visitors. In fact, its diversity in art, landscapes, food and traditions have all helped make it the world's top tourist destination. From Bucharest to Lisbon, Europe's great variety in terms of scenery, services, cultures and people is unrivalled.

And the economic return from the tourism sector speaks for itself: prior to the accession of Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia, tourism accounted for 13 per cent of the EU's GDP. Nowadays, tourism represents 10 per cent of the European economy. The tourism sector employs approximately 5.2 per cent of the total workforce – roughly 10 million jobs – and involves almost two million small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Yet while the tourism sector provides many opportunities for Europe, it is also faced with many challenges. These are mainly related to changes in global trends and increasing competition with non-

European countries, particularly in Asia and North America. For Europe to be competitive and continue attracting both EU and non EU citizens, we first need a defined strategy that will not only take into consideration new global trends, but will also bring together the main institutional actors (the parliament, the commission and the council), as well as the relevant stakeholders in the field.

In this context, I would like to point out that members of parliament's European tourism development, cultural heritage, way of St James and other European cultural routes intergroup – which I co-chair – is actively pushing for the revision and update of the commission's 2010 communication titled, "Europe, the world's number one tourist destination".

In order for us to achieve our goals, we must ensure that the European tourism sector and its actors receive the attention they deserve. In my opinion, one way to give the sector the boost it needs is by designating a 'European year for tourism'. The last year for tourism was 1990. Since then, the EU has expanded, the use of internet has increased, and global economic patterns have changed. Having a European year for tourism now would allow for more promotion of Europe – beyond its capitals, it would bolster the branding of Europe as a top destination for international tourists, and most importantly, it would assist the numerous SMEs in the field which continue to be affected by the aftermath of the economic and financial crisis. Our intergroup is seeking the commission's support to push this initiative through. 34 of my colleagues and I have submitted a question to the college on this matter, and our intergroup will continue our efforts in order to reach the council.

We must remember that tourism is one of the industries that can make or break the European economy. For us be able to 'make it', we must ensure the viability, sustainability and diversity of the EU as a destination for years to come. This alone is an opportunity that cannot be missed. ★

"In my opinion, one way to give the sector the boost it needs is by designating a 'European year for tourism'"





Internal audit is key to 'transparency and trust' for European business

Kicking off the roundtable discussion, which was organised in cooperation with the European confederation of institutes of internal auditing (ECIIA), host Igor Šoltes, a vice-chair of parliament's budgetary control committee, told those in attendance, "you have the means, and above all, the knowledge to raise awareness on building trust with internal audit". "The first task is to help the public to understand its importance", said the Slovenian deputy, who is a former president of his country's court of audit. He explained that, "non-financial reporting is essential for public stakeholders to evaluate how well companies are performing in these areas as they introduce accountability in firms, drive sustainability improvement and contribute to the development of better corporate practice". Highlighting the benefits of non-financial reporting, the MEP underlined that it is "a source of opportunity and competitive advantage for companies. Non-financial reporting demonstrates responsible corporate behaviour, which can contribute to long-term business sustainability, promote a brand and please stakeholders".

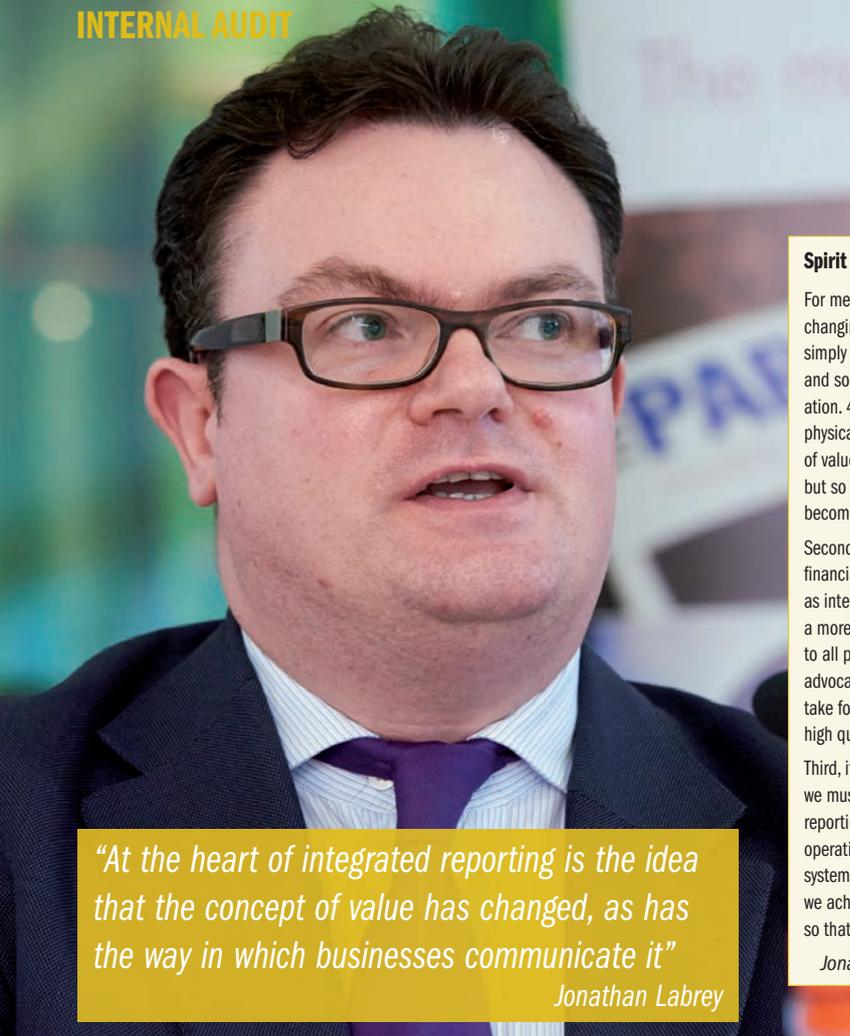
Non-financial reporting is set to become increasingly important for businesses, as a new directive on the topic was adopted last year and is in the process of being implemented

in the member states. Šoltes warned, "the benefits of this reform in terms of greater transparency, trust and long-term performance will depend on the quality of the reports issued. There is a need to define accountability and determine a clear mechanism for oversight assurance in respect of the reporting of this information in order to meet the objectives of greater transparency and better corporate governance". He added, "internal audit will only be effective and efficient if given all existing documentation. Hiding information or limiting access to the relevant documentation may result in negative surprises, which lead to diminished or even ruined public trust. And trust is something we have been working on for many years, yet it can be lost overnight".

Antoine Begasse, policy and case officer for corporate transparency at the commission's directorate general for financial stability, financial services and capital markets union, laid out the non-financial reporting directive's key characteristics. He explained that it is currently in its implementation phase, and the first reports are expected some time in 2018. "The directive only covers large public entities with more than 500 employees, which is approximately 6000 companies". Small and medium-sized enterprises do not fall within the scope of the directive.

A Parliament Magazine roundtable discussion on internal audit has underlined the importance of non-financial reporting and building trust





“At the heart of integrated reporting is the idea that the concept of value has changed, as has the way in which businesses communicate it”

Jonathan Labrey

Spirit of partnership

For me the roundtable had three principal outcomes. First, it confirmed the extent to which the world is changing. A debate about managing business systems and risks associated with non-financial reporting simply would not have taken place 10 years ago. The terms of dialogue between business, regulators and society is changing, and nowhere is that reflected more than in the way we think about value creation. 40 years ago, the lion's share of corporate value was accounted for in the financial statements or physical assets of a company. Today, this situation has been turned on its head, with over 80 per cent of value represented outside the financial statements. Business models and strategies are changing, but so too are progressive-minded professionals and the internal audit profession has led the charge to become more strategic and future oriented.

Second, real action is taking place, allied to the European commission's work, especially the non-financial reporting directive and proposed capital markets union (CMU). Market-led initiatives such as integrated reporting are taking hold as boards and management teams increasingly want to have a more fruitful dialogue with their providers of financial capital and other stakeholders. My challenge to all participants in the discussion, and readers of this article, is this: what action will you take to advocate change within your organisation, to manage risk and understand value differently? What will it take for a truly inclusive information architecture to become the centrepiece of the CMU to help direct high quality capital across EU member states to deliver jobs and growth?

Third, it reinforced my belief that effective change can only be achieved through collaboration, and that we must all work to remove the silos that are often the key barrier to progress. At the heart of integrated reporting is the principle of connectivity of information, recognising the truth that so much of business operations today are complex and interconnected. As the world economic forum has said, we need new systems and processes to make sense of this new interconnected world. Only by working together can we achieve that goal, and it is vital that the spirit of partnership evident from the roundtable stays alive so that we can create the economic, capital market and reporting system that will benefit us all.

Jonathan Labrey is the international integrated reporting council's chief strategy officer

Integrated thinking

The world is changing and evolving, and so is the internal audit profession. Stakeholders' expectations must be addressed, in order to know everything about their potential investments and appropriately evaluate all related risks.

EU authorities reacted to the financial crisis with new regulations in an effort to increase transparency, recover trust and tend to long-term performance. One of these reforms was the directive on non-financial reporting, which will impact large companies. The goal is for firms to produce quality reports that contain pertinent information and can improve a firm's performance by also taking into considering social and environmental impacts. Therefore, this will only work if the reporting is perceived as an interesting tool within the company to help it create value, instead of an extra burden. It implies clear accountability, deeper integration within an organisation and setting up lean and efficient processes to manage sustainability matters.

The internal audit profession is constantly becoming increasingly connected to the processes used to come up with social and environmental information and figures. Its role may vary, depending on how experienced a company is when it comes to sustainability issues. Internal auditors are advisors to governance bodies, and therefore may play a coordination role with the various actors involved, both inside and outside the company. In order to facilitate integration and coordination, it is recommended to implement integrated thinking, with integrated management and resulting in an integrated report. This will make it easier to pass on the relevant information to the governance bodies and facilitate the harmonisation of controls and risks.

Internal auditors can provide independent assurance and increase trust and transparency - they are not involved in the set-up of the reporting or its content. For this reason, they have a central role to play in the implementation of the directive.

Silvio de Girolamo is Autogrill group's chief audit and sustainability executive and an ECIIA board member



“There are two words to focus on – integration and assurance. Results can be limited, even within a company, so we need integration, and integration is needed to increase confidence and transparency in the company's work and management”

Silvio de Girolamo



“Non-financial reporting is essential for public stakeholders to evaluate how well companies are performing in these areas as they introduce accountability in firms, drive sustainability improvement and contribute to the development of better corporate practice”

Igor Šoltes

Businesses will be required to disclose material information concerning “environmental issues, social and employee matters, respect of human rights, corruption and bribery matters and diversity in the board of directors”. Begasse added that the directive “is not prescriptive – we are leaving significant flexibility to companies to disclose the information in a way they find most useful”.

Silvio de Girolamo, chief audit and sustainability executive for Autogrill group and an ECIIA board member, explained that “an internal auditor is like a critical friend [who] can support and help you better manage a situation and can help a company take care of risks”. He acknowledged that the profession “has changed a lot in recent years”, and that it is now moving towards prevention.

“There is no benefit for the company in just identifying what is wrong”, he said, “the benefit for the company is to

prevent the fire before it happens, and we are in the best position to do so because we are inside the company – we don’t just manage the figures, we also manage the process and the risk in order to see what the best solution is”. He added that companies must “appreciate not just economic aspects, but also social and environmental ones”, because this is the type of information that prospective investors are starting to care more and more about.

Girolamo explained that “there are two words to focus on – integration and assurance. Results can be limited, even within a company, so we need integration, and integration is needed to increase confidence and transparency in the company’s work and management”.

Commenting on the commission’s new directive, he said, “we need to reinforce it with international law and harmonise with different geographical dimensions, giving greater transparency and trust to stakeholders who have the long-term performance of a company in mind”. He pointed out that the

Critical insight

The role of internal auditors is extremely important, both for the public and private sectors, and their mission is changing. While internal auditors have traditionally focused more on financial reporting, their knowledge and experience will be increasingly put to use for non-financial reporting. This means that in addition to financial review, issues such as environmental protection, labour and social rights, relations within the company and the entire work process are becoming more and more interesting and essential for auditors.

An important concern is to ensure overall transparency, transparency of operations and an integrated approach to assessing working and production processes. This calls for additional skills and audit techniques. Above all, it requires management to identify internal auditors as partners, associates or consultants who are acting in the interests of the company, but not in the sense of writing flattering reports that comply with management’s wishes; reports should be critical and should reflect rational assessments of real situations and objective criticism where necessary. Capital owners and other stakeholders are aware that excellent internal audit can result in shaping a company’s reputation and brand recognition – this is something consumers reward and it is essential, and the opposite is also true.

Internal auditors must have access to all relevant information and data in order to produce a balanced and credible report that can be understood by all stakeholders. Reports can be very helpful for management in strengthening internal control mechanisms, as well as strategic and managerial decision-making.

Strategic planning as the foundation of a company’s future activities is the stage at which an internal auditor should be called upon to detect any deviations from the standards that are essential for legal and efficient operations. Of course, it is up to managers to decide on a strategy, but auditors may prevent those in charge from implementing business solutions that are not what they seem or that are even illegal. It is ill judgement to think that internal auditors are merely firefighters who come to the rescue once the damage has already been done.

Organisations that want to improve their financial operations and enhance transparency should place the internal audit function close to or within the upper managerial function, making its mission and the extent of their operations clear. I would like to wish each and every internal auditor both many professional challenges and pleasure, with as little obstacles to fulfilling their mission as possible.

Igor Šoltes (Greens/EFA, SK) is a vice-chair of parliament’s budgetary control committee



“The directive only covers large public entities with more than 500 employees, approximately 6000 companies”

Antoine Begasse



sector needs to “take the opportunity to have better integration between external and internal auditing; integrated assurance can contribute to a better vision and understanding of a company”. He concluded by promising that ECIIA is “ready to contribute to this new trend and would like to take part and provide services to public stakeholders and governance bodies”.

The final speaker on the panel was Jonathan Labrey, international integrated reporting council (IIRC) chief strategy officer, who underlined that “at the heart of integrated reporting is the idea that the concept of value has changed, as has the way in which businesses communicate it”. He told the audience that companies that only take into account their financial performance “are really losing out and exposing themselves to greater risk and not exploiting opportunities that cannot be found in balance sheets”. Labrey shared that “the role of the internal audit function has an increasingly strategic nature”, and the position is “developing a role as a trusted advisor for boards on all matters pertinent to the activities of an organisation”.

He said there were three main concepts to bear in mind – lines of sight, trust and breaking down silos. He explained that, “insight is critical for integrated reporting because when seeking to attract financial capital, the key is to find tomorrow’s reasons to invest today”, adding that “the profession is moving

into the area of foresight”. In terms of trust, he commented, “while disclosure and reporting and internal audits are very important to enhancing trust and accountability, we also need to stand back as professionals and policymakers and think about the rules of the capitals markets system we operate in”. And on the topic of silos, he pointed out that, “when talking about financial performance, it is critical we think about interconnections between different resources and how they create value”. He also said that according to the world economic forum, “risks can no longer be isolated – they are interconnected”.

Concluding the discussion, Igor Šoltes warned that governments “should not use a ‘copy and paste’ approach when implementing the directive”, and called on the EU to “focus [its] energy on simplifying legislation and making it more user-friendly”. ★

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Public-private partnerships are vital in ongoing battle against malaria

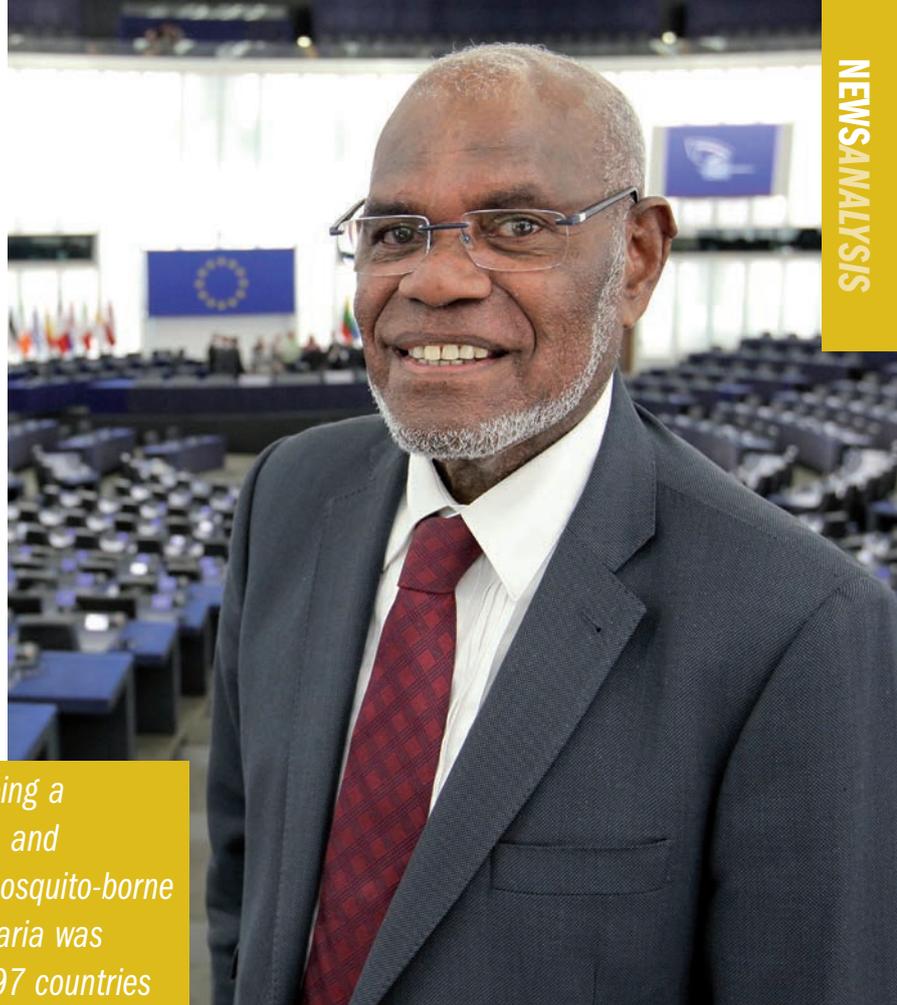
The Ebola virus death toll in west Africa is a reminder that tropical and neglected diseases such as malaria, Aids, tuberculosis and dengue remain a prominent global health challenge. The world health organisation (WHO) estimates that over one billion people suffer from one or more neglected diseases. April is dedicated to health issues as part of the European year for development and world malaria day is on 25 April. In this context, I believe the EU should strengthen its leadership on global health and development policy, starting with the fight against malaria.

Despite being a preventable and treatable mosquito-borne illness, malaria was present in 97 countries and territories in 2014, putting an estimated 3.2 billion people around the world at risk of infection. The sixth millennium development goal (MDG6), which aimed to halve the incidence of malaria by 2015, has contributed to the fight against the disease. Over the past decade, malaria mortality rates have dropped by 47 per cent worldwide, with 64 countries set to meet the MDG6 target thanks to increased prevention and control measures. Despite this progress, the WHO estimates that about 198 million people had malaria in 2013 and about 584,000 died from it, mainly in Africa. Moreover, the parasite responsible for the major strand of malaria is becoming resistant to existing therapies in parts of south east Asia.

Against this background, the fight against malaria requires continued efforts and investments, as well as a renewed push in research and development (R&D) to work towards new insecticides, better diagnostic tools and more effective treatments. These include drugs for fighting increasing resistance to current treatments and a complete cure that would enable patients to be cleared from all malaria parasites and stop transmission to other people. Additionally, single dose treatments would enable patients to take the entire treatment at once, virtually eliminating the risk of insufficient treatment.

One key to making faster progress is to pool resources and work in partnership – enabling NGOs, governments, academia and the private sector to contribute their best assets towards the elimination of malaria. The EU can

“Despite being a preventable and treatable mosquito-borne illness, malaria was present in 97 countries and territories in 2014, putting an estimated 3.2 billion people around the world at risk of infection”



contribute through existing participative initiatives, such as the European and developing countries clinical trials partnership (EDCTP2), which aims to accelerate the development of new or improved drugs, vaccines, microbicides

and diagnostics against poverty-related and neglected diseases in sub-Saharan Africa such as malaria. I also welcome the activities of private companies, such as Novartis, which have demonstrated significant commitment to the eradication of malaria. Since 2001, the Novartis malaria initiative has consistently been a frontrunner in the fight against the disease by improving access to treatment, helping communities deliver better healthcare and investing in R&D in the next generation of antimalarials.

Strengthening health systems and building local capacity is also a key factor of success. The involvement of governments from malaria-endemic countries is absolutely critical for drug delivery or healthcare services to function, and working with local communities is important to ensure that public information campaigns create proper awareness among the population.

I hope that the post-2015 development agenda will continue fund and support efforts in the fight against malaria globally, and meet further successes. Such successes are vital for improving the lives of populations and the socioeconomic development of endemic countries and show us what can be achieved in global health through multilateral partnerships. ★

The EU must show leadership in eradicating this disease, writes Maurice Ponga

Maurice Ponga (EPP, FR) is a vice-chair of parliament's development committee

No room for complacency in the fight against malaria

Charles Nelson, Chief Executive at Malaria Consortium



A health worker takes a blood sample to test for malaria using microscopy

Malaria, a completely preventable and treatable disease, kills more than 580,000 people a year. 90 percent of these deaths occur in Africa where an estimated 437,000 children die before their fifth birthday. As we mark World Malaria Day, these numbers remain unacceptable.

This is despite significant progress having been made. A rapid expansion of malaria interventions since 2000 has helped to reduce the number of malaria deaths by an estimated 47 percent worldwide and by 54 percent in Africa. This is predominantly due to activity in support of the malaria-specific Millennium Development Goal, which not only created a cause for the international development community to rally behind, but also helped to mobilise political advocates on the issue. The gains, though impressive, are fragile and malaria has resurged significantly on many occasions.

The parasite that causes the disease, *Plasmodium falciparum*, is changing through mutation to develop resistance to

artemisinin, our most effective treatment, in the Greater Mekong Subregion of Southeast Asia. This region has been the cradle of resistance to previous antimalarial drugs, and therefore tackling antimalarial drug resistance is now a global health priority. If allowed to reach malaria-endemic parts of Africa and South Asia, it could have a devastating impact on recent achievements and trigger a huge rise in malaria deaths.

In Southeast Asia there is relatively low overall transmission of malaria. Containment programmes are now aimed at accelerating the elimination of *P. falciparum*, as the only safe way to eliminate resistant malaria parasites, and the risk of them migrating, is to eliminate malaria. This must be done urgently, and we cannot afford to miss the short window of opportunity we have to act effectively.

Malaria Consortium is contributing to these efforts by helping countries establish stronger surveillance systems for malaria, triggering timely response. The people most at risk of suffering from and spreading drug resistant malaria in the region are the large mobile and

migrant populations. We are also helping to protect and monitor these populations, and to help stop the increase of drug resistant malaria both within and beyond the region.

It is an issue that is having increasing resonance globally. It is clear from the Ebola crisis in West Africa that weak health systems struggle to cope with significant infectious disease epidemics, and the loss of one of the key tools in the treatment for malaria, before alternatives can be found, would be devastating. Furthermore, there is growing international attention being given to the issues of antibiotic and anti-tuberculosis drug resistance, problems with similar causes and effects to antimalarial drug resistance.

The European Commission remains a key partner in the fight against malaria, with an important role to play in helping developing countries to achieve universal access to prevention and treatment for all. As one of the leading donors to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the EU's contributions should be applauded.

However, as we celebrate World Malaria Day on 25 April, the fight continues and there is no room for complacency. The European Commission has a greater role to play in directly addressing the urgent issue of drug resistant malaria, and European political advocates are needed to keep malaria high on the agenda.

And the biggest challenge remains, that international and domestic funding combined is still only just over half of what is required to achieve global targets for malaria control and elimination forecast by the World Health Organisation. If we want to stay ahead of the game in malaria control and continue making steady progress towards elimination, current *and* new political advocates need to help close this funding gap.



A child is tested for malaria using a rapid diagnostic test kit. By ensuring an accurate diagnosis prior to treatment, the risk of drug resistant malaria can be reduced through avoiding the overuse of drugs.

Malaria Consortium is one of the world's leading non-profit organisations specialising in the prevention, control and treatment of malaria and other communicable diseases among vulnerable populations.

Our mission is to improve lives in Africa and Asia through sustainable, evidence-based programmes that combat targeted diseases and promote child and maternal health.

Discover more about our work:
www.malariaconsortium.org
[@FightingMalaria](https://twitter.com/FightingMalaria)

You can also find out more about the impact of malaria in both Asia and Africa from our collaboration with award winning photographer, Adam Nadel
www.malaria-tears.org

**malaria
consortium**

disease control, better health

Malaria Consortium is a charity registered in England and Wales, no. 1099776, and a company registered in England and Wales, no. 4785712

Tackling drug-resistant malaria must be EU research priority

Ahead of world malaria day, **Marlene Mizzi** writes that despite ongoing research efforts, the disease is gaining strength

Marlene Mizzi (S&D, MT) is a vice-chair of parliament's petitions committee

The establishment of a 'day' dedicated to something or someone is driven by the need to highlight, flag, honour or raise awareness. World malaria day, on 25 April, has been established to enhance the visibility and underline the importance of dealing with malaria, which represents a major concern for the world health organisation (WHO).

Over one million people die of malaria each year – most of whom are children under five and pregnant women. In addition, there are an estimated 250 million reported cases of the illness, and over three billion people at risk of infection. The WHO is rightly concerned, especially if in addition to malaria-prone countries in sub-Saharan Africa and sub-tropical Central and South America, the disease spreads to Europe. An immediate challenge in the fight against malaria is the parasite's increasing resistance to treatment, particularly to well-known and relatively inexpensive drugs. Consequently, many affected countries will have to turn to a combination of drugs or more expensive alternatives to stimulate progress and address this resistance.

Fortunately, research into malaria has been strong in Europe, namely through the sixth (2002-2006) and seventh (2007-2013) framework programmes (FPs) for research and technological development. The inclusion of researchers from

malaria-endemic countries has ensured long-term cooperation and links with research facilities in these regions. Under the sixth framework programme, research was significantly intensified and very large malaria projects were supported. There were also major clinical trials supported by the EU through the European and developing countries clinical trials partnerships (EDCTP) where funds were provided to produce new drugs, vaccines or microbicides and elevate them to the more costly phase two and three clinical trials.

Under FP7, malaria once again featured prominently for research support as part of the 'infectious diseases' programme. A major difference from other programmes is that FP7 focused on targeting the origin of the disease and controlling malaria infection by targeting the mosquito vector.

However, the challenge is making vaccines and antimalarial drugs available to malaria-infected regions, although the resistance of the disease to current affordable drugs is an immediate and urgent problem. Drugs which have traditionally cured and treated millions may end up being ineffective, causing a surge in deaths from this disease. Developing drugs which are beyond the reach – both geographically and economically – of malaria-infected regions defeats the very purpose of the millions of euros pumped into research and development.

Total global eradication of this disease should be the ultimate aim of research efforts. The United Nations millennium development goals and the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, together with the WHO's global malaria action plan, are aiming to achieve this on a country-by-country basis.

The importance of funds dedicated to research in eradicating malaria can only be appreciated when taking into consideration the fact that this disease costs more than €11bn in indirect losses each year – not to mention the loss of life. On 25 April, world malaria day will serve to remind us of the importance of fighting this monster of a disease and of increasing funding for research and development, clinical tests and investing in people's health, education and the eradication of poverty. ★

“Developing drugs which are beyond the reach – both geographically and economically – of malaria-infected regions defeats the very purpose of the millions of euros pumped into research and development”



Malaria kills a child every minute

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Defeating Malaria Together

LIFE Trivers:

to know, protect and restore temporary rivers in Europe



Temporary rivers —one of the most common aquatic ecosystems— are natural habitats of high ecological interest. These rivers have dry periods at any moment during the year which lead to the disappearance of aquatic life. In many cases, water ceases to flow at the surface, but some isolated pools remain. Recent studies have proved that biological indicators used to evaluate the ecological status of permanent rivers cannot be applied to complex hydrological regimes like temporary rivers.

The main objectives of the European project LIFE Trivers, led by the University of Barcelona (UB), is to provide solutions to achieve a correct diagnosis of river ecological status and to improve the management of temporary rivers considering the regulations of the European Union Water Framework Directive (WFD).

The other project partners are the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Water Research (IDAEA-CSIC), the Catalan Water Agency (ACA) and the Júcar Hydrographic Confederation (CHJ).

One of the main actions of the project is the development of the software Temporary Rivers Ecological and Hydrological Status (TREHS). The tool will enable to know the evolution of river hydrological characteristics over time and to determine the probability of water abstraction at different moments throughout the year. It will help managers select appropriate sampling dates and use the adequate methods to determine rivers' ecological status. The main results will be obtained from field data to determine the relationship between the aquatic states of a temporary river and its biological communities in order to assess its ecological status.



More information about TRivers in www.lifetrivers.eu
Or follow us on twitter @LifeTRivers



The main task of the project is to learn the elements of the culture of trust in order to understand the behavior of educational entities in situations of the usage of ICT tools and programs in globalizing societies. The object of study is formal education, non-formal and informal.

The research carried out a perspective of: critical and emancipator pedagogy (Poland), multimedia learning (Norway), sensory learning (Italy), value pedagogy (India), pragmatic pedagogy (Russia). It is important to discover the elements of a culture of trust in consideration of diverse media messages because of their **source, content, motives, objectives and circumstances of resorting to the transmissions.**

The project will result in: 1) educational rapprochement of cultures, 2) breaking down of stereotypes, 3) preparation of professional teacher training standards in establishing a culture of trust in the use of ICT.

SIT

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Stimulators and Inhibitors of Culture of Trust in Educational Interactions Assisted by Modern ICT

More information about the project www.sitproject.eu,
Coordinator contact:
Elzbieta Perzycka
perzyk@gmail.com

Erasmus failing to provide equal access to education and training

Everyone should be afforded access to education and professional training, as well as real opportunities for further development. Investment in knowledge means investment in Europe's future job growth and competitiveness. Participating in mobility programmes helps to acquire much-needed skills, benefits employability, self-development and self-assessment, provides life-changing experiences and broadens social networks among our youth. Ensuring equal access to education and training and facilitating effective support to people with special needs, is essential in order to fight social exclusion and promote active participation in society and the economy.

I place high value on the proposed supplementary financial support for students with special needs who wish to participate in Erasmus+ but are unable to do so without extra funding. According to statistical data from the commission, during the 2012-2013 academic year only 388 students with special needs received a supplementary grant for Erasmus studies or traineeships. This represents just 0.14 per cent of all Erasmus students and trainees. Although the number has increased compared with previous years it is still extremely low. In this regard, the commission should be doing more to encourage people with special needs to participate in Erasmus+.

This could be combined with better promotion of the opportunities and support that are available, as many young people are still not aware of them. We must strive for significant progress in the social and educational inclusion of people with special needs. I am certain that facilitating their access to international mobility programmes will be beneficial for their social and professional integration.

Another issue I would like to raise is the bureau-

cratic obstacles impeding participation in Erasmus+. Student and staff mobility helps people understand and learn from the differences that may otherwise divide us. Academic mobility is also a mechanism for higher education institutions to provide valuable exchange of good teaching practices and methods for foreign staff in destination countries. All this is very important, but not easily achievable. Despite the measures that have been undertaken to reduce the bureaucratic obstacles that students face, many still find it too complicated to join the programme, or to complete the paperwork once it has ended. For participants that are not from the EU, the European economic area or Switzerland, coming here for research or study is far more difficult than it should be. We must remove these obstacles and make the EU more open. Such mobility benefits the EU and our economy through the circulation of knowledge and ideas. In order to facilitate international mobility streams, the commission should put more effort into tackling the issue of visa requirements, which is a serious bureaucratic obstacle to international mobility.

More fruitful discussion between EU institutions, member states, educational establishments and students is needed in order to exchange views and expectations and overcome existing challenges. There also needs to be better cooperation between host universities and those

sending students, so as to improve flows of information. Students still have to deal with unnecessary inconveniences and delays because educational institutions do not sufficiently communicate with one another.

I believe that Erasmus+ affords students a range of benefits and opportunities, and they should be able to access its full potential. It is our duty and responsibility to shine a light on any issues that get in the way of participation in the programme, and seek out solutions. ★

Too many obstacles still prevent students with special needs from participating in international mobility programmes, writes **Ilhan Kyuchyuk**



“During the 2012-2013 academic year only 388 students with special needs received a supplementary grant for Erasmus studies or traineeships. This represents just 0.14 per cent of all Erasmus students and trainees”

Ilhan Kyuchyuk (ALDE, BG) is a member of parliament's foreign affairs committee



Lack of harmonised university credits undermining Erasmus

Erasmus students are suffering due to failures of recognition between university credit systems, writes **Lara Comi**

The Erasmus programme is a clear success for European higher education and a true mark of excellence for the EU. The mobility of young people from one country to another within the academic world has certainly contributed to the circulation of ideas, the comparison between different cultures, the training of young people, European integration and, more generally, to the strengthening of European citizenship.

Students attend another member state's university for a certain period of time, taking exams and acquiring credits there. The quantification of student learning through the use of credits was already present in Europe, so as to facilitate mobility and recognition of study periods under Erasmus with the European credit transfer system (ECTS). This system makes courses of study more transparent and facilitates the recognition of qualifications.

In Italy, the ECTS system has caused some issues. A system originally created to facilitate student mobility within Europe has sometimes hindered it. The problem is that the rating scales differ too much from country to country, and the rigid criteria applied to the recognition of students' study periods at different universities, or between different degree programmes, have in some cases blocked students' training, sometimes resulting in 'lost' credits and causing a lack of recognition of training activities

already carried out and quantified in the form of 'crediti formativi universitari' (CFU). When it comes to the workload required of students to achieve certain educational goals, it has failed the original CFU concept. In addition, there are several educational discrepancies. For example, some disciplines are associated with a low number of CFU but require a tremendous amount of work from students, while at other times, a high number of CFU is not matched by the necessary workload. Moreover, students returning home after having studied abroad often find that their exams are not recognised because the subjects' credits do not coincide, despite the teaching programme being the same. As such they have to take further exams.

A fairly widespread feeling among students is that the quantification of training activities in the form of credits has, in fact, complicated university life. This feeling, in my opinion, is probably linked to a lack of harmonisation in terms of the concept and meaning of university credits by the academic community.

Despite these problems, each year about 25,000 Italian students take part in the Erasmus programme. But it must be made more and more efficient. For this reason, I have submitted a written question to ask the European commission which legislative initiatives or actions it intends to put forward to further improve the harmonisation of university credit transfers for students within the Erasmus programme. ★

"A fairly widespread feeling among students is that the quantification of training activities in the form of credits has, in fact, complicated university life"

Lara Comi (IT) is a vice-chair of parliament's EPP group

Lack of entrepreneurial skills is blunting Europe's competitive edge

A competent young workforce is crucial to retaining the competitiveness of the EU economy as a whole. However, ensuring that the younger generations possess the right skills is becoming more challenging in a shrinking and increasingly competitive job market. The truth is that the skills required to thrive in this day and age are very different from what is being taught at the majority of schools and universities. The world economic forum has recognised high unemployment and underemployment as the second largest global risk, yet today's graduates have no guarantee that their tertiary education can equip them with the skills they need to fill the jobs available on the market. They are increasingly discovering that despite their academic qualifications, they lack the specific skills wanted by employers.

While EU and national authorities have already recognised the importance of teaching science, technology, engineering and maths, as well as ICT skills, to match the increasing demand for jobs in these fields, much less attention is paid to the development of entrepreneurial competences, including financial literacy and soft skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, time management, creativity and opportunity recognition.

The lack of entrepreneurial skills remains a serious challenge for the EU economy, and must be addressed immediately if Europe is to retain its competitive edge. Such skills can open up a much wider horizon of job opportunities to graduates. There is enough scientific evidence demonstrating that students who undertake entrepreneurial courses have a greater chance of launching their own company, are more likely to find a job quicker than their peers and appear to be better able to adapt to changing job market requirements. In the European regions that have been hit hardest by the crisis any additional skill featured on a job application could be enough to sway an employer's decision. Teaching entrepreneurial skills not only improves young people's ability to start their own businesses, it also helps them better understand their prospective

employers' behaviour and needs. Providing students with hands-on experience during their education, teaching them the basic rules of business administration, would allow them to become much more valuable employees, able to think and act in entrepreneurial terms. This way, they could contribute to the success of a company more than other workers. Therefore, it is crucial for policymakers, business leaders and teachers to nurture an entrepreneurial spirit in young Europeans.

Last month, I hosted the launch of the entrepreneurial skills pass, a new European qualification in entrepreneurship for young people, which gives potential employers proof that its holder has real entrepreneurship experience and relevant

If Europe is to tackle unemployment, more must be done to teach young people about entrepreneurship, writes **Petra Kammerevert**

"Teaching entrepreneurial skills not only improves young people's ability to start their own business, but also helps them better understand their prospective employers' behaviour"



job skills. This initiative is a collaboration between public institutions, non-profit organisations and large private companies. Engaging with the business community is key to ensuring easy access to entrepreneurial education and job skills, as businesses are the source of real-life examples and experiences that are essential for entrepreneurial learning.

Finally, we must consider expanding the traditional model of academic universities by adding emphasis on vocational education and training to ensure the full social inclusion of all EU citizens. ★

Petra Kammerevert (S&D, DE) is a member of parliament's culture and education committee



ECSEL

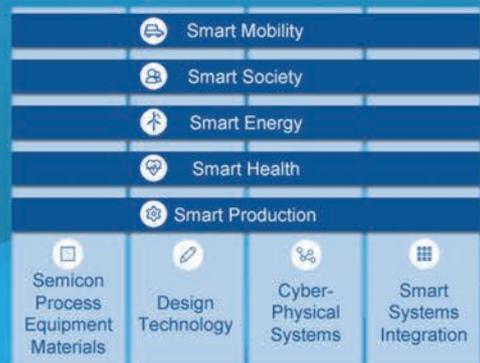
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Europe's 'Oscars' celebrate work of EU parliamentarians in style

Reding took to the stage on Wednesday 18 March for the 11th annual MEP awards in the glamorous Concert Noble hotel in Brussels' EU district, where 18 members of the European parliament were rewarded for their work. Kicking off the ceremony, Reding pointed to the importance of the awards, saying they "recognise the extraordinary work done by MEPs".

The former commission vice-president also praised the high number of votes received in the run-up to the awards, adding that the 566 votes cast numbered "more than some plenary sessions".

More than 400 guests turned out on the night for the awards, enjoying drinks generously supplied by The Brewers of Europe and Diageo. Jo Leinen, the winner of the outstanding

achievement award for his sterling work as part of the parliament's preparations for and representation at the UN climate change conference, said it was a "real honour to receive this award" and recalled that "it is 40 years ago in March 1975, that I began my work to protect and preserve ecosystems on this planet". Leinen outlined that, "the European movement exists outside the 28 member states" and "other states want to be part of our Europe".

Reding described the German Socialist as "a fighter for a united states of Europe" and said the award was "only a small facet of his work" which is "recognised worldwide", particularly in the area of climate change. A passionate believer in a united Europe, Leinen closed by emphasising the success that the European project encapsulates. ★

"[These awards] recognise the extraordinary work done by MEPs"

Viviane Reding

MEP and former commission vice-president **Viviane Reding** hosted the Parliament Magazine's annual event in Brussels recognising MEPs for their work





“As a farmer myself, I understand the importance of innovation in farming”
 Jan Huitema (ALDE, NL), winner of the agriculture award sponsored by Fertilizers Europe



“The way we treat animals tells us what kind of people we are and how we treat other people”
 Sirpa Pietikäinen (EPP, FI) receives her animal welfare award from IFAW’s Sonja Van Tichelen

“I am working to fight poverty and inequality and promote the protection of wildlife and our planet. Good governance is important for human dignity”
 Davor Ivo Stier (EPP, HR) accepts the development award from World Animal Protection’s Ruud Tombrock



“Despite working in the European parliament for five years as an assistant, a lot has changed – these have been stressful and busy times, but I am very thankful for all the people who have supported, energised and inspired me”
 Best newcomer Eva Paunova (EPP, BU) accepts her award from EU40’s Adam Mouchtar



“Good governance must be possible, and companies must act as liable parts of society”
 Evelyn Regner (S&D, AT) receives the corporate governance award from ECIIA’s Thijs Smit



“Europe doesn’t need its Mark Zuckerberg – we have our own, and Europe can be better than Silicon Valley, but for this to happen we need more than words”
 Victor Negrescu (S&D, RO) receives his digital agenda award from IEEE’s Dirk van Hertem



“Our motto should be health first and until this is true, we cannot say we have been truly successful”
 Alojz Peterle (EPP, Slovenia) scoops his third MEP award for health

“I want to thank my team, assistants and the economic and monetary affairs secretariat for their exceptional work, as well as those MEPs who are no longer with us and who did excellent work in the previous term”
 Pablo Zalba Bidegáin (EPP, ES) and DTCC’s Andrew Douglas



“I would give up this award immediately if it meant changing the way of thinking of people in the EU – we need to be more motivated and more active”
 Martina Dlabajová (ALDE, CZ) receives her employment and social affairs award from Eurociett’s Annemarie Muntz



“The transition to a sustainable economy is happening and we need to speed this up. This award is proof we are on the right track”
 Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE, NL), winner of the environment award



“I have been working for the past seven years on energy policy and I hope we can realise a true energy union for Europe”
 Energy award winner Adina-Ioana Vălean (EPP, RO) and Fuels Europe’s Chris Beddoes



“I have been fighting for the digital single market for many years”
 ICT award winner Paul Rübigh (EPP, Austria)



“No MEP could do anything by themselves and there is much left to do, but being from a small country puts no limits on my work”

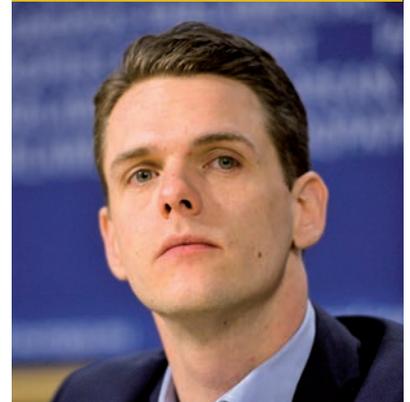
Roberta Metsola (EPP, MT), justice and civil liberties award winner

“This award is an acknowledgement of the hard work in fighting for free trade. Some think I go too far for free trade, but it is good to know my work is recognised”

Christofer Fjellner (EPP, Sweden), winner of the trade and internal market award

“It is a real honour to receive this award. It is 40 years ago in March 1975, that I began my work to protect and preserve ecosystems on this planet”

Outstanding achievement winner Jo Leinen receives his award from EuroBrussels’ Julian Lewis



“Parliament’s influence has changed the Horizon 2020 project for the better. It is an innovative and flexible research programme”

Christian Ehler (EPP, DE) receives his research and innovation award from ECSEL’s Andreas Wild



“This award is the crowning achievement of a year full of hard work and parliamentary reports. I want to thank my family and my brother for keeping me grounded in the business world, which for a politician is very important”

Transport award winner Franck Proust (EPP, FR) and the Association of European Airlines’ Ziya Taskent



“There is a long relationship between Europe and its regions and this has changed. We must bring Europe closer to the citizens”

Lambert van Nistelrooij (EPP, NL) receives his award from The Brewers of Europe’s Pierre-Olivier Bergeron

Europe should open its gates to refugees fleeing Eritrea

The human rights situation in Eritrea is dire. The participants of a recent meeting of parliament's subcommittee on human rights stressed that there are basically no opposition political parties, independent media or civil society organisations permitted to operate.

Sheila Keetharuth, the UN special rapporteur on Eritrea, spoke of a wide range of human rights violations, such as "indefinite national service, arbitrary arrests and detention, extrajudicial killings, torture, inhumane prison conditions, restricted freedom of movement and expression, assembly, and religious belief; sexual and gender-based violence, and violations of children's rights." What does this mean for EU relations with Eritrea? This country, which some politicians refer to as 'Africa's North Korea' is a one party state run by the dictator Isaias Afwerki. There have been no national elections since independence in 1993 and regional elections scheduled to take place in 2009 have not yet been held.

Nevertheless, the EU maintains intensive development programmes in Eritrea, in the areas of agriculture, construction of solar pumps and measures to enable conservation of soil and water. We are talking about initiatives totalling €60m, executed together with the Eritrean government. I agree with these measures but if we can cooperate in these issues, why can't we force the regime to accept UN investigations on human rights? Keetharuth confirmed to the subcommittee that Eritrea is still denying access. This is why she is asking the EU and the international community to strengthen their efforts to break this blockade.

One of the most virulent human rights abuses is indefinite national service, which can last 10 years or more. It is one of the primary reasons thousands of Eritreans are fleeing the country, despite the risks encountered in escaping and an uncertain future abroad. Every citizen aged between 18 and 40 has a duty to perform 'active national service',

which is in theory limited to 18 months. However, due to the Ethiopian-Eritrean war in 2002, the government extended the duration indefinitely. Another contributory factor to people leaving the country is the ongoing practice of arbitrary arrests and detentions. Even though some journalists seem to be released, it is still unclear what happened to all the other political prisoners.

Adebrhan Welde Giorgis, former Eritrean ambassador to the EU, stressed to us that sanctions are not working and agreed on the need to engage in dialogue but on different terms. However, to again quote the UN special rapporteur, the EU needs to strengthen efforts to "prevent a repeat of the Lampedusa situation and ensure protection of those fleeing from Eritrea". Eritreans are not fleeing for no reason, but due to an authoritarian regime committing gross human rights violations, which need to be stopped. As long as we are unable to stop these violations, we have to open the gates for refugees coming from this country searching for a secure place. ★

Europe must do more to help the victims of human rights abuses in 'Africa's North Korea', says **Barbara Lochbihler**

Barbara Lochbihler (Greens/EFA, DE) is a vice-chair of parliament's human rights subcommittee

"There are basically no opposition political parties, independent media or civil society organisations permitted to operate [in Eritrea]"



Member states in meltdown over energy union's nuclear silence

A coalition of member states is urging the commission to consider allowing nuclear energy to be eligible for EU financing mechanisms. **Sofia Kalogeraki reports**

Despite accounting for the largest individual share of the European Union's domestic production of primary energy, ahead of gas and renewables, nuclear energy has been noticeable for its absence from the European commission's energy union plans. The strategy presented by the commission acknowledges that nuclear energy produces about 30 per cent of the EU's electricity but does not refer to it as part of the EU's low carbon economy. Nuclear is, however, briefly mentioned under the fifth pillar of the energy union, in which the commission stresses that the EU should maintain technological leadership within the nuclear domain.

This silence on nuclear power in the energy union strategy has caused unease among Europe's nuclear states, which have been pushing for "a package of initiatives to develop a supportive EU framework for safe and sustainable nuclear power". Prior to the publication of the strategy, energy ministers from eight member states – Romania, France, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and the UK – sent a letter to the EU executive asking it to explore the possibility of applying European financing mechanisms for large infrastructure projects to nuclear development. They also asked the commission to bring forward "clear guidance" in its 'Guidelines on state aid for environmental protection and energy 2014-2020', which are due for revision in 2019. The initiative has reportedly caused a rift

Nuclear in numbers

- The EU accounts for roughly one-third of the world's annual nuclear-based electricity generation
- In 2013 nuclear energy accounted for the largest share of EU domestic production of primary energy in 2013 with 29 per cent, ahead of renewables and gas
- The largest producer of nuclear power within the EU28 in 2013 was France, with a 48.3 per cent share of the total, followed by Germany (11.1 per cent), the UK (8.1 per cent), Sweden (7.6 per cent) and Spain (6.5 per cent). These five member states accounted for more than 80 per cent of the total amount of electricity generated in nuclear facilities
- Following the disaster in Fukushima, Germany has decided to phase out all nuclear power plants by 2022
- Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta and Portugal do not produce nuclear power at all

between the eight member states and traditionally non-nuclear countries, such as Austria, which in December 2014 stood against the inclusion of nuclear infrastructure in the projects eligible for funding under the €315bn Juncker plan.

Scepticism has been also expressed by the Greens/EFA group in the European parliament, which argues that the overarching focus of the energy union is to revive nuclear power. The group was also the only one to openly welcome the parliament's budgetary control committee decision in

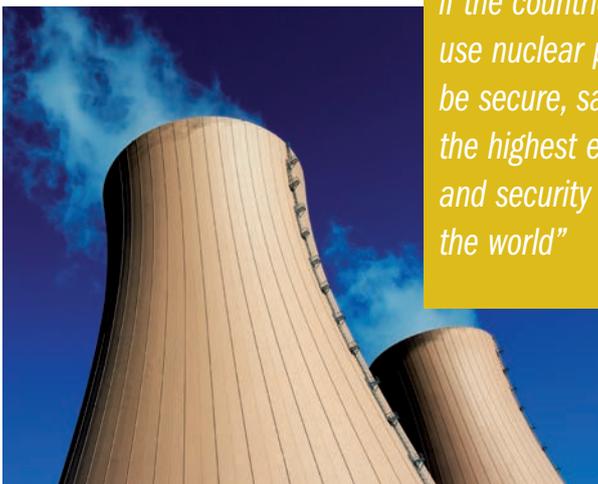
March to not grant a discharge to the EU budget line for the ITER nuclear fusion project, on the grounds that it is "a costly white elephant for which the European taxpayer is being left to foot the bill". S&D MEPs have also argued against the bankrolling of the nuclear industry under the Juncker investment plan and called for the phasing out of subsidies to the sector.

The commission argues that it is the right of each member state to invest in nuclear energy, provided that certain safety and environmental concerns are met. In addition, it pledges to come back

with more initiatives related to nuclear investment projects and intensify its efforts to increase the transparency of agreements with third partners. A communication on a nuclear illustrative programme, which will describe the status of the sector in the EU, is also set to be presented in 2015. ★

"What is important for the European commission is that if the countries decided to use nuclear power that it will be secure, safe and have the highest environmental and security standards in the world"

Maroš Šefčovič



Sofia Kalogeraki is a consultant for Dods EU monitoring

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Commission alleges Google abused its dominant position in search

The European commission has sent a 'statement of objections' to Google, alleging the internet search giant has "abused its dominant position in the markets for general internet search services". The statement claims Google is "systematically favouring" its own comparison shopping tool in its general search results pages. The commission believes that this is a breach of EU antitrust rules.



Morten Messerschmidt (pictured), parliament's rapporteur on the annual report on EU competition policy in 2014 said, the announcement was evidence that, "we are seeing some life in the commission's competition directorate [...] after having been asleep on the job for far too long". The ECR MEP predicts the commission's digital agenda will "have no credibility until this issue is resolved".

He added that, "The commission has now showed its teeth, and it must now work swiftly with Google to resolve this case."

Michel Reimon, the Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the annual report on EU competition policy said, "There can be little doubt that Google abuses its dominant market position, so it was high time for the commission to formally act on this." Reimon dismissed the arguments put forward by the US search engine that consumers are free to use other search providers as "misleading".

From the Twittersphere

@BartStaes Bart Staes

My report on #TTIP adopted in ENVI! Strong message towards Commission. No negotiations on REACH, hormones, GMO's, cloning & public health!



@TheProgressives S&D Group

Opening a path to justice! The #EP backs the S&D proposal to recognise & commemorate the #Roma Holocaust during WWII



@StylianidesEU Christos Stylianides

One year today since the abduction of Chibok girls by #BokoHaram. United we demand their immediate and safe return #BringBackOurGirls



@ManfredWeber Manfred Weber

.@EPPGroup supports @EU_Commission in its investigation into #Google's position. EU must show its teeth. www doesn't mean Wild Wild West



@Senficon Julia Reda

#Geoblocking is discrimination, Commission Vice-President @Anspip_EU and #DigitalSingleMarket working group chair @rozathun agree.



@TerryReintke Terry Reintke

Yeah! Pre-financing for Youth Employment Initiative adopted. Now we will start the negotiations with council and commission. #reclaimEurope



@GuyVerhofstadt Guy Verhofstadt

Putin lifting ban missiles #Iran undermines regional stability & puts coherence #IranTalks at risk #Russia.Consolidation nuclear deal needed



@SebDance Seb Dance MEP

EP silent for most recent victims in Mediterranean. We can't ignore need for more co-op b/ween govts



@GreensEP Greens in the EP

Good news. MEPs have supported a Green amendment to earmark part of the Juncker investment fund for energy efficiency #EFSI



@EP_Environment ENVI Committee Press

#Biofuels: outcome of negotiations adopted with 51 votes in fav, 12 ag and 1 abstention. Lead #MEP @NilsTorvalds. Plenary vote April 11



EU policymakers blamed for refugee deaths in Mediterranean

The international organisation for migration says around 900 migrants have died since January. Most recently, 400 were feared dead off the coast of Libya. Cécile Kyenge, parliament's rapporteur on migration, said, "we are hearing more and more about the crisis and the fact that migration is increasing – is the arrival of 250,000 migrants to a continent of half a billion people really a crisis?" The Socialist deputy highlighted that "a union of 28 states and half a billion people must have the capacity to cope with the current situation". She pointed out that "Mare Nostrum, Italy's sea patrolling operation carried out by a single member state, saved 150,000 people in one year. Paradoxically, the EU joint operation meant to take over Mare Nostrum, Triton, is



not having anywhere near the same level of success".

Greens/EFA group spokesperson on migration Judith Sargentini, said, "the reality is that Europe is also responsible for these deaths by turning a blind eye to the precarious journeys engaged on by desperate refugees". EPP group chair Manfred Weber tweeted that the "difficult situation of refugees will remain an issue for Europe for years – we need comprehensive strategies and decisions". MEPs' comments were echoed by parliament president Martin Schulz, for whom this is "not just an issue for individual countries, it is one the EU must treat as its own". For now, no concrete EU measures have been announced.

A NEW ERA FOR AVIATION SAFETY

The International Federation of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Associations (IFATSEA) unites the professional associations of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel (ATSEPs) from around the world. ATSEP is the recognized ICAO terminology for personnel proven to be competent in the installation, operation and/or maintenance of a CNS/ATM system. ICAO recognises observer status for IFATSEA.

Working Together with Eurocontrol, IFATSEA developed the first ATSEP Training Manual adopted as ICAO Doc 7192-AN_857 Part E-2. IFATSEA contributes to SESAR Joint Undertaking activities, defining and validating the future technology platform for Air Traffic Management (ATM) in Europe.

IFATSEA is participating to the EASA rulemaking activities related to ATSEPs and cooperates with IFATCA, IFALPA and ITF.

Air Navigation Service (ANS) technologies include systems in ATM and Communication, Navigation, Surveillance (CNS), Networks, Flight Data Processing **while ATSEP is the first barrier towards Cybersecurity threats.**

The steady growth in air traffic volumes and the introduction of new concepts (e.g.: i4D, RPAS) means that systems and procedures in ANS must be continuously modified and adapted based on software-based solutions which are also managed and overseen by ATSEP.



Furthermore, the **availability, accuracy and integrity of CNS/ATM** being critical enablers for Performance of aviation is secured by competent and trained ATSEPs throughout Europe and worldwide. Every passenger who has landed within bad weather conditions guided by the ILS knows.

ANS rely on an extensive technical infrastructure, with field stations, that are often placed at the top of mountains, at national and regional airports and even in military premises. ATSEP ensure to provide services 24/7 throughout the year. This also makes considerable demands on the ANSPs workforce, in terms of shift work. Working beyond linguistic and cultural borders asks also for a pronounced ability to work as a team.

In addition to their professional competencies, ATSEP must show high degree of self-discipline and flexibility while working on operational online systems, to be able to cope with critical decision-making and psychological pressure, since their decisions impact the flying public safety. Moreover, according to a recent EASA study, the ATSEP profession is identified among others as a top Safety Critical Profession.

That is why IFATSEA strives for a worldwide standard of Licensed ATSEP.

ATSEP are the licensing missing link in the aviation safety chain.

ATSEPs perform, among others, the following activities on operational facilities, depending on their aptitude, training and qualifications:

- preventive and corrective maintenance
- hardware and software specifications and modifications software integration and testing
- compiling and revising documentation , installation and commissioning. Airborne calibrations of navigation and radar facilities and systems monitoring and control and project management skills.

Since the start of the early days of the SES reform in the European Union, ATM/CNS has been part of the equation. IFATSEA have been at the forefront of the discussions since the first white paper and the European Commission published in 1996, almost twenty years ago. IFATSEA is always willing to contribute in a forward-looking and socially sustainable way while it is catering for its members.



The workers in the European Aviation represent the backbone (or the Fifth Pillar) of an impressive system, which has evolved over the past two decades, generating significant growth and cohesion throughout the European continent. They will continue to be the key for any future development of the Single European Sky including the Deployment of the PCP (Pilot Common Project) of SESAR technologies, which will bring harmonisation and efficiency in the European ATM arena, while improving safety levels.

No other transport mode will bring you from A to B as fast, as timely and as “cheap” as Air Transport when compared to others. CNS/ATM's contribution to this success should not be underestimated, in particular as the infrastructure almost is completely financed by the users.



With the transition from SES I to SES II and the intended extension to SES II+, IFATSEA raised its substantiated concerns against the unbundling of CNS and other ANS services and considering them as ‘Support services’. Even ANSPs prefer to control these services as their business backbone including a big volume of investments.

- IFATSEA believes that unbundling of the **core ANS service of CNS** services domain and changing a working business model, at the same time of critical PCP deployment **introduces a major risk for the Deployment plans**.
- IFATSEA opposed proposals to layoff several ATSEP as a further cost reduction proposal (see PRB report) while CNS service provision indicated a minus 3% trend over RP1. This is unfounded and contradictory, especially when legacy systems will have to be maintained while new SESAR solutions are integrated or fused in.
- In fact, IFATSEA has identified a trend for lack of high qualified ATSEP in the forthcoming years, when SESAR solutions, especially under the light of Cybersecurity requirements, will be implemented.

IFATSEA believe that SES should not fail. Too many jobs and economic cohesion/interdependence are at stake for this to happen. We still do believe any reorganization process can still benefit from our expert input.

- In conclusion – as professionals in ATM, together with ATCOs, who:
- guarantee a high level of service and safety for passengers, for less than 6€ per flight ticket,
 - have a productivity, which is 3% higher than any other network industry in the past decade

IFATSEA support the improvement of safety and performance in aviation and is willing to contribute towards the creation of a truly safe and efficient Single European Sky, which is socially acceptable, sustainable and efficient for all stakeholders involved.

- IFATSEA
 - Welcomes the initiative by EASA to implement common rules in Europe for Training, Qualification and Competence Assessment for ATSEP.
 - Welcomes the update of ICAO Doc 7192-AN_857 Part E-2 ATSEP Training Manual and recognition of ATSEP by ICAO in PANS-TRG Doc 9868 (Competency Based Training for professions in the aviation safety chain) and continues to urge ICAO Member States to include ATSEP in ICAO ANNEX 1.
 - Urges that ANSPs shall employ sufficient number of competent ATSEP to ensure the provision of ATM/ANS in an efficient, continuous and sustainable manner whilst ensuring that safety is not in any way compromised.

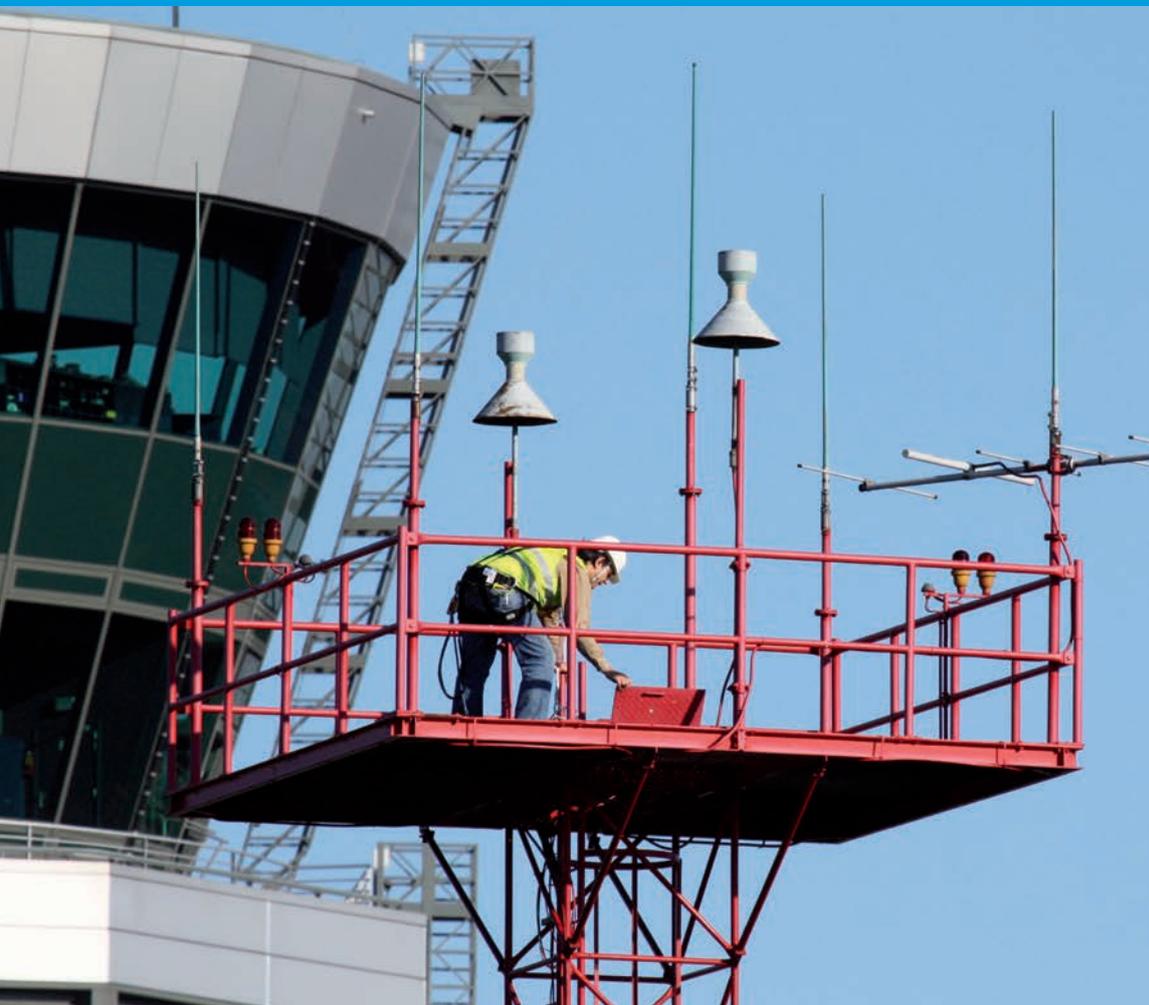


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Belgocontrol controls the airspace in the heart of Europe: in Belgium and in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. This central positioning is crucial in the European air traffic, placing the five Belgian airports in the center of the network and emphasizing their economic importance. Safety and accessibility of the airspace and the airports are therefore of prime importance for Belgocontrol.

Belgian airspace, at the 'crossroads' of European air traffic, is one of the most complex airspaces in Europe. Meeting high standards regarding safety, capacity, environment and economic efficiency can be challenging, but Belgocontrol manages to meet with success the set standards. Even more, we continue to improve our performances every year in all four domains. 2014 was an outstanding year regarding safety occurrences, with less severe incidents than ever before (less than 4 per million movements) and a new record for capacity. The average delay per flight en route for Belgocontrol was merely 0,02 minute!

At the center of Belgium lies Brussels, the beating political heart of the European Union and the home of many international institutions and companies. Their directors, employees, stakeholders and clients come to Belgium by airplane, landing at or departing from Brussels National Airport or at one of the four regional Belgian airports, a stone's throw from Brussels, namely Charleroi (also called Brussels South), Liège, Antwerp or Ostend. Belgocontrol delivers the same high level service on all these airports, considering their specific characteristics. As leading provider of air traffic control services in Belgium we handle each year 1 million movements. This is only possible thanks to a very skillful and experienced staff.

Belgocontrol is aiming for strong partnerships in Europe. As a partner in FABEC, the common functional airspace block encompassing the airspace of Belgium, France, Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, Belgocontrol fully subscribes to the objectives of FABEC to enhance the performances in terms of

safety, environmental impact, capacity, economic efficiency, shorter flight paths and efficiency of military missions by providing services across national borders. Belgocontrol has proven to be one of the most performing partners of FABEC, meeting and even outperforming the common goals.

But also on a national level Belgocontrol is striving to reinforce the collaboration with the military aviation authorities and with the neighboring ANSPs part of the Benelux. Facing the challenges of tomorrow Belgocontrol therefore considers it of utmost importance to co-design the future European airspace.



Belgocontrol

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EU aviation strategy will look to tackle all major policy issues

The aviation sector is a victim of its own success. The EU aviation market has brought tangible benefits to the people, with the possibility of flying more often, to more places for lower prices – and to the industry, with new business opportunities. But the exponential air traffic growth of the past few decades has created new, intertwined challenges.

We need to work on the modernisation of the air traffic management (ATM) system, to increase its efficiency and decrease its costs; we need to encourage and improve sustainability and we need to deal with the looming capacity crunch in our airports – Eurocontrol forecasts that if we do not act now, by 2035, 12 per cent of demand will not be met, meaning 120 million passengers will not be able to make their journeys. We need to make the EU's aviation

sector more competitive internationally; and we need to do all this by maintaining the highest level of safety, where Europe is already a world champion.

Creating a single airspace in the EU through the single European sky (SES) tackles all these challenges together. Moreover, the SES contributes to key commission priorities such as growth and jobs, a more integrated internal market,

and the climate goals for the energy union. For this reason it is – and will remain – a priority for me. The aims of the SES are to improve safety tenfold, triple airspace capacity, reduce air traffic management costs by 50 per cent and reduce environmental impact by 10 per cent.

Since the beginning of the SES 10 years ago, much progress has been made, but the most important element has been our capacity to structure the change. →

The single European sky will enable the EU to reap its potential for growth and competitiveness, writes **Violeta Bulc**

“Eurocontrol forecasts that if we do not act now, by 2035, 12 per cent of demand will not be met, meaning 120 million passengers will not be able to make their journeys”

SINGLE EUROPEAN SKY

Managing this change is one of the most difficult tasks ahead – we have embarked on a path that will transform the way the entire aviation sector, from providers to passengers, does and understands business. This year, for example, we have given a substantial boost to ATM modernisation through our research arm, the single European sky ATM research (SESAR) joint undertaking, which is moving from research and development to the concrete realisation of projects. Airlines, airport operators and air navigation service providers will receive up to €3bn in EU funding through the connecting Europe facility for common projects, which are crucial to achieving the SES goals.

The modernisation of European airspace requires adapting to change at all levels, from air traffic controllers to pilots and airport operators. Our plan is to keep following the path that has been outlined since the beginning of the SES, and try to speed up the process. We have institutionalised consultation mechanisms with all the actors of the aviation sector, and we are gathering input to develop a new medium to long-term vision for the SES, along with a wider aviation strategy that the commission intends to adopt by the end of the year.

To allow the EU's aviation sector to keep Europe connected within and with the rest of the world, and to reap its potential for growth and competitiveness, a long-term, overarching strategy is needed. In this light, the commission is developing an aviation strategy that will tackle all the major policy issues in the sector, including the future of the SES. At this stage it is too early to know what exactly this proposal will contain. However, I believe that innovation and technology, service provision and a streamlined economic regulatory framework will play a major role in the future of the SES. At institutional level, the emphasis on cooperation will remain strong. The new aviation strategy will be developed with the input of all interested actors in the aviation sector. To this end, a public consultation has been launched and will be open until 10 June. We are looking forward to receiving valuable input.

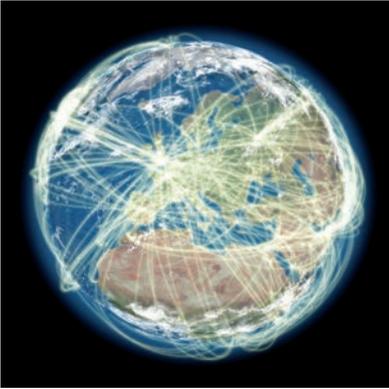
I am sure the new strategy will also push the SES initiatives to progress further, and take us near the realisation of a true single European sky. Moreover, I expect the strategy to bring enormous benefits in terms of competitiveness of the sector, benefiting both the aviation industry and all Europeans. ★

“We have embarked on a path that will change the way the entire aviation sector, from providers to passengers, does and understands business”

Violeta Bulc is
European transport
commissioner



High performing aviation for Europe



Modernising Air Traffic Management (ATM) is critical for the sustainability of European aviation. If we do not act now, we will not be able to cater for the forecasted increase in air traffic by 2030. This is where the Single European Sky's ATM Research technological pillar, SESAR, comes in. As one of the most ambitious research and development projects launched by the European Union, SESAR's role is to develop and deploy the improvements ("Solutions") needed to increase the performance of Europe's ATM system.

With SESAR...

Some of the benefits of SESAR can be listed as follows:

- Shorter flight times
- 50% fewer cancellations and delays
- Increased predictability on arrivals and departures
- A 50-million tonne reduction of CO₂ emissions by 2030 (in spite of the increased traffic)
- 42, 000 direct jobs (and 328, 000 jobs indirectly)

Seeing is believing

Since the start of SESAR, more than 30,000 trials have been conducted on commercial flights in real-life operational conditions. These activities have demonstrated the benefits that SESAR Solutions bring to airlines, airports, air navigation service providers and manufacturers. They have also shown how SESAR could alleviate the workload of pilots and air traffic controllers, allowing them to focus on higher value tasks. Among noteworthy milestones is the implementation of the world's first Remote Tower Services (RTS) in Sweden supporting mobility and thereby economic sustainability for remote regions in Europe. Another ground-breaking achievement is the unprecedented 4D flight, which allows for more efficient flightpaths and traffic flows, and ultimately more predictable flights.



© Saab AB Photographer: Stefan Kalm

Deploying SESAR

The most convincing proof of SESAR's readiness is the EU decision to deploy the first set of SESAR Solutions, referred to as the Pilot Common Project (PCP). This will allow for the crucial synchronised deployment across Europe (2015-2020). In parallel, an extended ATM research programme (SESAR 2020) will address new challenges and evolutions in ATM and aviation necessary to reach the next level of performance.

There is still a long way to go with SESAR, but after 50 years of almost complete standstill in Air Traffic Management, SESAR is now demonstrating Europe's ability to deliver performance-based ATM and its key role in the sustainability and competitiveness of Europe's aviation industry.



© SESAR Deployment Manager

SESAR: the building blocks

2004 - Establishment of **SESAR (Single European Sky Air Traffic Management Research)** as the technological pillar of the Single European Sky (SES).

2007 - Establishment of the **SESAR Joint Undertaking (SJU)** as a public-private partnership to pool the knowledge and resources of the entire ATM community in order to define, research, develop and validate SESAR Solutions. The SJU has a current mandate until 2024.

2014 - Establishment of the **SESAR Deployment Manager (SDM)** as a partnership between airlines, airports and air navigation service providers to coordinate the synchronised deployment of SESAR solutions, delivering significant benefits to airspace users and the environment.

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RA ROMATSA is organized as a self-financing public company, being certified and designated as air navigation services provider, including air traffic services, aeronautical communication services, navigation and surveillance services in the aeronautical field, aeronautical meteorological services, aeronautical information services, as well as coordination of the search and rescue missions in FIR BUCHAREST.

In addition to its basic activities, ROMATSA also has the right to perform consulting activities and to provide services in its field of activity, as well as research-development activities, including the manufacturing and trading of products specific to the air traffic management field, by its own forces or in partnership with the internal or external economic entities, as well as to perform its own transport activities, as per the legislation in force.



ROMATSA's core activities are:

- Provision of air navigation services for the Romanian Airspace:
 - air traffic services: communication, navigation and surveillance;
 - meteorological services for air navigation;
 - aeronautical information services;
- Civil-military coordination;
- Search and Rescue Coordination Center.

Vision and Mission

By the approval of the European Union regulations for the "SINGLE EUROPEAN SKY" (SES) concept an irreversible process

was initiated for the change of the conception and of the framework for the provision of the air navigation services in Europe, such regulations significantly influencing the way of providing the air navigation services in the entire European Union airspace.

Therefore, during the reconfiguration process for the European air traffic services network, RA ROMATSA must keep its key role in the area, to maintain a stable position, with a well-defined identity.

The strategic goal of RA ROMATSA in the implementation process of the SES concept is the preservation and promotion to ROMANIA's interest of the operational, technical and human potential as a national provider of air navigation services.

In the context of the Single European Sky, ROMATSA will provide air navigation services at a high level of safety, quality and performance, while observing the applicable requirements and contributing to the achievement of the goals of the Single European Sky together with the consolidation of its position in the region in partnership with the air navigation services providers.

Strategic guidelines

Safety: Improving the safety level in accordance with the national and international requirements (SAF).

Quality: Continuously improving the certified Quality Management System of RA ROMATSA, in all its fields of activity (QAL).

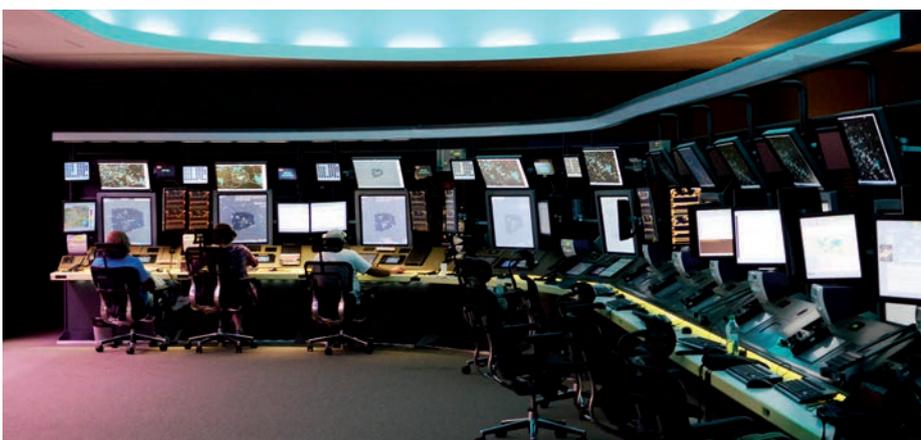
Efficiency: Improving the quality and performance level required for the provision of air navigation services, achieving the strategic goals at the most efficient cost/performance rate (FIN).

Capacity: Maintaining the zero delay and optimal capacity level (CAP).

Security: Fulfilling the requirements for the aeronautical and information security in cooperation with the competent authorities (SEC).

Environment: Implementation, certification and maintenance of an Environment Management System, in accordance with the requirements of ISO 14001:2004 standard (ENV).

Human Resources: Maintaining a high level of professionalism and flexibility among all employees by increasing the professional motivation and satisfaction, maintaining a stimulating work environment and promoting a result-based culture (HUM).



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Single European sky progress is necessary for the good of Europe

Europe is facing numerous challenges, and I agree with commission president Jean-Claude Juncker when he says this is the EU's last chance – either policymakers introduce reforms, or they fail. This is applicable to all sectors, including aviation. We live in a high speed era. Sometimes we need to get from one place to another very quickly and the best way to do this is to travel by plane. But what should we do when faced with delays, congestion and wasted time between flights? The single European sky (SES) is Brussels' attempt at solving these problems and we need progress. Looking at our competition, Brazil, Canada, Russia and China all want to secure their place within this strategic industry. We must move with the times – we need SES today, not tomorrow.

“Since the inception of the SES, the EU's enlargement policy, together with an active neighbourhood policy, has extended the European aviation market to 38 countries, turning EU aviation into a global player”

It is never easy to draft the perfect text for a report, but as MEPs, we are fully aware of our responsibility to do our best to improve the lives of half a billion citizens. I am parliament's rapporteur on the single European sky, a dossier which was adopted in 2014. It is the third piece of pan-European legislation on the management of our community's airspace, and I highly doubt it will be the last. Since the inception of the SES, the EU's enlargement policy, together with an active neighbourhood policy, has extended the European aviation market to 38 countries, turning EU aviation into a global player.

The SES has two main objectives – direct routes and a new airspace configuration. I do not believe the project will result in higher costs for companies, but in order to properly assess its social costs, a proper evaluation must be carried out. The implementation of the single European sky will definitely have

The single European sky is essential to boosting growth and employment in Europe, and negotiations must begin as soon as possible, urges **Marian-Jean Marinescu**





a positive impact on growth, employment and competitiveness in Europe, in particular by increasing demand for jobs requiring advanced qualifications.

Now, after an unnecessarily long period of time, both texts have finally been approved in parliament and council. Unfortunately, council has refused to enter into negotiations with parliament, invoking the UK's opposition to the project because of Gibraltar airport. This is not in line with the treaty. The text was voted with a qualified majority in council, which means that negotiations should begin. I hope the Latvian EU council presidency will respect the procedure and start the trilogues.

I am confident we will find a common position, but I made the decision not to simply wait for this to happen. In the last two months, with the support of parliament's directorate-general for communication, I organised a series of conferences about SES in key European locations – Maastricht, Bucharest, Warsaw, Vienna, Madrid and Berlin – and up next are Paris and London. I talked to hundreds of stakeholders and national authorities – all of whom agreed that SES is essential if we want to ensure progress and modernisation in Europe.

“The implementation of the single European sky will definitely have a positive impact on growth, employment and competitiveness in Europe”

In aviation, safety is key – it is the most important requirement that should be met by industry stakeholders, beginning with legislators. Policymakers have a duty to afford the same levels of attention to any person or entity. No one should consider themselves the most important actor and demand special privileges, but passengers must be viewed as the masters of this industry. At the same time, everyone's opinion must be taken into account when drafting a piece of legislation. If any part of a sector's service delivery chain is not satisfied or convinced by the benefits of a particular piece legislation, then this can compromise the safety and efficiency of that sector's activity.

Whenever I have the wonderful opportunity of being rapporteur on a project, I fully take into account the necessity of holding discussions, fostering dialogue, ensuring respect for other people's opinions and understanding the benefits of compromise. For me, the single European sky is not a job that is requested of me as part of my statute as an MEP. It is a project that is necessary for the good of air passengers and for the good of Europe. That is why I will continue fighting for SES to become a reality as soon as possible. ★

Marian-Jean Marinescu (EPP, RO) is parliament's rapporteur on the implementation of the single European sky (recast)

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SURVIVING THE IMPROBABLE

New flight control technologies to avoid loss of control in flight

Worldwide civil aviation safety statistics indicate that ‘in-flight loss of control’ has become the major cause of fatal accidents. This loss of control can have various causes, such as system malfunctions, upsets and loss of situational awareness by the crew. Recent research has shown that adaptive safe flight envelope estimation and protection technologies can assist the flight crew in avoiding loss of control and can provide a significant contribution in the increase of safety in aviation.

Worldwide aviation operations are expected to double almost in the next 15 years. This rapid growth over the coming decades will have important consequences for safety. At current high safety levels, this still would unavoidably result in an increase in the number of accidents. Therefore, further developments are required which focus on the continuous improvement of safety levels and reducing the risks of life threatening failures. In a recent study by the Commercial Aviation Safety Team (CAST) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), it can be observed that loss of control in flight (LOC-I) is the most frequent primary accident cause. This study is based on a statistical analysis of aircraft accidents between 2002 and 2011. LOC-I can have various causes, occurring individually or in combination, such as a system malfunction, atmospheric disturbances (e.g. turbulence or icing), and loss of situational awareness by the crew.

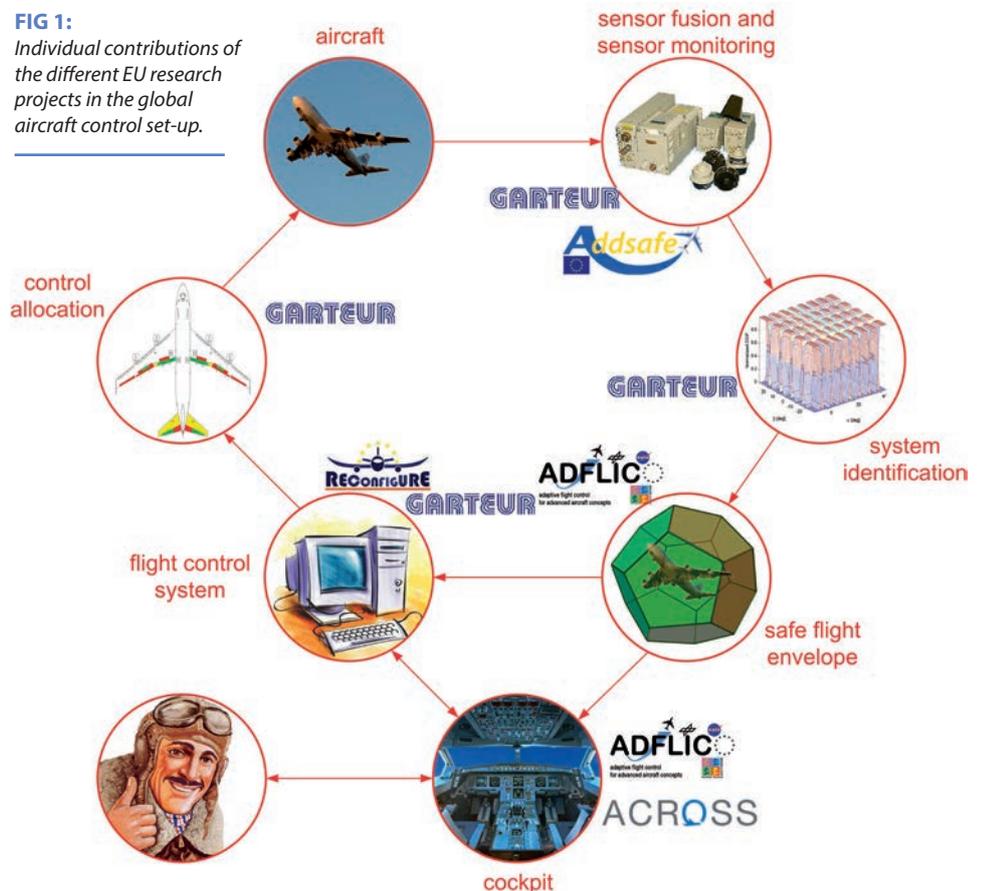
An example aircraft accident attributed to loss of control in flight is the Bijlmermeer accident. In 1992, a Boeing 747 cargo aircraft of El Al lost both engines on the right wing shortly after take-off from Schiphol Airport in the Netherlands due to metal fatigue in the engine pylons. The crew tried to nurse the crippled plane back to the airport, but entered an unrecoverable roll-dive at slow speed and crashed on an apartment building in the Bijlmermeer suburb. New technological developments could contribute significantly to avoiding this kind of accidents.

This context presents many diverse technological challenges. In the past decades, European cooperative projects and financial support have been organized for the development of various new technologies that contribute to avoiding loss of control in flight.

Research in the GARTEUR framework (Group for Aeronautical Research and Technology in Europe) has been done in Fault Tolerant Flight Control (FTFC), where non-conventional adaptive control strategies take malfunctions into account and assist the pilot in recovering the crippled airplane. This fault tolerant flight control technology could have contributed to the survivability of the damaged aircraft in the Bijlmermeer accident, as was pointed out by the research. Several other research projects have been funded recently by

the EU, through the seventh framework programme, such as ADDSAFE, RECONFIGURE and ACROSS. The ADDSAFE research project addressed the fault detection and diagnosis challenges arising from predominantly sensor and actuator malfunctions. The main goal of the RECONFIGURE project is to investigate and develop aircraft guidance and control technologies that facilitate the automated handling of off-nominal events by automatically reconfiguring the aircraft to its optimal flight condition while maintaining

FIG 1: Individual contributions of the different EU research projects in the global aircraft control set-up.



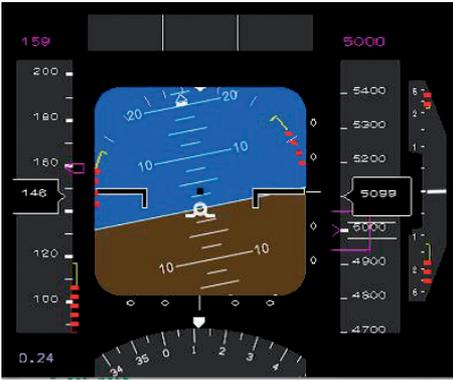


FIG 2: Primary Flight Display with additional updated information about the safe flight envelope (yellow and red markers), with respect to airspeed (left), vertical speed (right) and bank angle (upper middle)

the current aircraft safety levels. The ACROSS project aims to develop, integrate and test new flight deck solutions to reduce stress for pilots and thus improve safety for passengers. Also at NASA, similar safety related research is being performed, for example in the now completed Integrated Resilient Aircraft Control project (IRAC), and the subsequent Vehicle Systems Safety Technologies (VSST) project. Even in the European Horizon 2020 Work Programme, an important focus has been placed on further coordinated research and innovation targeting the highest levels of safety for European aviation.

Another important aspect during operations under system malfunction or extreme atmospheric disturbances is that the crew needs to maintain awareness of the possibly time changing degradation of aircraft performance characteristics. This could have helped the crew in the Bijlmermeer accident in avoiding the unrecoverable roll-dive. This is the focus of the ADFLICO research project (Adaptive Flight Control for Advanced Aircraft Concepts), where an EU-funded Marie Curie International Outgoing Fellowship (IOF) provided the framework and financial support such that a research fellow of the German Aerospace Center DLR could spend two years at NASA Ames Research Center. During this research visit, joint research has been performed for estimating on-line the safe flight envelope for impaired aircraft in the context of loss of control and aircraft and energy state awareness of the cockpit crew. As can be seen in Fig 1, this research is complementary to the projects mentioned previously.

The set-up of this envelope estimation technology consists of three modules, namely (1) aircraft model identification, (2) trim envelope estimation and (3) manoeuvring envelope estimation. Module (1) uses conventional aircraft sensor measurements

to generate an online updated aircraft model which is capable to represent the altered aircraft dynamics. The second module uses this updated aircraft model to calculate the trim envelope, which is the collection of flight conditions where a steady state can be established without saturation of the controls. Finally, module (3) extends the aforementioned trim envelope towards a wider manoeuvrability envelope. This is the collection of flight conditions which can be reached safely from trim, and from which one can return to trim safely. The combination of trim and manoeuvring envelopes is designated as the safe flight envelope. This updated safe flight envelope information can be conveyed to the flight crew in an intuitive way via the primary flight display (PFD), as is shown in Fig 2.

The combination of safe flight envelope estimation technology, extended primary flight displays and predictive alerting has been implemented and evaluated in the Advanced Concepts Flight Simulator (ACFS) at NASA Ames Research Center, see Fig 3. Several experienced commercial airline crews flew multiple challenging approach and landing scenarios in a realistic environment. The piloted simulator evaluation results have shown that these additional technologies and display features contribute significantly to the flight crew awareness and to avoid loss of control in flight. It was observed that this additional information consistently helped the crews in adapting their steering strategy for staying away further from the envelope boundaries.

Current evaluations show promising results and motivate further research into the

FIG 3: Advanced Concepts Flight Simulator (ACFS) at NASA Ames Research Center. ©Thomas Lombaerts



development of these safe flight envelope estimation and protection technologies, which is planned at DLR as well as at NASA. These new technologies can, combined with the aforementioned complementary technologies in a global setup, assist in avoiding loss of control and can provide a significant contribution in the further increase of safety in aviation.

This work is supported by a Marie Curie International Outgoing Fellowship (IOF) within the 7th European Community Framework Program, and by NASA's Aviation Safety Program, through the Vehicle Systems Safety Technologies (VSST) project.

FACT BOX

Project name: ADFLICO – Adaptive Flight Control for Advanced Aircraft Concepts

Project type: Marie Curie International Outgoing Fellowship (IOF), call 2010

Execution period: April 2012 – November 2015

Partners:



DLR Institute of System Dynamics and Control, Oberpfaffenhofen

NASA Ames Research Center, Intelligent Systems Division, Moffett Field

Scientists involved:

Thomas Lombaerts (DLR), Gertjan Looye (DLR), Stefan Schuet (NASA), Diana Acosta (NASA), John Kaneshige (NASA), Kimberlee Shish (NASA)

More information:



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Social, political and technological obstacles hindering single European sky implementation

A European Union that has eliminated borders on the ground cannot continue to maintain them in the sky, explains **Gesine Meissner**

Over a decade since its inception, the single European sky (SES) remains far from being in place. This is regrettable because the reorganisation of European air traffic control would have many benefits. It is hard to understand why some planes are forced to zigzag in the sky because of national fragmentation of airspace or vast military areas, instead of using the most direct route from point A to point B. As a European union, we cannot maintain borders in the sky while they have been removed on the ground.

Therefore, I welcome the SES II+ initiative the commission launched in June 2013 in order to speed up the implementation of the single European sky, but the main obstacles remain unchanged. One problem is that the idea of the single European sky was born when there was congestion in our skies. Back then, flight paths had to be organised in a more efficient way in order to cope with growing numbers of flights. Today, we no longer have any congestion and there is less pressure for national authorities to implement the project.

Now, more attention is being paid to the environmental benefits of SES. Direct flight paths would save fuel and, ultimately, emissions. This could mean a cost reduction for airlines and, perhaps, lower ticket prices for consumers, given that fuel costs account for a large portion of the price of a ticket. With SES in place, emissions are expected to be cut by 10 per cent. Airlines argue that this would be a much more effective measure to reduce emissions from aviation than the eternal

fight over the European aviation emissions trading system.

European airlines have been lobbying very heavily for the single European sky. In addition to fuel savings, they expect fewer air traffic management (ATM) costs. Following the SES framework, a more efficient organisation of air traffic control should cut ATM costs by 50 per cent. Airlines have complained that ATM costs are not falling yet. As European airlines

“Direct flight paths would save fuel and, ultimately, emissions. This could mean a cost reduction for airlines and, perhaps, lower ticket prices for consumers, given that fuel costs account for a large portion of the price of a ticket”



have difficulties in keeping up with their heavily subsidised competitors from the Middle East, they have insisted on these financial benefits that they have been promised by SES.

However, on the side of air traffic controllers, implementation is still very lengthy. One problem is that the differences in how air traffic control is organised in the member states should not be underestimated. In the UK, it is privatised, in France, it is a public administration, and in other countries, national airspace is controlled by the military. On this basis, it is very difficult to set up cooperation and agree on a common organisational structure inside a functional airspace block (FAB), as well as common quality standards and prices for their services. Therefore, things have been moving very slowly and the deadline set by the commission for the implementation of the FABs – 2012 – was impossible to meet. For example, Germany, France, Switzerland and the Benelux countries are expected to build a FAB in order to organise air traffic in this area in a more efficient manner. More generally, it is always tricky for member states who mostly own national



“The differences in how air traffic control is organised in the member states should not be underestimated”

air traffic control services to give up sovereignty over their national airspace.

And member states are not the only ones to have shown reluctance, as air traffic controllers’ trade unions also strongly oppose SES. They fear jobs will be lost and salaries will be cut as a result of reorganisation and task-sharing with neighbouring services or the European air traffic controllers at Eurocontrol. This is why they regularly go on strike to prevent the implementation of the SES. Seeing as they are able to shut down whole national airspaces, forcing airlines to make huge detours and cancel all national flights, air traffic controllers have significant bargaining power. Therefore, the commission has done the right thing by trying to address their concerns by underlining social dialogue in the SES project.

Considering all the obstacles SES must face, it is even more upsetting that its technological pillar has recently been weakened. The single European sky air traffic management research (SESAR) project is developing a new generation of Europe-wide ATM systems to provide European air traffic controllers

with a common technology to work with. This is more than needed, as most of the current systems are over 50 years old. To support the deployment of the new technology, €3bn has been earmarked in the connecting Europe facility, which was created only a year and a half ago to co-finance transport infrastructure. The new Juncker investment plan is now planning to take part of its resources from this facility, also reducing the funds available for the deployment of SESAR infrastructure by €500m. This is not a consistent way of strengthening European transport infrastructure. Parliament’s transport and tourism committee is therefore opposing the idea cutting the facility, but it will be a tough fight.

On SES II+, we must wait for Spain and the UK to settle their dispute over Gibraltar – this has been blocking the aviation files in council for many years now. Yet it is a good sign that council still managed to agree to a common position last December, after parliament had already voted on its position in March last year. Now, we wait for the trilogues to start on SES II+. ★

Gesine Meissner (DE) is parliament’s ALDE group shadow rapporteur on the single European sky (recast)

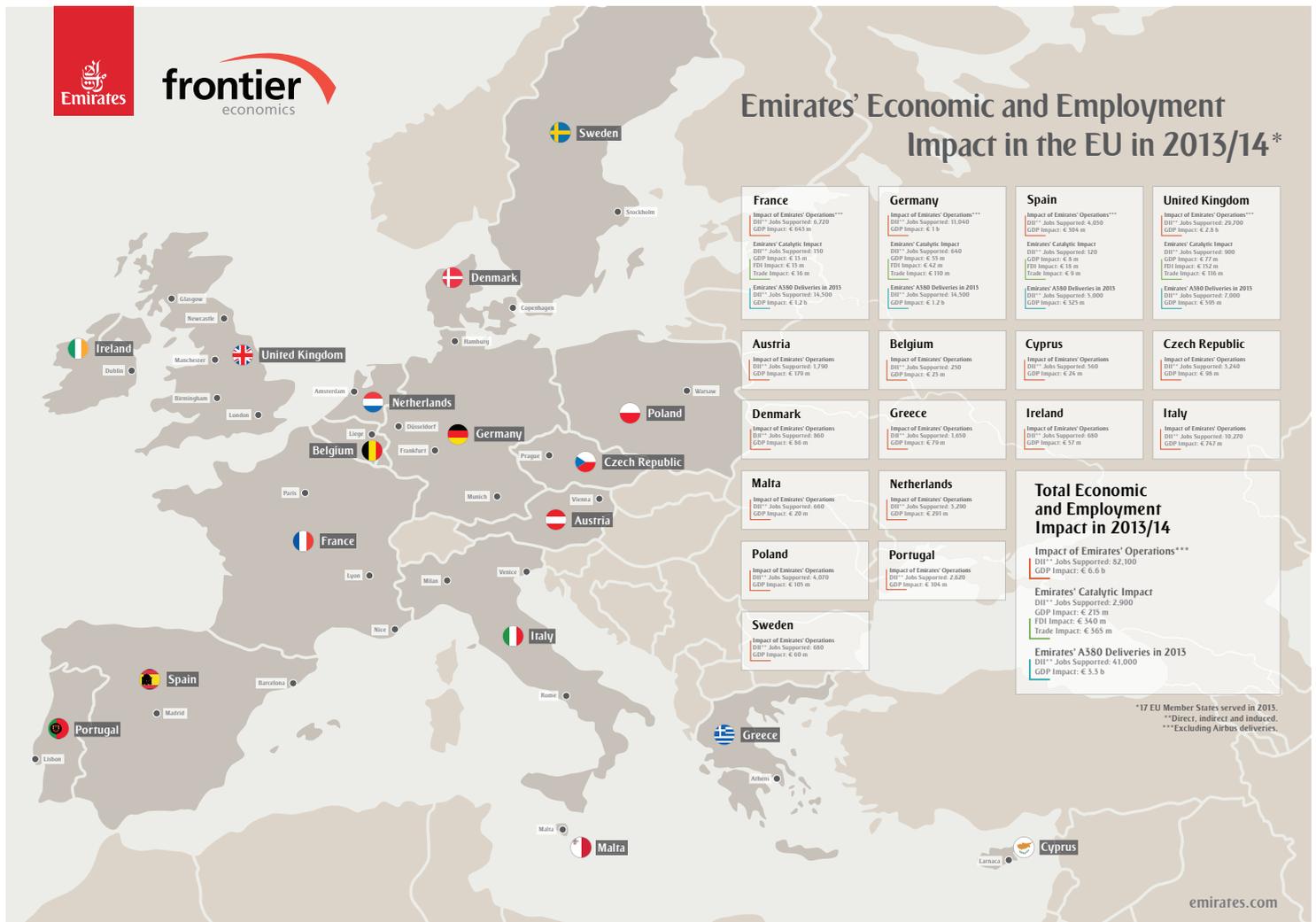
Emirates' Economic Impact in the EU

Frontier Economics, a leading European economic consultancy, and Emirates, a global connector of people, places and economies, recently released the results of a study that quantifies Emirates' jobs and GDP contribution in the EU in 2013.

Emirates' relationship with the EU dates back to 1987, when Emirates first started flying from Dubai to London Gatwick. Since then, Emirates has grown based on demand, providing global connectivity via its hub in Dubai. By stimulating demand for travel and cargo, especially in markets underserved by other airlines, Emirates contributes to the economies of the communities it serves.

Emirates currently operates more than 350 passenger flights per week to 18 EU Member States, but still has a relatively limited inter-continental footprint in comparison to some of the big European carriers. However, the economic impact of this connectivity that Emirates provides is at times not fully appreciated.

Frontier's report shows that the direct, indirect and induced impact of Emirates' operations and unique connectivity supported 85,000 jobs across the EU in 2013, has a substantial impact on EU GDP - equivalent to €6.8 billion GDP.



See the full report on Emirates' economic impact in the EU:

<http://www.emirates.com/english/about/int-and-gov-affairs/publications/economic-impact-studies.aspx>

and view a short video showcasing some of the highlights of the report:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=nH_HxUmVJbc

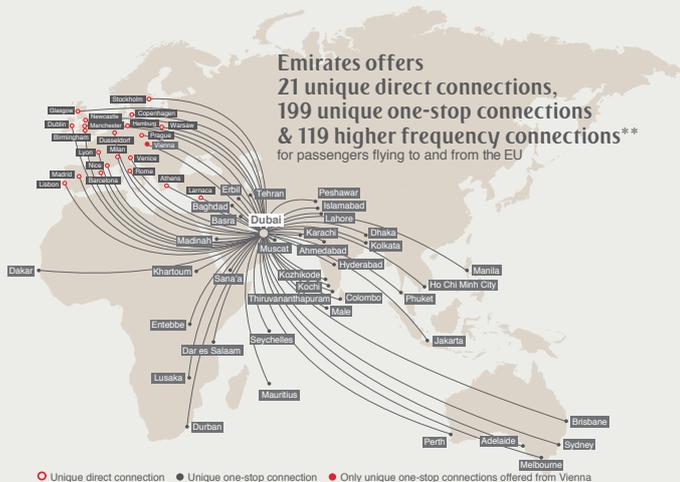
Emirates' Unique Connectivity



Emirates and the EU



Connectivity*



Employment Impact*

Direct, indirect and induced jobs supported through Emirates' A380 deliveries in 2013



Direct, indirect and induced jobs supported through Emirates' operations in the EU in 2013/14



Catalytic Impact of Connectivity*



Economic Contributor



Emirates spends
€4.3 billion each year
 on EU goods and services



\$67 billion
 spend on past and future
 investments on Emirates A380s



€53.9 billion
 in bilateral trade between the UAE
 and the EU in 2013 – up 18% from 2012



44%
 Emirates' share
 of A380 order book



€44.7 billion
 value of EU exports to the
 UAE in 2013 – up 20% from 2012

Emirates SkyCargo



518,000
 tonnes of cargo carried annually
 on Emirates flights to and from 17 EU Member States

Passenger Traffic



350+ weekly
 Emirates flights to and from
 16 EU Member States



11.5 million
 annual passengers on
 Emirates flights to and from
 16 EU Member States



1.96 million
 EU nationals visited
 Dubai in 2013 – up 11%
 from 2012

*Frontier Economics Analysis.
 **Flight schedules based on 2013 data from OAG Analyser. For more details on the unique one-stop and higher frequency connections, read the Frontier Economics report on emirates.com

emirates.com

Some European competitors accuse Emirates of overcrowding existing routes and stealing traffic, but in fact, Emirates has grown gradually and on the basis of demand in Europe, and provides unique connectivity that other airlines do not.

The Frontier report identified 220 routes from Europe that are unique to Emirates. 21 of these are direct connections from European cities to Dubai, and the remaining 199 routes are unique one-stop connections via Dubai.

Using any other airline or alliance on these unique routes would require an additional stop.

The connectivity provided through the 220 unique routes positively impacts foreign direct investment and trade by supporting the development of regional centres, increasing tourism and providing added choice for the consumer. The report found that 2,900 jobs are facilitated through the impact of the 220 unique connections, equivalent to €215 million of GDP.

The impact of Emirates' A380 purchases

With a total of 140 aircraft ordered, Emirates is the largest purchaser of Airbus' A380. In 2013 Airbus delivered 13 A380s to Emirates which represented 50% of the total A380 deliveries that year. Airbus estimates that Emirates' A380 orders support the employment of 41,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs in Europe. About 70% of these jobs are split equally between France and Germany, with the UK having 17% and the remaining 5,000 jobs in Spain. These are high-skilled jobs and impact a high-value supply chain, creating a significant multiplier effect in countries where Airbus has aircraft production facilities.

Delays to single European sky will come at a high price

Failure to implement a unified EU airspace could jeopardise the creation of over 300,000 jobs, writes **Franck Proust**

Franck Proust (EPP, FR) is a vice-chair of parliament's sky and space intergroup and 2015 MEP award winner for transport

The single European sky (SES) concept is simple – to unite the air control over European skies, which is currently divided into around 30 zones and where planes are sometimes forced to make huge detours because of frontiers in the sky. The single European sky air traffic management research (SESAR) is also an opportunity to produce a technological breakthrough in terms of inflight aircraft communications. The single sky would allow these frontiers to be removed, in the same way they faded on the ground 20 years ago. More specifically, it would allow travel times to be shortened by 10 per cent, flight safety would be increased tenfold, over 300,000 jobs would be created, 50 million tonnes of CO2 emissions would be saved and over €400bn of economic spin-offs would result.

That is, of course, in theory. In practice, things are slightly more complex. The process is moving along and legal texts exist and are being applied. But several obstacles are casting a shadow over the future of the single sky.

First, the application of the legislation already in force has resulted in technical blocks. European governments are failing to play by the rules. The introduction of functional airspace blocks (FABs) – sets of several national airspaces – was supposed to be the initial stage of the implementation of the single sky. However, some member states are lagging behind; the commission has called these countries to order. There has

been no agreement yet on how air control will be managed once the single European sky is in place. Not to mention, the reluctance of some professions to move with the times, including calling strikes which can block air passengers for days.

There are also political hurdles relating to the 'single sky II' dossier which is currently being discussed. This is because at the time of writing, the European status of Gibraltar airport is up in the air, given that Spain and the UK cannot agree on the issue. Both countries are standing in the way of progress. I respect the principle of sovereignty – something of which I would like to remind my Spanish and British colleagues – however, we cannot freeze discussions for an entire continent over a single airport located on a rock that is only about half a dozen square kilometres. What would our fellow citizens say if this were to be picked up by the press? I must once again reiterate that 'single sky II' would be extremely useful in making the European sky more efficient. Certainly, there are some disagreements between parliament and council. But what we want – what we are demanding – is to move forward.

A delay at any stage of the process will come at a high price, as much for Europeans as for public authorities and businesses. In the medium-term we will be forced to fork out even more cash and compromise our environmental promises. In the long-term, if we lose the technological battle, Europe will lose its position as the world's leading air power. Passenger traffic is expected to rise by 50 per cent

by 2035 – we no longer have time to talk, we must act now. We have a schedule that we must adhere to. We must once again focus on what is important – becoming simpler and more effective. That is, after all, the example that has been set by the commission's new motto. ★



“Travel times [would] be shortened by 10 per cent, flight safety would be increased tenfold, over 300,000 jobs would be created, 50 million tonnes of CO2 emissions would be saved and over €400bn of economic spin-offs would result”

EU investment plan will create up to 1.3 million new jobs

Investment in Europe is still 15 per cent below the long-term average, with the shortfall reaching 25 per cent or even 60 per cent in some EU member states. This is hampering both the demand and supply side of our economy – and we need policy action on both. And yet we know that there is liquidity in the system. Research tells us that a major barrier is the lack of risk financing – a lack of certainty regarding investment projects and regulatory burdens.

Within days of the new mandate, the commission presented the investment plan for Europe, which aims to reverse the downward trend in investment and help boost job creation and economic recovery, without weighing on national public finances or creating additional debt burdens to the member states. The investment plan is a comprehensive one, since there is no silver bullet. It is built on three pillars: the creation of a new risk-financing facility inside the European investment bank (EIB) – the European fund for strategic investments (EFSI), to mobilise private investments; the creation of a transparent pipeline of projects to increase EU investment projects visibility and a European advisory hub, to help public and private promoters structure their projects; and most importantly, the removal of barriers to investment through the European semester and the completion of the single market.

As part of the investment plan, we are also committed to improving the investment environment through a deeper and wider single market, with better regulation at its core. On 6 May, the commission will present its strategy for a connected digital single market. In February, we launched the energy union strategy and the green paper on the capital markets union. And colleagues are working hard on a reasonable and balanced transatlantic trade and investment partnership with the US.

As regards to the EFSI, here's how it will work: EFSI regulation establishes an EU guarantee fund, which will provide a liquidity cushion for the union budget against potential losses incurred by the EFSI when supporting projects. It will gradually reach €8bn by 2020 via payments from the EU budget, by using 3.5 per cent of the Horizon 2020 budget, 10 per cent



“According to estimates, taken as a whole, the proposed measures could add €330-€410bn to EU GDP over the next three years and create up to 1.3 million new jobs”

of the connecting Europe facility budget, and the rest from unused funds in the budget margins. The EFSI will be built on a guarantee of €16bn from the EU budget, combined with €5bn committed by the EIB. Every public euro mobilised

in the EFSI will generate about €3 of additional lending by the EIB. Every euro of additional lending will in turn attract additional euros from public and private promoters in EFSI's projects. All in all, for every budget euro put to the guarantee fund, €30 of investment to the real economy will be generated. The EFSI will focus on private investment, and public-private joint ventures, but not pure public investment. According to estimates, taken as a whole, the proposed measures could add €330-€410bn to EU GDP over the next three years and create up to 1.3 million new jobs.

Some people are concerned about using Horizon 2020 resources for the investment plan. I myself am very much an education and research-oriented person – this has always been my political priority. But I truly believe that EFSI can serve research and innovation better by providing the type of risk-financing that innovative companies are lacking in Europe today – such as equity. Moreover, with EFSI's tools, it will be

Jyrki Katainen says a chronic lack of investment is hampering Europe's economic development



easier for universities to attract private capital to fund research activities. This is the message I am constantly getting when visiting member states on my roadshows. I am a big supporter of Horizon 2020 – it is the world's largest research programme, standing at €77bn. We are planning on using 3.5 per cent of it (€2.7bn) to convert grants into financial instruments, which will allow research and innovation to receive funding far exceeding €2.7bn. Investing in research is and remains a priority for the EU, and of course grants for fundamental research will continue.

The investment plan will attract additional investments in the real economy in areas such as transport and energy infrastructure, education, research, innovation, renewable energy and energy efficiency. It will also focus on supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and mid-cap companies (companies with between 250 and 3000 employees). We have therefore set aside one quarter of the EFSI financing capacity for these emerging companies, who are the innovative job creators of the future. The investment plan

also sets up an advisory hub to provide advice and support to projects and investors. And there will be a project directory so that investors can see what investment opportunities exist across the EU, whether or not they are financed by the EFSI. There won't be any geographical or sectorial quotas when choosing which project to finance through the EFSI. Strict criteria will be set by the steering board, and then independent experts in the investment committee will make the individual proposals to the EIB for final approval. This way, there is no chance of political interference in the decision-making, which pleases private investors.

Member states signed off on the regulation for the EFSI in March, and MEPs are currently working hard on their report. We expect the EFSI to be up and running by September, but a handful of SMEs and infrastructure projects will already benefit from pre-financing from the EIB by the summer.

The plan won't solve everything by itself and there is a crucial need for structural reforms, but I am confident that we are on the right track. ★

"I truly believe that EFSI can serve research and innovation better by providing the type of risk-financing that innovative companies are lacking in Europe today – such as equity"



Jyrki Katainen is European Commission vice-president for jobs, growth, investment and competitiveness



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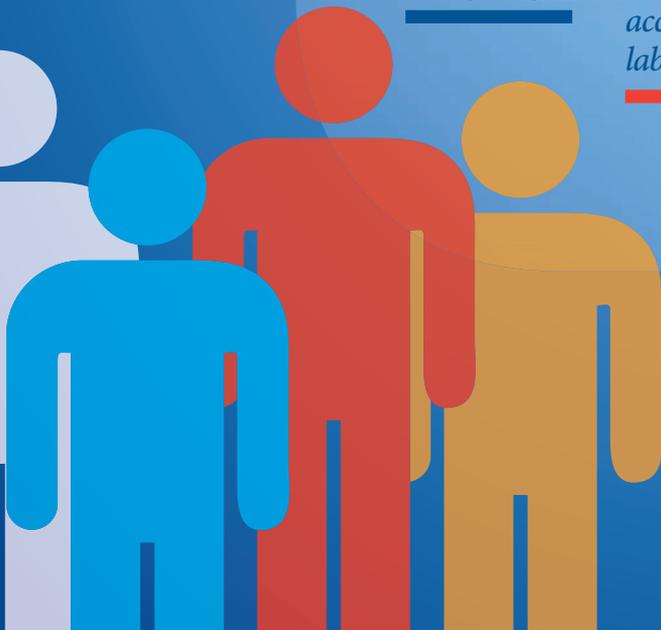
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**CREATES
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MORE JOBS** *in Europe*

**SERVES
MORE THAN
1.5 MILLION
COMPANIES** *in
Europe with
the right talent
to succeed*



Cohesion policy has shielded EU from full impact of economic crisis

Tamás Deutsch believes 'a balanced, complementary relationship' is needed between cohesion policy and the Juncker plan

The cohesion reports of the European commission are of great importance. They are milestones in EU history and I am of the view that the sixth cohesion report provides an excellent opportunity for renewal and gives a new impetus to cohesion policy.

The indispensable character of cohesion policy was clearly demonstrated by the way it mitigated the devastating impact of the crisis. The European structural and investment fund has become the most important source of finance for public investment in member states which have to reduce budget deficits. Nevertheless, despite the tangible and positive results of cohesion policy, the crisis clearly put an end to the process of convergence with significant increases in unemployment across all regions, but especially in less developed areas.

Let me highlight a few points which need careful attention if we want to relaunch growth and boost employment. First, we have to put an end to recurrent liquidity-related problems. Cohesion policy had a €23.4bn backlog of payments at the end of 2013 for the 2007-2013 programming period, which undermines the credibility, efficiency and sustainability of the policy. The indispensable character of cohesion policy was demonstrated by the way it helped in alleviating the ramifications of the crisis and can help achieve the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy. The reoccurring problem of backlogs hampers the smooth implementation of programmes, puts additional burdens on public budgets and on beneficiaries. Apart from the 2007-2013 backlog, the delay in adopting and implementing of operational programmes for 2014-2020 has serious budgetary consequences and further undermines the credibility of cohesion policy. Budgetary discipline means not only not wasting public money; it also means paying the bills on time.

Second, we have to reinforce the original role of cohesion policy, which is fostering economic, social and territorial cohesion in all EU regions, with special attention on the less developed ones. There is a tendency to see cohesion policy merely as an instrument to achieve the Europe 2020 goals. I believe we should highlight how the objectives of cohesion policy as defined by the Lisbon treaty contribute directly to the

attainment of the goals of smart, inclusive and sustainable growth. A balanced, complementary relationship should be sought between cohesion policy and the Europe 2020 strategy, as well as with the Juncker plan and the European fund for strategic investments.

Third, in order to support employment we should aim at an integrated use of funds, as the European social fund is not the only tool to promote this objective. Infrastructure created by the European regional development fund is just as important. We need to focus on small and medium sized enterprises, the role of which is indisputable in providing for jobs and growth. Youth unemployment is unacceptably high and we have to mobilise all funds available to support the training and employability of young people. We should keep in mind that by fostering employment initiatives and supporting social integration at the same time.

My draft report explores several other issues as well, such as macroeconomic conditionality, thematic concentration, the simplification of administrative procedures and the territorial dimension. I believe we have to act along the lines elaborated on in my report if we want cohesion policy to be effective and yield results in the 2014-2020 period. ★



"Budgetary discipline means not only not wasting public money; it also means paying the bills on time"

Tamás Deutsch (EPP, HU) is parliament's rapporteur on investment for jobs and growth: promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion in the union

Europe in need of coherent and effective investment framework

Cohesion policy has played an important role in mitigating the effects of the financial, economic and social crises and had a positive impact on all Europe's regions. The role of the policy has also been noticeable in its closing of the public and private investment gap, especially in the countries most affected by the crisis. Furthermore, investment in cohesion has provided stability to regions by ensuring the flow of funding when national public and private investments were reduced or even ceased. However, due to the economic crisis and austerity measures, regional, economic and social disparities have widened, while employment and competitiveness rates of several member states has worsened, particularly in southern peripheral countries.

The level of investment in the United States in 2014 is close to pre-crisis levels, yet this is not the case in Europe where

investment remains significantly lower than before. European policies are therefore expected to preserve growth-enhancing investment, particularly by promoting education, research and innovation, green energy, modernisation of transport and environmental infrastructure, as well as the deployment of broadband. Cohesion policy is now expected to maximise its potential for stimulating investment to enhance growth and jobs.

According to the sixth cohesion report, cohesion policy has become the main source of public investment in the union. Its structure has been accommodated in the Europe 2020 strategy - it being the main instrument for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. In line with this approach, the €315bn European fund for strategic investment (EFSI) is expected to foster public investment towards mobilising private funding. In the opinion, prepared on behalf of parliament's economic

Costas Mavrides is opposed to the creation of a close link between fiscal objectives and cohesion policy



and monetary affairs committee, I stress the interdependence of cohesion policy with the EU's other investment initiatives and call on the commission to create a coherent and effective investment framework.

According to the commission, investment funded by cohesion policy will not deliver on its growth and jobs objectives without sound fiscal and economic policies. Therefore, the commission introduced macroeconomic conditionality, which makes cohesion funding dependent on the country's compliance with economic governance procedures. Essentially, should a country fail to take measures recommended under the instruments of macroeconomic coordination, its EU funds could be suspended. Given such conditionality, the 'investment clause' was included as part of the preventive arm of the stability and growth pact (SGP) in order to allow member states in adverse economic circumstances and in a context of increasing public investment to temporarily deviate from their medium-term budgetary objective or their required adjustment path. However, I firmly believe that the investment clause should be symmetrically extended to the corrective arm of the SGP, as asymmetry prevents the application of this clause for countries under the excessive deficit procedure.

Although, I support better governance and efficiency in cohesion policy, I strongly oppose creating a close link between fiscal objectives and cohesion policy. Such a close link dilutes the purpose of the policy. Cohesion funding should primarily be used where it matters most; the least prosperous regions and not necessarily aiming for the best return. The application of macroeconomic conditionality sanctions would be detrimental to the solidarity element of cohesion. After all, cohesion policy has been the most visible expression of solidarity within the EU and this must not change. Efficiency and solidarity must be two sides of the same coin.

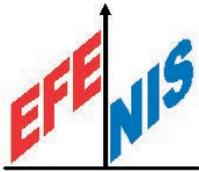
Therefore, the commission needs to ensure that the effectiveness of the ESIF is not compromised by macroeconomic policies. In addition, the full and formal involvement of parliament in the future governance structure of the fund is critical. As an opinion rapporteur, instead of sanctioning member states, I propose exempting the national co-financing of the ESIF from

SGP deficit calculations to free up resources for investment and speed up expenditure procedures, especially in countries hit most by the crisis and those under financial assistance programmes.

Finally, I stress that the ESIF should aim at labour intensive projects, which seek to create quality employment in the EU, notably by taking proper account of the financing needs in countries most affected by the crisis. Additionally, direct support to promote solid growth and sustainable development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, in regions with the greatest impact in terms of closures, should be a priority. ★

Costas Mavrides (S&D, CY) is parliament's economic and monetary affairs committee opinion rapporteur on investment for jobs and growth: promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion in the union

"Investment in cohesion has provided stability to regions by ensuring the flow of funding when national public and private investments were reduced or even ceased"



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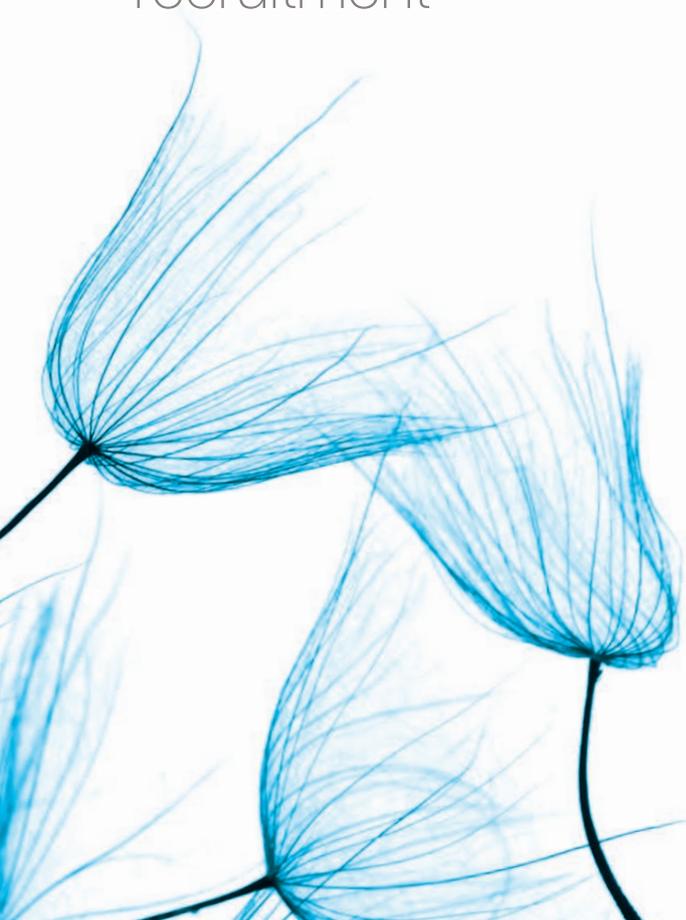
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EU investment gap putting Europe 2020 strategy ‘at risk’

The economic and financial crises, as well as the investment gap, are putting the achievement of targets set in the Europe 2020 strategy at risk, in particular, the headline employment target. In the third quarter of 2014 unemployment in the EU28 stood at 9.7 per cent. Still too many young Europeans are on the edge of poverty while many member states fail to make effective use of available funds, such as the youth employment initiative.

The financial crisis has undermined the benefits of cohesion policy and led to more unemployment, worse poverty and social exclusion and less convergence than expected. However, we should not neglect the fact that things would have been even worse without the cohesion and structural funds. They

are still among the EU’s main investment instruments, and when used efficiently have the potential to alleviate some of the harmful effects of the financial crisis and create jobs.

What worries me is that the job creation potential of EU funds is still insufficient, and this is often because of the ineffective way money is spent. These problems have been addressed in the framework for cohesion policy for the coming years, and I hope we will soon see the benefits of this results-based policymaking. Positive trends in the labour markets should also be apparent as a result of strengthening the European social fund’s role in adapting workers’ skills to the demands of the labour market and new more flexible forms of employment.

Making Europe an ‘attractive’ investment destination should be guiding EU policy, argues **Danuta Jazłowiecka**



“We are facing a serious risk of losing a whole generation of people who should normally bring optimism and energy into our economy”



The situation is particularly worrying for young people, many of whom start falling into the long-term unemployed category. We are facing a serious risk of losing a whole generation of people who should normally bring optimism and energy into our economy. Therefore we should welcome the European commission's recent decision to release €1bn in 2015 in pre-financing for the youth employment initiative (YEI). It should be a priority for member states to make the best use of this money and support the YEI with greater national funding, as well as necessary reforms to areas such as education systems. Higher education institutions should put much more effort into adapting their programmes to the needs of labour markets and developing guidance and counselling programmes for young people.

Despite the benefits of cohesion policy, current efforts to foster growth and boost employment have not been sufficiently successful. Europe urgently needs a complementary initiative aimed at growth and job creation and in this context we should welcome the proposal to set up the European fund for strategic investment (EFSI). Evidence shows a strong correlation between employment and investment levels and we should expect this fund, if well-structured and managed, to boost much-needed medium to long-term employment. The fund is expected to mobilise €315bn over three years and generate 1.3 million additional direct and indirect jobs.

The potential employment impact of the EFSI will depend on many factors, especially the possibility of supporting projects with job creation potential, the extent to which private capital will be leveraged, its compatibility with other instruments and the timely release of funds and additional measures addressed at labour markets. If the fund is to generate jobs we need to make sure that money is directed towards small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). SMEs represent 99 per cent of businesses in the EU, employ more



“SMEs represent 99 per cent of businesses in the EU, employ more than 90 million people and have been recently responsible for an 85 per cent recent net growth in jobs”

than 90 million people and have recently been responsible for an 85 per cent recent net growth in jobs. They have great job creation potential so incentives for the private sector to invest should

be strengthened. Results-based policymaking with regards to structural funds, the youth employment initiative, structural reforms of the labour market, and the EFSI are crucial to boosting growth and jobs in the EU, but should be further supported by additional measures to provide greater regulatory predictability and remove barriers to investment, making Europe a more attractive investment destination. ★

Danuta Jazłowiecka (EPP, PL) is parliament's employment and social affairs committee opinion rapporteur for investment for jobs and growth: promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion in the union

Juncker plan could be tool to end ‘financialisation’ of public policy

The possibility of deflation is threatening our national economies on a scale we have never experienced. We now have consensus on the fact that public and private investors need to have a more active role in creating growth and jobs. I defended this position when I was president of the Committee of Regions, as has the S&D group since the onset of the eurozone crisis. The European commission has finally taken a similar stance.

The Juncker plan is a three-year programme which foresees an investment of €315bn into the European economy. It aims to encourage public investment from guarantees and through the European investment bank, the combination of which constitutes the European fund for strategic investment (EFSI). This is while also pushing private investors to take more risk.

This month, parliament and 12 of its committees must amend the proposal for a regulation on the EFSI. As S&D members, we strongly support this initiative, but we also ask that the initial projects that are to be targeted be those which cannot easily secure support from investment markets. Typically these are in social, energy and local infrastructure, which are essential for job creation and boosting growth.

In order to have a selection of projects which are not just driven by economic interests but take account of the added social value, we need democratic and transparent governance of the EFSI. Since the public investment element will come partly from the EU budget, we have a responsibility as MEPs to control the allocation of funds and keep citizens informed.

Even though actions for boosting growth are needed more than ever, we must ensure we are not robbing Peter to pay Paul. Funds for use in the EFSI should not be taken from vital EU funding programmes, such as cohesion policy or Horizon 2020. These funds have been pillars of public investment in member states since the beginning of the crisis. Indeed, many states have taken drastic measures to reduce their public expenses and as such have seen investment shrink massively. The development of the EFSI and its financing must therefore be made in tandem with structural funds and in line with the EU's social and territorial cohesion policy.

Europe needs a strong and effective investment tool. The longer we fail to invest in the real economy and in infrastructure, the sooner our economies will collapse because of the lack of growth. The deflation to come will be the product of a decade of the ‘financialisation’ of public governance. This strategy has now shown the limits of its effectiveness and the EFSI could be a good tool to create a new economic dynamic in the EU. ★

The Juncker investment plan must not ‘rob Peter to pay Paul’, says Mercedes Bresso

Mercedes Bresso (IT) is parliament's S&D group shadow rapporteur on investment for jobs and growth: promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion in the union

“The longer we are not investing in the real economy and in infrastructure, the sooner our economies will totally collapse”

Juncker plan could compromise cohesion within the EU

The European fund for strategic investment can help Europe grow but must not undermine its 'long-term perspective', says **Ruža Tomašić**

Ruža Tomašić (HR) is parliament's ECR group shadow rapporteur on investment for jobs and growth: promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion in the union

The European fund for strategic investment (EFSI) is Europe's newest attempt to speed up economic recovery. I was a little sceptical about the outcome of this strategy because we haven't yet made any real reforms for boosting private investment. But the report we are working on now is forcing the commission to do just that and, if adopted, could make a difference.

The EFSI, combined with certain reforms to make private investment more efficient, could certainly help the European economy grow but it is crucial that it doesn't undermine the strategic coherence and long-term perspective of cohesion policy programming. I understand that the success of the EFSI is of crucial importance to commission president Jean-Claude Juncker and his college of commissioners, but we should not undermine our long-term policies to make it work. I therefore think that any redirection of structural funds would be counterproductive and could jeopardise the balanced development of European regions.

The flexibility in the project selection within the EFSI could undermine the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the European Union by channelling more investment to more developed member states. This scenario is in collision with the goals of cohesion policy and should be avoided at all costs. Our report recognises this threat and calls on the commission to closely monitor the relationship between the EFSI and the European structural and investment fund (ESIF).

My second concern is connected with the greatest challenge

facing cohesion policy, which is the administrative capacity of the states, particularly those that are less developed. Without strong administrative capacity, states won't just risk losing the direct benefits of funds from the previous financial period but will also be unprepared for the new cohesion policy. Combined with the significant delay in the implementation of the 2014-2020 cohesion policy and the delay in adoption of operating programmes, this lack of capacity could endanger our goals of growth and recovery.

Our report also points out that a simplification of management and procedures would allow for error rates in the implementation of cohesion programmes to be reduced. I believe, the complexity of EU regulation and procedures is just as responsible for fraud cases as malicious intentions. Therefore, I'm glad that we are trying to make things as simple as possible and I hope the commission will recognise this and join us in this initiative.

To succeed in his mission of boosting growth and jobs, Juncker needs a contribution from the private sector. This is the part I am most sceptical about because I think we haven't done nearly enough to revitalise European small and medium

sized enterprises (SMEs) by cutting red tape and reducing the administrative and tax burden.

I think we made a significant step in the right direction in our report by emphasising the key role SMEs have in job creation, smart growth and calling for a favourable regulatory environment that is conducive to the setting up and running of such enterprises. ★

"Any redirection of structural funds would be counterproductive and could jeopardise the balanced development of European regions"

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Spain playing futile geopolitical games with Gibraltar's future

Fabian Picardo says Gibraltar expects the same 'respect, dedication and support' as other loyal members of the union

Gibraltar has always sought a positive, progressive and mutually-beneficial relationship with the European Union. We are ahead of virtually all other jurisdictions in transposing EU directives into our own legal system, our tax legislation has been endorsed by EU finance ministers (ECOFIN) and we are consistently recognised as world innovators in the regulation of the online gambling industry. Along with deputy chief minister Joseph Garcia, I pay regular visits to Brussels and maintain strong links with MEPs and EU officials. As an indication of the strength of these links, my government has invested heavily in the legal infrastructure of our EU department. Our first Gibraltar office is due to open later this year in Brussels under the auspices of former MEP Graham Watson. Gibraltar is a fully compliant, innovative and progressive member of the EU, and deserves to be treated as such in our relationship with EU

partners and institutions. Crucially, the people of Gibraltar are proud to consider themselves Europeans and they are genuinely supportive of our positive approach to EU matters.

We are fully up to date in its transposition of EU directives and other measures and 80-85 per cent of all legislation considered in Gibraltar's parliament originates from Europe. Furthermore, our tax legislation is compliant with the organisation for economic cooperation and development and the EU's code group principles. As a direct result of the current administration's reform of Gibraltar's income tax act, ECOFIN endorsed it as being compliant with the European code of conduct for business taxation in June 2013. This was the first time that our tax system had been fully endorsed by both the code group and ECOFIN and, therefore, there can be no credible challenge to Gibraltar companies being allowed full access to the single market. Indeed, the Bay of Gibraltar

presents lucrative business opportunities to companies seeking access to the EU single market and this is an avenue that we are actively pursuing.

A particular sector in which Gibraltar is a fully compliant world innovator is the online gaming industry. Our model directly sets the standard for consumer protection, common standards, sports integrity and anti-money laundering and we are always eager to offer our expertise in these areas. We have been referred to

as 'the Silicon Valley of online gaming', and it fully intends to live up to this reputation. We have helped to set online gaming standards for more than 20 years, and the proposal for national self-exclusion registers that I proposed in March 2013 have since been adopted by the European com-



"Gibraltar has come of age in the EU and is entitled to influence the direction of European legislation and to contribute to the future of the union"



“The right of EU nationals to freedom of movement [...] is of paramount importance, and Gibraltar will continue to stress this message in our relations with Europe”

mission. Responsible cooperation and regulation is essential in ensuring real consumer protection across borders, and we welcomed the commission's July 2014 report on online gambling, the principles of which reflected our existing regulations. We set the highest industry standards, only licensing 30 operators, all of which have long-established backgrounds and reputations in the global remote gambling industry. We are ready and able to influence future EU policy in online gambling.

Gibraltar has come of age in the EU and is entitled to influence the direction of European legislation and to contribute to the future of the union. Simultaneously, we are grateful for the support of the EU in regards to continuous delays artificially created by Spain at our shared land frontier. In November 2014, my government noted the publication of the EU's letter to Spain, and requested a permanent monitoring mission at the border to ensure that ordinary people are not forced to suffer unnecessary delays because of our neighbour's illegitimate and futile geopolitical games.

For its part, Gibraltar continues to send monthly reports to the commission containing detailed information on the situation at the frontier. Our full compliance with all commission recommendations regarding the border were outlined by the deputy chief minister in January 2015. Indeed, the right of EU nationals to freedom of movement through an internal border of the EU is of paramount importance, and Gibraltar will continue to stress this message in our relations with Europe until our aim of a free-flowing frontier between two cooperative and mutually supportive neighbours is achieved. Gibraltar is dedicated to a positive approach towards the EU and is wholly committed to full transparency with our partners. We do, however, expect and deserve that same respect, dedication and support to be extended towards us as a legitimate and loyal EU jurisdiction. ★

Fabian Picardo is chief minister of Gibraltar

Spain-Gibraltar cross-border cooperation is entirely possible

Spain and Gibraltar could and should be working together on a mutually beneficial basis, argues **Iskra Mihaylova**

Cross-border cooperation has the potential to transform a border into a possibility for development. By working together, bordering regions can jointly identify and address the specific challenges and opportunities presented by the border between them, which inevitably will lead to better relations between them and will foster a lasting trust through an integrated approach to cooperation, with the aim of exploiting unused potential to boost economic development. Cross-border cooperation encourages networking between people, as well as between local communities and businesses. EU funding for such cooperation contributes to stability and prosperity between the union's borders and facilitates the generation of social capital and mutual understanding among the communities either side of the border, which is an important element of our vision for liberal and democratic Europe.

The European Union has used funding from the regional development fund to finance cross-border and other territorial cooperation between the member states since 1990. In my capacity as chair of parliament's regional development committee, I would like to foster and welcome cooperation between the different regions of the European Union. This also applies to Gibraltar and Spain. European territorial cooperation programmes offer the opportunity to look outwards, work together and coordinate activities as partners, to provide added value through cooperation and deliver additional benefits to each territory.

In some ways, this area is already an example of how Europe should work. There are 10,000 frontier workers of many different EU nationalities who live in Spain but work across the border. Gibraltar has a base labour force of 22,907 workers (2013), and 32.76 per cent of these people are frontier workers, or, in other words, are normally resident in Spain but employed in Gibraltar. In turn, Spain provides an outlet for residents of Gibraltar to spend their leisure time and money in shops, restaurants and hotels. All this is possible because Europe needs regional cooperation, progress and development for all European citizens.



“European territorial cooperation programmes offer the opportunity to look outwards, work together and coordinate activities as partners”

Therefore, cross-border territorial cooperation on both sides is entirely possible through identifying areas for cooperation on a mutually beneficial basis. In this case, areas of cooperation could include environment, tourism, sport, education and culture, and boosting the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises. Other potential areas for cooperation include renewable energy, accessibility and mobility of workers, and cooperation in transport issues, particularly airport, ports and inland transport. Such cooperation should aim at providing integrated solutions, therefore promoting the sustainable and integrated development of both Gibraltar and Spain. It will also strengthen cooperation between citizens and entities on both sides of the border.

There are many opportunities for social, economic and territorial cooperation. During the EU's new programming period for structural funds, Gibraltar can benefit from two territorial cooperation programmes, namely the south-west Europe and the Mediterranean programmes. Both programmes aim to ensure growth and employment by making their respective regions more competitive and also support territorial cohesion and environmental protection to ensure sustainable development. ★

Iskra Mihaylova (ALDE, BG) is chair of parliament's regional development committee

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Spanish government cannot hold European policies to ransom

Successive Spanish governments have sought to exclude Gibraltar from Europe while using the European Union as a means to advance their illegitimate sovereignty claim. Spain has objected to the inclusion of Gibraltar airport in European Union civil aviation measures, including the single European sky II+, artificially creating a Europe-wide impasse on these directives. Madrid is now renegeing on its 2006 commitment to never seek the exclusion of Gibraltar airport from EU civil aviation legislation. This is unacceptable and Spain must be made to honour its 2006 agreement.

Gibraltar is a British overseas territory, has been part of the EU since 1973, and is not excluded from participation in EU aviation measures under the treaties or the UK act of accession. The Spanish campaign to exclude Gibraltar is, therefore, illegal. However, only 18 months after Spain joined the European community, Madrid objected to the proposed 1987 air liberalisation package on the basis that it applied to Gibraltar airport, despite community law on civil aviation having always applied to Gibraltar and no member state having ever objected to this. Within six months Gibraltar was suspended from the 1987 package unless we accepted joint Gibraltarian-Spanish control over the airport. When Gibraltar challenged its exclusion, the European court of justice refused to listen to the substance of the case and ruled that Gibraltar did not have standing. Gibraltar airport therefore was suspended from all aviation measures until 2006.

That year, the Spanish, UK and Gibraltar governments formally agreed that Spain would no longer seek the suspension of Gibraltar airport from EU civil aviation measures, that these would be extended to it and a new terminal parallel to the frontier fence with direct access to another building on the Spanish side could be constructed. Gibraltar kept to its part of the bargain at a cost of over €80m, with no EU funding.

When the terminal opened in 2011, Spain's People's Party government reversed the cooperative stance adopted by their Socialist predecessors. The results are evident: Spain withdrew from the trilateral

forum for dialogue with the UK and Gibraltar governments, there is no direct access to the air terminal from Spain, and Madrid is seeking the exclusion of Gibraltar airport from EU aviation measures, despite its 2006 commitments. The current Spanish policy has consequences for the whole of Europe. There has been disagreement in the European council about the application of single skies to Gibraltar and the dossier on air passenger rights is also being held up by Spain.

Spain cannot be allowed to hold Europe ransom in pursuit of narrow political interests. Any solution to this impasse must fully respect the status of Gibraltar airport as an EU airport and of Gibraltarians as EU citizens. A simple solution would be to return to the 2006 agreements, which were universally beneficial and allowed EU aviation measures to progress without prejudice to the respective legal positions of the UK and Spain. Gibraltar must be included in single sky and other aviation measures. It would be totally unacceptable to bow to Spanish pressure and create a regime that accords fewer rights and benefits to EU nationals flying to and from Gibraltar airport.

While many in the UK look away from the EU, Gibraltar looks towards Europe as long as our position in it is fully respected and upheld. Gibraltar's legal rights cannot be any less important simply because of our small size. ★

The EU must not exclude Gibraltar airport from aviation agreements because of Spain's 'illegitimate sovereignty claim', argues **Joseph Garcia**

Joseph Garcia is deputy chief minister of Gibraltar

"It would be totally unacceptable to bow to Spanish pressure and create a regime that accords fewer rights and benefits to EU nationals flying to and from Gibraltar airport"



Gibraltar fed up with EU ignoring ‘Spanish bullying’ at the border

Ashley Fox says Spain’s ‘illogical and illegal’ stance on Gibraltar should not delay vital EU legislation

Ashley Fox (ECR, UK) is a member of parliament’s industry, research and energy committee and an MEP for south west England and Gibraltar

Earlier this year I was proud to sponsor a stand by the government of Gibraltar in the European parliament. This interactive exhibition highlighted the Rock’s history, vibrancy and enterprise. It included a string of compelling facts and figures about Gibraltar as a landmark, a home to 32,000 people and a destination for nine million visitors annually. It told of how Gibraltar has 30 miles of military tunnels cut into it, while the port is now the biggest bunkering or maritime fuelling station in the Mediterranean.

I am sure that the many MEPs and senior officials who visited the exhibition found it fascinating to learn about Gibraltar instead of having to listen to myths being circulated by other parties.

The exhibition coincided with further attempts by the Spanish government to exclude Gibraltar from the single European sky second package (SESII+) and of investigations by the European commission into the situation at the land frontier.

Madrid is threatening to scupper the so-called single European sky initiative because of its long-running argument with Britain over the sovereignty of the Rock and its airport. In the past Spain has delayed important EU legislation because it included Gibraltar.

In December, the EU

council of transport ministers agreed to press ahead with single sky, which has been in the pipeline since 2004 and would merge national air corridors to create shorter flight paths and cut costs and carbon dioxide emissions. The council did not take any position on whether Gibraltar airport should be included. Spain’s stance is provocative and unreasonable as well as illogical and illegal. It flies in the face of the 2006 Córdoba agreement, under which Spain agreed to stop seeking the exclusion of Gibraltar airport from EU aviation measures in return for the settlement of Spanish worker pensions in Gibraltar. Since the Maastricht treaty, every citizen of every member state holds EU citizenship. In the UK, very few people are even aware of this and those that are will regard it as worthless if the commission fails to defend the rights of British citizens when they are threatened.

It is now nearly two years since the politically motivated border problems began in Gibraltar. There have been 20 months of border delays, legal threats, harassment and bullying. Spanish accusations that Gibraltar breached environmental regulations in the establishment of an artificial reef, bunkering and reclamation projects on the eastern side of the Rock have all been rejected by the commission. More importantly though, following a visit to the frontier last year, the commission “expressed serious concerns about the lack of progress that could be observed by the experts on the Spanish side of the crossing point during the second visit, as well as regards the complaints that continue to reach the commission pointing out persistent long waiting times on both entry and exit to/from Spain. The commission considers that checks giving rise to waiting several hours to cross this border are disproportionate.”

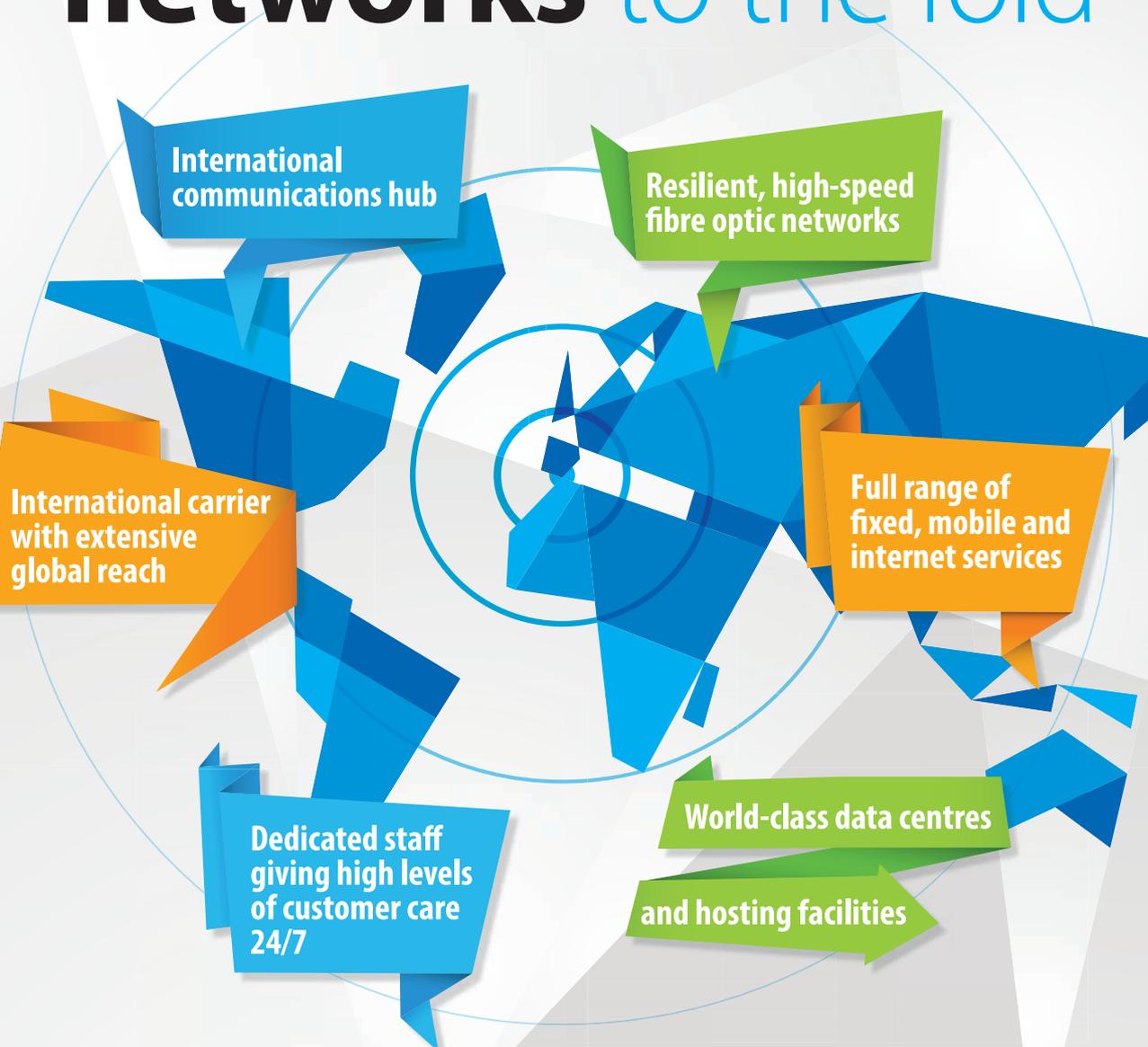
After the visit, the commission once again recommended improvements to the situation at the border to the Spanish authorities. The problem is that these are just recommendations. The people of Gibraltar are fed up with the commission allowing the Spanish government to drag its feet while they are forced to endure continued harassment. They want action. Nowhere else in Europe would this be allowed and for some reason the commission once again turns a blind eye and allows this bullying to continue. I believe that the Spanish government has had more than enough time. The commission should begin legal proceedings and defend EU citizens in need. ★

“Madrid is threatening to scupper the so-called single European sky initiative because of its long-running argument with Britain”



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EU must end ‘unnecessary controversy’ over single sky

Rules to coordinate airspace regulations should not be delayed by Spanish efforts to exclude Gibraltar, writes Clare Moody

There aren't many parliamentarians that are able to say they represent both the north and south of Europe in their constituency – but happily I can. Gibraltar went to the European court of justice to achieve representation in parliament and is now part of the south west of England and Gibraltar constituency that I am proud to represent. There are many things to celebrate about Gibraltar: the thriving economy, the drive to build new social housing and the promotion of environmental protection, among many others. However, at present, it is also central to ensuring the single European sky II+ (SES II+) is brought into force.

Gibraltar hasn't always had easy relations with its neighbour, Spain, and under the current Spanish government of Mariano Rajoy, there have been particular problems recently. These have been most visible in the form of border delays, which frustrate the day-to-day lives not just of Gibraltarians, but also thousands of Spanish people who cross the border daily to work. For people on the Gibraltarian border, such as the people of La Linea in Andalucía, Gibraltar is a valued partner. The daily interactions between the Spanish and Gibraltarian people shows how relations could and should work across the border, as good neighbours within the EU.

It had been hoped that SES II+ would be agreed at the transport ministers' meeting in December, but that wasn't to be. The Spanish government attempted to exclude Gibraltar and its airport from SES II+, something unacceptable to the UK government. These rules will coordinate airspace regulation and planning across the 28 member states, something that should cover all airports and passengers across the EU regardless of borders. However, as a consequence of the attempts to exclude Gibraltar from this legisla-

tion, it is now in limbo.

In November, I wrote to the commission about this issue and followed up in January by asking if Gibraltar is included in the transport titles of the Lisbon treaty. The commission confirmed that it is. I have written an open letter with chair of parliament's civil liberties, justice and home affairs committee Claude Moraes calling for the commission and council to take action on unblocking the single sky issue. I have also spoken with colleagues on parliament's transport committee in an effort to build an alliance to ensure SES II+ is agreed with Gibraltar included and the legislation is not used as a tool in an unrelated matter. SES II+ should have been a good news story but it has now become an unnecessary controversy.

If a piece of legislation is necessary then surely it must cover north, east, south and west. EU legislation should apply to the whole of the EU equally. ★

“The daily interactions between the Spanish and Gibraltarian people show how relations could and should work across the border”



Clare Moody (S&D, UK) is a member of parliament's budgets committee and an MEP for south west England and Gibraltar

Gibraltar's sovereignty must be defended from Madrid's 'bullying'

Two months ago I sent a written question to the European commission asking whether the Spanish government had provided a response to the government of Gibraltar's offer for cooperation on cross-border issues. The administration in Gibraltar remains ready to cooperate and has made this clear to the Spanish authorities. I am firmly of the view that a good relationship between neighbouring states should always be positive, but in this case, the relationship has been particularly difficult because of the attitude of successive Spanish governments.

This has not been my first question on this issue. Previously I asked the commission about the obstacles to free movement between Spain and Gibraltar put in place whenever the relationship between London and Madrid takes a turn for the worse. These obstacles put in place by the Madrid government,

including arbitrary security controls designed to inflate the cross-border queues, adversely affect European citizens who are paying the price for tensions between the two governments.

Sometimes the disputes concentrate on legal jurisdiction in territorial waters, but last year matters took a turn skywards. In December, Spain's public works minister Ana Pastor Julián said in an interview, "Including Gibraltar airport in the single European sky would be recognition of its sovereignty and would set a serious precedent because we would lose a battle that is centuries-old." This is the crux of the matter. The fundamental problem in this conflict is that Spain never accepted the sovereignty of Gibraltar which resulted from the treaty of Utrecht more than three centuries ago. And it is because of this that every minor problem today becomes a cause of friction.

The American think tank the Heritage foundation recently alerted the US congress of the need to defend Gibraltar's sovereignty from Spain's 'bullying'. It argues that Spain regularly ignores the right to self-determination of Gibraltar and considers this behaviour uncharacteristic of a European ally in the 21st century. It also suggested that the Spanish government uses Gibraltar as a distraction from Spain's economic problems and from the political scandals involving prime minister Mariano Rajoy and some members of his political party.

I find these arguments persuasive. In any case it is neither right nor acceptable that the government of an EU member state blocks the free movement of European citizens. The purpose of any government should be to facilitate people, whether natives or foreigners, and not needlessly complicate matters and incite discord as the Spanish government does so well.

All political problems must be solved at a political level and not by imposing new obstacles on people. Ordinary people should not pay for disagreements among those who have the democratic duty of serving them. ★

The attitude of the Spanish government towards the British overseas territory is 'uncharacteristic of a European ally in the 21st century', argues **Josep-Maria Terricabras**

"The fundamental problem in this conflict is that Spain never accepted the sovereignty of Gibraltar which resulted from the treaty of Utrecht"

Josep-Maria Terricabras (Greens/EFA, ES) is a member of parliament's constitutional affairs committee



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Spanish sabre rattling on border with Gibraltar is fooling nobody

Recent incursions by Spain into Gibraltar have put unnecessary strain on relations between the two countries. This is part of the ongoing incursions by Spain into Gibraltarian waters and the creation of lengthy queues at the border crossing. While you would think these would be simple enough situations to resolve, it seems that lack of cooperation by the Spanish government and police is prolonging the dispute.

I visited Gibraltar in August 2013 when the border crossing issue was at its peak, with lengthy delays in scorching summer heat caused by the Spanish Guardia Civil. Having seen the problems first hand, it is a source of great frustration to me that border issues continue today. I have been working directly with colleagues in the UK foreign office to try to find a solution, and many Gibraltarians keep me updated with the queue situation via social media. Despite the European commission raising this with the Spanish authorities, the problem has not been solved.

The British minister for Europe David Lidington visited Gibraltar last July to review the situation and called for upgrades to the border infrastructure and an end to this politically motivated problem. I have been assured that the UK government will maintain diplomatic pressure until this frustrating situation is resolved. The commission assures me that Spanish authorities have said that the construction works at the crossing point at La Línea de la Concepción used by foot passengers and vehicles should be completed by the end of June.

In late 2014, there was a serious incursion into British Gibraltar territorial waters by a Spanish state research vessel. Freedom of navigation in international waters is a

vital principle of international law and we must continue to uphold the sovereignty of British Gibraltar territorial waters through the use of the Royal Navy. Unlawful incursions into these waters are completely unjustifiable. The behaviour of the Spanish vessels is often dangerous, something I have raised in the European parliament and the UK government has raised with Spain on numerous occasions. The most recent incident took place in March and saw a Guardia Civil patrol boat cut across the bow of a British nuclear submarine as it sailed from Gibraltar.

Spain is fully aware of the legal position around territorial waters, yet over the past two years has increased unlawful incursions by state vessels from around five per month to around 40. These provocations are unacceptable. It is impor-

Julie Girling says Gibraltarians have 'fewer rights and protections' than other EU citizens when travelling



"Spain is fully aware of the legal position around territorial waters, yet over the past two years has increased unlawful incursions"





"It is unacceptable that domestic difficulties for Spain's governing people's party, currently mired in corruption scandals, should be allowed to affect the people of Gibraltar"

Gibraltar and the Spanish city La Línea de la Concepción

Julie Girling (ECR,UK) is member of parliament's environment, public health and food safety committee and an MEP for south west England and Gibraltar

tant to note that incursions are a violation of sovereignty, not a threat to it. They do not weaken or undermine the legal basis in international law for British sovereignty over Gibraltar, including British Gibraltar territorial waters. I have robustly defended the interests of Gibraltar in the parliament and will continue to do so.

Finally, there is the single European sky initiative. Europe's air space is among the busiest in the world and this initiative has been accepted by all EU governments apart from Spain. The Spanish government entered into an agreement with the governments of the UK and Gibraltar in 2006 under which they committed not to seek the exclusion of Gibraltar airport from EU civil aviation measures. In 2011, the current Spanish government decided to ignore what had previously been agreed and broke the agreement by seeking the exclusion of Gibraltar airport from a number of measures.

Gibraltar is a part of the EU and its people are EU citizens. Spain is seeking the exclusion of Gibraltar airport from EU

air passenger rights legislation. I have asked the commission if they would accept the discriminatory precedent this would set, resulting in fewer rights and protections than those travelling through other EU airports. I still await a response.

It is unacceptable that domestic difficulties for Spain's governing People's Party, currently mired in corruption scandals, should be allowed to affect the people of Gibraltar. This sabre rattling from Spain is a thinly disguised diversionary tactic that is fooling nobody.

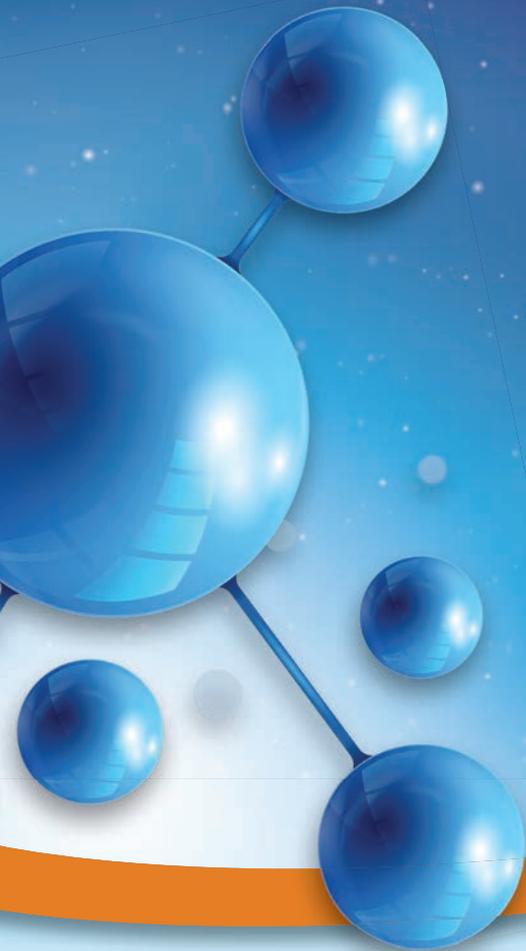
I do believe there is an end to these problems in sight – it simply requires a willingness on the part of Spanish authorities. I will continue to support my constituents in Gibraltar in parliament and work with colleagues in London to ensure the UK government continues to take whatever action necessary to uphold the interests of Gibraltar, its people, its security and economy. These issues will be resolved by political means through our relationship as EU partners, not through disproportionate measures. ★



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