

WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 9 January

Latvia takes on Presidency of the Council of the European Union

On 2 January 2015, Latvia took over the rotating six-month Presidency of the Council of the European Union from Italy. It is the first time Latvia has held the EU Presidency since it became a member of the EU in 2004. On 1 July 2015, Latvia will hand over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union to Luxembourg, who will hold the Presidency until 31 December 2015. The main priorities of the Latvian Presidency are:

Competitive Europe – Jobs&Growth

- Facilitate investment across Europe
- Strengthen the Single Market
- Advance the Energy Union
- Mainstream industrial competitiveness
- Deepen the Economic and Monetary Union

Digital Europe

- Safety in the digital environment
- Digital Single Market
- Digital by default

Engaged Europe

- Neighbourhood policy
- Trade Development
- Security and defence
- Enlargement

Further information:

Latvian Presidency's [official website](#)

[Official Work Programme](#) of the Latvian Presidency

[18 month official Work Programme](#) of the Trio

Presidency (Italy, Latvia and Luxembourg)

[Calendar of Council meetings](#) from January to June 2015

(Source: Latvian Presidency)

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/176-kicking-off-the-latvian-presidency-of-the-council-of-the-eu-juncker-commission-travels-to-riga>

EU hopes for 'skeleton' of US trade deal by year-end

The EU said on Wednesday that it hopes the 'skeleton' of the free trade deal with the United States will be ready by the end of this year. Talks on TTIP, which would be the world's biggest trade deal, began 19 months ago and are still under way, with the next round due in February. EU leaders agreed at a December 19 summit in the Belgian capital that Brussels and Washington "should make all efforts to conclude negotiations" on TTIP by the end of 2015. Criticism has particularly focused on the so-called investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS), which would allow firms to sue national governments if they feel that local regulations violate the trade deal and threaten their investments.

(Source: EU Business)

<http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/us-trade-ttip.zdt/>

Commission publishes TTIP legal texts

This week, the European Commission published a number of [negotiation texts](#) setting out EU proposals in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) it is negotiating with the US. This is the first time the Commission has made public such proposals in bilateral trade talks. The published proposals set out the EU's initial proposals for legal text on specific areas in the TTIP negotiations. These proposals also set out the actual language and binding commitments which the EU would like to see in the agreement. These proposals cover the areas of competition, food safety and animal and plant health, customs issues, technical barriers to trade, small and medium sized enterprises, and government-to-government dispute settlement. They will be tabled for discussion in future negotiating rounds with the US. The Commission has also published TTIP position papers explaining the EU's approach on engineering, vehicles, and sustainable development.

(Source: European Commission)

<http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1231>

Climate governance divides countries

The structure of a new governance system for the EU's 2030 climate policy looks set to prove controversial, with member states and MEPs disagreeing on the division of power between institutions. Green MEP Claude Turmes accused the UK on Wednesday of proposing to shut the European Parliament out of energy governance completely. In an informal position co-authored with the Czech Republic, the UK proposes a "light touch" approach from Brussels with a focus on the EU's "collective progress" rather than national implementation. Discussions on national plans produced as part of the process would be "conducted informally and bilaterally between member states and the Commission" with a report to the EU Council – not the European Parliament – every three years. The Greens see these ideas as a broader attempt to move away from the ordinary legislative procedure in energy policy, which gives the Parliament and member states equal weight, to unanimous decisions by heads of state and government. The new governance system was originally proposed to monitor compliance with a 27% renewable energy target for 2030, binding only at EU level, endorsed by EU heads of state and government in October. It has become a key element of the 'Energy Union' concept as discussions have moved towards a system whereby member states would draw up national energy plans covering all of competitiveness, security of supply and sustainability. In a second position paper on the Energy Union, the UK called for the promotion of all "low- and lower carbon sources of energy". The European Commission is due to publish a strategy on the Energy Union next month.

(Source: ENDS Europe)

<http://www.endseurope.com/38603/climate-governance-divides-countries-meps>

Martin Lundstedt elected ACEA Commercial Vehicle Board Chairman

The Commercial Vehicle Board of Directors of the European Automobile Manufacturer's Association (ACEA) has elected Martin Lundstedt as its new Chairman for 2015. Mr Lundstedt, President and CEO of Scania, follows Wolfgang Bernhard, Head of Daimler Trucks, who took over the chairmanship of ACEA's Commercial Vehicle Board in 2013, and went

on to serve a second term in 2014. In this context, the CV industry has formulated three recommendations to policy makers:

- To take full account of the complexity of the commercial vehicle market, which cannot be reflected in a 'one-size-fits-all' approach;
- To improve consumer information, thereby further strengthening market forces. This will make the customer the best regulator;
- To foster close partnerships between all relevant stakeholders through a fully integrated approach, in order to double the annual potential of CO2 reduction.

(Source: ACEA)

<http://www.acea.be/press-releases/article/martin-lundstedt-to-lead-acea-commercial-vehicle-board-for-2015>

Industrial Producer Prices fall

In November 2014, compared with October 2014, industrial producer prices fell by 0.3% in the euro area and by 0.4% in the EU28, according to estimates from Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union.

(Source: European Commission)

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STAT-15-3040_en.htm



Week ahead

European Parliament

Wednesday 14 January

Council and Commission Statements on the Programme of Activities of the Latvian Presidency