

### February EU passenger car registrations grow 7%

In February 2015, EU passenger car registrations recorded growth for the eighteenth consecutive month (+7.3%), reaching 924,440. All major markets contributed positively to the overall expansion, especially Spain (+26.1%), Italy (+13.2%) and the UK (+12.0%) posting double-digit growth, followed by Germany (+6.6%) and France (+4.5%). From January to February 2015, new passenger car registrations increased by 7.0%, totalling almost 2 million units (1,923,484). Most major markets posted growth, contributing to the overall upturn of the EU market. Germany (+4.6%), France (+5.3%), the UK (+8.3%), Italy (+12.3%) and Spain (+26.7%) increased over this period. (Source: ACEA)

<http://www.acea.be/press-releases/article/passenger-car-registrations-7.0-over-two-months-7.3-in-february>

### 'Intelligent' technologies open new avenues for transport

EU policy makers and industry experts met to take stock of the EU's transport policy at a European Parliament public hearing on Tuesday (17 March). The hearing heard that connected vehicles with communication technologies offer an unprecedented opportunity to achieve an integrated multi-modal transport system in the EU. Wim van de Camp, a Dutch MEP (EPP), presented a report reviewing the implementation of a transport white paper and policy roadmap, adopted by the European Commission in 2011. The roadmap contained 40 initiatives that are expected to reduce Europe's dependence on imported oil and cut carbon emissions in transport by 60% by 2050. The report states that "the objective for the next decade is to create a genuine single European transport area [...], easing the process of integration and the emergence of multinational and multimodal operators". MEPs in attendance hailed the progress made so far but stressed that a lot remained to be achieved. (Source: EurActiv)

<http://www.euractiv.com/sections/transport/intelligent-technologies-open-new-avenues-european-transport-313047>

### Annual meeting of EU-Japan Industrial Policy Dialogue

The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the EU-Japan Industrial Policy Dialogue took place this week in Brussels. One of the main outcomes of the meeting was the adoption of a Regulatory Cooperation Joint Document foreseeing the enlargement of the existing cooperation to new areas such as robotics, construction and medical devices. The Regulatory Cooperation Joint Document is the first step towards a deeper and enlarged regulatory cooperation between the EU and Japan. The intention is to undertake the cooperation at the earliest stage possible in the process so as to avoid potential damaging discrepancies in the respective systems. As well as preventing potential regulatory divergences, the cooperation also aims to reduce and solve behind the border issues, while respecting the legitimate policy objectives of the parties. The Dialogue also reviewed the work of the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation and the activities of the business-led EU-Japan Business Round Table. The EU-Japan Centre for industrial cooperation is supported by METI and DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs through the [EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises \(COSME\)](#). It is a unique body that seeks to serve a joint 'EU-Japan' vision. The five technical working groups set up within the Dialogue also reported to the annual meeting. The working groups are on:

- standards and conformity assessment;
- climate change and the environment;
- the automotive industry;
- chemicals;
- corporate social responsibility.

The working groups will support the implementation of the Regulatory Cooperation Joint Document.

(Source: European Commission)

[http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item\\_id=8148&lang=en&tpa\\_id=1041&title=18th-Annual-Meeting-of-the-EU-Japan-Industrial-Policy-Dialogue](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=8148&lang=en&tpa_id=1041&title=18th-Annual-Meeting-of-the-EU-Japan-Industrial-Policy-Dialogue)

## Environment Council discusses Energy Union

Last week, the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council met in Brussels. Ministers exchanged ideas on how transport policy can boost EU competitiveness, growth and jobs, based on a [background document](#). During the debate, ministers stressed the fundamental role the transport sector plays in the European economy. They highlighted that a forward-looking and predictable development of infrastructure was crucial for enhanced competitiveness and a well-functioning single transport area. The proposed European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI) could provide new opportunities for financing the strategic ambitions for transport. It could attract extra money for projects with real EU added value and a higher risk profile than those usually financed by public and private banks or private partners. However, more new financing mechanisms are needed, particularly in the framework of public-private partnerships. Under other business, the ministers also discussed the Energy Union where the Commission presented the transport-related elements of its Energy Union Package, including the need to improve energy efficiency and speed up decarbonisation, to progressively switch to alternative fuels and to integrate the energy and transport systems. (Source: European Commission) [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2015/03/Outcome-of-the-transport-council-meeting\\_EN\\_pdf/](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/tte/2015/03/Outcome-of-the-transport-council-meeting_EN_pdf/)

---

## Juncker puts pressure on MEPs over investment plan

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker's investment plan is facing a battle in the European Parliament. The €315 billion European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) is being contested by MEPs who don't want part of the €16 billion EU contribution to the fund taken from the EU's infrastructure and research programmes. There is a large consensus in the four parliamentary committees discussing the fund that alternatives have to be found to protect EU money meant for infrastructure and research. In the amendments to EFSI, MEPs suggest that money come instead from non-allocated budget funds or from fines collected by the commission. The amendments will now be discussed between the parliament, the commission, and the council of ministers before a committee vote on 20 April. (Source: EUObserver) <https://euobserver.com/political/128034>

## Week ahead

### European Commission

Tuesday 24 March

- The Commission will publish the EU road safety statistics for 2014
- Report presentation: 'Completing Europe – from the North-South Corridor to Energy, Transportation and Telecommunications Union'

Wednesday 25 March

- Commission discusses plans to create a Digital Single Market

### European Council

Wednesday 26 – Thursday 27 March

- Informal Competitiveness Council (Riga) – discussion of digital opportunities in order to deliver smart sustainable and inclusive growth

### European Parliament

Monday 23 March

- AFET – The state of EU-Russia relations
- ITRE – Next steps in the implementation of the Energy Union Strategy; Green growth opportunities for SMEs
- ECON – Monetary Dialogue with Mario Draghi

Tuesday 24 March

- ITRE – Conclusion of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol; European Fund for Strategic Investments; Forthcoming energy and climate policy measure; resource efficiency: moving towards a circular economy
- ECON – recommendations to the Commission on the negotiations for TTIP

