

## WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 30 May

### European Parliament election results announced

The results of the European Parliament elections, held across Europe on 22-25 May, have been announced. The centre-right European People's Party (EPP) narrowly remained the largest political group, although its share of the vote decreased by 7.9% and it now has 59 fewer seats than in the previous Parliament. The centre-left S&D, affiliated with the Labour party, has maintained its status as the second largest political group, securing 25.4% of the vote and 187 MEPs in total, 4 seats fewer than it secured in 2009. At this stage, 105 non-attached MEPs have been elected compared to 32 non-attached MEPs in the 2009-2014 term. The number of non-attached MEPs is set to reduce over the coming weeks, however, as MEPs join already established Groups or attempt to form new groups. As in the UK, eurosceptic parties fared well across Europe and now hold approximately 140 seats out of the 751 available. The new MEPs will take up their office in Brussels in June, with a new Commission President and European Parliament President elected in July. The new President of the European Council will be elected in November. (Source: BBC News)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/events/vote2014>



### Rise in commercial vehicle registrations

Figures published by ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers Association, show that demand for new

commercial vehicles in the EU during April has increased for the eighth consecutive month. Total commercial vehicle registrations grew by 5.1%, totalling 151,571 units. Across the vans, buses and coaches segments, growth was sustained, while the market for trucks and heavy trucks contracted. Out of the most significant markets, Spain and Italy recorded double-digit growth at +54.6% and +15.2% respectively, and demand in France also increased by +0.4%. Germany and the UK saw their registrations decline however, at -2.1% and -3.6% respectively. Four months into the year, the EU market expanded by 8.7%, totalling 595,170 units. During this period, Spain (+43.3%), Italy (+14.4%), the UK (+7.1) and Germany (+6.7%) all posted growth, while France was the only major market who recorded a decline (-0.4%). For heavy trucks, April results showed a 0.7% decrease in new registrations, totalling 17,832 units. Spain posted the highest increase with +29.8%, whereas the UK saw registrations decline by -29.3%. Four months into the year, the EU market for heavy trucks grew by 9.2%, reaching 70,631 units. The April results for trucks showed a 2.9% decline in new registrations, totalling 23,358 units. The UK saw their demand decrease by -29.6%. From January to April, 90,360 new trucks were registered in the EU, an increase of 4.7% on the same period last year. Demand for new buses and coaches in April increased by 20.4%, totalling 3,080 units. The UK posted double-digit growth with an increase of +44.7%, whereas Italy saw demand decrease by -31.6%. From January to April, the EU market grew by 5.6%, totalling 10,331 new buses and coaches. Demand for new buses and coaches declined in Spain (-3.4%) and Italy (-9.4%), while new registrations increased the most in Poland (+18.0%), with the UK registering +6.8%.

(Source: ACEA)

<http://www.acea.be/press-releases/article/commercial-vehicle-registrations-8.7-over-four-months-5.1-in-april>

## Survey shows lack of funding prevents companies from capitalising on innovation

The 2014 Innobarometer survey, “The role of public support in the commercialisation of innovations”, has revealed that most companies (91%) have not received public financial support for R&D or other innovation activities since January 2011. The survey shows that access to finance is still the main obstacle encountered by companies in the commercialisation of their products or services. 66% of companies surveyed stated that they have introduced at least one innovation in the last three years, and for 61% of companies, innovative goods or services contributed 25% or less to annual turnover in 2013. 18% of companies have won at least one public procurement contract since January 2011, however, just over one third of companies (38%) that won a contract sold innovative goods or services.

(Source: European Commission)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-14-610\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-610_en.htm)

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## Commission presents new European energy security strategy

The European Commission has published a new European Energy Security Strategy, which is based on a study of member states’ energy dependence. The strategy proposes actions in the following areas:

- Completing the Internal Energy Market and building missing infrastructure links.
- Diversifying supplier countries and routes.
- Strengthening emergency and solidarity mechanisms and protecting critical infrastructure.
- Increasing indigenous energy production including renewable, sustainable production of fossil fuels and safe nuclear where the option is chosen.
- Improving coordination of national energy policies and speaking with one voice in external energy policy.
- Further developing energy technologies.

The proposals will be discussed by the European Council on 26-27 June.

(Source: BBB)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-14-606\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-606_en.htm)

## Robotic assistants provided to aid factory floor workers

The EU-funded LOCOBOT project has developed reconfigurable robotic assistants to help industry make the transition from combustion engine-powered vehicles to electric vehicles. It is hoped the introduction of these robotic assistants will increase productivity on the assembly line as well as reduce costs. The project’s low-cost robotic assistant is designed to work alongside humans on the factory floor. Project co-ordinator Christian Wögerer stated “The mobile robots could make their debut at assembly lines within three to four years, allowing for low and varying production volumes that can quickly be changed to produce larger numbers”. Workers will be able to re-programme the robot for each new product or task themselves, without the need to call on specialist technicians. The project states that the expected benefits for the industry, and its workers, include higher efficiency, safer working conditions and the ability to quickly adapt production processes to demand.

(Source: European Commission)

<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/news/robotic-assistants-workers-factory-floor>



## Week ahead

### European Commission

No relevant activity

### Council of Ministers

Thursday 5 June

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (TTE)

### European Parliament

The European Parliament will return to normal business in July following the recent elections.