

## WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 13 June

### EU and EIB join forces to support R&I investment

The European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Commission have launched a new generation of EU financial instruments and advisory services to help innovative firms access finance more easily. Over the next seven years, it is expected that the 'InnovFin – EU Finance for Innovators' products will make available more than €24 billion of financing for research and innovation (R&I) by small, medium and large companies and the promoters of research infrastructures. This finance is expected to support up to €48 billion of final R&I investments. 'InnovFin – EU Finance for Innovators' will consist of a range of tailored products: guarantees for intermediaries that lend to SMEs and direct loans to enterprises – it is hoped that these will help support the smallest to the largest R&I projects in the EU and countries associated to Horizon 2020. Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, European Research, Innovation and Science Commissioner, said "The EU Lags behind its global competitors in terms of business investment in innovation, so we must encourage banks to lend to these projects and help research-intensive companies get access to this finance."

(Source: EU Commission)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-14-670\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-670_en.htm)

### 2015 EU draft budget adopted by Commission

The 2015 EU draft budget has been adopted by the Commission, with the bulk of commitments for future projects that will make Europe stronger economically. The draft also proposes 40% of the payments to still cover EU funded projects from the 2007 - 2013 financial period. Almost 60% of the proposed commitment appropriations amount is dedicated to programmes that support Europe's research and innovation, youth and businesses. The main portion of payment appropriations will go to areas that will boost Europe's economic growth and jobs such as research (Horizon 2020), trans-European networks for energy,

transport and ICT (Connecting Europe Facility) or the Youth Employment Initiative. Following the adoption by the Commission of the budget, member states will now adopt their position on it, followed by the European Parliament. This will then be followed by a 21-day conciliation period to find a compromise agreement between the Council and the Parliament. (Source: EU Commission)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-14-665\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-665_en.htm)



### London MEP to lead ECR Group

London MEP Syed Kamall has been elected as the new leader of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR Group). After his election, Mr Kamall MEP paid tribute to outgoing chairmen Martin Callanan, applauding his hard work and the impact this has had on the ECR Group. Mr Kamall outlined his commitment to build on the successes of the group and to encourage the ECR to play an active, pivotal and constructive role in the parliament in order to deliver their agenda of a more decentralised and flexible EU that focuses its efforts on economic reform, providing opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs and opening markets.

(Source: ECRGroup)

<http://ecrgroup.eu/news/syed-kamall-elected-to-lead-the-european-conservatives-and-reformists-group-in-the-european-parliament/>

## Commission points to innovation to sustain economic recovery

The European Commission has highlighted the importance of research and innovation (R&I) investments and reforms for economic recovery in the European Union, and has made proposals to help EU member states maximise the impact of their budgets. Increasing R&I investment is a proven driver of growth, and so the Commission has pledged support to member states in pursuing R&I reforms best suited to their needs, including by providing policy support, world-class data and examples of best practice. The three key areas of reform that have been highlighted by the Commission are:

- Improving the quality of strategy development and the policy-making process
- Improving the quality of R&I programmes
- Improving the quality of public institutions performing research and innovation, including through new partnerships with industry.

The Commission has also called on member states to prioritise R&I – with current R&I spending across the public and private sector worth just over 2% of the GDP, the EU remains well behind international competitors like the United States, Japan and South Korea. Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Euro, Olli Rehn, said “The EU budget is helping drive growth-enhancing investment in research and innovation and today we are outing forward ideas to help maximise the impact of every euro spent.”

(Source: European Commission)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-14-646\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-646_en.htm)



## Commission adopts new rules supporting transnational projects

The European Commission has set out new criteria under which member states will be able to support transnational projects which are of strategic significance for both the EU and for the achievement of Europe 2020 objectives, in line with EU state aid rules. The Commission has adopted the Communication on Important Projects of European Interest (IPCEIs), which is aimed at encouraging member states to channel their public spending to large projects that make a clear contribution to economic growth, jobs and the competitiveness of Europe. The key features of it IPCEI include:

- Extending existing provisions on IPCEIs to any sector of the economy
- Diversifying forms of support
- Increasing aid intensity
- Allowing aid for the first industrial deployment of an R&D project.

The Communication will enter into force on 1 July 2014.

(Source: EU Commission)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-14-673\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-673_en.htm)

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## Week ahead

### European Commission

No relevant activity

### Council of Ministers

Friday 20 June

Economic and Financial Affairs Council - Finance Ministers will meet in Luxembourg, key items on the agenda include:

Approval of recommendations on the 2014 national reform programmes of the member states and on the economic policies of the euro area

Adoption of opinions on the recent 2014 country-specific recommendations

### European Parliament

Political group meetings will continue into next week in order to finalise the composition of the pan-European political groupings within Parliament ahead of the 24 June deadline.

Following this groups will enter into negotiations with each other in order to allocate Committee chairmanships and memberships.