

## WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 28 June

### Political agreement on 2014-2020 EU budget and 2014 election date confirmed

The Irish Presidency of the Council and European Commission confirmed political agreement had been achieved on the European Union's future budget for 2014-2020. Focusing on growth through spending on research and education were highlighted as key, as was addressing youth employment, supporting SME growth and also increasing aid for the poorest citizen's in Europe. It is proposed spending in these areas is brought forward to the first part of this budget period, for example, the Commission proposes that the €6 billion Youth Employment Initiative should be frontloaded so that it is committed in 2014 and 2015 rather than over the seven-year period of the next budget. The budget deal will now be submitted to the European Parliament and the Council for formal endorsement.

This week, it was also confirmed that the 2014 European Parliament elections will take place on Thursday 22 May. The new college of Commissioners are also due to be appointed around the same time.

(Source: European Commission)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-13-625\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-625_en.htm)

### Car CO<sub>2</sub> deal delayed following Member State lobbying

It has been reported that following high-level lobbying of the Irish Presidency by Germany, Council adoption of the new car CO<sub>2</sub> regulations has been delayed, and will now be discussed under the Lithuanian presidency which begins on 1 July. The reported high-level intervention is understood to have included personal calls by German Chancellor, Angela Merkel. On Monday 24 June, it had been reported an agreement had been found based on the mandate given to the presidency by EU Member States. However, German concerns over the impact on the

competitiveness on German industry led to lobbying and a delay in adoption.

(Source: Euractiv/European Voice)

<http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/2013/june/germany-blocks-car-co2-limit-deal/77700.aspx>



### Parliament and Council find agreement on procurement and infrastructure

The European Parliament and Council have found political agreement overhauling public procurement rules. The new rules are aimed at modernising rules and improving flexibility. Public procurement contracts account for around 19% of EU GDP, and the new rules hope to improve SME access to this opportunity. The Parliament's rapporteur Marc Tarabella MEP said that the new rules send "a strong signal to citizens who have the right to see public money used effectively". The provisional agreement must now be formally approved by the Council and Parliament, with a plenary vote and agreement sought for the autumn.

A provisional agreement was also found this week on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), the EU's mechanism to fund infrastructure projects for trans-European transport, energy and telecoms networks. The package still needs to be politically endorsed by the Council and the Parliament. Its budget (the Commission has proposed €50 billion) will depend on the outcome of current EU budget negotiations.

(Source: European Parliament)

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20130625IPR14411/html/Procurement-package-New-deal-to-ensure-more-responsible-public-spending>



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## EU education investment valuable – OECD report

An OECD report 'Education at a Glance 2013' has found that education investment is a valuable use of public budgets. The report analyses global education systems and confirms the importance of EU Member States working together to tackle common education challenges.

(Source: OECD)

[http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2013\\_eag-2013-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2013_eag-2013-en)

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## Week ahead

### **European Commission**

No relevant business

### **Council of the EU**

Monday 1 July

Croatia becomes 28<sup>th</sup> Member State of the European Union

### **European Parliament (Plenary)**

(Agenda yet to be issued)