

## EU and Vietnam reach agreement on free trade deal

The EU and Vietnam reached agreement on a free trade deal this week. The EU said the agreement in principle followed two and a half years of negotiations between the 28-nation European Union and Vietnam. The discussions will have to be completed so as to finalise the legal text of the agreement. It is expected that this process could be finalised in a few months' time and certainly before the end of the year. In 2014, the EU was the second trading partner for Vietnam after China (not including trade within ASEAN), representing 10% of total Vietnamese trade. The EU was Vietnam's second export destination (after the US), with the EU purchasing as much as 18% of Vietnam's global exports. In 2014, EU-Vietnam trade in goods was worth over €28.2 billion, with €22.1 billion of imports from Vietnam into the EU and €6.2 billion of exports from the EU to Vietnam. Vietnam's key export items to the EU include telephone sets, electronic products, footwear, textiles and clothing, coffee, rice, seafood, and furniture. EU exports to Vietnam, meanwhile, are dominated by high-tech products including electrical machinery and equipment, aircraft, vehicles, and pharmaceutical products. Total bilateral trade in services amounted in 2013 to €2.9 billion, with a slight surplus for the EU. The EU is one of the largest foreign investors in Vietnam. In 2013, EU investors committed a total of more than €500 million in Foreign Direct Investment and thus remain Vietnam's sixth largest foreign investor partner. Since 2013, Vietnam has been the EU's fourth most important trading partner among the ten ASEAN Member States, surpassing the EU's bilateral trade with Indonesia.

(Source: [European Commission](#))

## European AFV registrations up 24.6% in first semester 2015

ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association has published data that shows total alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) registrations in the EU in the second quarter of 2015 increased 17.4%, totalling 143,595 units. Of these, electric vehicle (EV) registrations significantly grew (+53.0%), rising from 18,024 units in Q2 2014 to 27,575 units in Q2 2015. Demand for new hybrid vehicles also increased (+22.6%), totalling 53,443 units. 62,577 new passenger cars in the second quarter (+3.0%) were powered by propane and natural gas. Looking at the EU's major markets, the UK saw the largest increase of AFVs registered over the period (+62.4%), followed by France (+59.7%) and Spain (+58.0%). Among the EFTA countries, demand was primarily driven by Norway (+74.1%), with 11,614 vehicles registered, 77% of which electrically powered.

(Source: [ACEA](#))

## UKIP unveils campaign for Brexit

Nigel Farage, leader of UKIP, unveiled plans for rallies from September to campaign for a "No" vote in the EU membership referendum. Nigel Farage said his party would launch a "major ground campaign" for the referendum, which Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron has promised to hold by the end of 2017. He criticised the lack of an organised "No" campaign, saying UKIP would campaign with fellow eurosceptics. Some senior Conservatives have suggested the referendum could be held as early as next year and the Independent newspaper reported last week that the Prime Minister would confirm this at the Conservative party's annual conference in October.

(Source: [EUBusiness](#))

## Calais migrant crisis – EU offers to help France and UK

The European Commission has said that it would send a first instalment of financial assistance to France of €20 million in order to help France deal with the migrant crisis at the Channel Tunnel. The UK has already received €27 million. The Commission also offered the two countries its technical assistance, including help to process asylum applications through a support office.

(Source: [Euractiv](#))

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## Greece in 'final stage' of bail-out talks

Greece is close to reaching an agreement with its creditors to secure €86bn which is expected to keep the country solvent for the next three years and secure its place within the eurozone, according to Greece's Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras. Mr Tsipras said meetings between the government and Greece's creditors had made good progress. Greek bank shares fell for a third day on Wednesday, after the end of a five-week shutdown sparked the biggest stock market drop on record. The Athens stock exchange closed down 2.44% at 643.86 points on Wednesday, after falling by as much as 4.4%, while an index of the country's top four banks fell 25% to 246.50 points. Bank shares have now fallen close to the maximum 30% allowed for three straight days.

(Source: [The Telegraph](#))

## Week ahead

**The European Parliament is in summer recess until 1 September 2015.**

